

Publishing Chinese Art

Issues of Cultural Reproduction in China, 1905-1918

Yu-jen Liu

Trinity College, Oxford
D.Phil. Thesis, Trinity Term 2010

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(Short abstract)

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This thesis is an enquiry into the conditions in which various understandings of the newly introduced but vaguely grasped Western notion of ‘art’ emerged and sustained themselves in the name of cultural reproduction in early twentieth-century China. This Western concept of art was translated into Chinese as ‘*meishu*’, a neologism originally coined in Japanese *kanji*, and regarded as the embodiment of the ‘national essence’. Through a close examination of five art-related publishing events—the publication of the nationalistic journal *Guocui xuebao*; the launch of the art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji*; the endeavours to compile a book collection on art, *Meishu congshu*; the making of the text *Zhonguo yishujia zhenglüe* which claimed to be a history book of Chinese ‘*meishu*’; and an example of image appropriation from Stephen Bushell’s *Chinese Art*—this thesis explores the ways in which different ‘neologistic imaginations’ of the term ‘*meishu*’ were constructed through publishing practices attempting to preserve and reproduce the ‘national essence’, by creating from the existent tradition a category of ‘art’ equivalent to that in the European West. Unlike previous scholarship, which deems any understanding of ‘*meishu*’ that deviated from the ‘authentic’ European model a ‘misconception’, this thesis sees these disparate understandings of ‘*meishu*’ as equally valid statements competing for dominance in the discursive field of art. This thesis thus argues that there existed at least three modes of utterances regarding the notion of ‘*meishu*’ in early twentieth-century China, and that the success of any such given utterance depended upon the acceptance of the authentic quality argued in its strategy of cultural reproduction. This thesis hence not only offers a detailed analysis of each publishing event, but also provides an interpretative framework within which the recognition of these utterances can be analysed by their strategic approaches to claiming cultural authenticity.

Publishing Chinese Art: Issues of Cultural Reproduction in China, 1905-1918

(long abstract)

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This thesis examines art publishing practices in early twentieth-century China through an attempt to map out the discursive field of Chinese art as it was perceived at the time. The publishing projects to be discussed include those of photographic reproductions of art, of a book series which gathered together texts on art already existent in China, and of a book that strove to give Chinese art a proper history of its own. They are approached in this thesis as endeavours of cultural reproduction, as they sought to preserve and valorise the importance of the new concept of ‘art’ in China at this period by multiplying and promulgating texts about, and images of, Chinese art. Issues to be explored in this thesis revolve around how the authenticity of these reproduced traditional art values was argued and, at the same time, was refashioned by the people who initiated these publishing activities during this time of great transition, in which China was no longer a fully sovereign entity, but rather was the victim of imperialism, being forced to participate in a world system composed of nation-states. This thesis hence sees these publishing projects as expressive of desires to reposition artistic culture in China with reference to the ‘rest of the world’, principally the West, and hence to negotiate a way through the vaguely, and sometimes not so rightly, perceived imported Western idea of ‘art’. However, this thesis does not intend to give a concrete definition of the concept of art which would embrace all the various practices of art-related activities at the time, but instead hopes to reconstruct the conditions of existence in which the fluidity of the discourse of art in China came into being. It therefore takes into account not merely statements explicitly declared in the written texts but also the actual practices regarding the presentation and categorisation of these texts and images. This emphasis on practices of publication distinguishes this thesis from previous studies, and proposes three modes in which one can observe how Chinese intellectuals at this period approached the newly introduced idea of ‘art’ as well as how various conceptions of the category of ‘Chinese art’ were formed accordingly.

Framed by an ‘Introduction’ and ‘Conclusion’, the five chapters of the thesis are designed to give a thorough discussion of four publications and one example of

image-appropriation; they are: the journal *Guocui xuebao* 國粹學報 ('Journal of National Essence', 1905-1912); the art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji* 神州國光集 ('Collected National Glories of the Divine Land', 1908-1912); the book series *Meishu congshu* 美術叢書 ('Book Series on Art', 1911-1918); and the text *Zhongguo yishujia zhenglüe* 中國藝術家徵略 ('Attested Biographical Sketches of Chinese Artists', 1914). Also discussed is the Chinese appropriation of the Victoria and Albert Museum's handbook, *Chinese Art* (1904, 1906), written by Stephen Bushell (1844-1908) and arguably the first book titled as such in English. Each chapter centres on one of these publishing events that are, as will be unravelled, in one way or another related to each other.

The 'Introduction' presents the problematics, premises, and methodology of this thesis. It should be noted that the European notion of 'art' began to be known in China from the late nineteenth century through writings by Chinese travellers to Japan. The idea was first translated into Japanese and rendered in *kanji*, the Chinese characters employed in the Japanese language, as either '*bijutsu* 美術' or '*geijutsu* 藝術', which arrived in China as '*meishu*' and '*yishu*', respectively, without alteration in form or much explanation of meaning. Consequently, it was the semantic form of the idea that was firmly grasped, while the semantic field remained fluid. The category of 'Chinese art' thus became from the very outset a contested field, contingent upon each individual's understanding and cultural aspiration. When the idea of art was subsequently associated with a then heightened nationalism, one aimed against Western powers, the work of art obtained the status of national patrimony, believed to embody the nation's pride and glory and deserving to be appreciated and preserved. Such a nationalist connotation affiliated to the notion of art thus gave rise to the art publishing projects in question and encouraged the reflection on, and reproduction of, artistic culture in China.

The first three chapters centre on the publishing enterprises undertaken by the same publisher, the 'Society for Preserving National Essence', through whose practices the problems and ironies entailed in the unconscious integration of the long-existent, art-related practices in China with the European concept of art will be demonstrated. Chapter 1 focuses on the journal *Guocui xuebao* and looks at how 'art' came to be allied with nationalism, as well as at how through the publication of this journal there came into being the enterprise of photographic reproductions of art, through the art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji* (Chapter 2), and how it also engendered the book series *Meishu congshu* (Chapter 3). The journal itself was the site where 'art' first emerged as an independent field within the discourse of national learning, and where it acquired its status as 'national essence'. With the rise of 'art' as a subject of learning,

two tendencies can be observed in the journal: first, the emphasis on the importance to the consolidation of nationalism of beholding history, which, thanks to photographic printing methods, soon developed into a flourishing enterprise of art reproduction; second, the desire to incorporate ‘art’ into the knowledge system in China, which prompted the compilation of the book series of art. Special attention is paid in this chapter to the material structure of the journal, and to the network of readership established through the distribution of the journal, in order to illustrate how the subsequent art publishing projects initiated by the same publisher both owed their inception to the management of the journal and at the same time enjoyed the resources facilitated by the Society’s operation.

Chapter 2 takes the art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji* as an example to probe into the multifaceted aspirations implicated in the introduction of modern photographic reproduction, then associated with traditional practices of copy-making. By examining the rhetorical strategies in the advertisements for these mechanical reproductions, together with the materiality of these same reproductions, this chapter argues that the attempt at reproducing Chinese art objects at this time was not merely aimed at faithful copying of images, but also implied an effort at authentically replicating traditional cultural practices. However, since our evaluation of different reproductive means more or less mirrors that of the works of art reproduced by these methods, a shift of value in the hierarchy of Chinese art forms at this time can also be discerned, which presents the most intriguing irony in the practice of cultural reproduction, as the tradition to be reproduced underwent a fundamental change precisely through the very endeavour of reproducing it. Equally ironic is that the lofty, nationalistic sentiments with which these art reproductions were highly charged did not preclude these reproductions from being used for commercial purposes, but instead facilitated the then booming market for antiques.

Chapter 3 discusses the same publisher’s engagement with text, looking into the publication of a book series on ‘art’, *Meishu congshu*, which gathered together from various sources existent treatises on art, and proposed a general scheme of categorisation for the selection and categorisation of these texts. As it was the first text collection that had been compiled under the rubric of ‘art’, the principles by which these texts were categorised become all the more important for gauging the horizon of ‘art’ as a discursive field, providing us with a precious insight into the discontinuity that sets this project apart from similar attempts in the past as well as in the present day. It becomes clear that the notion of Chinese art manifested and represented in this book series, and as perceived by the publisher and other like-minded people, was a result of the accommodation of the literati’s leisure pursuits

and of their cultural practices around antiquarianism to the new semantic field of ‘art’.

It is by no means the intention of this thesis to promote an idyllic picture in which the notion of art in China naturally evolved with time, coalescing at the turn of the twentieth century into a more concrete shape, and eventually arriving at what we perceive it to be today. Instead, it is hoped to foreground the multiple approaches existent almost concurrently in the crucial period 1905-1918, approaches which also strove to demarcate this new field called ‘art’. Therefore, Chapter 4 turns to a now almost forgotten attempt to historicise ‘Chinese art’, the book *Zhongguo yishujia zhenglue*, since this book by Li Fang (1884-1926) also in a subtitle claims itself to be a ‘History of Chinese Art’ (*Zhongguo meishushi* 中國美術史), although in a less assertive manner than some subsequent and more successful texts. The chapter explores the distinctive way in which ‘history’ was perceived by Li Fang, and the way in which the book presents itself and organises different forms of art objects, as well as the book’s inevitable fate of oblivion. According to the author, ‘art’ was understood as the demonstration of intricate techniques, inclusive of not only what we regard today as artworks such as lacquer, but also machinery and civil engineering. As the study shows, however weird, useless, or out-dated the book may seem to our modern eye, it was actually perfectly acceptable as one potential ‘History of Chinese Art’ to its contemporaries at its time of appearance. The book’s ultimate fate as falling into oblivion is hence regarded in this thesis as a discursive repression, which can be revealed by juxtaposing the book with other perhaps more loudly-proclaimed (and consequently better-studied) statements of that time, statements that approached the notion of ‘art’ by resorting primarily to how this idea had been perceived in the European context.

The final chapter places the quest for marking out the category of Chinese art into the context of cultural encounter and appropriation. Its analysis is made possible by my discovery in the journal *Guocui xuebao* of hitherto unnoticed reproductions of some of the illustrations in Stephen Bushell’s *Chinese Art*. Since Bushell was a long-time resident in Beijing, and acquired his knowledge of Chinese art through the local practices of art collecting and appreciation, the chapter centres on how he presented, or Orientalised, his knowledge to the British audience, and whether or not the Chinese editors necessarily received this Westerner’s Orientalist point of view when the book, the synthesis of Bushell’s knowledge acquired in Peking, ‘travelled back’ to China a decade before it was fully translated into Chinese. This chapter argues that the category of Chinese art so perceived by the Chinese publisher was more or less informed by such a cultural encounter, while at the same time some of the emphases in Bushell’s book were also subtly altered in the act of appropriation.

To conclude, this thesis reflects upon the ways in which authenticity to tradition was stressed and reiterated in process of cultural reproduction. It shows how the attempt at preserving cultural traditions ended up inevitably transforming that which was intended to be preserved. It demonstrates how the discourse of art in China should be understood within the trilateral relationship between China, Japan, and the European West. This thesis argues that the interplay of the three coexisting modes deployed in early twentieth-century China to approach the notion of art, (namely: art as the elegant lifestyle of the literati; art as the demonstration of human skills of object-making; and art as whatever was defined in the Western Enlightenment model as ‘art’), is the key to categorising and understanding the diverse motivations which informed the development of art-related reproductive activities at this time. These different approaches to the notion of art, which characterised the period, can only be understood by situating them in relation to one another, even though history has subsequently seemed more or less to follow the third thread as dominant, and consign the others to marginality and oblivion.

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Fig. 5-12 Comparison of the illustrations of the Landscape Scroll attributed to Zhao Mengfu in a. Giles’s *Introduction to Chinese Pictorial Art* (1905), b. Bushell’s *Chinese Art*, vol. 2 (1906), and c. *Guocui xuebao* (1908).

Fig. 5-13 Illustrations of the bronze vessel in the shape of a rhinoceros in a. *Guocui xuebao*, 4.1 (1908) and b. Bushell’s *Chinese Art* (vol. 1, fig. 55)

Fig. 5-14 Illustration of Elephant of Enamel in a. *Guocui xuebao*, 4.1 (1908) and b. Bushell’s *Chinese Art* (vol.2, fig. 91)

Fig. 5-15 Illustration of an ice chest of enamel in a. *Guoxue xuebao*, 4.1 (1908), and b. Bushell’s *Chinese Art*, vol. 2, fig. 92

Fig. 5-18 Genie of Longevity in the two central panels of a coloured lacquer screen,

GX, 4.1 (1908)

Fig. 5-19 Picture woven in coloured silk and golden threads of Dragon Boat Festival,
GX, 4.1 (1908)

Fig. 5-20 Drawings of sericulture and silk weaving *GX*, 4.1 (1908)

Fig. 5-21 Round dish of painted enamel, *GX*, 4.2 (1908)

Fig. 5-22 a. Detail of the 'Table of Contents' of *Guocui xuebao*, 5.6 (1909); b.

Illustration of a carving in bamboo of 'Mountain Dwelling of Bamboo Village'
by Zhou Hao 周顥 (1685-1763), *GX*, 5.6 (1909)

Abbreviations

GX = *Guocui xuebao*

SG = *Shenzhou guoguangji*

MC = *Meishu congshu*

Zhenglüe = *Zhongguo yishujia zhenglüe* [by Li Fang]

ZMRC = *Zhongguo meishujia renming cidian* [by Yu Jianhua]

Siku edition = *Yingyin Wenyuange Siku quanshu*

N.B. i. East Asian names give the surname first, as in the case of *Li* Fang.

ii. Unless otherwise indicated, all the translations from Chinese are mine.

Introduction

The present thesis examines some of the art-related publishing projects and practices in early twentieth-century China, which saw Chinese objects and Chinese traditions of object-making and appreciation from the specific perspective of the newly introduced idea of ‘*meishu* 美術’, an idea designating the so-called Western notion of ‘art’. The five chapters in this thesis are designed to give a thorough discussion of four publications and one example of image-appropriation, as well as an analysis of the conceptions of ‘*meishu*’ embodied in their very materiality. These publishing events are: the journal *Guocui xuebao* 國粹學報 (‘Journal of National Essence’, 1905-1912); the art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji* 神州國光集 (‘Collected National Glories of the Divine Land’, 1908-1912); the book series *Meishu congshu* 美術叢書 (‘Book Series on Art’, 1911-1918); and the text *Zhongguo yishujia zhenglue* 中國藝術家徵略 (‘Attested Sketches of Chinese Artists’, 1914). Also discussed is the Chinese appropriation of the Victoria and Albert Museum’s handbook, *Chinese Art* (i: 1904; ii: 1906), written by Stephen Bushell (1844-1908) and arguably the first book titled as such in English. These examples existed more or less concurrently, related to each other in one way or another, and each displayed a distinct way of grouping Chinese objects under the rubric of ‘*meishu*’ as well as a different degree of comprehension of the Western notion of ‘art’. They are thus regarded as attempts at creating in China a category of ‘art’ parallel and comparable to that in Europe. Nevertheless, they are also viewed in this thesis as efforts of cultural reproduction, since this new category ‘*meishu*’ was seen at that time as embodying the national essence. This aspiration to reintroduce a Chinese tradition of ‘art’ under the new framework of ‘*meishu*’ hence implied a certain degree of negotiation with, and

even local imagination about, a foreign concept. It should therefore be stressed that not all of these attempts followed the European Enlightenment model of ‘art’ in the strictest sense, and some of them might even have nothing to do with this European notion.

The present thesis argues that the sense of cultural authenticity reiterated in the act of cultural reproduction not only interacted with each aspiration to create a category of ‘art’ in China equivalent to that in the West, but also greatly affected the recognition of such an aspiration in the discursive field of ‘*meishu*’. By proposing an analytical framework focusing on cultural reproduction and authenticity, it is hoped that these attempts at projecting Chinese refractions of the Western notion of ‘art’ onto the Chinese tradition can be explained as competing for dominance over the discursive field of ‘*meishu*’. It also aims to give a fuller account of the cultural aspirations embodied in the materiality of these publishing practices, which are often ignored, unstudied, or unnoticed in previous scholarship.

The complexity of the issues involved in the quest for a category of ‘art’, parallel and comparable to that in the West, is best illustrated in the following comment on the European category of ‘art’ by Lin Shu 林紓 (1852-1924), the acclaimed translator, painter, and ancient-style prose writer in China at the turn of the twentieth century:

The ‘Fine Arts [*meishu*]’ so-called by the Europeans are those [practiced by] carpenters, artisan painters, stone carvers, and ancient-style prose writers. I was amazed at their idea at first, wondering why such ancients as Han, Liu, Ou, and Wang would possibly be grouped together with builders who play with earth and water. After learning the reasons, I came to agree on it. ...That the Westerners would group the four incompatible matters together is also a weird wonder.¹

¹ Lin Shu, *Chunjuezhai lunhua* 春覺齋論畫 ‘Comments on painting from Studio of Spring Awakening’, in Yu Anlan 于安瀾 (ed.), *Hualun congkan* 畫論叢刊 ‘Collected writings on painting’ (6 vols., Beijing, 1937), v, individually paginated, pp. 1-39 (1b-2a). The ‘Han, Liu, Ou, and Wang’ in the text refer to the celebrated ancient-style prose writers in the Tang and Song periods, Han Yu, Liu Zongyuan, Ouyang Xiu, and Wang Anshi. [歐人之論美術者，木匠也，畫工也，刻石也，古文家也。]

For English readers, Lin Shu's perception of the European concept of 'Art' (or 'Fine Arts'), originally written in the early years of the Republican era (1912-1949) and here translated 'back' into English, must be no less extraordinary than the first impression Lin had had of the same European concept.² Their amazement would probably be augmented by the fact that Lin Shu, hailed as the most popular translator of his day, knew no foreign language at all.³ Nevertheless, a close examination of Lin's own description of the four arts (omitted in the above quotation) suggests that those rendered literally in Chinese as 'carpenters', 'artisan painters', 'stone carvers', and 'ancient-style prose writers', most likely refer respectively to 'architects', 'artist painters', 'sculptors', and 'writers of belle-lettres' in the European context.

Regardless of how Lin got this idea and how accurate his perception was as to the 'authentic' European concept of 'Art', this short passage showcases the problems involved in the emergence of the category of 'art' in China. Firstly, although the nineteenth-century neologism *meishu* in Lin's writing is translated here as 'Fine Arts', it should be noted that the notion of 'Art' with a capital A, or 'Fine Arts', which not only assumes an aesthetic sense but also implies such concepts of modern aesthetics as genius, originality, and disentanglement from crafts, did not have an equivalent entity in the Chinese consciousness before the twentieth century.⁴ Although it is now a common practice to translate this nineteenth-century neologism '*meishu*' into

余始聞而駭然，謂古人如韓柳歐王，奈何與泥水匠同科？繼而聞其議論，乃深以爲是。... 此四者不相附麗而西人合而一之，斯亦奇矣。]

² Some of the contents of *Chunjuezhai lunhua* had been published in a newspaper in Beijing in the early years of the Republican before the whole text was put into print in 1935; see Gu Tinglong 顧廷龍, 'Ba 跋' (Afterword [to *Chunjuezhai lunhua*]), in *Hualun congkan*, v, individually paginated, p. 1b.

³ For Lin Shu and his translations, see Qian Zhongshu 錢鍾書, '*Lin Shu de fanyi* 林紓的翻譯 (Lin Shu's Classic Translations)', in *Qizhui* 七綴集 'Collection of the miscellaneous' (Hong Kong, 1990), pp. 81-120; Ying Hu, 'The Translator Transfigured: Lin Shu and the Cultural Logic of Writing in the Late Qing', *positions: east asia cultures critique*, 3.1 (Spring, 1995), pp. 69-96; and 'Transplanting the Lady of the Camellias', *Tales of Translation: Composing the New Woman in China, 1899-1918* (Stanford, 2000), pp. 67-105.

⁴ For the development of 'Art' with a capital A, see R.G. Collingwood, *The Principles of Art* (Oxford, 1938), pp. 5-7; Paul Oskar Kristeller, 'The Modern System of the Arts', in *Renaissance Thought and the Arts: Collected Essays* (Princeton, 1980), pp. 163-227.

English as ‘Fine Arts’, what this term really means in the texts produced in early twentieth-century China is not always easy to determine. In fact, the cases to be studied are all publishing projects which were inspired by this vaguely grasped and not so accurately perceived European concept, be it ‘Art’, ‘Fine Arts’, ‘art’, or merely ‘arts’. It should be stressed that this parallel and comparable, if not equivalent, category in China took on the semantic form of ‘*meishu*’ or ‘*yishu* 藝術’, while its semantic field remained highly contested. Since the Chinese conceptions of ‘art’ discussed in this thesis hardly aimed at imitating or faithfully reproducing the European model established in the eighteenth century (and this thesis does not intend to chronicle the evolution of Chinese ‘*meishu*’ towards the European notion of ‘Art’), this European notion is hereafter referred to in general as ‘art’ to avoid confusion.

Secondly, it is worth noting that this European notion of art first struck Lin Shu as a particular way of grouping, and, indeed, a rather inconceivable one. As Paul Kristeller has aptly demonstrated, the European classification of the arts is a specific way of grouping which was not established until the eighteenth century, with the five arts of painting, sculpture, architecture, music, and poetry as its irreducible nucleus.⁵ Lin Shu’s amazement at the European grouping of ‘art’ testifies how incompatible the Western notion must have seemed to Chinese intellectuals in the early twentieth century. As such, the cases to be studied present an invaluable corpus of material for understanding the conditions in which a seemingly comparable category of ‘art’ was deliberately forged by means of grouping and reproducing texts and images.

The third aspect revealed in Lin Shu’s passage is the problem of translation, which, as Lydia Liu argues, is a kind of translingual practice based on hypothetical and often

⁵ Kristeller, *op. cit.*, pp. 164-165.

problematic ‘tropes of equivalence’.⁶ The seemingly ridiculous equivalence between ‘architect’ and ‘carpenter’ was not made without grounds. Given that traditional Chinese architecture was generally constructed in wood and hence architects in China were all carpenters, Lin Shu’s understanding of the European grouping of ‘art’ does not seem too wrong.⁷ Similarly, those ostensibly absurd understandings of ‘*meishu*’ to be discussed in this thesis may also have been based on certain tropes of equivalence and had reasons for their absurdity, as part of the historical experiences of the time. This thesis thus hopes to examine the conditions in which these seemingly strange understandings were made possible.

The issue of translation also points to the problem entailed in the transcultural transmission of any conceptual category in that, even though on a certain level the transmitted idea is properly understood, the institutional weight originally placed on certain elements of the transmitted idea tends to be misplaced to something else during the process of transmission. How this act of ‘misplacement’ operates is to be analysed in this thesis as a strategy of cultural reproduction, a strategy occurring during the process where ideas and cultural practices are transmitted not only from one culture to another but also from the past to present. This strategy of reproduction reorganises the precedence and priority of a reproduced idea, shifts its source of authority and eventually redefines its cultural authenticity. In Lin Shu’s case, the ‘original’ and ‘authentic’ meaning of this foreign idea and the cultural context behind

⁶ The idea is originally proposed by Douglas Robinson, in his *The Translator’s Turn* (Baltimore, 1991), elaborated in Lydia H. Liu, ‘Translingual Practice: The Discourse of Individualism between China and the West’, *positions*, 1.1 (1993), pp. 160-193 (166 and 190 n. 12); and *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity – China, 1900-1937* (Stanford, 1995), pp. 3-10.

⁷ As Lin’s explanation shows, the equivalence between ‘carpenter’ in Chinese and ‘architect’ in European languages was grounded on the fact that they all build great mansions. See Lin Shu, *op. cit.*, p. 1b. Interestingly, in late nineteenth-century Japan, the introduction of the Western architectural profession prompted the collaboration between architects mastering Western building techniques and traditionally-trained master carpenters, which suggests that in terms of social function, ‘architect’ and ‘carpenter’ were perceived as parallel and comparable categories also in Japan; see Cherie Wendelken, ‘The Tectonics of Japanese Style: Architect and Carpenter in the Late Meiji Period’, *Art Journal*, 55.3 (Fall 1996), pp. 28-37.

it did not matter at all. Lin, consciously or not, adopted a strategy which gave more authority to a Chinese point of view. He first looked for great carpenters in China comparable to such great prose masters in China as ‘Han, Liu, Ou, and Wang’, found no Michelangelo to support the assumed comparability between these two groups suggested in the European model he understood, and arrived at the conclusion that this European notion was a bit strange. He appeared to address a European concept but in fact projected a Chinese situation onto a foreign land. What was also reproduced and even reiterated in Lin’s passage is the Chinese value which deemed architects, professional painters, and sculptors incomparably inferior to prose writers, and by this way of reproduction, the European notion of art was also ridiculed.

This issue of cultural reproduction is even more pertinent and complicated in the various endeavours to establish a category of ‘art’ in China, since they concerned not only how to engage with the new idea of ‘art’ but also how to preserve the Chinese tradition of ‘art’ (the meaning of the term ‘art’ is contingent upon each individual’s perception of it). As will be elaborated in Chapter 1, the semantic form ‘*meishu*’ emerged in China and was endowed with great cultural agency through the discourse of ‘national essence’, then associated with the strength, nature, and survival of a nation. Nevertheless, while the semantic form of the term ‘*meishu*’ was firmly grasped and linked to the national essence and national strength, the semantic field of the same term remained contested, and subjected to, as Lydia Liu puts it, each individual’s ‘neologistic imagination’.⁸ Insofar as the ‘neologistic imagination’ of ‘*meishu*’ was mostly inspired in this period by the desire to preserve the national essence of China, a certain degree of cultural authenticity had to be maintained in the acts of engaging with the foreign concept of ‘art’. Therefore, the various conceptions of ‘art’ seen in

⁸ Lydia Liu, *Translingual Practice*, p. 40; and ‘Legislating the Universal: The Circulation of International Law in the Nineteenth Century’, in Lydia Liu (ed.), *Tokens of Exchange: The Problem of Translation in Global Circulations* (Durham, 1999), pp. 127-164 (137).

this period cannot be reduced to merely a matter of translation, but should be approached as efforts at cultural reproduction, whereby certain authentic qualities of the native culture would also be stressed and preserved. Through the practice of replication and reiteration, a certain cultural authenticity was thus argued in each claim to creating a Chinese tradition of '*meishu*', and would in turn serve as the source of authority to sustain such a claim in a discursive field. Therefore, the success of these various statements of '*meishu*' in a discursive field also depended upon the acknowledgement and recognition of this claimed cultural authenticity. As we shall see, the term '*meishu*' was not entirely understood in that period from the perspective which saw the 'authentic' European notion of 'Art' with a capital A as the absolute arbiter of the meaning, and the term was even on some occasions approached purely through the literal meaning suggested by the ideographic construction of the term itself without in any sense alluding to the conception of 'Art' in Europe.

The quest for the semantic origin of '*meishu*' in China and its evolution in meaning towards that which it is generally understood today, has appeared in separate fields in Chinese studies on translation, aesthetic theory, and art historiography. The occurrence in Chinese texts of the terms '*meishu*' and '*yishu*' has been carefully located in the scholarship on translation studies. '*Meishu*' is identified as a neologism originally coined in Japanese *kanji* (Chinese characters appropriated in Japanese language) as '*bijutsu*', which arrived in China as early as 1880 through travel writings by Chinese travellers back from Japan, and whose most common dictionary definition is 'fine-arts'.⁹ The term '*yishu*' is labelled as a return loan of Japanese '*geijutsu*',

⁹ The earliest occurrence of '*meishu*' known so far is in the travel journal written by Li Xiaopu 李筱圃 where it is seen in the compound '*meishuhui* 美術會' (literally, 'gallery of *meishu*') referring to the Ueno Museum in Tokyo which would become the Imperial Museum in 1889. See Frederico Masini, *The Formation of Modern Chinese Lexicon and Its Evolution toward a National Language: The Period*

which was originally a Chinese term denoting ‘skill’ and returned to China as early as 1890, referring to ‘art’ under Japanese influence.¹⁰ Nevertheless, although the focus of the study of translation has now shifted to the power struggles expressed in the appropriation, manipulation and negotiation of meaning in the process of translation,¹¹ there has been little scholarship concerning the complicated ‘conditions of translation’ of these two terms.

Also, such identification of occurrences by scholars of translation has not been adopted by the research in art theory and art historiography, which has placed the origin of ‘*meishu*’ in the 1890s and 1900s.¹² The pioneering work in this regard is by Chen Zhenlian who tries to establish the trajectory by which the ideographic term ‘*meishu*’ travelled from Japan and eventually arrived and resided in China.¹³ He not only incorporates studies by Japanese scholars on the coinage of and the politics behind ‘*bijutsu*’, but also examines the texts by celebrated authors which he considers important in the dissemination of the notion of ‘art’ in China. Furthermore, he also looks into different institutions where the term ‘*meishu*’ was invoked and used, including the book collection *Meishu congshu* and the Nanyang Industrial Exposition

from 1840 to 1898 (Berkley, 1993), p. 188-189. See also Li Xiaopu, *Riben jiyou* 日本紀游 ‘A trip to Japan’, collected in Wang Xiqi 王錫祺 (ed.), *Xiaofanghu yudi congchao* 小方壺輿地叢鈔 ‘Xiaofanghu collection of writings on geography’ (16 vols., Taipei, 1962), xiv, pp. 8125-8138 (8134, 8136).

¹⁰ The earliest use of such known by far is seen in 1890; see Masini, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

¹¹ Lydia Liu, *Translingual Practice*, pp. 26-27; Theo Herman, ‘Cross-Cultural Translation Studies as Thick Translation’, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 66.3 (2003), pp. 380-89.

¹² For example, Chen Zhenlian sees the term ‘*meishu*’ first used by Wang Guowei in 1904, while Shao Hong provides an even earlier usage by Wang in 1902. Another scholar Li Xinfeng suggests the first occurrences of ‘*meishu*’ be seen in *Riben shumuzhi* 日本書目志 (‘Bibliographic record of Japanese books’) written by Liang Qichao and published in 1897. See Chen Zhenlian 陳振濂, ‘*Meishu yuyuan kao: Meishu yiyu yinjin shi yanjiu*」美術」語源考:「美術」譯語引進史研究 (The etymology of ‘*meishu*’: a study on the introduction of ‘*meishu*’ as a translated term)’, *Meishu yanjiu* 美術研究 ‘Art Research’, 2003.4, pp. 60-71 (64-65), and 2004.1, pp. 14-23; Shao Hong 邵宏, ‘*Xixue meishushi dongjian yibainian* 西學“美術史”東漸一百年’ (Western ‘art history’ in China: 100-years’ experience), in *Wenyi yanjiu* 文藝研究 ‘Literature & Art Studies’, 2004.4, pp. 106-114 (106); and Li Xinfeng 李心峰, ‘*Xiandai yishu gainian* 現代藝術概念’ (Modern concept of *yishu* [art]), in Li Xinfeng (ed.), *Ershi shiji zhongguo yishu lilun zhutishi* 20 世紀中國藝術理論主題史 ‘Thematic history of the art theories of twentieth-century China’ (Shenyang, 2005), pp. 3-14 (8-9).

¹³ Chen, *op. cit.*

of 1910 (which will also be discussed in this thesis in Chapters 3 and 4, respectively). Nevertheless, in Chen's eagerness to see through a medley of statements a concrete shape of that which is understood today as 'art' and '*meishu*', there lies a problem: there are still a vast array of irregularities which cannot be confined to a clear, evolutionary trajectory on which the Western notion of 'fine arts', carried in Japanese '*bijutsu*', eventually became Chinese '*meishu*'. Even in the important texts listed in his article, subtle differences from today's conception of the term still exist. To get away from this problem, Chen focuses his discussion only on those which fit into this supposed picture of '*meishu*' and neglects or plays down the presence of the differences. Although Chen suggests that '*meishu*' was still a fluid concept in early twentieth-century China, the coexistence and correlations between these subtly different understandings of the term are regarded as merely a result of the fact that the translated ideas had not been fully grasped in this transitional period. However, exactly what foreign concept was the term '*meishu*' intended to convey in the first place?

Chen's approach traces the origin of a now seemingly 'fixed' concept of '*meishu*' only by, to quote Michel Foucault, 'a retrospective hypothesis', and by an interplay of 'semantic resemblances'.¹⁴ The term '*meishu*' is now, in Chen's work, definitively defined as 'visual arts', and thus the history of the origin of '*meishu*' is a history of how the meaning of '*meishu*' comes to denote 'visual arts' alone. However, at the time when the term '*meishu*' first appeared in China, it probably meant, or was perceived as, something else. The term '*meishu*' is now widely inscribed in the titles of institutions such as art academies (e.g. '*meishu xueyuan* 美術學院'), particularly in mainland China, while the closely related, sometimes seemingly interchangeable term,

¹⁴ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York, 1972), p. 22.

‘yishu’, comes to be understood as a broader concept of ‘art’ ranging from ‘skills’ to all that which in its practice and performance inspires, or works against, an aesthetic sense and is not just confined to visual arts.¹⁵ Nevertheless, despite the fact that it seems possible to solicit a difference between these two terms as described by Chen, such a clear-cut distinction between ‘*meishu*’ and ‘*yishu*’, I believe, exists perhaps mostly in dictionaries and institutional definitions of art history. Even the discipline of ‘art history’ can be described in Chinese as either ‘*meishushi* 美術史’ or ‘*yishushi* 藝術史’ without causing any difference in meaning.¹⁶ The latter expression is even more frequently seen in the titles of Chinese translations of Western art historical works. This is not to say that it is pointless to distinguish between these two terms, but to point out that even today there is a gray area in which ‘*yishu*’ and ‘*meishu*’ conflate with each other. If, after more than a hundred-years’ residence and coexistence in China, a considerable interpenetration between these two terms still exists, there was very likely a certain degree of confusion in meaning caused by the similarity of the ideographic construction of these two terms in the early twentieth century. However, no recent scholarship has focused on the conditions in which the old Chinese term ‘*yishu*’ and the neologism ‘*meishu*’ shaped each other’s meanings in early twentieth-century China. In addition, the approach represented by Chen Zhenlian’s work also fails to take into account the conditions in which a certain set of statements and practices emerge to be taken as the norm while others are consigned to marginality and oblivion in a discursive field.

Another approach to understanding the perception of ‘*meishu*’ is based on the

¹⁵ Li Xinfeng, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-14; and Tang Xiaobing, *Origins of the Chinese Avant-Garde: The Modern Woodcut Movement* (Berkeley and L.A., 2008), p. 13.

¹⁶ My own education background also suggests the ‘synonymous’ character of these two terms, as the official title of the graduate institute at National Taiwan University from which I received my MA degree describes its discipline as ‘*yishushi*’, while the academic journal published by the same institute uses ‘*meishushi*’ in its title.

assumption that the term ‘*meishu*’ is coined to translate the European concept of ‘fine arts’ or ‘*beaux arts*’.¹⁷ The notion that ‘*meishu*’ denotes ‘*beaux arts*’ (and hence ‘visual arts’), is now treated as a historical fact whose foreign origin was first pronounced in a text of 1913, published in the inaugural issue of a communiqué of the Ministry of Education, entitled ‘Draft Proposal on the Dissemination of Art’, by a young writer, Lu Xun 鲁迅 (1881-1936), who would become one of the most influential writers of twentieth-century China:

The term ‘*meishu*’ did not exist in ancient China, and is a translation of the English word ‘*aite* 愛忒 (Art or fine Art) [original translation]. ‘*Aite*’ is a word originating in the Greek world, denoting ‘skills’ [yi 藝] which were controlled by nine deities who were worshipped by the ancient people in hope of obtaining mastery and deftness [in arts], a practice similar to the offerings and prayer performed by artisans in China.¹⁸

According to Lu, ‘*meishu*’ is viewed as a term translated from the Western concept of ‘Art’ or ‘fine art’. However, the same term seems to obtain a more specific meaning in an essay entitled ‘Revolution of Art’ published in 1918 in a radical-intellectual magazine, *New Youth*, by a young writer Lü Cheng 呂澂 (1896-1989):

Things embodying beauty can be called *yishu* Art, in which category painting, architecture and sculpture, the three whose forms occupy a certain space, can be alternatively termed *meishu* Fineart [original spelling]. This is the common distinction.¹⁹

¹⁷ This approach is most pronounced in Ogawa Hiromitsu 小川裕充, ‘*Bijutsu sōsho no kankō ni tsuite: Yōroppa no gainen “Fine Arts” to nihon no yakugo “bijutsu” no dōnyū* 美術叢書の刊行について：ヨーロッパの概念と日本の譯語‘美術’の導入 (Regarding the Publication of *Meishu Congshu* [Fine Arts Series]: Introduction of the European Concept ‘Fine Arts’ and the Japanese Translated Term ‘*Bijustu*’), *Bijutsushi ronsō* 美術史論叢, 20 (2004), pp. 33-54.

¹⁸ Lu Xun, ‘*Ni bobu meishu yijian shu* 擬播佈美術意見書’ (Draft proposal on the dissemination of art), originally published in *Jiaoyubu bianzuanchu yuekan* 教育部編纂處月刊 ‘Editorial Department of the Ministry of Education Monthly’, 1 (1913), reprinted in Lang Shaojun 郎紹君 and Shui Tianzhong 水天中 (eds.), *Ershi shiji Zhongguo meishu wenxuan* 二十世紀中國美術文選 ‘Selected 20th -century essays on fine arts’ (2 vols., Shanghai, 1996), i, pp. 10-14 (10). [美術爲詞，中國古所不道，此之所用，譯自英之愛忒 (Art or fine art)。愛忒云者，原出希臘，其誼爲藝，是有九神，先民所祈，以冀工巧之具足，亦猶華土工師，無不有崇祀拜禱矣。]

¹⁹ Lü Cheng, ‘*Meishu geming* 美術革命’ (‘Revolution of art’), originally published in *Xinqingnian* 新青年 ‘*New Youth*’, 6.1 (1918), reprinted in Lang and Shui (eds), *Ershi shiji*, i, pp. 26-28 (26). [凡物象爲美之所寄者，皆爲藝術 Art，其中繪畫建築雕塑三者，必具一定形體於空間，可別稱爲美術 Fineart，此通行之區別也。]

In this text, '*meishu*' now denotes 'fine arts' only. The designation of 'fine arts' to the term '*meishu*' thus appears to have arisen more from the need to differentiate the Chinese meaning between '*meishu*' and '*yishu*' (as '*mei*' can be translated as 'fine') than from the necessity to address the difference between 'art' and 'fine arts'. Moreover, both Lu Xun and Lü Cheng had studied in Japan; Lu was a medical student from 1902 to 1909, and Lü studied aesthetics for a year in 1915. However, their experiences in Japan did not guarantee a fixed meaning of the Japanese coined term '*meishu*'. As such, to regard '*meishu*' as a term to translate specifically the Western concept of 'fine arts', or to consider all the conceptions in any degree departing from this Western notion as 'misconceptions', is inappropriate, as it fails to pay, as Edward Said puts it, a 'critical attention to history and to situation'.²⁰

The present thesis acknowledges the plurality seen in this period around the various understandings of '*meishu*', but refuses to subscribe to the linear narrative which isolates a particular idea and traces by semantic resemblances this idea's evolution towards what it is today. Instead, this thesis hopes to present a discursive field where different utterances of '*meishu*', or, broadly speaking, of the imported European notion of 'art', existed concurrently, competing for dominance. Such an approach is obviously indebted to Foucault's view on 'discourse' and Pierre Bourdieu's theory on the field of cultural production.²¹ This thesis will thus identify three modes of utterances, of approaches to the imported Western concept of 'art' in the discursive field of '*meishu*', in contrast to the situation where the position represented by Lu

²⁰ Edward Said, 'Traveling Theory', in *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (London, 1984), pp. 226-247 (237).

²¹ Foucault, *op. cit.*; Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature* (Cambridge, 1993).

Xun and Lü Cheng (which gets studied most) ascends to prominence, and the others are consigned to marginality (Chapter 3 and 4). This multi-threaded way of conceiving history is also inspired by Presenjit Duara's idea of 'bifurcated history', although this thesis does not relate the plurality of utterance to different conceptions of nation-state or nationalism.²²

This thesis also places the different interpretations of '*meishu*' in the translingual practice of translation, but hesitates to designate as '*meishu*' any specific European notion of art (be it 'Art', 'fine arts', or 'visual arts') as its 'original' idea from which the term was translated. As stressed above, although the term '*meishu*' was regarded as something originated from the European West, the original and authentic content of this imported foreign notion probably did not matter to most contemporary Chinese intellectuals who had their own cultural concerns. Lydia Liu's idea of 'neologistic imagination' thus helps to bring out the agency exercised by the 'host' of the 'target language' in the process of translation.²³ What conditioned the 'neologistic imagination' is that which matters here. Hence this thesis ponders the relationship between the meaning of the traditional term '*yishu*' and the neologistic imagination of the new term '*meishu*', and looks into the ways in which their meanings were shaped by their mutual penetration and exclusion. As we shall see, '*meishu*' was seen in this period as a term not only translating a European concept of art, but was also believed to be a modernised and superior semantic form for the traditional meaning of '*yishu*', i.e. 'skills', or 'accomplishments' (see Chapter 4).

Since these two terms in modern Chinese are often mixed up and used to describe

²² Presenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China* (Chicago and London, 1995).

²³ In order to place more emphasis on the mediations of the language to be translated into in the construction of meaning, Lydia Liu proposes the notion of 'host language' and 'guest language' to replace the traditional theoretical terms 'target language' and 'source language', respectively; see Liu, *Translingual Practice*, p. 27.

each other, this thesis puts a particular emphasis in its analysis on material practices, such as the practice of text selection, exclusion and classification, as well as the materiality of art reproductions. This methodological approach is encouraged by the studies of material culture and book history. The former sees objects not only as carriers of ideas but also as forces to shape human thoughts and behaviours;²⁴ and the latter argues that the material form of a book is a ‘complex system of signs’, in which ‘the publisher’s imprint, typographical layout and design, paper, binding, illustrations, and the text itself’, all relate to the construction of meaning, and contribute to the fashioning of the reader’s expectations.²⁵ This thesis also pays attention to the ‘paratext’ of each publishing project to look into the ways in which the discussed text is framed.²⁶

Although the neologism ‘*meishu*’ began to be used in Chinese texts as early as 1880, this thesis starts with the publishing event in 1905 which marks the launch of the journal *Guocui xuebao*. This event manifested the linkage between the vaguely grasped European category of ‘art’ (presented in this journal as ‘*meishu*’) and the discourse on national essence and national learning. Motivated by the call for preserving ‘national essence’ which was believed to be embodied in ‘national learning’, of which ‘*meishu*’ was considered a part, the publisher of this journal embarked on publishing enterprises which aimed at cultural reproduction engaging with both image and text. This cultural aspiration led to the launch of the art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji* (1908-1912) featuring reproductions of Chinese works of art, and, subsequently, the book collection *Meishu congshu* (1911-1918),

²⁴ Chandra Mukerji, *From Graven Images: Patterns of Modern Materialism* (New York, 1983), p. 15.

²⁵ ‘Book history’, in Dinah Birch (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, 7th edn (Oxford, 2009), p. 143. The same approach applied to Chinese materials is seen, for instance, in Robert Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction in Late Imperial China* (Stanford, 1998).

²⁶ For the idea of paratext, see Gerard Genette, *Paratexts: Threshold of Interpretation* (Cambridge, 1997).

collating existent Chinese texts on ‘art’. The same desire to valorise the Chinese ‘tradition’ of ‘art’, or ‘*meishu*’, was also shared by other contemporary publishing practices which approached this notion of ‘*meishu*’ rather differently. Li Fang’s *Zhongguo yishujia zhenglüe*, subtitled ‘History of Chinese *Meishu*’, is thus brought into the discussion. It provides the third mode of utterance proposed in this thesis, an utterance different from those seen in the writings of Lu Xun and Lü Cheng, or in the text selection and classification of the *Meishu congshu*. All these efforts at promoting a Chinese tradition of ‘art’ inevitably prompt us to contemplate the conditions in which ‘Chinese art’ as a category was formed. For Western audiences, this category was created in the nineteenth century in Europe and North America, with a strong implication of an Orientalised perception which regarded this body of material as being not only different from that which had been practiced in the Western tradition but also homogeneous in time and space within the territory of China.²⁷ My ‘discovery’ that the illustrations in Bushell’s *Chinese Art* were appropriated by the journal *Guocui xuebao* thus serves as a good example of how this Orientalised Western perception was met by the Chinese audience.

The idea of ‘cultural reproduction’ is significantly different from the notion of *fugu* 復古, or ‘return to the past’, which has been not only a strong strand in Chinese art historiography, but also a persistent trope dominating artists’ imagination. As an interpretive mode the notion of ‘*fugu*’ positions artistic innovations and individual artists’ creativity in a non-historical continuum of tradition.²⁸ Nevertheless, such an interpretive approach highlights the ‘originality’ in each event of artistic return to the

²⁷ Craig Clunas, *Art in China*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 2009), pp. 9-12. For the construction of ‘Chinese art’ in Britain, see Clunas, ‘Oriental Antiquities/ Far Eastern Art’, in Howard Morphy and Morgan Perkins (eds.), *The Anthropology of Art: A Reader* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 186-208 (originally published in *positions*, 2.2, Fall 1994, pp. 318-355).

²⁸ Wen C. Fong, ‘Archaism as a “Primitive” Style’, in Christian F. Murck (ed.), *Artists and Traditions: Uses of the Past in Chinese Culture* (Princeton, 1976), pp. 89-109 (89).

past, and falls short of paying attention to the conditions in which the restored past gained discursive weight as ‘the’ truth to art. The idea of ‘cultural reproduction’ proposed in this thesis thus takes into account the ways in which ‘cultural authenticity’ is argued in each act of reproduction, in the hope of bringing to light the power struggles occurring at all levels during the reproductive process. As such, the idea of ‘cultural reproduction’ includes also the unconscious reiteration of the self-perceived ‘authentic’ practices of the reproduced culture.

Insofar as the issue of ‘cultural reproduction’ exists not only on the level of verbal utterance but also in the very materiality of the publishing practices discussed in this thesis, each of the following chapters will deal with one publishing event, regarding it as an independent object of study, and examining its practices of production and rhetorical strategies of self-positioning. Chapter 1 thus probes the impact that the introduction of the idea of ‘*meishu*’ in the journal *Guocui xuebao* had on the grouping of illustrations in the same journal, and the network of readership upon which the proliferation of the idea of ‘*meishu*’ depended. Chapter 2 not only investigates the appropriation of the traditional discourse on copy-making seen in the publishing practices of photographic reproduction of Chinese art, and establishes the relation between printing technologies and the cultural hierarchy between different art forms reproduced in the art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji*, but also touches upon the antique market behind the practices of art reproduction. My attempt to clarify the hopelessly entangled two terms ‘*yishu*’ and ‘*meishu*’ is made in Chapter 3 where the classifying systems around ‘*yishu*’ in an eighteenth-century imperial book collection and around ‘*meishu*’ in the book series ‘*Meishu congshu*’ are examined. In the hope of redressing the oblivion of Li Fang’s book in the discursive field of ‘art’, Chapter 4 therefore gives a detailed description and analysis of this book’s physical

characteristics, along with a discussion on its putative and extant editions. Chapter 5 not only scrutinises the ways in which ‘Chinese art’ was Orientalised in Bushell’s *Chinese Art* and the ways in which the journal ‘*Guocui xuebao*’ inscribed Bushell’s illustrations in a Chinese context, but also suggests a trilateral relationship between China, Japan, and the vaguely perceived West, in which the enterprise of art reproduction in early twentieth-century China was made possible.

All these enquiries into practices and materiality will be succinctly reviewed in a ‘Conclusion’ from the perspective of ‘cultural reproduction’, to analyse the mechanism conditioning the consecration and repression of different statements in a given discursive field.

Ch 1 Art as National Patrimony: *Guocui xuebao*, 1905-1912

The Western concept of ‘art’ as a category for grouping certain types of objects—as a category conceived as something that ‘could be’ and ‘should be’ applied universally, and therefore to China—did not enter the Chinese consciousness painlessly or without causing any confusion. Nor did its value and effectiveness as a cultural category defining a nation’s character gain wide recognition until the early twentieth century. A crucial transformation took place in the early twentieth century as this foreign concept made its formal entrance into China and began to become incorporated within the existing artistic tradition in China; objects traditionally treasured for the enjoyment of the literati, such as calligraphy and painting, were conceptually converted into and in a sense promoted to ‘national patrimony’ and labelled as ‘art’. Such a transformation was closely related to the then-prevailing nationalist discourse against Western powers. ‘Art’, then usually translated in Chinese as ‘*meishu*’, arose as a category of knowledge precisely defined within the broader field of ‘national learning’ (*guoxue* 國學), and the venue for the union of ‘art’ and the ‘essence of the nation’ was a journal promoting the preservation of the national essence, *Guocui xuebao* (Journal of National Essence, 1905-1912).¹ ‘*Meishu*’ was thus in the very beginning placed at the intersection where ‘art’ as a form of expression met with nationalism, where ‘art’ as a field of knowledge coalesced with national learning, and where new and foreign ideas clashed with all things traditional.

The impact of the patrimonialisation of objects of ‘*meishu*’ was profound. It not only allowed the tropes and rhetoric of nationalism to enter into the discourse of

¹ All analysis of the journal *Guocui xuebao* in this thesis is based on the edition collected at SOAS Library (London), which, unlike those commonly seen in modern libraries, still retains its original binding, except the volumes published after 1911.

‘*meishu*’, but also prompted the endeavour of mapping out this hitherto undefined new category using objects and ideas already present in China. Furthermore, the overwhelming desire for preserving the national essence also lent the act of reproduction the most legitimate means of achieving that aim. It hence brought about the unprecedented publishing enterprise of photographic reproductions of art and the publication of collections of ancient texts on art, both conceived as means of cultural preservation. In the succeeding chapters, we shall see that the double dimension of the term ‘patrimony’, as both collective heritage and private enjoyment, is crucial to our understanding of the entangled relationship between the preservation and the consumption of ancient art objects—a relationship in which the latter was to be justified in the name of the former.² However, in this chapter we shall begin with a discussion of where and how all these changes were begun: the journal *Guocui xuebao*, its aspirations, and its own confusion about the equalisation (initially promoted by the journal itself) between ‘art’ and ‘national patrimony’.

In Shanghai in 1905, the journal *Guocui xuebao* was founded by the Society for Preserving National Learning (*Guoxue baocun hui* 國學保存會, hereafter, the Society), an organisation which has long been categorised in previous scholarship as having been affiliated with the pro-revolutionary anti-Manchu group.³ Following its

² The use of the term ‘patrimony’ is borrowed from Sophie Maisonneuve, ‘Between History and Commodity: The Production of A Musical Patrimony through the Record in the 1920-1930s’, *Poetics*, 29 (2001), pp. 89-108 [89-90, 95, 103].

³ For studies on the National essence movement in China, see Laurence A. Schneider, ‘National Essence and the New Intelligentsia’, pp. 57-89; and Martin Bernal, ‘Liu Shih-p’ei and National Essence’, pp. 90-112, both in Charlotte Furth (ed.), *The Limits of Change: Essays on Conservative Alternatives in Republican China* (Cambridge, MA, 1976); and Lydia H. Liu, ‘Rethinking Culture and National Essence’, in *Translingual Practice*, pp. 239-256 (240-46); Zheng Shichu 鄭師渠, *Guocui, guoxue, guohun: Wan Qing guocui pai wenhua sixiang yanjiu* 國粹、國學、國魂：晚清國粹派文化思想研究 ‘National essence, national learning, and national spirit: studies on the National Essence group in the late Qing period’ (Taipei, 1992), pp. 10-18; Wang Dongjie 王東杰, ‘Oumei fengyu zhong de guoxue baocun hui 歐美風雨中的國學保存會’ (Facing the threat of the Euro-American West: the Society for Preserving National Learning), *Dangan yu shixue* 檔案與史學 ‘Archives and history’, 1999.5, pp. 33-39. For other recent works on the National Essence group, please refer to Luo Zhitian 羅

launch, the journal released eighty-two issues until the 1911 Revolution finally realised the journal's unspoken dream of overthrowing the Qing government. After that, the journal ceased publication, yielding its function as the organ of the Society to a new journal, *Guxue huikan* 古學彙刊 ('Collected works of ancient studies'), from 1912 onwards to 1914.⁴

It should be noted that it was not until 1907 that '*meishu*' began to appear in the journal as an independent subject of 'national learning'. Its relatively late inclusion in a journal overtly aimed at the preservation of the national essence suggests a new interest at that point in incorporating artistic culture within Chinese nationalist discourse, where 'art' had originally had no place.

Such incorporation had undeniable significance. It prompted the patrimonialisation of objects of '*meishu*', leading to an awareness of the problem of entanglement of the historical and the aesthetical approaches to art appreciation, and eventually opened up the booming age of the art publishing enterprise. However, previous studies on the journal and the National Essence group have treated this aspect only in a passing manner, as if 'art'-related publishing activities were merely superficial ornaments for the nobler ambition to which the Society aspired, i.e., promoting the studies of Chinese philosophy, history, and literature.⁵ In fact, as we shall see in Chapters 2 and 3, 'art'-related publishing enterprises were the only cultural projects initiated by the Society that successfully sustained themselves in financial terms and grew into a separate branch of their own, developing various production lines in order to supply

志田, '*Qingji baocun guocui de chaoye nuli jiqi guannian yitong* 清季保存國粹的朝野努力及其觀念異同' (Endeavours by the court and provincial elites to preserve the national essence in the late Qing, and the similarities and differences between their views), *Jindaishi yanjiu* 近代史研究 'Modern Chinese history studies', pp. 28-100, esp. 28 n1.

⁴ See '*Ni tuiguang benhui zhi zhiyuan* 擬推廣本會之志願' (Proposal for promoting the society's resolutions), in 'Report No. 60', GX, 7.8 (1911), p. 1b.

⁵ For example, Laurence Schneider considers painting only 'to a lesser degree' in comparison with traditional scholarship and poetry as a viable medium through which Chinese national essence was believed to manifest itself. See his 'National Essence', p. 59.

varying demands. Hence, this chapter will approach ‘*meishu*’ as a subject within the rising discourse of nationalism, and place the related art publishing projects within the whole cultural scheme proposed by the Society, to see how the high-minded cultural aspirations of this group of people and the journals’ logistical setup and networks contributed to the art publishing enterprises, purported to be in the service of cultural reproduction.

Art and *guocui* (national essence), *guoxue* (national learning)

Although translation does not necessarily imply a complete transplantation of the tropes and connotations associated with its original foreign concept, the entry of ‘art’ into the nationalist discourse in China did bear some features which had also characterised its Japanese predecessors. The semantic form of ‘*guocui* 國粹’ came from the Japanese term *kokusui*, rendered in the ideographic form of Japanese *kanji* as ‘national essence’, and was originally coined to translate the Western concept of ‘nationality’ during the National Essence Movement in Japan in the 1880s and 1890s.⁶ As suggested in the catchy Japanese slogan ‘*kokusui hozon* 國粹保存’ (‘preserving the national essence’), this movement sought to reconcile the conflicting needs of cultural borrowing with Japanese national pride, following the sweeping wave of Westernization during the first half of the Meiji period (1868-1912).⁷ Amidst such nationalist sentiments, ‘art’ gradually came to be regarded as embodying the uniqueness of Japanese character and was thereby associated with the national essence of Japan⁸—an association which eventually led to the establishment in 1889

⁶ Martin Bernal, ‘Liu Shih-p’ei’, p. 100-103.

⁷ For the National Essence movement in Japan, see Kenneth Pyle, *The New Generation in Meiji Japan, 1885-1895* (Stanford, 1969), pp. 4, 52-71.

⁸ For the relationship between art and nation, and how art came to be associated with national essence in Japan, see Christine Guth, ‘*Kokuhō*: From Dynastic to Artistic Treasure’, *Cahiers d’Extrême-Asie*, 9

of three institutions whose proposed methods of preserving the Japanese artistic tradition would serve as potential models for similar attempts in China: the Imperial Museum (*Teikoku Hakubutsukan* 帝國博物館), the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (*Tōkyō Bijutsu Gakkō* 東京美術學校), and the scholarly art journal *Kokka* 國華 (literally, ‘nation’s efflorescence’ or ‘national glory’, and significantly, as pointed out by Alice Tseng, a homophone for ‘nation’ [*kokka* 國家]).⁹ The art journal’s publication of in-depth scholarship and high-quality photographic and coloured-woodblock reproductions of Japanese artworks,¹⁰ and the training offered by the art school—in the virtuoso skills required for making faithful copies of the masterpieces housed in the imperial museums¹¹—were all methods regarded as viable for achieving the goal of preserving and promoting the Japanese artistic tradition. The practice of reproduction, whether by making exact copies or by capturing the original in photographs, played an important role in these new methods. As the national essence could in a way be materially appreciated through the nation’s ‘art’, the conservation and reproduction of art objects also came to be seen as the most concrete realisation of the aspiration to preserve and protect the national essence.

Although in China ‘*meishu*’ was to be likewise regarded as one of the material forms of the national essence, the link between ‘art’ and the ‘national essence’ was to be fulfilled in the journal *Guocui xuebao* in the name of ‘national learning’ (*guoxue*).

(1996-1997), pp. 313-322; *Art, Tea, and Industry: Masuda Takashi and the Mitsui Circle* (Princeton, 1993), pp. 162-167; and Alice Y. Tseng, *The Imperial Museums of Meiji Japan: Architecture and the Art of the Nation* (Seattle, 2008), p.82-85.

⁹ Alice Tseng, *The Imperial Museums*, pp. 84-85.

¹⁰ ‘*Kokka* 國華’, *Kokka*, 1 (1989), pp. 1-4.

¹¹ Christine Guth, ‘*Kokuhō*’, pp. 319-320; Alice Tseng, *The Imperial Museums*, pp. 91-92, 239 n. 38. As pointed out by Alice Tseng, in addition to the use of photography, ‘painted copies’ (*mosha* 模寫) and ‘sculpted copies’ (*mozō* 模造) were also recognised as viable for recording and preserving the collection. For modern copies of ancient art works and issues about the collaboration between the museums and the Tokyo School of Fine Arts in the commissioning of copies, please refer to the exhibition catalogue, Satō Dōshin (ed.), *Mosha, mozō to Nihon bijutsu: Utsusu, manabu, tsutaeru* 模寫、模造と日本美術：うつす、まなぶ、つたえる ‘Passing Traditions in Japanese Art: Study, Copy, Create’ (Tokyo, 2005).

Both the term itself and the idea of *guocui*, ‘national essence’, had been picked up by the Chinese intellectuals sojourning in Japan in the early twentieth century. It gained currency in China even before the establishment of the Chinese national essence society, and it seems to have been closely associated with ‘national learning’ at the outset.¹² The Japanese National Essence movement was by no means unknown to the group of people who were to start in China the Society for Preserving National Learning and the journal *Guocui xuebao*, such as Huang Jie 黃節 (1873-1935) and Deng Shi 鄧實 (1877-1951).¹³ As Martin Bernal has pointed out, the National Essence group in China agreed with their Japanese predecessors in the idea that the survival of the nation depended on the survival of national culture.¹⁴ The inextricable relationship between the ‘national essence’ and ‘national learning’ was readily suggested in the name of the Society itself as well as the journal title, and national essence came to be seen as being embodied in national learning. It was also reasoned in the abstract that when national learning went into extinction, so did the nation and the race.¹⁵ The idea of protecting ‘national learning’—sometimes termed ‘old

¹² The term was first seen in 1901 in the writings of Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1837-1929; see Ling Qichao, ‘*Zhongguoshi xulun* 中國史序論’, in *Yinbingshi wenji* 飲冰室文集 ‘Collected writings of Tasting Ice Studio’ (16 vols., Shanghai, 1936), iii, pp. 1-12 (8). Liang’s use of the term in this instance is identified by Zheng Shichu as the earliest example in the Chinese context; see Zheng, *Guocui, guoxue, guohun*, p. 4. In the autumn of 1902, Liang even started a short-lived *National Learning Newspaper* (*Guoxuebao* 國學報) to promote the preservation of national essence, which for the first time associated ‘national learning’ with ‘national essence’. See Bernal, ‘Liu Shih-p’ei’, pp. 103-104.

¹³ See Huang Jie, ‘*Guocui baocun zhuyi* 國粹保存主義’ (Movement for preserving the national essence), *Zhengyi tongbao* 政藝通報 ‘Journal of politics and arts’, 1 (1902), photographic reprint in Shen Yunlong 沈雲龍 (ed.), *Jindai zhongguo shiliao congkan* 近代中國史料叢刊 ‘Collected sources for Chinese modern history’ (1181 vols., Taipei, 1976), cclxvii, pp. 180-181. However, Huang was not the first to have introduced the Japanese National Essence movement to a Chinese audience. Early in the same year, an anonymous author had published an article titled ‘*Riben guocui zhuyi yu ouhua zhuyi zhi xiaozhang* 日本國粹主義與歐化主義之消長’ (The tension between the National Essence movement and Europeanization in Japan) in the periodical *Yishu huibian* 譯書匯編 (Assorted collection of translated texts), cited in Zheng, *Guocui, guoxue, guohun*, pp. 5-6. Huang’s ‘Preface to the *Guocui xuebao*’ of 1905, also alluded to the Japanese movement, which shows a relationship of appropriation between the National Essence movements in China and Japan; see Huang Jie, ‘*Guocui xuebao xu* 國粹學報敘’ (Preface to the *Guocui xuebao*), *GX*, 1.1 (1905), p. 1-4a (3b)

¹⁴ Bernal, ‘Liu Shih-p’ei’, p. 105

¹⁵ Huang Jie, ‘*Guocui xuebao xu*’, p. 2a.

learning’ (*jiuxue* 舊學 or *guxue* 古學) vis-à-vis the imported Western ‘new learning’ (*xinxue* 新學)—was thus embraced with great urgency, and eventually resulted in the launch of the journal *Guocui xuebao* in 1905. By 1907, the slogan ‘preserve the national essence’ had won over most Chinese intellectuals and provided a common ground on which people across the political spectrum could unite. National learning came to be perceived as the embodiment of Chinese culture, as the essence of the nation.¹⁶

However, it should be borne in mind that before 1907 there had been no place for ‘art’ in this entity of ‘national learning’, which was broken down into different sub-areas in the *Guocui xuebao*. As listed in its ‘Inaugural Statements’, the journal originally comprised seven parts:

- ‘Criticism at large’ (*sheshuo* 社說)
- ‘Politics’ (*zhengpian* 政篇)
- ‘History’ (*shipian* 史篇)
- ‘Approaches to studies’ (*xuepian* 學篇)
- ‘Literature’ (*wenpian* 文篇)
- ‘Assorted notes’ (*congtan* 叢談)
- ‘Writings and manuscripts’ (*zhuanlu* 撰錄).¹⁷

Among these divisions, only four sections (those from ‘Politics’ to ‘Literature’) had a clear disciplinary orientation, none of which accommodated the visual and material aspects of Chinese culture. The subject ‘*Meishu*’, along with the subject ‘*Bowu* 博物’ (‘natural history’, or literally, ‘broad [knowledge] about things’), was added into the journal only after the *Guocui xuebao* had been in production for two years.¹⁸ These new sections, ‘*Bowu*’ and ‘*Meishu*’, contained both articles and illustrations. In the

¹⁶ Martin Bernal, pp. 107-111.

¹⁷ ‘*Guocui xuebao fakan ci* 國粹學報發刊詞’ (Inaugural Statement of the *Guocui xuebao*), *GX*, 1.1 (1905), p. 2a

¹⁸ ‘*Guocui xuebao zengguang menlei* 國粹學報增廣門類’ (New subjects added into the *Guocui xuebao*), in ‘Report No.5’, *GX*, 2.12 (1906), p.1b. Also, from Issue 4.2 (1908) the journal introduced another new subject ‘geography’ (*dili* 地理).

‘Bowu’ section, Society member Cai Youshou 蔡有守 (1879-1941) painted illustrations of animals and plants,¹⁹ some of which have been identified in recent scholarship as having been copied from illustrations in Western books on natural history.²⁰ Insofar as both articles on and illustrations or photographic reproductions of Chinese artworks were published, the ‘*Meishu*’ section seems to have echoed the Japanese art journal, *Kokka*, in the chosen methods of preserving the national artistic tradition; however, the exact relationship between these two publications is difficult to characterise precisely, a phenomenon which will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 2. Nevertheless, such engagement with both images and text within the newly added subject of ‘*Meishu*’, one the visual knowledge of art and the other the textual knowledge of art, later developed into two individual but co-related enterprises, through which the publisher believed the national artistic tradition could be better preserved and propagated.

The inclusion of the subject ‘*Meishu*’ on the one hand indicated that ‘art’ at that point had acquired a new status as part of ‘national learning’, and hence became part of the ‘national essence’. Such placement not only enabled ‘*meishu*’ to share all the tropes, connotations, and significance exclusively assigned to the broad area known as ‘national essence’, but also designated works of ‘*meishu*’ as part of the ‘national patrimony’ to be preserved as part of China’s cultural heritage and appreciated for

¹⁹ See ‘*Guocui xuebao tianru bowu meishu tuhua zhi tese* 國粹學報添入博物美術圖畫之特色’ (Features of the newly added illustrations of *Bowu* and *Meishu* in the *Guocui xuebao*), in ‘Report No. 10’, *GX*, 3.5 (1907).

²⁰ For the life of Cai and pictorial sources of the depicted animals and plants from the West, see Cheng Meibao 程美寶, ‘*Wan Qing guocui dachao zhong de bowuxue zhishi: lun Guocui xuebao zhong de bowu tuhua* 晚清國粹大潮中的博物學知識:論國粹學報中的博物圖畫’ (Knowledge of Natural history in the late-Qing tide of national learning: a study of the *bowu* illustrations published in *Guocui xuebao*), *Shehui kexue* 社會科學 (Social Science), 2006.8, pp. 18-31, and ‘*Fuzhi zhishi: Guocui xuebao bowu tuhua de ziliao laiyuan jiqi caiyong zhi yinshua jishu* 複製知識:國粹學報博物圖畫的資料來源及其採用之印刷技術’ (Reproducing knowledge: sources of *bowu* pictures in the *Guocui xuebao* and the applied printing technologies), *Zhongshan daxue xuebao* 中山大學學報 (Journal of Sun Yat-sen University, social science edition), 49.3 (2009), pp. 95-109.

private enjoyment and cultivation. On the other hand, however, this inclusion also suggests that a new space had been deliberately opened up within the field of ‘national learning’, a phenomenon which entailed a conceptual negotiation with the existing conceptions of traditional artistic culture as well as the existing knowledge system—for the rubric ‘*meishu*’, through which ‘art’ as a concept took on its meaning in China, was a term never before seen in this tradition. The integration and negotiation of the new, European-informed concept of ‘*meishu*’ with both the traditional Chinese artistic culture and the prevailing discourse of national essence can, whether consciously or not, be observed in the perceived functions of the illustrations in the journal, which serve in part as a visual testament to history. As the importance of ‘beholding history’ became more pronounced in the nationalist discourse through the use of photographic illustrations, the editors’ efforts to insert the distinctive, new subject of ‘*Meishu*’ further brought upon themselves considerable confusion between ‘cultural relics’ and ‘works of aesthetic value’. Such confusion was precisely the milieu where the negotiation between the old and the new ideas took place.

The importance of beholding history

Even before the inclusion of the ‘*Meishu*’ section in the journal, photographic reproductions had been regarded by the editors as capable of inspiring readers’ nationalist sentiments. Ever since the inception of the *Guocui xuebao*, a section had been included covering the ground which would later be of interest to the subject ‘*Meishu*’; that is, the section of ‘Pictures’ (*tuhua* 圖畫), dedicated to portraits of not only cultural heroes and famous scholars, but also patriots and loyalists of the Song and Ming dynasties.²¹ Also displayed in this section, before the addition in 1907 of

²¹ The ‘Pictures’ section was not mentioned in the ‘Inaugural Statements’, but was listed in the

the ‘*Meishu*’ section, are images of the handwriting (or rubbings of the handwriting) of famous patriots of past dynastic periods, and an image of a double-lined copy of an ancient stone inscription (Figs. 1-1 to 1-4). In this period, each portrait is generally accompanied by a eulogistic inscription (*zan* 贊), giving an introduction to the subject’s life and his most significant achievement. In the cases where the portrayed figure is a loyalist or patriot, the eulogy would sometimes be substituted with the dying testament or one of the man’s famous quotations, as can be seen with the portrait of Yue Fei 岳飛 (1103-1142), a renowned military general of the Southern Song dynasty (Fig. 1-5). Obviously, pictures in this section served to kindle a passion for the pursuit of national learning, and to encourage the nationalist sentiments which were considered to be desperately needed in this age of turmoil.

It was held firmly by the journal that viewing images of past cultural and patriotic heroes was an experience almost equivalent to that of beholding history itself. Therefore, unlike the illustrations in other contemporary magazines, which presented a variety of subjects with the aim of broadening the reader’s mind,²² illustrations in the journal were restricted to portraits of ancient Chinese figures who enjoyed great cultural significance, including great thinkers such as Confucius, Lao-tzu, Mencius, ancient sage kings (e.g., the Five Emperors), and loyalists who had refused to submit to foreign rulers.

Interestingly, images of these men’s handwriting and of the objects used by or associated with them were also considered to have the same agency as portrait images and were believed to invoke the material presence of the deceased heroes and to have

‘Contents’.

²² Such as the *Dianshizhai* Pictorial (*Dianshizhai huabao* 點石齋畫報). See Rudolf G. Wagner, ‘Joining the Global Imaginaire: The Shanghai Illustrated Newspaper *Dianshizhai huabao*’, in Rudolf G. Wagner (ed.), *Joining the Global Public: Word, Image, and City in Early Chinese Newspapers, 1870-1910* (Albany, 2007), pp. 105-173; and Rania Huntington, ‘The Weird in the Newspaper’, in Judith T. Zeitlin, Lydia H. Liu and Ellen Widmer (eds.), *Writing and Materiality in China: Essays in Honor of Patrick Hanan* (Cambridge, Mass. and London, 2003), pp.341-396.

the capability of inspiring nationalist and patriotic sentiments. As such, the editor Deng Shi commented on the rubbing of the handwriting of Yue Fei (Fig. 1-2) that one would surely be immersed in the thought of protecting the race and nation when viewing Yue's portrait, reading his *ci* poems, and appreciating his 'ink traces' (*moji* 墨蹟).²³ The righteousness and heroic bearing of Wen Tianxiang 文天祥 (1236-1283), loyal official of the Southern Song dynasty, was also thought to be revealed and preserved in his 'remnant ink traces'.²⁴ In the same vein, the 'ink traces' of Shi Kefa 史可法 (1601-1645), a Ming official famous for his resistance against the Qing armies in Yangzhou, was thus urged to be treasured the same 'as his portrait and family letters' (Fig. 1-3).²⁵

Apparently, each image in the 'Pictures' section of the journal was reproduced because of its association with a particular historic figure, whether the image was a pictorial representation of the person (e.g., a portrait) or a reproduction of the things he had left behind (e.g., a piece of his handwriting). In other words, these images were valued not for their aesthetic value, but for the history or historical meaning invoked by their subject matter. However, the exact physical appearance (as reproduced in a photographic illustration) of the things made or used by these past heroes or cultural figures seems to have been regarded as the primary driving force for motivating the viewers to relate themselves to the history of and stories behind the objects that had been reproduced in this way. Therefore, letters and manuscripts handwritten by renowned scholar-officials and patriots were deliberately reproduced photographically in lithography and published in book form well before the Society began the enterprise of 'art' reproduction, even though the publisher could have had these

²³ See Deng Shi's comment on Yue's handwriting in GX, 2.3 (1906).

²⁴ See Deng Shi's comment on Wen's calligraphy in GX, 2.5 (1906).

²⁵ See Deng Shi's postscript to Shi's calligraphy in GX, 2.9 (1906).

manuscripts edited and printed in movable type, rather than printing them in photolithography to retain the original appearance.²⁶

This attitude towards the purpose of reproductions—an attitude which assumes that reproductions embody the evocation of history—can be termed the ‘approach of the antiquarian’. It was entangled with and (especially after the addition of the ‘*Meishu*’ section to the journal) attempted to be differentiated from the ‘approach of the connoisseur’, who sees reproductions as a means of preserving the formal and aesthetic quality of the objects. In fact, the entanglement of these two attitudes towards material objects (one historical, and the other aesthetical) had been seen in China before, not least in the time-honoured discourse on calligraphy; for a piece of calligraphy is also a piece of handwriting, or ‘ink traces’, of the maker—which is regarded as a record of the calligrapher’s movement and the embodiment of his virtue and personality, in addition to its artistic merits.²⁷ However, the fact that the traditional discourse had not called for a distinction between these two approaches—and that it was not until the subject of ‘*Meishu*’ joined the *Guocui xuebao* that the problem of the entanglement of these two attitudes became more pronounced—reveals the negotiating process through which the new concept,

²⁶ ‘*Ming er daru shiwu wanren moji shoutie* 明二大儒十五完人墨蹟手帖’ (Ink traces and handwritten letters by two great Ming scholars and fifteen complete men of the Ming), in ‘*Guocui congshu disanci chuban guangao* 國粹叢書第三次出版廣告’ (Advertisement for the third release of the *Guocui* book series), *GX*, 2.8 (1906), inside back cover. This practice continued even after the periodical *Shenzhou guoguanji* had been released. See ‘*Yincheng Mingxian chidu moji qizhong* 印成明賢尺牘墨跡七種’ (Seven pieces of handwritten letters by Ming worthies), in ‘Report No. 22’, *GX* 4.5 (1908), p.1b; ‘*Huiyin xianru shouxie yizhu* 彙印先儒手寫遺著’ (Collection of handwritten manuscripts by past scholars) in ‘Report No. 27’, *GX*, 4.10 (1908), p. 1b. The Society even claimed that the reproductions of handwritten manuscripts were more precious than those of calligraphy and painting. The efficacy of this statement will be elaborated in Chapter 2.

²⁷ For the specific aspect of Chinese culture in which personal letters were treasured as calligraphic works, see Qianshen Bai, ‘Chinese Letters: Private Words Made Public’, in Robert E. Harrist Jr. and Weng C. Fong (eds.), *The Embodied Image: Chinese Calligraphy from the John B. Elliott Collection* (Princeton, 1999), pp. 381-399. For the theory of calligraphy which sees ink traces as the embodiment of the writer, see John Hay, ‘The Human Body as a Microcosmic Source of Macrocosmic Values in Calligraphy’, in Susan Bush and Christian F. Murk (eds.), *Theories of the Arts in China* (Princeton, 1983), pp. 74-102; and Wen Fong, ‘Chinese Calligraphy: Theory and History’, in Harrist and Fong, *op.cit.*, pp. 29-84 (31-37).

informed by the European notion of art or '*meishu*', was being incorporated into the Chinese nationalist discourse. These negotiations oscillated between a Western sense of 'art' (which emphasises the formal rather than historical aspects of the object), and the traditional Chinese view, which embraces the aesthetic quality as well as the historical value of the object as a whole.

However, once the '*Meishu*' section was added into the journal, the editors were immediately forced to define the nature and function of the illustrations in the '*Meishu*' section as being different from those in the 'Pictures' section. Such a necessity could not have been overlooked because these two sections had been physically separate from each other prior to 1908. Illustrations of artworks were then put altogether with articles about art in the '*Meishu*' section, which was placed at the end of all the other disciplinary sections of national learning (Fig. 1-6), while the 'Pictures' section always occupied the opening pages of the journal. The editors hence found themselves in the position of having to decide whether an illustration should be categorised in the '*Meishu*' section or not.

It seems obvious from the outset that the 'Pictures' section was meant to inspire patriotic sentiments, and hence was confined to portraits of cultural and patriotic figures, as well as to images of things associated with them, such as their 'ink traces'; whereas the illustrations in the '*Meishu*' section were included for the purpose of demonstrating the Chinese artistic tradition, and accordingly contained rubbings of objects of '*meishu*' (such as bronzes, *qin* zithers, and stone inscriptions), as well as painting and calligraphy by renowned artists. However, the problem of image categorisation occurred nonetheless with a portrait painting of a celebrated essayist of the late Ming period, Hou Fangyu 侯方域(1618-1654) (Fig. 1-7). The portrait, painted by Gu Yuncheng 顧雲程 (1606-?), was originally placed in the 'Pictures'

section but was later relabelled (in a notice of correction) as an illustration of a work of ‘*meishu*’.²⁸ Although binding workers were publicly blamed for the ‘mistake’, this change of label was not simply a correction of a mindless error, but an index to the editors’ own confusion over the different nature of ‘historical paintings’ (i.e., those which belong in the ‘Pictures’ section) and ‘artistic paintings’ (those which belong in the ‘*Meishu*’ section). Apparently, this portrait of Hou Fangyu had originally been intended for the ‘Pictures’ section because conventionally, this section contained at least two images of admirable historical figures, and if this painting had been withdrawn, only one image would remain, which could hardly form a section on its own. However, the editors still decided to re-label the painting as an object of ‘*meishu*’ and apparently considered such redefinition a ‘correction’, which suggests the ongoing confusion over what should be defined as ‘*meishu*’.

A comparison of this painting with other examples may lead to a possible reason for such a shift in conception: unlike most of the other portraits in the ‘Pictures’ section, where the sitter is normally situated against an empty background to convey a documentary sense (Fig. 1-5), the distinctive character of the portrait of Hou is manifested in its setting of ‘landscape’. As ‘landscape’ has been a subject matter traditionally regarded as most expressive of a painter’s artistic merits, a portrait painting such as this one—inclusive of a landscape background—is more than a portrait, and hence its aesthetic aspect should be highlighted by locating the painting into the ‘*Meishu*’ section.²⁹ However, the criteria by which a portrait painting was to

²⁸ ‘*Tuhua dengzheng guanggao* 圖畫更正廣告’ (Correction notice on pictures), *GX*, 3.9 (1907), inside front cover.

²⁹ The change of its categorisation might have also been a result of the possibility that the illustrated painting itself was a painted reproduction by Shen Tang (the reason will be given in the main text below). Nevertheless, given that the mastery of Shen Tang’s copying skill had never been the focus of the comments, the illustrated work was most likely to be approached as if it were the original, rather than a work by Shen. The original painter Gu Yuncheng, also known as Gu Jianlong 顧見龍, see *ZMRC*, p. 1536.

be deemed a painting or merely a portrait were not always unequivocal. It is perfectly understandable why a portrait of Dong Qichang 董其昌 (1555-1636, attributed to a famous painter You Qiu 尤求, active 1570s-80s) was placed in the ‘*Meishu*’ section, even though the painting has no background at all (Fig. 1-8). However, it is less clear why the portrait painting of Ming loyalist Chen Gongyin 陳恭尹 (1631-1700, by an anonymous artist)—depicting his listening to the resonance of a sword with an attendant against a void background—should have been placed in the ‘*Meishu*’ section (Fig. 1-9).

Such entanglement of the historical and aesthetical perceptions of reproduced items can even be observed within the ‘*Meishu*’ section itself, where some of the illustrated objects were selected not as much for their aesthetic value as for their association with famous historical figures. The rubbing of the *qin* zither once owned and played by Chen Gongyin (Fig. 1-10) and a painted reproduction of the inkstone believed to have been collected and used by the late Ming scholar Liu Zongzhou 劉宗周 (1578-1645, Fig. 1-11) are such cases; the editorial comments seem to dwell more on the patriotic passion these images may have kindled rather than any artistic quality they might have possessed.³⁰

Even the calligraphy and painting reproduced in the ‘*Meishu*’ section could be approached in a non-aesthetical way since, as was explained earlier, the reproduced works were regarded not only as a material and historical testament to the artistic temperament inherent in the Chinese people, but also as the material embodiment of the maker’s life, character, and of history—and hence were meant to be seen by extension as a material continuation of the maker’s life and destiny. Thus, the editor

³⁰ See Huang Jie’s comment on the rubbing of the *qin* zither owned by Chen Gongyin, GX, 3.9 (1907); and Deng Shi’s long inscription on the painted reproduction by Shen Tang 沈塘 of the inkstone used by Liu Zongzhou, GX, 3.2 (1907).

Deng Shi still viewed the album leaves attributed (wrongly!) to the Ming official Huang Zunsu 黃尊素 (1586-1626)—who died as a result of his refusal to ally himself with the then-powerful eunuch Wei Zhongxian 魏忠賢 (1568-1627)—as the remaining traces of loyalty and integrity, which it was thought had attracted some sort of divine protection allowing it to have survived to Deng's time.³¹ The Chinese tradition of collecting was also praised in the journal's rhetoric, as can be seen in the editorial comment on a piece of calligraphy by the great calligrapher Mi Fu 米芾 (1051-1107): the editor reasoned that the fact that one was still able to view Mi's work hundreds of years after it had been created was a proof of the refined nature of the Chinese people, who obviously knew the importance of treasuring and appreciating art.³²

Although in 1907 'Pictures' and '*Meishu*' were physically two separate sections and thus demanded distinct approaches (historical and aesthetical, respectively) to the selection of illustrations, the entanglement of these two approaches was both evident and persistent. Ultimately, however, the historical meaning of the reproduced objects was clearly the prime concern in the act of reproduction. As discussed earlier, the perceived historical dimension of the artworks was threefold: they were themselves historical evidence of the artistic achievement of the nation; they were historical testaments to the civilised culture of art appreciation in China; and finally, they served as material indices to the lives and histories of the artists and their time. Such a multilayered historical dimension not only enabled 'art', or '*meishu*', to enter the nationalist discourse—to be studied as national learning, to be preserved as national

³¹ See Deng Shi's comment on Huang's album leaves, GX, 3.10 (1907). However, the editor's identification of the painter was wrong. According to the seals on the album leaves, the maker should be named as Wang Zunsu 王尊素, a painter active during the late Ming and early Qing dynasties; see ZMRC, p. 106.

³² See Deng Shi's comment on Mi's calligraphy, GX, 3.7 (1907).

essence, and to be handed down as national patrimony—but also endowed the reproductions of artworks with unparalleled importance, relative to illustrations of ‘Pictures’ and those of animals and plants in the ‘*Bowu*’ section. This newfound significance eventually led to the development and transformation of the illustration of art objects into the independent enterprise of art reproduction.

Furthermore, it was the availability of photographic reproductive technologies that made the beholding of history possible, leading to an increasing interest in and elevation of visual perception. The editors thus regarded the illustrations of artworks as a ‘treat’ for readers and increased the number of these illustrations to celebrate the third anniversary of the journal in Issue 4.1, in 1908.³³ This celebratory issue contained thirty-three pages of art objects, including eleven pieces collected in museums in Britain at the time. The sources of these illustrations and the historical significance of their appropriation will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Also in 1908, illustrations in the ‘*Meishu*’ and ‘*Bowu*’ sections were detached from the sections to which they originally belonged and moved forward, nearer the ‘Pictures’ section at the front of the journal, under the headings of ‘*Meishu tuhua*’ (‘Art Pictures’) and ‘*Bowu tuhua*’ (Pictures of Natural History), respectively (Fig. 1-12). The ‘Pictures’ section was further renamed the ‘Portraits’ section (*huaxiang* 畫像) beginning in the fifth issue of that year. However, the heading ‘Art Pictures’ was soon abandoned in 1909, and was replaced by a more detailed grouping that sorted illustrations into ‘Metal and Stone [inscriptions]’ (*jinsi* 金石), ‘Ink Traces’ (*moji*), ‘Painting’ (*hua* 畫), and ‘Objects of art’ (*Meishupin* 美術品) (Fig. 1-13). Henceforth, illustrations other than those of ‘natural history’, including portraits, were no longer differentiated by their historical or aesthetic orientation—as had been seen

³³ ‘*Guocui xuebao juxing disan zhounian dazhudian* 國粹學報舉行第三週年大祝典’ (Celebration for the third anniversary of the *Guocui xuebao*), in ‘Report No. 15’, *GX*, 3.10 (1907), p. 1b.

in the original distinction between ‘Pictures’ and ‘Art Pictures’—but were instead differentiated by the category of ‘art’ into which they were now sorted. In other words, the sections ‘Pictures’ and ‘*Meishu*’ (which had initially been separated) were now collapsed into each other, and portrait painting could now be perfectly accommodated in its own section of ‘Portraits’ without any detriment to its symbolic meaning or aesthetic value. One case in point is the painted reproduction of the portrait of Xue Shiheng 薛始亨 (1617-1686), copied by Cai Youshou with a background painted by Huang Binhong 黃賓虹 (1865-1955)—who was at that time one of the editors of the journal but later became one of the most celebrated painters in twentieth-century China (Fig. 1-14). Now, the categorisation of these illustrations seems to have been made mainly for the purpose of sorting art objects, suggesting that by 1908, the aesthetical approach to reproduction had come to prevail.³⁴ Nevertheless, this aesthetical approach still lay ultimately within the framework of the national essence, inextricably intertwined with the original historical approach. All these illustrations were thus viewed both as visual evidence of art and, at the same time, as material evidence of China’s history.

The year 1908 also saw the same publisher launch the art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji*, featuring reproductions of Chinese art objects. Working from the success of this art periodical, the publisher soon developed an enterprise in its own right dedicated to the publication of reproductions of ancient rubbings, celebrated calligraphic works, and well-known paintings. The Society’s innovative investment in the market of photographic art reproduction soon attracted the attention of other publishers and eventually inaugurated an age of photographic reproduction of art in China (see Chapter 2). Nevertheless, such an enterprise with such wide recognition

³⁴ The question of why there was still a category termed ‘Objects of Art’ in this categorisation of ‘art’ will be addressed in Chapter 5.

and such an enthusiastic reception could not have sustained itself simply by resorting to rhetoric on the importance of beholding history; support from and participation of the readers also played a crucial role in opening up this brand new market. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out an overall survey of all the Society's cultural projects into which the attempt to publish Chinese art had been integrated, as well as to examine the circulation of the journal, the social and intellectual background of its readership, and the ways in which the journal encouraged its readers to take part in its enterprises.

The function of the network of readership

The journal *Guocui xuebao* was not only a site where 'art' was first seen to be associated with the nationalist discourse; the journal also functioned as the organ of the Society for Preserving National Learning. Such a relationship is evident in the fact that the journal began in 1906 to publish in each issue a report on the management of the Society, which would normally include a listing of names of the Society's 'patrons', as well as of the amounts of money, titles of books, and names of objects, that these patrons had contributed. Also reported were important announcements about both the Society and the journal, and sometimes correspondence from readers.³⁵ Contributions, whether of money or of books or objects, was vital to the operations and publishing endeavours of the Society, since the Society still intended to establish a Library (*Cangshulou* 藏書樓, thereafter 'the Library') for the ambitious purposes of collecting and reprinting ancient texts in a National Essence book series (*Guocui congshu* 國粹叢書); compiling textbooks of National Learning (*Guoxue jiaokeshu* 國學教科書); starting a National Essence Academy (*Guocui xuetang* 國粹學堂); and establishing its own publishing firm, the 'National Glories Press' (*Guoguang*

³⁵ The Report first appeared in Issue 2.8 (1906) and continued for the duration of the journal's publication.

yinshuasuo 國光印刷所).³⁶ These projects, particularly the ones of the Library and of reprinting ancient texts, required a great number and variety of texts and books which, as was understood by the publisher, could not have been assembled simply through the editors' own efforts. As such, appeals to readers for contributions of rare books appeared every now and then in the Reports.³⁷ Requests for contributions of 'art objects' (*meishupin*) were also presented, breaking down art objects into ten categories:

- rubbings of metal and stone inscriptions
- bronze ritual vessels
- calligraphy and painting by the culturally renowned
- portraits of the culturally renowned
- seals and seal albums
- old books of the Song and Yuan
- verse, prose, and *ci* and *qu* poems
- music
- textiles and embroidery
- porcelain and lacquer³⁸

Once collected, the objects (it was said) would be stored and most likely displayed in the 'Art Room' (*meishushi* 美術室) in the Society's library, which suggests that such

³⁶ These projects are seen in 'Bianji guoxue jiaokeshu guanggao 編輯國學教科書廣告' (Advertisement for the National Learning textbooks), GX, 1.8 (1905), inside back cover; and 'Guoguang yinshusuo jigou zhangcheng 國光印書所集股章程' (Guidelines on investment in the National Glories Press), GX, 3.3 (1907), unpaginated advertisement. However, the attempt to establish a National Essence Academy was abandoned in 1907 due to the lack of means, see 'Guoxue jiangyi zhanting chubao guanggao 國學講義暫停出版廣告' (Lecture notes on national learning ceased publication), GX, 3.1 (1907), back cover.

³⁷ The practice of asking for donations was also used by the Nantong Museum, the first museum in China, established by Zhang Jian (1853-1926) in 1905. See Lisa Claypool, 'Zhang Jian and China's First Museum', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 64.3 (2005), pp. 567-604 (570). In fact, the *Guocui xuebao* also published in the 'Meishu' section an article by Zhang Jian listing the items wanted by the Nantong Museum. See Zhang Jian, 'Tongzhou bowuguan zheng xianbei shiwenji shuhua ji jinshi guqi mulu 通州博物館徵先輩詩文集書畫及金石古器物目錄' (Tongzhou museum's wish list of writings, calligraphy and painting by elder generations and of epigraphic inscriptions and ancient objects), GX, 4.2 (1908), pp. 6-9.

³⁸ 'Zheng meishupin zhonglei 徵美術品種類' (Types of art objects requested), in 'Report No. 1', GX, 2.8 (1906), p. 2b. [一金石碑[碑]版、二鐘鼎彝器、三名人字畫、四名人畫象、五印章印譜、六宋元舊槧書籍、七詩文詞曲、八音樂各品、九織繡各品、十磁漆各品]

objects were regarded as samples of Chinese works of art.³⁹

These appeals for contributions proved to be very effective, particularly those for books, as can be observed from the contribution lists in the Reports. Given that the journal printed only 3000 copies per issue in 1905, but four months after its launch raised that number to 5000 in order to meet the unexpected demand,⁴⁰—not to mention the fact that the journal had distribution agents all over China and even in Tokyo, Japan⁴¹—the journal was not only a members' magazine but was instead aimed at a much wider audience of those who shared the same aspirations of preserving China's national essence, even though its circulation number was relatively small compared with the foremost daily publications in Shanghai.⁴² For instance, Su Shichang 蘇世昌, a reader from Keelung, Taiwan (then already a colony of Japan), contributed a book and a celebratory photograph of a painting by a French artist to mark the third anniversary of the journal (Fig. 1-15).⁴³ Another reader, Xu Hongbao 徐鴻寶 (1881-1971), also offered to hire people to copy for the Society's Library the eighteenth-century imperial book collection, *Four Treasuries*, of the edition housed in

³⁹ 'Zhengqiu neidi bowu wuchan ji meishupin shumuzhi jianzhang' 徵求內地博物物產及美術品書目志簡章' (Brief statement about the requested items of natural history and local produce as well as art objects and books), in 'Report No. 7', GX, 3.2 (1907), p. 1b. There was another 'Natural History Room' (*bowu meishushi* 博物室) for housing samples of natural history. As such, the two rooms were sometimes referred to collectively as 'Natural History and Art Room(s)' (*bowu meishushi* 博物美術室).

⁴⁰ 'Guoxui xuebao di yier sansihao zaiban chuban guanggao' 國粹學報第一二三四號再版出版廣告' (Advertisement for the reprints of Issues 1- 4), GX, 1.5 (1905), inside back cover; and 'Benguan guanggao' 本館廣告' (Publisher's announcement), GX, 1.11 (1905), inside front cover. However, the circulation number was reported to have gone down in 1908; see 'Report, No. 11', GX, 3.6 (1908), p. 1b.

⁴¹ Sixty-one news agents and book shops were recorded as distributing the journal across China, as well as two bookshops in Tokyo. See 'Benbao daipaichu' 本報代派處' (Distribution agents for the journal), GX, 1.9 (1905), 2.5 (1906), 3.4 (1907), back cover.

⁴² For example, *Shibao* 時報 (Eastern Times) had a circulation at 17,000 in 1908, and *Shenbao* had 14,000 in 1907. However, the circulation numbers for the *Guocui xuebao* were still slightly higher than that of the daily *Zhongwai ribao*, which was at 4,000 in 1909. See Joan Judge, *Prints and Politics: Shibao and the Culture of Reform in Late Qing China* (Stanford, 1996), pp. 40-41.

⁴³ 'Report No. 3', GX, 2.10 (1906), p. 1a ; and the illustration 'Haitian shuguang' 海天曙光' (The sun rising from the sea), GX, 4.1 (1908).

the Fengtian Palace in Liaoning.⁴⁴ Still another reader, Huang Zunquan 黃尊權, volunteered to gather for the journal bibliographic information on Chinese books held in the ‘Ueno Library’ (*Ueno toshokan* 上野圖書館) in Tokyo.⁴⁵ Furthermore, not all these contributors and patrons—a group composed of individual readers and of other societies and publishers⁴⁶—were in a strict sense ‘members’ of the Society, which had only 26 registered members that can be identified today.⁴⁷ Hence, editors, registered members of the Society, readers who might or might not have had a personal connection with the Society, and people who were simply in sympathy with the Society all formed an invisible and loosely-defined community that shared the common goal of building up a reservoir of China’s national essence. Their collective efforts would later facilitate the publication of the art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji* and the book collection on art, *Meishu congshu*.

Such means of involving readers in the Society’s cultural projects were probably conceived by the chief executive editor, Deng Shi, to whom most correspondence from readers was addressed and who was without a doubt the central figure in all the Society’s endeavours. Born into a wealthy family in Shunde 順德, Guangdong, Deng had studied under the local Confucian master Jian Chaoliang 簡朝亮 (1851-1933), along with Huang Jie, also from the same county and another key figure in the Society (Fig. 1-16). It is clear that the Society was mainly financed by Deng and Huang; the former contributed more than anyone else.⁴⁸ A considerable portion of the books in

⁴⁴ ‘*Tongxun* 通訊’ (Correspondence from [Xu Hongbao]), in ‘Report No. 5’, *GX*, 2.12 (1906), p. 1b. For the compiling history of the *Four Treasuries*, see R. Kent Guy, *The Emperor’s Four Treasuries: Scholars and the State in the Late Ch’ien-lung Era* (Cambridge, 1987).

⁴⁵ ‘*Tongxun* 通訊’ (Correspondence from [Huang Zunquan]), in ‘Report No. 13’, *GX*, 3.8 (1907), p. 1b.

⁴⁶ For example, see ‘Report No. 7’, *GX*, 3.2 (1907), p. 1a.

⁴⁷ Wang Dongjie, ‘*Oumei fengyu*’, p. 34. However, the Society considered itself to have only 21 members by 1907, see ‘*Fuqi* 附啓’ (Postscript), in ‘Report No. 12’, *GX*, 3.7 (1907), p. 1b.

⁴⁸ ‘*Kuaiji baogao* 會計報告’ (Accounting Report), *GX*, 3.1, 3.7 (1907), 4.1, 4.7 (1908), 5.1, 5.7 (1909), 6.2 (1910).

the Library also came from Deng's personal collection and new acquisitions. Deng also acted as chief editor for the *Shenzhou guoguangji* and the *Meishu congshu*, and he also invited Huang Binhong to work on these two projects.⁴⁹ Deng was himself an art collector and would later become a dealer; objects from his 'Chamber in the Winds and Rains' (*Fengyülou* 風雨樓) collection were sometimes published in the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, where he started two editorial columns: 'Talks on the topic of the editorial work' (*Jilu yutan* 輯錄餘談) and 'True Knowledge of Connoisseurship in Painting' (*Jianhua zhenchuan* 鑑畫真詮).⁵⁰ Through the management of the Society and the journal, Deng also extended his personal connections, which would in turn help him assemble and circulate even more works of art.

At the nascent stage of the journal, illustrations of artworks were indeed acquired from people directly associated with the editors. For example, the two Shens from Wujiang 吳江, Shen Zhilu 沈屋廬 and Shen Tang 沈塘 (?-1921), were friends of Deng Shi's and played such a contributory role.⁵¹ Shen Zhilu supplied the journal with photographs of the art objects from his own as well as others' collections and later contributed an ancient ruler for measuring the dimensions of original objects published in the art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji* (see Fig. 2-6).⁵² Shen Tang was in charge of painting illustrations in the 'Art Pictures' section; the painted reproduction of the inkstone believed to have been collected and used by Liu Zongzhou was made by him (Fig. 1-11);⁵³ he also contributed photographs of the

⁴⁹ See Wang Zhongxiu 王中秀, *Huang Binhong nianpu* 黃賓虹年譜 'Chronicles of Huang Binhong's life' (Shanghai, 2005), pp. 52-53, 61-3, 68-69.

⁵⁰ See SG, 19, 20 (1911). Deng's essay 'Notes of the Chamber in the Winds and Rains on Reading Paintings' (*Fengyulou duhua xiaoji* 風雨樓讀畫小記) is also published in SG, 9 (1909).

⁵¹ For Shen Tang's biography, see ZMRC, pp. 434-435.

⁵² For example, the calligraphy by Mi Fu mentioned above was photographed and posted by Shen Zhilu, GX, 3.7 (1907). He would also bring art objects to Shanghai in person, such as the calligraphic work by Mi Youren illustrated in GX, 3.10 (1907).

⁵³ 'Guocui xuebao tienru bowu meishu tuhua tese, GX, 3.5 (1907).

artworks in other private collections to which he had access, as in the case of the illustration of the horse painting by Qian Feng 錢澧 (1740-1795), which was then in the collection of the Chen family of Qishui 蘄水 (Fig. 1-17 a).⁵⁴

There are reasons to believe, however, that this illustration of the so-called ‘Qian’s horse painting’—which Shen did not own but had seen—was in fact an illustration of Shen’s copy of the original. He described his dealings concerning the illustrated paintings as ‘*moying rutong* 摹影入銅’, which could have meant ‘photographed for printing’. However, although the expression ‘*moying*’ could have simply denoted the act of photograph-taking (since photography then was rhetorically analogous with ‘writing/painting pictures’, or ‘*xietu* 寫圖’⁵⁵), what was more likely in this case is that Shen ‘re-traced’ (*mo*) the original painting and had the painted reproduction photographed (*ying*) for printing (*rutong*). A comparison with a photographic reproduction of the painting of the same title, most likely from the same collector, published in another art periodical (*Zhongguo minghua* 中國名畫, see Chapter 2) confirms that the one in the *Guocui xuebao* was a painted copy, as conspicuous differences can be observed between the two illustrations in the treatment of horse tails and the muscles of the right-fore leg (Fig. 1-17). That is probably why the advertisement announcing the launching of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* particularly stated that all illustrations in the art periodical were photographed ‘from the originals’, since some of the illustrations in the journal *Guocui xuebao* had actually been photographed from painted reproductions!⁵⁶

⁵⁴ See the description of this particular illustration in GX, 3.5 (1907). For Qian Feng’s biography, see ZMRC, p. 1438.

⁵⁵ For example, the contributor of the photograph of the tree in front of the tomb of Zigong 子貢 (one of Confucius’s disciples) says that he used Western photography (*tuoyingfa* 脫影法) to ‘write (paint) the picture’, GX, 5.10 (1909).

⁵⁶ ‘*Fakan Shenzhou guoguangji* 發刊神州國光集’ (Releasing the *Shenzhou guoguangji*), in ‘Report No. 18’, GX, 4.1 (1908), p. 2a.

The publication of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* seems to have slightly changed the editors' attitude towards copy-making. It should be noted that until 1908, illustrations made from painted reproductions did not distinguish themselves in the title from illustrations made from originals. In an earlier period, the title in the journal gave only the name of the original artist, while information about the illustration's true nature (i.e., that of a painted copy) was hidden in the 'fine print' of the images' commentary descriptions, as can be seen in the case of the horse painting I have just discussed. Such a practice seems to have been replaced by a less misleading one beginning in 1908, when the editors began to specify the names of both the original author and the copyist in the title, as can be seen with a reproduction of Li Gonglin's 'Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva', copied by Cai Youshou, an artist mentioned above who was also responsible for drawing illustrations of natural history for the journal (Fig. 1-18).⁵⁷ In a later issue, an illustration of a horse painting originally done by Qian Feng also clearly stated that the illustration was produced from a copy of the original painted by Shen Tang (Fig. 1-19).⁵⁸

This change is significant in terms of the attitude towards art reproduction. First, it suggests that in an earlier period, these painted reproductions were treated as if they had been the originals, and that the copyist's mediation was regarded as transparent and could be disregarded. Second, insofar as this change in attitudes occurred precisely at the time when the publisher began to develop an independent, large-scale enterprise of art reproduction using photomechanical printing methods, it is very likely that the publishing of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* not only prompted the differentiation between human and mechanical reproductions, but also raised awareness of the mediating role played by the copyist in artistic reproductions.

⁵⁷ See GX, 4.5 (1908).

⁵⁸ See the title and caption of that illustration, GX, 6.12 (1910).

Shen Tang's introduction of objects owned by other collectors who might not have direct personal connections with the editors reveals one of the ways in which the network of the journal's readers and contributors were able to be extended. One such case is the 'Portrait of Hou Fangyu' (Fig. 1-7), which was then contained in the collection of the renowned connoisseur Li Baoxun 李葆恂 (1859-1915), who had never contributed to the journal of his own accord. Li Baoxun's son Li Fang 李放 (1884-1926) and the book that Li Fang compiled, *Zhongguo yishujia zhenglüe* ('Attested Sketches of Chinese Artists', 1914), will be the focus of Chapter 4. Such cases suggest that at first, the journal relied entirely on the editors' own personal connections; however, these connected associates would then support and extend the cultural enterprises of the Society through their own personal connections. Nevertheless, anonymous readers could also become associated with the journal through their contributions of money, books, art objects, or photographs of art objects, or even their own scholarly writings; once a connection was formed, these contributors would also assist the Society's cultural enterprises and expand the social network by introducing their own personal connections.

The Society made more of such connections after the release of the inaugural issue of the art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji* in 1908, with the most notable assistance of Luo Zhenyu 羅振玉 (1866-1940)—one of the most influential scholars and collectors in early twentieth-century China, whose name began to appear in the list of contributors beginning in 1908.⁵⁹ It is very likely that through Luo, the journal recruited Wang Guowei 王國維 (1877-1927), eminent scholar in Chinese history, literature and ancient scripts in the early twentieth century, to write articles for the

⁵⁹ 'Report No. 24', GX, 4.7 (1908), p. 1a. Luo's writing began to be seen in the journal from Issue 4.10.

journal; and probably also through Luo that the journal made an association with Pang Laichen 龐萊臣 (1864-1949), a wealthy merchant and celebrated Shanghai-based collector who also contributed images of some of the objects in his collection.⁶⁰ In addition, insofar as many of the listed members of the Society were also associated with the pro-revolutionary societies such as Tongmenghui 同盟會 ('Revolutionary Alliance') and Nan She 南社 ('The Southern Society'), this network of patronage would probably be enlarged through such extended social groups.⁶¹ Moreover, even high officials who had been suspicious of the Society for its anti-Manchu propositions—such as Sheng Xuanhuai 盛宣懷 (1844-1916) and Duanfang 端方 (1861-1911)—also contributed to the journal some of their books or objects from their own art collections, most likely in hopes of soothing political tensions.⁶²

However, although the network of readership allowed the journal to form a community that seemed to transcend personal connections and political propositions in order to reach out to a wider audience and to attract more contributors, such a network itself also created an atmosphere of an exclusive, insiders' community where members and collections were known by their courtesy names, which would make sense only to people already associated with them.⁶³ For example, Shen Zhilu's collection was often referred to merely as the '*Jiangqu shuzhuang* 江曲書莊 (Book

⁶⁰ Wang's articles began to appear in the journal from Issue 4.10. Pang's collection was illustrated in *GX*, 6.4, 6.12 (1910), and 7.2, 7.6 (1911).

⁶¹ See Zheng Shichu, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-18.

⁶² It has been pointed out that the Society was harassed by the authorities; see Wang Dongjie, '*Oumei fengyu*', pp. 38-39. Sheng Xuanhuai donated a set of books from his collection; see 'Report 41', *GX*, 5.12 (1909), p.1a. Objects in Duanfang's collection made their appearance in *SG*, at least in No. 2 and 4 (1908). For Duanfang's life as a collector, see Thomas Lawton, *A Time of Transition: Two Collectors of Chinese Art* ([Lawrence], 1991), pp. 5-63. Jason Steuber at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of art, Kansas City, is now developing an international project for the former collection of Duanfang's; for the holdings of Duanfang's collection in the Nelson-Atkins Museum, see Steuber, 'Politics and Art in Qing China: The Duanfang Collection', *Apollo*, 525 (Nov. 2005), pp. 56-67.

⁶³ Such a sense of exclusivity would probably have been enhanced by the esoteric and abstruse nature of the published articles. See the discussion of the journal's reception among people of a younger generation, such as Gu Jiegang and Hu Shih, in Martin Bernal, 'Liu Shih-p'ei', pp. 111-112; and Wang Dongjie, '*Oumei fengyu*', p. 39.

Villa of River Turns) Collection of the Shen of Wujiang’, and Shen Tang’s collection was simply known as the ‘*Shuanglu shanguan* 雙麓山館 (Mountain Lodge at Twin Foothills) Collection’ or the ‘*Chakan* 茶龕 (Niche for Tea) Collection’. Such descriptions gave no indication of the collectors’ personal names, by which they were probably more familiar to the journal’s subscribers and readers. As such, a reader who was not in any way personally connected with the members of this exclusive ‘club’, and who had nothing to contribute apart from his sincerity and desire to preserve the national essence, would probably have no way to take part in this ‘core’ network. There is nothing new about this phenomenon in view of the traditional patterns of social intercourse between the literati in China. Nevertheless, in the age of mass media in which anyone is able to approach the publisher for soliciting information of and even participating in this network, the publishing house became the centre of this social network. As in the case of the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, any enquiries about the published artworks could be made to or through the publishing house, and the latter would in turn facilitate any transactions between collectors who had kindly published their own collections in either the journal *Guocui xuebao* or the art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji*. The commercial side of this publishing practice, however high-minded the journal may have alleged itself to be, had already become embedded in this network.

Art publishing as an enterprise

It should be borne in mind that art publishing as an enterprise had not yet been attempted when the Society was first established. Nevertheless, most of the publisher’s endeavours came to be focused on ‘*meishu*’ as a subject, which helped to distinguish it from all the other subjects of national learning, and subsequently, the

entirely new independent enterprise of art publishing was born. Previous discussions have by and large focused on the various aspects of art reproduction, and have strived to give a full picture of how the perceived importance of beholding history not only contributed to the idea of establishing an ‘Art Room’ in the Society’s Library to house samples of Chinese artwork, but also gave rise to the business of art reproduction. As we shall see in Chapter 2, the business of art reproduction included not only the monthly art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji*, which featured photographic reproductions of Chinese works of art, but also reproductions of single pieces of rubbing, calligraphy, and painting printed and sold separately for the purposes of interior decoration or personal collecting.

Equally important in this art publishing enterprise was the text compilation project, the book collection *Meishu congshu*, which is the subject of Chapter 3. It can be argued that this project would not have been greatly differentiated from more generic text compilation projects such as the National Essence book series had the publisher not been slightly aware of the ‘newness’ of the subject ‘*meishu*’ within the traditional Chinese knowledge system. However, one should not assume, *a priori*, that texts on art ought to have all been published in this book collection on art. It was only through the practice of publishing the reprints of ancient texts that the publisher came to realise that the texts on the subject of art should have been given more focused attention. In an earlier period, books about art—such as *Records on the Calligraphy and Painting Encountered in the Region Wu and Yue* (*Wuyue suojian shuhualu* 吳越所見書畫錄) by Lu Shihua 陸時化 (1714-1779); *Jiangcun’s Records on Passing Summers* (*Jiangcun xiaoxialu* 江邨銷夏錄) by Gao Shiqi 高士奇 (1645-1704); as well as *Records on Paintings I Have Read* (*Duhualu* 讀畫錄), and *Biographies of Seal Carvers* (*Yinrenzhuan* 印人傳) by Zhou Liangong 周亮工 (1612-1672)—were

published in the book collection of the ‘Chamber in the Winds and Rains’ (*Fengyülou congshu* 風雨樓叢書), a book series named after the editor Deng Shi’s studio and begun just half a year before the first volume of *Meishu congshu* was released. Some of the books were even advertised originally as reprints of ‘one-and-only old texts’ (*guben jiuji* 孤本舊籍), without being named as belonging to any specific book series.⁶⁴ The undertaking of the publishing endeavour to compile a book collection on ‘*Meishu*’ and titled as such suggests not only an unprecedented scholarly interest in this new subject, but also the attempt to create a space within the traditional Chinese knowledge system in which ‘*meishu*’ was taken as an approachable, proper, and sufficiently serious branch of knowledge.

All in all, the Society and the network of the journal’s readership all cooperated in this art publishing enterprise; the former supplied the ideas, presented a portion of the contents, and diffused the products, while the latter supplied the remaining portion of the contents and consumed the ideas conceptually and materially embodied in these products. The concept of ‘*meishu*’, together with its nationalist connotations and its hierarchical structure, was thus propagated through the conceptual inculcation and the materiality of these products aimed at reproducing and thereby preserving China’s artistic culture and heritage.

⁶⁴ ‘*Xinchu jingyin guben jiuji* 新出精印孤本舊籍’ (Latest fine reprints of one-and-only old books), *GX*, 6.4 (1910), [adv.] p. 2b. The *Fengyulou* book series was applied to these texts from *Guocui xuebao*, 6.5 (1910).

Ch 2 Art in the Age of Photographic Reproduction: *Shenzhou guoguangji*, 1908-1912

The year 1908 witnessed the birth of the bimonthly art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji* ('Collected National Glories of the Divine Land', Fig. 2-1), which was launched by the publisher *Shenzhou guoguangshe* 神州國光社 (House of the National Glories of the Divine Land; hereafter, House of SG), the art publishing department of the Society for Preserving National Learning. Motivated by a strong desire to preserve, protect, and promulgate the national essence believed to be embodied in works of art, the *Shenzhou guoguangji* seems to have been the first attempt in China specifically to employ the half-tone and collotype processes to reproduce images of Chinese art; and indeed, the market for photographic reproduction of Chinese art subsequently began to prosper. Further endeavours modelled on the example of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* came one after another (Appendix 2-1), all of which appeared in the form of periodicals being released at regular intervals and claiming to propagate the splendours of Chinese art. In addition to these routine publications were a great number of reproductions devoted to single works and published in various formats, from albums to those suitable for interior decoration; in the latter cases, customers were even able to choose from mounted and pre-mounted options.¹ These facts all suggest that reproducing art by means of modern printing processes had at that time become a growing enterprise in China, profitable enough to attract investment from a variety of different companies; a booming age of photographic reproductions of Chinese art was henceforth begun. After the Republic of China was established in 1912, this periodical changed its name

¹ See '*Shenzhou guoguangji jiwai zengkan siwuchi dahupian mulu* 神州國光集集外增刊四五尺大畫片目錄' (Catalogue of 4- to 5-foot high oversized scrolls not included in the SG), SG, 19 (1910), inside back cover.

to *Shenzhou daguanlu* 神州大觀錄 (‘Collection of the Grand View of the Divine Land’, Fig. 2-2),² continuing to publish collotype reproductions of images of Chinese art until late 1922.³ Shortly thereafter, the publishing house passed from the owner and chief editor Deng Shi to Chen Mingshu 陳銘樞 (1889-1965), who would later become the chairman of the Guangdong Provincial Government.⁴

Since most images published in the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, as well as in other similar art periodicals, were those of works in renowned private collections of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, these reproductions have long been regarded by modern scholars as visual evidence of the contents of these early twentieth-century collections before they were dispersed by the later wars and turmoil in China and have served as historical evidence supplementary to more accessible public collections today. As a result, these art reproductions have been used by art historians merely as raw pictorial data, transparent and free from any preoccupations of the time in which they were created, rather than as a ‘text’ in their own right.⁵

² The period immediately after the 1911 Revolution saw a prevailing uncertainty about the fate of the newborn Republican China, which inevitably interrupted the regular release of the periodical. Consequently, the *Shenzhou guoguangji* halted its publication (after releasing Issue 20) from the eighth lunar month of 1911, and the last issue (21) was published only in October 1912 when the overall situation became more stable. See ‘Guanggao 廣告’ (Announcement), SG, 21 (1912), inside front cover.

³ SOAS Library has the first twelve volumes (1912-1917) of the *Shenzhou daguanlu*. I came across vols. 13 to 16 (1918-1922) in the Art Museum of the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

⁴ Due to his deteriorating health, Deng Shi sold the House of SG to Chen in 1923. See Wang Zhongxiu, *Huang Binhong nianpu*, pp. 186-187. Chen entrusted the art division of the publishing house to Huang Binhong, who from 1928 started a new art periodical *Shenzhou daguan xubian* 神州大觀續編 (Continuing Series of the *Shenzhou daguan*) to continue publishing art reproductions. By June 1929, the publisher had released 6 volumes. However, it is still uncertain when this periodical ceased to exist, and how many volumes were put out in total. The copies I have encountered are the ones collected in the library of the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

⁵ This attitude is best illustrated in James Cahill’s response to Cheng-hua Wang’s draft on new printing technology, heritage preservation, and reproduction of antiquities in early twentieth century China, in which he says, ‘This [article] is less a reminiscence ... than a guide to researchers on the whereabouts of collections of collotype reproduction books for Chinese painting. ... [T]hey make up a huge archive of reproduction materials for Chinese painting’. James Cahill, ‘Chinese Ptg Collotype Reproduction Books’, online text, <http://jamescahill.info/r11.336.159.shtml>, access date, 1 July 2010. However, recent scholarship have begun to consider the role of photographic art reproductions in the formation of new cultural practices; see Suzuki Hiroyuki 鈴木廣之, *Kōkoka tachi no jūku seiki: bakumatsu meiji ni okeru ‘mono’ no arukeorōjii* 好古家たちの十九世紀:幕末明治における《物》のアルケオロジー ‘Antiquarians’ nineteenth century: the archaeology of “things” in the late Edo and Meiji periods’

However, the historical significance of these art reproductions is far more complicated; they provide not only photographic evidence of contemporary visual knowledge, but also valuable insights into the ways in which traditional cultural practices are reproduced through, and integrated with, modern technologies—insights concerning the different loci where cultural authenticity is asserted. It should be borne in mind that reproducing paintings and calligraphy has been practiced in China since at least the fourth century, and it was certainly no novelty to the Chinese people of the early twentieth-century. Although modern printing technologies incorporating photography eventually made possible what William Ivins calls ‘exactly repeatable pictorial statements’,⁶ this alone cannot explain why these methods were embraced with such great enthusiasm in China, where there had already existed time-honoured practices revolving around the making and collecting of copies. Moreover, the advent of printing technology alone did not guarantee that photomechanical processes would become the preferred method for making art reproductions. For instance, in Europe, even in the 1850s—by which time photography had already become widely available for the purpose of reproducing artworks—reproductive engraving was still thought to be the more preferable method of art reproduction, being widely admired for its capability of ‘translating’ the spirit of the original.⁷ Therefore, the convergence of photographic printing technology and the enterprise of art reproduction is not simply a question of grabbing and adopting the latest printing methods, and perhaps this issue can be better understood as a culturally conditioned choice.

(Tokyo, 2003). I am grateful to Cheng-hua Wang who kindly gave me part of her manuscript entitled ‘New Printing Technology and Heritage Preservation: Reproduction of Antiquities in Early Twentieth-Century China’, which contains her initial thoughts on the relationship between collotype reproductions, heritage preservation and the exhibitionary culture in early twentieth-century China.

⁶ William Ivins, *Prints and Visual Communication* (Cambridge, MA, 1953), p. 3.

⁷ Trevor Fawcett, ‘Graphic versus Photographic in the Nineteenth-century Reproduction’, *Art History* 9.2 (June 1986), pp. 185-212 (192-193). Ivins recalls in his book that even in the 1910s some highly-placed persons in American museums still insisted that the best and the only truly dignified way to reproduce important paintings and sculpture was by means of traditional manual reproductions executed by recognised painters and engravers. Ivins, *Prints and Visual Communication*, pp. 130-131.

As one of the pioneers in the field of mechanical production of art reproductions, the *Shenzhou guoguangji* was the one which inspired most of the other contemporary publishing houses not only to emulate its printing practices, but also to subscribe to its rhetoric on reproduction. The thriving market in art reproductions also suggested a wide and positive reception for such rhetoric and practices. Why did such a great demand for art reproductions exist during this period? Why should the printing and advertising practices set up by the Society come to be followed by later, similar attempts? Did these reproductions help to shape the contemporary understanding of ‘Chinese art’, at a time when the term ‘art’ (*meishu*) as an integral concept grouping objects of different materials was still new to China?

To explore these questions, it is important not only to examine the rhetorical strategies deployed in the advertisements for these photographic reproductions, but also to take into consideration the materiality of the same reproductions on which such advertising rhetoric centred. As such, this chapter will first give a brief account of the contents and physical form of this periodical and the printing methods it employed, followed by an introduction to the traditional and contemporary practices of art reproduction from which the *Shenzhou guoguangji* may have acquired its physical features and rhetorical vocabulary. All these descriptions and historical constructions lead to an analysis of the interplay between the trope of the copy in China, the hierarchical values projected onto these modern printing techniques, and the materiality of the reproductions published in this periodical. It will be argued that the attempts at reproducing Chinese art objects at this time were not merely aiming for a faithful copying of images, but also implied an effort to replicate cultural practices and translate them into a modern art world. Finally, in order to address the multilayered historical milieu within which the periodical established itself, the

market for and behind this enterprise of art reproduction will also be discussed, in order to see how the lofty, nationalistic sentiments with which these reproductions were so highly charged did not preclude them from being used for commercial purposes, but instead actually facilitated the then booming market for antiques.

The contents and materiality of the *Shenzhou guoguangji*

Given that this periodical was aimed at ‘celebrating national glories and promoting *meishu*’, it is not surprising that the *Shenzhou guoguangji* is considerably larger (22 x 29.8 cm) than its immediate predecessor in the practice of art reproduction, the journal *Guocui xuebao* (13.5 x 20.2 cm, Fig.2-3).⁸ The editor-cum-manager Deng Shi began his ‘Preface’ to this art periodical with a brief introduction to the importance of *meishu* in its own right, and described the study of *meishu* as the only disinterested learning in the world. He acknowledged the high, honourable status of ‘*meishu*’, and referred to the idea of an unnamed German philosopher that *meishu* was the creation of genius and had no practical purposes, for beauty was the only end of art and existed within the art itself. The disinterestedness of art was regarded as being precisely where the value of *meishu* lay, for a viewer would become absorbed in art and would hence forget other worldly interests. Therefore, *meishu*—unlike politics and science, which dealt with physical desires—answered only to one’s soul, and was the means of escape from human suffering.⁹

This German philosopher in question is very likely to be Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), whose ideas of genius, of disinterested aesthetic appreciation, and of absorption in art as a means of alleviating human sufferings, were applied to Chinese

⁸ ‘*Fanli* 凡例’(General Remarks), *SG*, 1 (1908), p. 4. Observations of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* are made primarily based on the copies held in the Percival David Foundation, unless otherwise specified as the copies collected in the Fu Ssu-nien Library, Academia Sinica, Taipei.

⁹ Deng Shi, ‘*Xu* 叙’(Preface [to the *SG*]), *SG*, 1 (1908), pp. 1-3 (1).

materials by Wang Guowei, then only in his late twenties, in a celebrated essay ‘Commentaries on *The Dream of the Red Chamber*’, first published in 1904 in the journal *Jiaoyu shijie* 教育世界 (World of Education), founded by Luo Zhenyu.¹⁰ Given that Luo and Wang were both involved in the network of readership/patronage of the Society after 1908, it is more than likely that Wang’s essay may have contributed to the notion of ‘*meishu*’ embodied in this publishing project. However, it should be noted that ‘poetry, dramas, and novels’ were regarded in Wang’s essay as the pinnacle of ‘*meishu*’ in China, which suggests that ‘literary arts’ were considered to be one of the components of ‘*meishu*’, a conception not only different from what is to be seen below in the practices of art reproduction, but to be modified in the undertaking of the compilation of texts on art, *Meishu congshu* (Chapter 3).¹¹

Nevertheless, all the aesthetical reasoning in the ‘Preface’ led readers to a nationalist concern. According to Deng, China was the earliest civilised nation in the world, and thus had a long tradition of art production which in recent years had attracted the pursuit of and studies by European and American connoisseurs.¹² However, the Chinese people did not seem to have realised the true value of their own treasures, a sad reality which, Deng believed, resulted from the fact that the original works of *jinshi* (metal and stone inscriptions, or metal and stone objects themselves), as well as those of calligraphy and painting, had been circulated only among the

¹⁰ Wang Guowei, ‘*Honglouloumeng pinglun* 紅樓夢評論’ (Commentaries on *The Dream of the Red Chamber*), in Luo Zhenyu (ed.), *Haining Wang Jingan xiansheng yishu* 海寧王靜安先生遺書 ‘Collected works by the late Mr. Wang Jingan from Haining’ (48 vols., Changsha, 1940), xiv, pp. 40b-62a. The relationship between this essay and Schopenhauer’s aesthetics is explored in Ye Jiaying 葉嘉瑩, *Wang Guowei jiqi wenxue piping* 王國維及其文學批評 ‘On Wang Guowei and his theory of literary criticism’ (Hong Kong, 1980), pp. 12-13, 148-211; and Guo Yuwen 郭玉雯, ‘*Wang Guowei Honglouloumeng pinglun yu Shubenhua zhexue* 王國維紅樓夢評論與叔本華哲學’ (Wang Guowei’s ‘Commentaries on *The Dream of the Red Chamber*’ and Schopenhauer’s philosophy), *Hanxue yanjiu* 漢學研究 (Chinese Studies), 19.1 (June 2001), pp. 277-308.

¹¹ See Wang Guowei, *op. cit.*, p. 44b.

¹² Here, Deng referred to books on Chinese art written by French and American authors without giving any bibliographic information for their identification. Deng Shi, ‘*Xu*’, p. 2.

wealthy and the powerful since ancient periods. Insofar as these art objects were inaccessible to a wide audience, they had suffered from a kind of ‘imprisonment’ (*youqiu* 幽囚) which would lead to their eventual extinction. As such, this periodical aspired to bring together the images of these precious works in hopes of ‘publicising to all the lovable substance of the nation, the embodiment of the national glories of the divine land’.¹³

Such strong nationalist sentiments were readily reflected in the title of this periodical, for the term ‘*guoguang*’ can be literally translated as ‘national glories’; and the term ‘*shenzhou*’, meaning ‘divine land’, is a metonym for ‘China’—used most often in contexts expressing the loss of one’s country or the will to salvage the motherland. Preserving national art was in a way meant to protect and glorify the nation, so the publisher found modern printing technologies particularly helpful, since the image of the original piece could be replicated without ‘a hair’s difference’. The latest halftone and collotype printing processes imported from Japan were thus employed to reproduce objects of Chinese art, and the size of the periodical was also said to have been carefully contrived to provide a viewing experience in which all the brushwork of the original could be duly appreciated. It was also stressed that each reproduction was made ‘from the original’, rather than from a painted copy—a statement most likely made to distinguish the reproductive practices of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* from those of the journal *Guocui xuebao*, where some illustrations were actually based on painted copies (see Chapter 1).¹⁴ Counterfeit items were guaranteed to be excluded from this art periodical, as the editorial board was supported by many established connoisseurs who not only contributed their own collections, but also helped to seek out works worthy of reproduction and publication. These experts

¹³ Ibid., pp. 2-3.

¹⁴ ‘*Fanli*’, p. 4.

included Luo Zhenyu, Shen Tang, and Shen Zhilu—the three patrons mentioned in Chapter 1—as well as Zheng Wenzhuo 鄭文焯 (1856-1918), a renowned *ci* poet; Yang Baoyong 楊寶鏞 (1869-1917), an acclaimed collector; and Wang Bogong 王伯弓.¹⁵ To be sure, the *Shenzhou guoguangji* operated in a fashion similar to that established by the journal *Guocui xuebao*, and shared the same network of readers and contributors (see Chapter 1), a network which would doubtlessly have extended beyond the listed names.

This art periodical is highly ‘visual’, in the sense that its textual contents are not as much a feature of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* as its pictorial ones. The physical form of the periodical can be roughly divided into two parts: the text—which comes first—and the images, which serve as the main body of the periodical. From an early stage, both sections were printed on Western papers, so this periodical was also bound in the Western style. The text section was printed in movable type on a kind of yellowish western paper (Fig. 2-4) and comprised mainly advertisements for other publications from the same publisher, in addition to editorial announcements and short biographies of the artists and of the acclaimed collectors related to the works published in that same issue. The rest of the periodical was composed of photographic reproductions of various works of art, with an average number of thirty-two plates per issue. These images were printed on two kinds of Western papers according to the printing methods applied to each reproduction, as will be discussed below. Each image page was separated by a thin, translucent protective sheet. Each image was accompanied by a short caption stating the name of the item, its attributed maker, and its current owner, as well as the dimensions of the original object (Fig. 2-5), which were measured specifically using a system based on an ancient bronze ruler, then in

¹⁵ Deng Shi, ‘Xu’, p. 2.

Shen Zhilu's collection, in an attempt to solve certain problems over disagreements between various measuring systems in China at the time (Fig. 2-6).¹⁶ The provision of the dimensions of the original object was believed to be able to help readers feel 'as if they were facing the originals in the flesh (*rujian zhenmian* 如見真面, literally, as if seeing the true face [of the object])'.¹⁷

Despite having a structure which separated the text and the image, this art periodical appears to have placed a strong emphasis on visual information, as in general not much description was given for each individual object. Although at certain times—when it was deemed necessary to provide more details about the published objects—yellowish paper (on which the additional text was printed) would be inserted between pages of images, such cases occur in only 10 cases throughout the periodical's publication history.¹⁸ Before Deng Shi started his editorial column 'Talks on the Topic of Editorial Work' (*Jilu yutan*) beginning in Issue 19 (1911), such additional information about the reproduced objects had only been found in the advertisements for past issues, which appeared just twice in the periodical's publication.¹⁹ As such, the *Shenzhou guoguangji* clearly remained image-orientated.

The 'national glories' deemed worth publicising were broadly divided by the editors into two categories: 'Shuhua 書畫' (Calligraphy and Painting) and 'Jinshi' (Metal and Stone), although the 'objects of art' (*meishupin*) requested by the Society for Preserving National Learning also included carvings, textiles, lacquers, and

¹⁶ Shen Zhilu, 'Jin tongchi 晉銅尺' (Bronze ruler of the Jin dynasty [286-385]), SG, 1 (1908), individually paginated, pp. 1-2.

¹⁷ 'Fanli', p. 4.

¹⁸ SG, Issue 1, 4 (twice), 6 (twice, 1908), 7, 9, 10 (1909), 16 (1910), 20 (1911).

¹⁹ 'Shenzhou guoguangji wushen yichu liuji guanggao lüeshuo 神州國光集戊申已出六集廣告略說' (Brief accounts of the past six issues of the SG published in 1908), SG, 7 (1909), no pagination; and 'Shenzhou guoguangji diqiji zhi tese 神州國光集第七集之特色' (Features in Issue 7 of the SG), SG, 8 (1909), [adv.] p.1.

ceramics.²⁰ The category ‘*Jinshi*’ was basically composed of objects made of materials of metal and stone, such as bronzes, steles and stone inscriptions; nevertheless, its application was also meant to be flexible, sometimes including ancient seals, coins (Fig. 2-7) and ‘miscellaneous objects’, such as musical instruments (Fig. 2-8). It should be remembered that rubbings of all these objects were also reproduced in the same way as the original objects themselves and were placed in the group of *Jinshi*, which can be seen in their order of appearance in the periodical. Although in the first seven issues the ‘Table of Contents’ (on the inside front cover) did not try to group the published items, objects of ‘*Jinshi*’ always came first, followed by those of ‘*Shuhua*’. Within each category, the objects were generally arranged by their periods of production; therefore, in the first six issues, works of calligraphy and of painting were not grouped separately and were sometimes seen mixed with one another, since they were arranged according to the period of their makers. The ‘Table of Contents’ also gave succinct information on the importance and whereabouts of the objects (Fig. 2-9).

However, a further breaking-down of these two categories was attempted beginning in Issue 8 (1909, Fig. 2-10) onwards, and, henceforth, reproduced objects were generally grouped by the materials with which they were made. ‘*Jinshi*’ was thus broken down into ‘*jin*’ (metal), and ‘*shi*’ (stone), with new (but not regularly present) categories added in, such as those of ‘*ni* 泥’ (‘clay’, Fig. 2-11), ‘*tao* 陶’ (‘pottery’), ‘*zhuan* 磚’ (‘brick’, Fig. 2-12), ‘*wa* 瓦’ (‘tile’, Fig. 2-13), and ‘*zaoxiang* 造像’ (‘sculpted images’, Fig. 2-14), as well as ‘*guquan* 古泉’ (‘ancient coins’) and ‘*zajian*

²⁰ ‘*Guoxue baocunhui jingzheng bowu meishupin qi* 國學保存會敬徵博物美術品啓’ (The Society for Preserving National Learning sincerely ask for contribution of objects of natural history and of art), SG, 1 (1908), no pagination.

雜件’ or ‘*zaqi* 雜器’ (‘miscellaneous objects’, Fig. 2-8, 2-15).²¹ ‘*Shuhua*’ was further divided into ‘*shu*’ (‘calligraphy’) and ‘*hua*’ (‘painting’), which were sometimes joined by an irregular category, ‘*tie* 帖’ (‘model-letters’, or ‘model calligraphic works’, Fig. 2-16), placed before the category of ‘*shu*’—which was in the ‘Contents’ always followed by that of ‘*hua*’.²² Although these new categories were still based on the original two groupings, objects of various materials, functions, and values, and hence requiring different ways of handling and appreciation, were all grouped under the same heading of *meishu*, and came to be known collectively as the ‘national glories’. However, no articles on the artworks illustrated, nor any critical studies on ‘Chinese art’ were to be found in the periodical. Such an image-orientated character of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* suggests the significance of the reproductions themselves. No wonder the methods of reproducing high-quality images were highly stressed in the rhetoric of its advertising.

Two kinds of printing processes were used in the production of this periodical: one is the halftone process (*dianqi tongbanfa* 電氣銅版法, or *wangmuban* 網目版); the other is collotype (*keluoban* 珂羅版 or *boliban* 玻璃版). Since they both are able to keep not merely the outline form of images, but also the gradations of tone, they were regarded at the time as the most suitable methods for reproducing works of art. The editors thus believed that the subtle changes in ink colour within the all-important brushwork, *bimo* 筆墨, could be well preserved, and hence immense emphasis was placed in the advertising rhetoric on the effect of verisimilitude. However, there were some restrictions on the type of paper to which each method was most effectively

²¹ The category ‘*ni*’ appears in SG, 9, 10, 11, 13; ‘*tao*’ in SG, 11; ‘*zhuan*’ in SG, 12, 14, 16, 17; ‘*wa*’ in SG, 18, 21; ‘*zaoxiang*’ in SG, 21; ‘*guquan*’ in SG, 18; ‘*zajian*’ in SG, 14; ‘*zaqi*’ in SG, 19, 20, 21 (1911).

²² There is only one exception, occurring in Issue 8, where a page printed in collotype shows both calligraphic and painted works by Dong Qichang. However, the order of ‘*shu*’ coming before ‘*hua*’ remains unchanged in the ‘Table of Contents’ of the same issue.

applied, and each technology had deficiencies of its own, facts which might not have been explicitly expressed in the advertisements.

The halftone process was invented in 1882 and came to be used in China in the 1900s.²³ To register the tonal gradation of the photographed image, this method involves placing inside the camera a specially made ‘screen’ (*wang* 網) on which there are innumerable minute, square openings (*mu* 目) to split into units the light passing through (which is probably why the halftone process was also called in Chinese *wangmuban*). As a result, these units appear to the eyes as very fine ‘dots’ of different sizes and cover the printing surface of a halftone image (Fig. 2-17). Since these minute dots must be printed on a very smooth paper, the paper used for the halftone process needed to be coated with china-clay to fill out the slightest unevenness on the surface of the paper, or must at least have been ‘calendared’ (pressed between rollers).²⁴ All these aforementioned features of the halftone process can be observed in the materiality of the halftones in the *Shenzhou guoguangji* (Fig. 2-8a, 2-18).²⁵ The paper used for halftone process in this periodical is shiny and white with a smooth texture, and looks a bit like the paper used for today’s calendars. It was called by the

²³ See He Shengnai 賀盛鼎, ‘*Sanshiwu nian lai zhongguo zhi yinshua shu* 三十五年來中國之印刷術’, (Printing technology in China during the past 35 years), in *Zueijin sanshiwu nian zhi zhongguo jiaoyu* 最近三十五年之中國教育 ‘Education in China during the recent 35 years’ (Shanghai, 1931), pp. 178-202 (184).

²⁴ Jan Poortenaar, *The Technique of Prints and Art Reproduction Processes: A Study of Technical Process with 45 Specimens and 90 Illustrations* (London, 1933), pp. 113-120, 159.

²⁵ The halftone process was also known in contemporary writings on modern printing technology as ‘*zhaoxiang tongxin ban* 照相銅鋅版’ (‘photographic copper/ zinc plate process’), ‘*wangmu tongban* 網目銅版’ (‘screened copper plate’), ‘*wangmu ban*’ (‘screened plate’), ‘*dianqi tongban* 電氣銅版’ (‘electronic copper plate’) or simply ‘*tongban* 銅版’ (‘copper plate’). However, the various Chinese terms of the same method also leads to confusion about the exact terminology for this process in English, particularly the term ‘*dianqi tongban*’, which is often mistaken for another term ‘*diandu tongban* 電鍍銅版’, denoting the method ‘electrotype’, which is used most often for making movable type. Christopher Reed translates the term ‘*zhaoxiang tongxinban*’ as ‘photoengraving’ (which in English denotes a process of engraving using photographic processing techniques) probably because he thinks this Chinese term refers to a category different from the ‘halftone’ process which he has introduced in the previous paragraph as a separate category; see Christopher Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1876-1937* (Vancouver, 2003), pp. 59-60. However, a close examination of the original Chinese texts from which Reed acquires his knowledge reveals that the so-called *zhaoxing tongxinban* is actually what in English is commonly known as the halftone process.

editors ‘waxy-bright paper’, *laguangzhi* 蠟光紙, and was a kind of paper not native to China.²⁶ Upon careful examination of this periodical, one can indeed perceive some fine dots on the edges of some images printed with the halftone process. The Chinese editors were well aware of such defects and once instructed readers (in response to the prevalent fraudulent replacement of collotype reproductions with photolithographic and halftone ones) that in a halftone reproduction, ‘there are still screen patterns (*wangwen* 網紋) to be found’ even though this process was able to preserve the gradations of the tone.²⁷ Therefore, the halftone process was not ideal in terms of its quality.

However, collotype has no such problems and was regarded as the remedy for problems found with other photomechanical printing processes such as photolithography and halftone. Since a plate of glass coated with gelatine is used to make the most delicate-grained printing surface, collotype is generally regarded as unequalled among all the photomechanical processes for high-quality reproductions.²⁸ In printing high-quality collotype prints, the control of the dampness during the printing process is of great importance, so a hard-sized paper is generally preferred, since an absorbent paper extracts too much dampness from the gelatine on the plate and affects the final results. In addition, unlike other mechanical printing methods such as halftone, collotype-printing must be attended to at all times during the process of printing, and hence its production times are comparatively slow. Furthermore, insofar as the surface of a collotype plate is so delicate, large numbers of editions cannot be printed from the same plate. According to Jan Poortenaar, five hundred good prints may perhaps be obtained from a single plate; but for a thousand, the

²⁶ ‘*Benji zhiban yinshua zhi tese* 本集製版印刷之特色’(Special features regarding the print-making of this periodical), *SG*, 4 (1908), inside back cover.

²⁷ ‘*Tebie guanggao* 特別廣告’(Special announcement), *SG*, 9 (1909), inside front cover.

²⁸ Jan Poortenaar, *The Technique of Prints*, p. 146.

quality becomes compromised.²⁹ If large numbers of prints are needed, new plates made from the same negative must be prepared.

The editors of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* could hardly avoid these technical limitations. They even claimed that each of their collotype plates was able to yield only 200 prints.³⁰ Such low manufacturing output may have been conditioned by the particular brand of printing machine the company used, as the publisher told the reader that the collotype technology they employed was not the ordinary ‘collotype’ (*keluo taibu* 珂珞泰布, transliteration of ‘collotype’), but the one called ‘*yatu taibu* 亞土泰布’ (transliteration of ‘Artotype’, a type of collotype)—a technology which was, the editors believed, the most refined reproductive method of all, and with which ‘the textural brushstroke within the depiction of a mountain, the delineation of the branches and foliages of trees, the dry/wet, dark/pale ink effects, as well as the strength and the route of the mark left by a brush pen are clearly registered without a slightest difference from the spirit of the original’(Fig. 2-5).³¹ The product of this collotype process was so fine that it was priced three times as high as a halftone³² and was often praised as ‘second only to the original’ (*xia zhenji yideng* 下真蹟一等)³³—a phrase which had previously been used most often in Chinese criticism in the appreciation of a tracing copy, originally of calligraphy, to celebrate its verisimilitude with regard to the original. The paper used for collotype printing in the *Shenzhou guoguangji* in the beginning also reflected the technical restrictions of this

²⁹ Ibid., p. 147.

³⁰ ‘*Jingao gohua zhujun* 謹告購畫諸君’ (To respectful buyers of [reproductions of] paintings), *SG*, 9 (1909), [adv.] p. 4.

³¹ ‘*Benji zhiban yinshua zhi tese*’, *SG*, 4. [凡山之皴染、樹之枝葉，乾溼、濃淡、深淺、筆路，一一分明，與原蹟精神無異]

³² ‘*Guanggao er* 廣告二 (Announcement II)’, *SG*, 1 (1908), inside back cover.

³³ ‘*Zi benji qi gaiyong xuanzhi lingzhuan yinhua guanggao* 自本集起改用宣紙綾絹印畫廣告’ (The periodical has now begun to use *xuan* paper and silk to print reproductions of painting), *SG*, 19 (1911), inside front cover.

printing process, as collotype worked best on hard, stiffened, non-absorbent paper. This kind of paper is not native to China either, and was referred to by the editors as ‘jade-plate paper’, *yubanzhi* 玉版紙.³⁴

Although in the advertisement the halftone prints in this art periodical were also praised as being ‘compatible to those in collotype’—as the screen the publisher employed for making the halftone print was said to have extremely fine openings which distinguished the halftone products of the House from ordinary ones on the market³⁵—it is clear that in the *Shenzhou guoguanji*, collotype was regarded more highly than the halftone process; the halftone process was, nevertheless, still viewed as superior to photolithography.³⁶ The hierarchy among these photomechanical printing processes was so firmly established and constantly reiterated in advertisements that it can be argued that pieces chosen to be reproduced in collotype were those which were more valued at that time. As the halftone and collotype processes were applied to different kinds of papers, the value the editors imposed on the reproduced objects was thus embodied in the materiality of the reproduction, which was not only visible in the quality of the image,³⁷ but also manifested in the material of the paper and thus tangible to the reader, whose viewing experiences involved both seeing and turning pages. As technology continued to advance, colour printing in both the halftone and collotype processes was also introduced in the *Shenzhou guoguanji* for a short period, during which time each issue would contain one colour print either in the halftone or in collotype; the paper used for these colour prints still depended on the respective printing method used.³⁸ Nonetheless, as we

³⁴ ‘Benji zhiban yinshua zhi tese’, *SG*, 4.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ ‘Tebie guanggao’, *SG*, 9.

³⁷ In addition to the difference in quality, a halftone illustration is generally framed by black border lines (Fig. 2-18), while this feature is absent in a collotype illustration (Fig. 2-5).

³⁸ Colour prints were introduced in Issue 9 (1909) and appeared in issues 9, 14 (in collotype), and 12,

shall see below, in the rhetoric on art reproduction in the early twentieth century, ‘colour’ printing itself was never able to compete with the black-and-white collotype process.

Although collotype was a photographic printing process invented in the late 1860s in Europe and was said to have been used in China in the early years of the Guangxu era (1875-1908), it was probably not until the early twentieth century that this method was considered in China to be a strong vehicle for replicating images of art works.³⁹ However, questions still remain, such as: what made the photographic printing methods be applied to reproducing images of art works; why such a practice would have become accepted as a means of preserving national glories and have sustained itself in market terms; why preserving the original art work to such a degree of visual exactitude would be considered so important to the publisher. Furthermore, the fact that these printing processes were able to reproduce artworks ‘photographically’ does not automatically explain away all these questions, just as a photographic image itself does not stand as evidence without its being integrated into a discursive system incorporating practices and institutions through which the photograph can take on meaning and exert what Barthes calls ‘evidential force’.⁴⁰ Therefore, we must also turn to the contemporary and traditional practices of art reproduction to explore the discursive system in which these photographic reproductions were able to enjoy their success.

13, 15, 16, 17 (in halftone). See also ‘*Tebie guanggao*’, *SG*, 9.

³⁹ The pioneer in collotype in China was said to be the missionary print shop Xujiahui Tushanwan Press, which used this process to reproduce images of the Virgin Mary. It was also reported that in 1902, Zhao Hongxue 趙鴻雪, a member of staff at Wenming Books (Wenming *shuju* 文明書局), succeeded in printing with collotype. See He Shengnai, ‘*Sanshiwu nian*’, p. 192. However, there seems no mention in the extant sources about the exact date before 1908 when this process was first used in the industry of art reproduction.

⁴⁰ John Tagg, *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories* (London, 1988), p. 4.

Possible prototypes

The *Shenzhou guoguangji* may have been the pioneer in China in applying the halftone and collotype processes to the preservation of the national artistic tradition; however, it was by no means the first such attempt in Asia. Modern scholars often compare the Chinese periodical to the *Kokka* (26.6 x 28.5 cm) in Japan, a prestigious art periodical inaugurated in 1899 and featuring both high-quality collotype reproductions and research into visual art. In fact, the *Kokka* itself recognised the *Shenzhou guoguangji* in 1909, after the Chinese periodical had been in circulation for one year. In this short Japanese introduction, the resemblance between the two periodicals was acknowledged: the *Shenzhou guoguangji* was described as a ‘*Kokka*-like’ art magazine in Qing China, one launched in response not only to the call for preserving the national essence, but also to the nationalist movement to reclaim national rights from foreign forces. The editors of the *Kokka* were also aware of the separately-issued reproductions of individual artworks published by the same Chinese publishing house, but pointed out that this Chinese art periodical lacked the academic and critical studies of art featured in the *Kokka* itself (Fig. 2-19).⁴¹ These are fair comments, for the *Shenzhou guoguangji* resembles the *Kokka* not as much in its material form as in its aspiration to promote national art, since the former centred more on illustrations and the latter on research.

Although a direct model on which the reproductive practices of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* was based remains undiscovered, perhaps a likely prototype for this Chinese art periodical can be found in another Japanese art publication, the *Shinbi taikan* 真美大観 (original English title, ‘*Selected Relics of Japanese Art*’, 27.5 x 41.2

⁴¹ ‘*Shinshū kokkō shū* 神州國光集’ (*Shenzhou guoguangji*), *Kokka*, 226 (1909), p. 242.

cm).⁴² It was a bilingual (Japanese-English), twenty-volume publication aimed at publicising reproductions in either collotype or chromo-xylography, consisting in total of a thousand objects of sculpture and painting owned by old temples, noble families, and private collectors from all around Japan (Fig. 2-20).⁴³ Like the *Kokka*, the *Shinbi taikan* was launched in order to introduce ancient Japanese art to the rest of the world and to supply materials for the study of Japanese art. All the collotype reproductions are in black-and-white; and chromo-xylography, a kind of colour wood-engraving, was said to be applied only to objects where the colour was essential to the original work, or those which were difficult to photograph.⁴⁴ Each volume is composed entirely of illustrations, each separated by a thin, translucent sheet of protective paper on which was given a brief introduction of the published object, written in both English and Japanese (Fig. 2-21).

The *Shinbi taikan*, like the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, was a publication that strove to promote the art of a nation.⁴⁵ The fact that its release spanned from 1899 to 1908 made it seem like a periodical; and its large size and emphasis on illustrations as

⁴² S. Tajima (ed.), *Shinbi taikan* 真美大観 ‘Grand view of true beauty’, or *Selected Relics of Japanese Art* (20 vols., Kyoto, 1899). The contents of *Shinbi taikan* have been digitalised from a photocopied reproduction and made accessible online by the National Diet Library, Tokyo. I am indebted to Prof. Toshio Watanabe for this information.

⁴³ I have not yet come across a complete original set of this exquisite publication. My observations are based on the copies held in two libraries: one in the reading room of the Graduate Institute of Art History, National Taiwan University, Taipei, where there are only the first ten volumes; the other in the Sackler Library, Oxford University, which, in fact, is a complete collection of the ‘protective sheets’ in the original publication, on which individual objects are introduced in both Japanese and English; however, there is no illustration in the Oxford copy. It is very likely that the illustrations of the Oxford copy were detached by the original owner to form a certain picture archive of Japanese art. This hypothesis is further supported by the presence of piles of reproductions of Japanese art in the Ashmolean Museum, which, sorted by artists, architectures, or artistic schools, are clearly put together from various publications; however, the original publication from which a reproduction is separated from is, without exception, not indicated. Some of these reproductions can be identified as being detached from the first ten volumes of *Shinbi taikan*, and, like the protective sheets in the Sackler Library, they all bear the stamp ‘Cohn Library of Oxford University’, a stamp probably used by the former library of the Department of Eastern Art at the Ashmolean Museum, created by William Cohn (1880-1961), before it was later integrated into the Sackler Library. I am indebted to Prof. Craig Clunas who suggested this possibility, and to Dr. Clare Polard, curator of Japanese art at the Ashmolean Museum, who facilitated my viewing of these reproductions and brought the library stamp to my attention.

⁴⁴ S. Tajima, ‘Editorial Notice’, in S. Tajima (ed.), *Shinbi taikan*, i, no pagination.

⁴⁵ However, it should be noted that *Shinbi taikan* also includes non-Japanese objects of art.

opposed to text is echoed in the image-orientated character of the *Shenzhou guoguanji*. The use of protective sheets between illustrations (a practice also seen in the *Kokka*) can be observed in the *Shenzhou guoguanji* too, in spite of the fact that the latter did not print onto such sheets information about the reproduced object. In addition, the *Shinbi taikan* listed not only the item's current owner, but also the dimensions of the original object—a practice absent in the *Kokka* (which did not give the dimensions of the art work) but adopted in the Chinese periodical (although it should be noted that the provision of the dimensions was also a common practice in China in cataloguing one's own collection of painting). Given that the Chinese publisher's network of readership had extended to Japan (Chapter 1), it was not entirely impossible that the editorial board of the *Shenzhou guoguanji* had in mind these Japanese art reproductions when they endeavoured to conceive their own version. An even more compelling association between the *Shinbi taikan* and the Chinese periodical may perhaps be reflected in the fact that the *Shenzhou guoguanji* was succeeded by a periodical titled *Shenzhou daguanlu* which shared the same Chinese characters 'dagan 大觀' ('taikan' in Japanese) with the Japanese publication.

However, there are reasons to believe that these Japanese periodicals and publications were not the only sources from which the *Shenzhou guoguanji* derived its form, structure, and publishing practices. For instance, the *Shenzhou guoguanji* structured its contents by the categories of objects, while the *Shinbi taikan* organised illustrations by the date of the artworks. It should be noted that although the *Shinbi taikan* had originally arranged reproductions in an order different from the later chronological one—an order in which the works reproduced in chromo-xylography came first, and the rest were arranged according to their subject matter—this practice was quickly abandoned and hence can hardly be seen as having been a model for the

Chinese art periodical (Fig. 2-22).⁴⁶ Furthermore, the term ‘art’ as interpreted in the Chinese periodical was considerably different from the interpretation in the Japanese publication; the latter celebrates mainly religious sculptures and paintings and does not contain any of what would be categorised in the *Shenzhou guoguangji* as ‘Jinshi’ (metal and stone), nor does it include calligraphic works or rubbings of stone inscriptions. In other words, notwithstanding the fact that an increasing number of Buddhist icons and sculptures are found in later issues of the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, the perception of ‘art’ exemplified in the *Shinbi taikan* did not seem to have had a significant impact on the Chinese editors, who aspired to propagate a purely Chinese artistic tradition. Other possible sources from which the *Shenzhou guoguangji* may have appropriated the publishing practices of art reproduction and the conception of ‘Chinese art’ will be dealt with in Chapter 5.

Contemporary practices of photomechanical art reproduction

If in contemporary practices of art reproduction in Japan one finds that high-quality reproductive printing processes were used to preserve and promote national art, one also sees that in China a growing market for art reproductions was striving to achieve better effects of verisimilitude to the originals. Before the halftone and collotype processes were introduced for art reproduction, photolithography had already been employed for the purposes of venturing into this new enterprise in China no later than 1879, as seen in an advertisement placed by the Shanghai-based Dianshizhai Lithographic Studio (*Dianshizhai shiyingju* 點石齋石印局) for photolithographic

⁴⁶ This practice was abandoned soon after the first volume was released, and hence the arrangement in the latter five hundred copies of vol.1 was changed to use a chronological ordering. The information about the change is given in a detachable small piece of paper found in the copy in the Graduate Institute of Art History, National Taiwan University, Taipei, vol. 2.

reproductions of model-letters, pillar couplets, and paintings.⁴⁷ The Studio was owned by the British entrepreneur Ernest Major (1841-1908), whose publishing enterprises also included two of the most widely-read publications in late nineteenth-century Shanghai: the newspaper *Shenbao* 申報 (launched in 1872) and the *Dianshizhai Pictorial* (1884-1898).⁴⁸ Photolithography was used by the Studio not only for producing art reproduction, but also for reprinting old books, classics, and preparatory materials for the civil service examination (abolished in 1905)—a practice similar to the photolithographic reprints of the manuscripts handwritten by celebrated writers issued by the Society for Preserving National Learning (Chapter 1).

While the attraction of a photolithographic reprint of an old book may have lain in the low price resulting from mass production (and sometimes in the convenience lent by its portable size when printed in reduced size),⁴⁹ the rhetoric on photolithographic art reproductions had always revolved around their verisimilitude to the original. In this 1879 advertisement, the studio's newly acquired printing machine was praised as being capable of replicating works of calligraphy and painting 'with an effect not slightly different from, and even more lively than, the original'. Each advertised product was issued on its own and was priced separately for mounted and pre-mounted formats; one could even choose a reproduction of a pair of couplets printed on coloured paper, or a hand-coloured reproduction of a painting. These formats themselves to some extent determined their presumed function, that is, for

⁴⁷ 'Dianshizhai shuju yinshou shuji tuhua beitie yinglian jiamu 點石齋書局印售書籍圖畫碑帖楹聯價目' (Price list for the books, paintings, model-letters, and pillar couplets printed by the *Dianshizhai Books*', *Shenbao*, reprint (Shanghai, 1983), 27 July 1879, *ban* 1. See also the discussion in Wu Fangzheng 吳方正, 'Wanqing sishinian Shanghai shijue wenhua de jige mianxiang 晚清四十年上海視覺文化的幾個面向' (Aspects in Shanghai visual culture during the last 40 years of the Qing dynasty), *Guoli zhongyang daxue wenxue yuan renwen xuebao* 國立中央大學文學院人文學報 'Journal of Humanities East/West', 26 (2002), pp. 49-95(56-63). Wu also notices some traces of evidence suggesting an even earlier date of photolithography's employment in China.

⁴⁸ For the history and development of the *Shenbao*, and the *Dianshizhai Pictorial*, see Rudolf G. Wagner, 'Joining the Global Imaginaire'.

⁴⁹ Christopher Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai*, pp. 99, 110-111.

public display or decoration. However, up to this point, little had been said on the association between photolithographic reproductions of art and the preservation of the national essence. This early advertisement hence demonstrates that the practice of art reproduction did not necessarily have to find its *raison d'être* by allying itself with the nationalistic discourse; rather, it had been an independent field with its own principles and criteria. The alliance formed in the early twentieth century between art reproduction and the idea of preserving national glories was therefore a new phenomenon, one suggesting the integration between nationalist discourse and the tradition of copy-making in China.

This 1879 *Dianshizhai* advertisement also presents some features that differ greatly from the rhetorical strategies in advertising utilised by the publisher of the *Shenzhou guoguangji*. First, the 1879 advertisement placed little emphasis on the provenance or the ownership of the reproduced work, particularly for works of model-letter form and ancient rubbings; these works were only mentioned in terms of the title of the original. This practice contrasts strongly with that of the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, which was explicit about both the current ownership and the provenance of the reproduced original; sometimes, a reproduction would be stressed as having been made from the 'initial rubbing' of a certain stele.⁵⁰ The lack of provenance information in early advertisements suggests that the market at this time was not aware of the importance of the origin of 'the original', and that the business of art reproduction had not yet started to seek out the canonical 'original' of a particular work. A market obsessed with the origin of the original was only to come to fruition in a later period, when the artistic and antiquarian culture enjoyed and practiced by the literati came to be

⁵⁰ For example, for the same rubbing title, 'Thirteen Lines of Wang Xizhi's calligraphy on jade plates' (*Yuban shisanhang* 玉版十三行), the *Shenzhou guoguangji* claimed their reproduction was made from the initial rubbing, while in the 1879 advertisement in *Shenbao*, only the title was mentioned. See SG, 2 (1908), 'Contents'.

regarded as the very essence of the nation, one that needed to be preserved by means of reproduction.

Second, the juxtaposition of reproductions of works by both ancient and contemporary artists in the 1879 advertisement— where works by the most celebrated Shanghai painter of the day, Ren Bonian 任伯年 (1840-1896), and by the acclaimed Ming painting master Tang Yin 唐寅 (1470-1524) are both present— also suggests that a market dedicated solely to the reproduction of ancient arts had not yet been established in the late 1870s. It was not until two decades later, when art reproduction had come to be associated with the preservation of national artistic culture, that a market specifically devoted to reproducing images of ancient art was developed, in spite of the fact that reproductions of contemporary artists had never ceased to exist in the meantime.

Nevertheless, some of these early practices of art reproduction still found resonance in later periods, particularly in the manufacture of reproductions of single artworks. The same publisher of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* also released reproductions of single works of art in various formats: in addition to those in portfolio or album form, there were also such products as *tangfu* 堂幅 (wide scrolls for hanging in the centre of a hall), *lizhou* 立軸 (hanging scrolls), *hengfu* 橫幅 (short handscrolls for hanging), *shoujuan* 手卷 (handscrolls), *pingtiao* 屏條 (sets of narrow hanging scrolls to be displayed as screens or for screen panels), and *jingping* 鏡屏 (works for mirror/glass panels); among these, only portfolios and *shoujuan* were not in themselves a format meant for public display or interior decoration.⁵¹ Most of these ‘decorative’ reproductions were those of painting. In light of these facts, it can be said that reproductions sold in portfolio or album form were thus produced more for the

⁵¹ ‘*Shenzhou guoguangji jiwai zengkan siwuchi dahuapian mulu*’, SG 19.

purpose of preserving the visual knowledge of the reproduced originals than for that of exhibiting and decorating.⁵²

Whether these early photolithographic reproductions of art were meant for exhibiting purposes or as pedagogical means of learning how to write and paint,⁵³ there was a growing tendency to treat these photographic reproductions *as if they were the ‘originals’* (*‘zhenji 真蹟’*, literally, ‘real/genuine/true traces’). Such an attitude was manifested in the application to the reproduction of the practices—the ‘cult’ in Benjamin’s sense—associated with the handling and appreciation of the originals.⁵⁴ In a 1905 advertisement for the photolithographic reproductions published by Wenming Books, a collection of calligraphic works written by Wu Zhiying 吳芝瑛 (1868-1933)—wife of Lian Quan 廉泉 (1868-1832), the owner of that same publishing house—these photolithographic products were sold in the same way as if they were the originals: they were said to be printed in photolithography with the finest ink, carefully mounted, and, most importantly, impressed with real seals by the lady herself. Hence, they became ‘not different from the original’. Hundreds of sets were said to be ‘mounted with silk of tributary quality and cased in boxes for customers to hang on the wall whenever pleases them, or to present as a gift’.⁵⁵

When the original maker authorises a reproduction with his/her own seals, the

⁵² An example of advertisements for these portfolios can be seen also in SG, 19, back cover.

⁵³ Instances can be found in the advertisement for ‘*Shiying Tongcheng Wu Ziyang nüshi Xiao Wanliutang xizitie* 石印桐城吳紫英女史小萬柳堂習字帖’ (Photolithographic models-calligraphy of the Little Hall of Ten Thousand Willows by Ms Wu Ziyang from Tongcheng’, *Shibao*, 19 February 1905, *ban* 1.

⁵⁴ Benjamin argues that the aura of a work of art finds its expression in cult as the earliest art works originated in the service of ritual. However, as technological reproducibility emancipates the work of art from its ritual context, cult value (of a work of art) is also replaced by exhibition value. See Walter Benjamin, ‘The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility: Second Version’, in *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility and Other Writings on Media*: Walter Benjamin, eds., Michael W. Jennings, Brigid Doherty and Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge, MA., 2008), pp. 19-55 (23-27). For a better known but for Benjamin probably much compromised ‘third’ version, see ‘The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction’, in *Illuminations*, trans., Harry Zohn (London, 1973), pp. 219-253 (225-228).

⁵⁵ ‘*Shiying Tongcheng nüshi Lantingxu ba ping* 石印桐城女史蘭亭序跋屏’ (Photolithographic screen panels of calligraphy by Madame Tongcheng’, *Shibao*, 30 July 1905, *ban* 4.

reproduction begins to claim the same position which the original has long occupied. The reproduction is thus viewed as a real work of art, as the equivalent of the original, deserving likewise to be preserved and collected.⁵⁶

Such a tendency in the early twentieth century coalesced with the new attitude which regarded 'art' as national patrimony, as both collective cultural heritage and a source of private enjoyment. Art reproductions previously meant for private use or personal enjoyment were now endowed with a new meaning—that is, the reproduction of the very essence of the nation—and acquired a noble connotation of cultural preservation. The consumption and, more importantly, collection of art reproductions also became a kind of endorsement for the aspiration to salvage the nation, a trend which converged with the tendency in market practices encouraging potential customers to collect and appreciate photomechanically reproduced copies as if they were the originals. It is not surprising to find that at the very beginning, the so-called 'art'—the national glories to be preserved and promoted—meant primarily those works which had already been frequently reproduced in photolithography, such as model-letters, rubbings, calligraphy, and paintings. More important, commoditisation and consumption of art works and their reproductions did not contradict the noble idea of nationalism, and all the commercial concerns behind the enterprise of art reproduction were perfectly justified.

Furthermore, the desire to prevent the culture from extinction also prompted reproduction of the whole cultural practice of art appreciation in China— established

⁵⁶ A parallel phenomenon was found in Europe at least as early as the first half of the twentieth century, after photography came to be used in reproducing art works. As observed by Poortenaar, 'many oil-paintings and water-colours have been reproduced by certain mechanical processes based on photographs of the originals, and of these reproductions there have been issued editions of a hundred or more numbered impressions, signed by the artist who painted the original'. However, a reserved, or negative, attitude towards such a contemporary practice pervades Poortenaar's writing. See Jan Poortenaar, *The Technique of Prints*, p.169. It should be pointed out that such reservations (about applying the 'cult' originally associated with the original to a reproduction) were absent in China.

mainly by the literati—in which the making and collecting of copies also played an important part. As verisimilitude to the original was considered from the outset the most important quality of a copy, the search soon began for photomechanical printing processes even more sophisticated than photolithography, processes which were rapidly adopted upon their discovery. A year before the launch of the *Shenzhou guoguangji*—when an attempt to publish a monthly art periodical featuring reproductions of Chinese art was first proposed by Di Baoxian 狄葆賢 (1873-1921) in the Shanghai newspaper *Shibao* 時報 (Eastern Times, 1904-1939)⁵⁷—photolithography was criticised as being inadequate for art reproduction. In his ‘Preface to *Newspaper of Chinese Art*’, Di highlighted the importance of reproduction to the preservation of national art, and drew a comparison with the same practices in the West:

There are in general four methods used for high-quality art reproduction [in Europe]: printing with chemical solutions, three-colour photographic printing, five-colour engraving, and collotype. All these methods are capable of replicating faithfully and transmitting vividly the spirit of the original. Compared with them, the photolithography used in our country lacks the ability to reproduce the gradation of tone. The difference between their methods and ours is as great as that between the earth and sky!⁵⁸

Di Baoxian—who also founded the publishing house Youzheng Books (Youzheng *shuju* 有正書局), which would eventually become the greatest rival of the House of SG in the enterprise of art reproduction—was probably the first person to have openly proposed publishing art reproductions in periodical form; this endeavour, however, was to be first undertaken by the publisher of the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, the House of

⁵⁷ For Di Baoxian and *Shibao*, see Joan Judge, *Print and Politics*, esp. Chapter 2.

⁵⁸ ‘*Zhongguo meishubao xu* 中國美術報序’ (Preface to *Chinese Art Newspaper*), *Shibao*, 27 February 1907. [其精印之法，約計有四：有以藥水印者，有以三色寫真版印者，有以五色精刻版印者，有以玻璃版印者。凡諸種法，皆無不惟妙惟肖，栩栩傳神。方之吾國石印法不分濃淡者，真有霄壤之判也]

SG.⁵⁹ Di's proposed periodical, the 'Newspaper of Chinese Art' (*Zhongguo meishubao* 中國美術報), never came out. Instead, four months after the launch of the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, Di published under the auspices of his Youzheng Books a periodical entitled *Zhongguo minghua* ('Famous Chinese paintings', or, as the publisher called it, 'Specimens of Old Chinese Pictorial Art: A Monthly Journal of Oriental Art', Fig. 2-28), a periodical similar to the *Shenzhou guoguangji* in the employment of halftone and collotype processes for art reproduction, but different in that it was solely devoted to reproductions of ancient Chinese paintings.⁶⁰ Before the end of the Qing dynasty, the competition between the two publishing companies, the House of SG and Youzheng Books, would become more and more fierce, as can be seen in their advertising campaigns, many of which announced the advent of a booming age of photographic reproduction of art in China.

However, the cultural significance of the integration between contemporary practices in art reproduction and the aspiration to replicate the 'essence of the nation' cannot be fully understood without looking into the traditional discourse on, and practices of, the tradition of copy-making in China. This tradition served as the discursive foundation for all the aforementioned commercial and nationalistic rhetoric on and practices of art reproduction, and it would eventually affect how the cultural authenticity of these reproductions was to be discussed. As we shall see below, the reasoning behind applying the most refined printing process to replicating works of

⁵⁹ According to the advertisement in *Shibao*, the inaugural issue of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* was actually released in July 1908 instead of the second lunar month of the same year, as stated in the imprint page of the same issue; see *Shibao*, 3 July 1908, *ban*1. The same can be said of other issues of the same periodical, since most of them did not come out on the date given in the periodical itself. However, for the convenience of citation, they are referred to in this thesis by their putative date of release.

⁶⁰ The inaugural issue of the *Zhongguo minghua* came out in November 1908; see its advertisement in *Shibao*, 25 November 1908, *ban* 1. A whole set of forty volumes are collected at Shanghai Library and the library of Hong Kong University; the first twenty-eight volumes are also accessible at Bodleian Library, Oxford.

art was derived from the traditional discourse on art reproduction in China; and even the equation of the fate of the national art objects and the fate of the nation was embedded in this tradition of art appreciation.

A brief look at the contemporary reception of photographic art reproduction in Europe will perhaps highlight the uniquely discursive power of the tradition of copy-making in China in the early twentieth-century. In the first half of the twentieth century, some European critics, particularly art historians, still held the view that paintings were better reproduced by means of reproductive engravings rather than photography, on the grounds that only a good engraver is able to capture the spirit of the original and to translate it into the syntax of engraving.⁶¹ Conversely, the editors of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* were convinced that these photographic processes were sufficiently able to capture and transmit the spirit of the original since the brushwork, *bimo* 筆墨, its outline form and its tonal effects, could be preserved in a photographic reproduction. Such a conviction comes from an artistic tradition that celebrates traces of the brush, *bimo*.

The trope of the copy in early twentieth-century China

Brushwork, *bimo*, denotes the effect which a brush pen, *maobi* 毛筆, renders on the surface, be it paper or silk. *Bimo* is the basic unit in constructing a piece of calligraphy or painting and was considered in pre-modern critical writing as having recorded the presence of the maker and his spontaneity in accomplishing the present work. The earliest attempt to make an exact copy in China appears to have been made in

⁶¹ The ambivalence in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries towards the use of photographs as visual facts related to works of art in art history has been explored by Wolfgang M. Freitag, 'Early Uses of Photography in the History of Art', *Art Journal*, 39.2 (Winter, 1980-1979), pp. 117-123; Anthony Hamber, 'The Use of Photography by Nineteenth-Century Art Historians', in Helene E. Roberts, ed., *Art History through the Camera's Lens (Documenting the Image, II)*, (n.p. 1995), pp. 89-121.

response to the desire to reproduce calligraphy, which has long been regarded as the highest art form in China, and from this impetus, the whole tradition of copy-making and copy-collecting appears to have developed.

The history and legend of the *Lantingxu* 蘭亭序, ‘Preface to [the poems composed at] the Orchid Pavilion’—the most celebrated piece of calligraphy in Chinese history of all times—well epitomises the trope of the copy in China (Fig. 2-24). Its original is believed to have been written in 353 AD, by the ‘Calligraphy Sage’, Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (303-361), to conclude the pleasant wine-gathering held at the Orchid Pavilion where the poems were composed. This piece of calligraphy is said to have been made when the calligrapher was in an exceptionally joyful mood, and its perfection was thus brought about through the calligrapher’s total spontaneity at that particular moment. The ‘Preface to the Orchid Pavilion’ written on that occasion was so brilliant that even Wang Xizhi himself was unable to make another copy to surpass the divine quality found in the original version: he is said to have re-written the same text hundreds of times, but none of these later repetitions was comparable to his original work. The fleeting, felicitous moment had gone forever.⁶² It is in the drive to perpetuate that specific moment of creation that the need for the most scrupulous method of making exact copies was born. This method is called ‘double-lined and filling-in’ method (*shuanggou kuotian* 雙鉤廓填), in which the outline of each brushstroke is first traced and then filled in with ink to recreate the ink tone seen on the original. This tracing technique takes into account the most trivial details; even the drying-off effect and the split ends of certain passages of brushwork are deliberately

⁶² The most important and widely cited source for the history of *Lantingxu* is ‘*Lantingji* 蘭亭記’ (The story of *Langtingxu*), written in 714 by He Yanchi 何延之. The text is compiled by Zhang Yanyuan in *juan* 3 of *Fashu yaolu* 法書要錄 (Essential records on calligraphy [ca. 847]), collected in *Wangshi shuyuan* 王氏書苑 ‘Mrs Wang’s book collection on calligraphy’ (18 fascicles, Shanghai, 1922), ii, pp. 28b-34a. See also Lothar Ledderose, *Mi Fu and the Classical Tradition of Chinese Calligraphy* (Princeton, 1979), p. 19.

reproduced (Fig. 2-25). Good copies of this kind can be recognised as reproductions only upon close examination.⁶³ Therefore, one may argue that before the age of photomechanical reproduction, the ‘double-lined and filling-in’ method was the most refined technique available in China for making exactly repeatable pictorial statements.

The *Lantingxu* is without a doubt the most eminent work in the history of Chinese calligraphy. However, its original is believed to have been buried along with the Emperor Taizong (r.626-649) of the Tang dynasty in the mid-seventh century. Fortunately, it is said that the Emperor had the original *Lantingxu* not only traced using the ‘double-lined and filling-in’ method but also engraved on stones so that rubbings could be taken and disseminated.⁶⁴ Based on these Tang dynasty copies, or even on later copies of these primary copies, the stylistic tradition of Wang Xizhi’s calligraphy was eventually established. For centuries, calligraphers of later dynasties studied the ‘Preface to the Orchid Pavilion’ with great effort and reverence, while ironically no one had actually seen the original; the knowledge of it, and of Wang’s calligraphic style, could be obtained only through the copies. Indeed, it is in this context that the expression ‘second only to the original’ (*xia zhenji yideng*) appears.⁶⁵

In the literal meaning of this expression, ‘second to the original’, the original remains in the highest position, and the copy seems to be slotted and fixed in the secondary place. Nevertheless, insofar as the original is definitively lost and utterly unattainable, the best that one can possess, enjoy, and learn from is the copy: ‘second

⁶³ Lothar Ledderose, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-35.

⁶⁴ Ho Chuen-hsing, ‘The Ting-Wu Rubbing of the Preface to the Orchid Pavilion Gathering in the National Palace Museum’, *National Palace Museum Bulletin*, 34.4 (September/ October 1999), pp. 1-25(1).

⁶⁵ The earliest use of this phrase known today is in the writing of Mi Fu (1051-1107), a famous calligrapher, art collector, and connoisseur of the Northern Song dynasty, in which it is used to describe the finest tracing copy of *Lantingxu* he had ever encountered. See Mi Fu, *Shushi* 書史 ‘History of Calligraphy’, *MC*, 2.1, p. 8.

only to the original'. In other words, copies can be considered almost as 'effective' as the original. 'Second only to the original' is hence an expression of high regard, rather than an idiom of dismay, and it appears quite often in the context where copies are the objects of viewing and appreciation. In China, under the circumstances that the original work no longer exists or is nearly or completely unattainable, copies are collectable and sometimes treated as if they were the original.⁶⁶

To the editors of the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, photographic printing processes in general, and collotype in particular, must have been regarded as the ultimate refinement of the 'double-lined and filling-in' method. These modern methods could be perfectly integrated with the traditional practice of copy-making, and indeed they were considered to have been even better than the traditional ones, since the use of modern technology brought with it a touch of modernity, which was thought at that time to be lacking in China. The collotype prints made by modern, Western, electrically-powered machinery was also believed to be far better than the ones manually printed, as the ink colour on the products by the former technology would 'remain consistent throughout a print run of thousands'.⁶⁷ Moreover, the rhetoric used for advertising these photographic reproductions also appropriated the traditional patterns of connoisseurship related to copies. Customers were urged to collect these photographic reproductions, and to treat them as if they were the original. Given the situation in China during that period, the original was thought likely to be facing the

⁶⁶ There are types of copies other than the one made by means of 'double-lined and filling-in' method, such as free copies and rubbings. Insofar as modern photographic printing processes acquired their discursive power mainly from the tradition of making copies using the 'double-lined and filling-in' method, these other types of copies will not be discussed in this chapter. However, it should be pointed out that a large number of photographic reproductions were taken from fine, or even the 'initial', rubbings of the original metal and stone inscriptions, which suggests that rubbings were also treated as the original. For a discussion on rubbings as possessing the character of both the original and the reproduction, see Wu Hung, 'On Rubbings', in Lydia Liu and Judith Zeitlin (eds.), *Writing and Materiality in China: Essays in Honor of Patrick Hanan*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series 58 (Cambridge, MA, 2003), pp. 29-72.

⁶⁷ 'Benji zhiban yinshua zhi tese', SG, 4.

danger of extinction, just like China itself. The implication was that if that time had really come, these photographic copies would be the only things from which people of later generations could imagine what the original may have looked like. Consequently, it was reasoned and advised that these reproductions should be viewed *as* the original.

The interplay between technology, materiality and the hierarchy of art

By the early twentieth century, when China was starting to reproduce artworks by means of halftone and collotype processes, photographic reproduction had become the norm in Europe.⁶⁸ However, the Chinese publishers currently under discussion were not simply picking up on what was most up-to-date at the time; rather, they had their own concerns, which could not be addressed simply by the visual verisimilitude brought about by photographic printing technologies. One may find in the rhetoric of advertisements emphases not merely on technological advancement, but also on the quality of paper and ink used for printing. The ‘jade-plate paper’ used for collotype printing in this periodical was said to be ‘strong in texture, delicate, and clean, with an antique colour and smooth, silky touch’, while the ‘waxy-bright paper’ chosen for the halftone was ‘thick as a coin, clear as a mirror’. The camera used to photograph art works was said to be the one of the finest found in the West, equipped with three-colour lenses and able to capture the weave of a silk surface, even of the oldest paintings whose surface had turned dark through the ages. The ink used for printing had been specially selected as well, being ‘evenly-textured and refined, black while

⁶⁸ Photography reproducing works of art in the 1850s and 1860s came to be regarded as a legitimate mode of reproduction, and began to dominate in the 1870s. See Fawcett, ‘Graphic versus Photographic’, pp. 200-208; Hamber, ‘The Use of Photography’, p. 95; Stephen Bann, ‘Photography by Other Means? The Engravings of Ferdinand Gaillard’, *Art Bulletin*, 88.1 (2006), pp. 119-138 (127). The struggles of graphic arts against photography as a reproductive means are explored in Gordon Fyfe, ‘Art and Reproduction: Some Aspects of the Relations between Painters and Engravers in London, 1760 to 1850’, in *Art, Power and Modernity: English Art Institutions, 1750-1950*, Contemporary issues in museum culture (London, 2000), pp. 101-119; Stephen Bann, *op. cit.*; and *Parallel Lines: Printmakers, Painters and Photographers in Nineteenth-Century France* (New Haven, 2001).

bright'. Even the size of each print was laboriously tested in order to present properly the effect of the brushwork.⁶⁹ All these concerns were drawn from the long-practiced tradition of connoisseurship in calligraphy and painting which incorporates every material aspect of the original—such as the texture of paper, the quality of ink, and its overall preserved condition—into the ultimate appreciation of brushwork. These indispensable elements in the traditional criteria for art appreciation would later become the centre of debates over the authenticity of reproductions.

Moreover, from the 19th issue (1911) onwards, the publisher of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* decided to make collotype reproductions on *xuan* paper, *xuanzhi* 宣紙, a kind of traditional Chinese paper used for writing and painting, sometimes known as 'mulberry paper' in English.⁷⁰ Given that 'hard-sized' paper is generally preferred for collotype printing, this use of *xuan* paper is really an unusual choice. This unprecedented innovation seems to have been achieved successfully in technical terms by Youzheng Books in late 1910, but it was widely accepted as one of the established practices for printing collotype reproductions of painting only after the *Shenzhou guoguangji* integrated it into the rhetoric on the culture of art appreciation (Fig. 2-26).⁷¹ According to the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, this unprecedented innovation

⁶⁹ 'Benji zhiban yinshua zhi tese', SG, 4.

⁷⁰ 'Zi benji qi gaiyong xuanzhi lingzhuan yinhua guanggao', SG, 19.

⁷¹ Youzheng Books' innovation was mentioned in the advertisement, 'Gailiang xuanzhiyin keluoban zhongtang Tang Liuru nanzhou jiesu tu dafu 改良宣紙印珂羅版中堂唐六如南州借宿圖大幅' (Innovated collotype printing on *xuan* paper of a big-sized hanging scroll by Tang Yin), *Shibao*, 2 December 1910, *ban* 1. The application of *xuan* paper to collotype printing originally seems to have been merely a discovery by chance, resulting from the attempt to solve some technical problems. As stated in this *Shibao* advertisement, Tang's original painting was too large to be printed; not until *xuan* paper was used was the collotype reproduction successfully made. The House of SG began to adopt this practice in early 1911, first applying to their reproduction of single paintings; see 'Shenzhou guoguangshe xincai xinchupin huace sizhong 神州國光社辛亥新出品畫冊四種' (Four painting albums newly released in 1911 by the House of SG), GX, 76 (1911), [adv.] p.1a. Due to the positive reception of the products on *xuan* paper—one of a painting by Wu Li 吳歷 (1632-1718), and the other of a painting by Wang Hui 王翬 (1632-1717); both artists were celebrated as among the 'Six [painting] masters of the Qing'—, the publisher replaced the 'jade-plate paper' for printing collotype reproductions in the periodical completely with *xuan* paper, and attached to the innovation a deeper meaning concerning the authenticity of the traditional practice of art appreciation; see 'Zi benji qi

was believed to bring several advantages that the foreign (Western) paper could never provide. The reasons given in this periodical are:

- The original of an old Chinese painting has always been painted on native paper; foreign paper does not go well with Chinese paintings if the former is to be used for printing the latter. Now, Chinese paper can be employed to print Chinese paintings. The flavours of the two are naturally in tune with each other.
- Foreign paper is too stiff and too thick for traditional mounting. Now, since paintings can be printed on *xuan* paper, an experienced connoisseur can select works of his own preference and have them mounted into an album to pass around for generations to come.
- The ancients put particular efforts into painting handscrolls. However, lengthy handscrolls are often so long that they have to be reproduced section by section in this periodical. Now, since *xuan* paper is used, published sections can be pieced together and mounted in the way the original looks. This periodical is hence more able to introduce handscrolls painted by acclaimed artists.
- A connoisseur tends to leave his appreciation seals on accomplished works he encounters. However, foreign paper is so glossy and smooth that it is unable to absorb ink paste; as such, a seal can easily be wiped off even if it has been imprinted on foreign paper. Since *xuan* paper is used now, this deficiency no longer exists.
- The ancients were keen to have the paintings they adore most inscribed, whether by themselves or by famous people. However, foreign paper does not suit Chinese pen brushes. Now since *xuan* paper is used, there is no danger that the added inscriptions will appear to be blurred or smudged.⁷²

How *xuan* paper could be applied to such a printing process as collotype, which requires ‘hard-sized paper’ to work on, is still a mystery, at least to me.⁷³ The

gaiyong xuanzhi lingzhuan yinhua guanggao, SG, 19.

⁷² ‘*Zi benji qi gaiyong xuanzhi lingzhuan yinhua guanggao*’, SG, 19. [一中國舊畫其原本均係本國之紙，若用外國之紙印之性質不無扞格，今用中國之紙印中國之畫，氣味自然相投。一外國紙硬厚不能裝裱，今用宣紙，精鑒者可以自行選擇裝潢成冊，以留久遠。一古人作畫遇手卷尤為聚精會神，然手卷過長者不能不分段印之，今用宣紙可以逐段接裱仍還舊觀，此後本集可多印名人手卷矣。一賞鑒家遇得意之作，每好加心賞鑒定等圖章，外國紙光滑不受泥印，雖印之一摩擦即落，今用宣紙可無此弊。一古人遇銘心之品，每好旁加題記或倩名人題之，然用中國筆書外國紙苦不相投，今用宣紙庶幾沉瀝。]

⁷³ According to print artist Weimin He (personal communication), the *xuan* paper would have to be dampened before being used for collotype printing. In fact, using *xuan* paper for collotype reproduction seems to cause the glass plate to wear out even more quickly than using a standard kind of paper designed for collotype printing (such as ‘*yubanzhi*’), as the grain of *xuan* paper is rougher. It is said that in general the maximum print run for collotype printing is about 1000, but when *xuan* paper or silk is used, the number would be reduced to 300 to 500; see Fan Muhan 范慕韓 (ed.), *Zhongguo yinshua jindaishi chugao* 中國印刷近代史初稿 ‘Draft of a history of modern Chinese printing’ (Beijing, 1995), p. 571.

previously used Western ‘jade-plate paper’ is thick, hard, and non-absorbent. These characteristics are exactly the opposite of the qualities that *xuan* paper can claim, since it is thin, soft and absorbent. However, although it is still not clear how the problem with paper was eventually sorted out, the materiality of this periodical tells us that the publisher had deliberately made this choice, and this fact only makes explicit their determination to bring traditional elements of art appreciation into their efforts at art reproduction. Such fastidious pursuit of imitation of the materiality of the original finally went to the extreme of bringing silk into this publication as the surface to be printed on, as we can see in the 19th and 20th issues (Fig. 2-27). Both of these cases are collotype reproductions of paintings, printed on silk.

The application of *xuan* paper further strengthened the argument that the reproductions were meant, at least by the editors, to be real works of art, which should be appreciated and even collected in the same way the ancients did, such as by mounting them into an album or scroll and impressing seals, as well as writing inscriptions on them. By using *xuan* paper to make reproductions, the periodical not only publishes the images of artworks, but also preaches the traditional way of handling and collecting art objects.⁷⁴ What was reproduced in the *Shenzhou guoguangji* were not just ‘images’ of Chinese art and antiques alone; a replication of a time-honoured cultural practice was also achieved.

It would be extremely naïve to assume that a contemporary audience would do exactly as the editors expected them to, and we all know advertising plays more with

⁷⁴ It is worth noting that most of the black-and-white collotype reproductions in the Japanese publication, *Shinbi taikan*, are printed on a kind of Japanese paper, which is not very absorbent and has a texture resembling ricepaper. The paper is folded in half with a piece of thick paper inserted in between. It is uncertain whether this kind of Japanese paper was used specifically for printing, or could also be used for painting, and hence it remains unclear whether traditional art appreciation culture was deliberately integrated into the practice of art reproduction that this Japanese publication adopted. I am indebted to Lu Hsuan-fei, a Ph.D. student at National Taiwan University, for checking some of the material characters which had escaped my attention when I first came across this publication.

rhetoric rather than reality. Nevertheless, the rhetorical tactics used in the advertisement to attract potential readers did project some of the contemporary sentiments in a period when China was forced to embrace the ‘real’ world in which European values seemed to be the norm. Throughout this particular advertisement, the dichotomy between ‘the Chinese’ (*Zhongguo* 中國) and ‘the Foreign’ (*waiguo* 外國) was constantly referred to. ‘The Foreign’ here denoted ‘the West’, where paintings were not made on *xuan* paper, where paintings needed no mounting, and where paintings would in no way be inscribed with viewers’ comments or impressed with seals. The distinction between the Same and the Other (here ‘the Same’ denoted China and ‘the Other’ the West), was here differentiated in the practice of the making, viewing, handling, as well as collecting of Chinese painting; and such differences can be expressed only in the materiality of photographic reproductions. Previous attempts to combine the two painting traditions—such as applying the ‘Western’ method of perspective to Chinese paintings like some Qing court painters did, or by adding colophons on a Western engraving mounted in Chinese style⁷⁵—seemed to be considered of less importance in this advertisement; and in the rhetoric of this advertisement, Chinese painting and Western painting were distinguished from each other as if they were considered to have their own distinct domains. Such an awareness of the difference between the Same and the Other, of the distinction between the Chinese and the Foreign, perhaps paved the way for the long development in China in establishing the concept of ‘national-style painting (*guohua* 國畫)’, a term believed to have evolved from another term, ‘national-essence painting (*guocuihua* 國粹畫)’⁷⁶, and, as Aida Yuen Wong has so fittingly noted, pay ‘tribute to

⁷⁵ ‘*Chushou minghua gaobai* 出售名畫告白’ (Famous paintings for sale), *Shenbao*, 7 June 1878, *ban* 1.

⁷⁶ Mayching Kao, ‘Preface’, in Mayching Kao (ed.), *Twentieth-century Chinese Painting* (Hong Kong, 1988), pp. ix-xxxii (xxi). See also Kong Lingwei 孔令偉, ‘*Guocui yu guocuihua* 國粹與國粹畫’

“Chineseness” by its medium of ink and mineral pigments on silk or paper, age-old stylistic models, and traditional formats of mounting’.⁷⁷

Although the photographic reproduction of art was meant to replicate traditional practices, we may still discern a shift of values taking place here. In this periodical, *Shenzhou guoguangji*, all the collotype reproductions printed on *xuan* paper are exclusively of the ‘painting’ genre. The focus of this new system of art appreciation had moved from the traditionally prioritised sphere of calligraphy to painting. The concerns surrounding the high-quality replication of images, as demonstrated in the advertisement in the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, were all conceived from the point of view of the connoisseurship required in the case of painting, not calligraphy, in spite of the fact that the whole trope of copy-making in China actually originated from the attempt to immortalise the art of calligraphy. Fig. 2-29 is a chart showing the proportions of painting, calligraphy, and other objects with regards to the total number of collotype reproductions in this periodical, whether on *xuan* paper or not. We can see that collotype, the most refined and expensive means of photomechanical printing method at the time, was used mainly for reproducing paintings.⁷⁸ Even though the periodical had adopted an eclectic approach to the selection of Chinese artworks, underneath the surface of this inclusiveness of all kinds of art objects, there was a real theme celebrating the advent of the aesthetic dominance of the ‘painting’ category.

(National essence and national-essence painting), *Meishu yanjiu* 美術研究 (Art Research), 2007.1, pp. 83-98.

⁷⁷ Aida Yuen Wong, *Parting the Mists: Discovering Japan and the Rise of National-style Painting in Modern China* (Honolulu, 2006), p.xxiii. The term ‘*guohua*’ came into general usage no earlier than the 1920s; see Wong, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-13. For further discussion on the meaning and connotations of *guohua*, see Julia F. Andrews, ‘Traditional Painting in New China: *Guohua* and the Anti-Rightist Campaign’, *Journal of Asian Studies*, 49.3 (August 1990), pp. 555-586 (555-559)

⁷⁸ The calligraphic works reproduced in collotype are found in SG, issues 4, 5 (1908), 8 (1909); they are a piece attributed to Wen Zhengming (1470-1559), written in small script; a piece of sutra writing attributed to Yu He 俞和 (active in mid-14 C.), written after the style of Zhao Mengfu; a handscroll of poems lamenting the death of Wang Shimin 王時敏 (1592-1680), written by Yun Shouping (see below); and a hanging scroll by Dong Qichang (1555-1636) written in running script, respectively. The nine items that are neither painting nor calligraphy include 6 pieces of rubbings and model-letters, and one musical instrument, found in SG, issues 5 (4 items), 6 (1 item), 12 (3 items), and 20 (1 item).

Inevitably, subsequent debates on the future of ‘Chinese art’ almost all took place in, and indeed were largely confined to, the realm of painting.

Despite all the grandiloquent boasting by the periodical on the verisimilitude of collotype reproductions to the originals, those reproductions printed on *xuan* paper in the Chinese periodical do seem to me to have compromised the quality of the reproduction when compared with the fine collotype prints in Japanese art periodicals printed on the kind of paper most suitable for collotype printing. Nevertheless, the use of *xuan* paper was widely adopted in the early Republican era, which suggests that reproducing the traditional cultural practices seemed to be more important, even at the expense of the quality of the image itself. This practice was subsequently taken up by many a publishing house. Not only did the *Shenzhou daguanlu*, the immediate successor of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* after 1912, publish objects of different genres and materials all in collotype on *xuan* paper, but the same practice was also picked up by the periodical’s greatest competitor, *Zhongguo minghua* (hereafter, ‘Famous Chinese Paintings’), published by Youzheng Books, which began to use *xuan* paper from Issue 17 onwards.⁷⁹ This practice was also adopted by other publishing houses such as the Commercial Press, which started to use *xuan* paper to print collotype reproductions in their ‘Paintings and Calligraphy by the Acclaimed’ (*Mingren shuhuaqi* 名人書畫集, initiated in 1916) beginning with Issue 9 in 1918. In addition, all collotype reproductions in the periodical ‘True Appreciation in the Field of Art’ (*Yiyuan zhenshangji* 藝苑真賞集, launched in 1915) were without exception printed on *xuan* paper.⁸⁰ Even well into the 1940s, there were still publications printing

⁷⁹ The exact publication date of Issue 17 has not been identified yet; however, one thing is for certain: that before the establishment of the Republic of China, Youzheng Books published only 15 issues of *Famous Chinese Paintings*. In other words, Issue 17 must have been published after 1912.

⁸⁰ The library of the Chinese University, Hong Kong holds a set of ‘Paintings and Calligraphy by the Acclaimed’; and a set of ‘True Appreciation in the Field of Art’ can be found in the library of the Hong Kong University. However, it is still unknown whether these collections are themselves complete sets

collotype reproductions on *xuan* paper.⁸¹ The wide use of *xuan* paper therefore demonstrates a shift in the locus of debates over authenticity, from the quality of the image and the verisimilitude to the original to the integrity of the cultural practices of art appreciation. And the popularity of this practice also shows that not only was the use of *xuan* paper recognised as a viable and legitimate means for art reproduction at that time, but the rhetoric deployed by the editors of the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, which attached great cultural connotations to this practice, was also accepted and embraced altogether.

The knowledge of Chinese art cannot be reduced to two-dimensional images; the whole practice of handling and engaging with art objects is also an indispensable part of the discipline's discourse and is essential to the retention of an artwork's original meaning. This idea prompts us to revisit Walter Benjamin's sharp insight on the ritual basis of the authentic work of art as described in his celebrated essay, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility', in which he writes that technological reproducibility is hailed as being capable of emancipating the work of art 'from its parasitic subservience to ritual'.⁸² However, the real situation seems to be more complicated. In the case of these art reproductions made in early twentieth-century China, we see that mechanical reproduction is not used merely to reproduce the work of art itself, but also to reproduce the ritualistic context in which the work of art had originally found itself; in short, to reproduce its cult value. This latter reproduction was made possible by the use of *xuan* paper, an endeavour which

or not.

⁸¹ For example, in 1947 Zheng Zhenduo 鄭振鐸 compiled a collection of ancient paintings, *Yunhuizhai cang tangsong yilai minghuaqi* 韞輝齋藏唐宋以來名畫集 'Yunhui Studio's Collection of famous paintings from the Tang and the Song eras' (Shanghai, 1947), where illustrations were all reproduced in collotype on *xuan* paper. Copies of this catalogue can be found in Shanghai Library and the library of the Chinese University, Hong Kong.

⁸² Walter Benjamin, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Its Reproducibility', p. 24; or 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', p. 226.

was driven by the desire to continue certain original cultural practices through these art reproductions, such as the impressing of seals and the addition of inscriptions. And by reproducing the ritualistic context, the aura of the work of art was also believed to have been remade; customers were therefore urged to collect, appreciate, and handle these art reproductions as if they were the originals.

However, the fact that ‘painting’ was the category of art which got reproduced most frequently in the *Shenzhou guoguangji* also leads to an historical irony, in which ‘painting’ was eventually crowned in the hierarchy of all Chinese art forms precisely through the endeavour of cultural reproduction. Photomechanical printing technologies in a sense allowed the realisation of what the Chinese discourse on copy-making had always hoped for: reproduction of the original to visual exactitude. While using these modern printing processes to reproduce traditional Chinese art objects, the publisher came to be aware of certain unique aspects of Chinese art media which could not be replicated simply by adopting the most up-to-date practices in the enterprise of art reproduction at the time. National identity was therefore embodied in an ideological awareness of the difference in the character of art appreciation from that of the ‘Other’ (in this case the ‘West’), and was embodied and represented in the endeavours to make these reproductions equivalent to their originals in aspects other than just those of representational verisimilitude. The very photographic reproduction used to reiterate the traditional value of art appreciation and to raise the awareness of heritage preservation—with all of its particular materiality and the discourse surrounding it—eventually became the means by which national identity could also be expressed. The attempt to reproduce Chinese art objects in the early twentieth century therefore implied an effort to replicate cultural practices, while ironically, the traditional value system for art appreciation seems to

have undergone a fundamental change via the very endeavour of reproducing it—an endeavour in which ‘calligraphy’ no longer seems unquestionably to have occupied the highest position in the hierarchy of Chinese art.

Nevertheless, the statement that ‘calligraphy is the highest art form in China’ is still constantly repeated up to the present day, and at least on a rhetorical level, calligraphy remains in public consciousness one of the most characteristic genres of Chinese art. The observation of the shift in hierarchy between calligraphy and painting which occurred in the early twentieth century seems to contradict our present discourse of Chinese art, which still maintains a tight grip on the authentic ‘traditional’ value in which ‘calligraphy’ is still regarded as the highest of all art forms. This phenomenon demands no defence, from either side, of ultimate legitimacy for the position of the highest art form in Chinese art, as both claims are valid and true in our historical experience; what should be noted is that one of them operates on the level of verbal statement, the other on the level of practice. Such inconsistency between statement and practice indicates nothing more than the complexity of a discourse in which seemingly contradictory positions can co-exist peacefully with one another. Similar disagreement between statements and practices can also be seen in the rhetoric of advertising for the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, where ‘*Jinshi*’ was said to be the subject to which the periodical had devoted most of its attention, to the extent that the standards for this category were particularly high and the expert Luo Zhenyu had been appointed to be in charge of its selection process.⁸³ Although the use of collotype in printing images of rare rubbings was also praised as being able to present as sharp an effect as seen on the original rubbing of the engraved outlines of characters,⁸⁴ only

⁸³ ‘*Fugao* 附告’(Notice), SG, 5 (1908), [advance adv.] p. 1.

⁸⁴ ‘*Benji zhiban yinshua zhi tese* 本集製版印刷之特色’ (Special features regarding the print-making of this periodical), SG, 8 (1910), inside back cover.

nine collotype reproductions of rubbings were provided throughout the publication history of this art periodical. A further example of such benign contradictions can also be found in the Society's claim that photolithographic reproductions of original manuscripts by famous writers were more valuable than reproductions of calligraphy and painting by celebrated artists, as one is able to produce in a life time hundreds of pieces of painting and calligraphy, but only a few substantial writings.⁸⁵

This thesis is not intended to argue that practices are 'more true' than statements; rather, it aspires to address the disagreement within a discourse by acknowledging the existence of different voices and assessing their individual efficacy within the discursive field in which they establish themselves. Calligraphy is hence still the most highly esteemed art form in China today because it is indeed 'esteemed' as such; nevertheless, it is also true that the attention paid to 'painting' as a medium in the modern discourse on art has exceeded that which is paid to 'calligraphy'. It is difficult to account for such incongruities and developments. Perhaps one may argue that the elevation of the status of 'painting' had begun no later than the Ming dynasty and was nothing new by the early twentieth century. However, it should be borne in mind that only through the modern photographic printing processes introduced into early twentieth-century China—with their specific materiality and the values attached to them—was the rise of 'painting' able to manifest itself in such a tangible manner. We may also consider the ascendance of 'painting' to be one of the results of the impact of the introduction of the Western concept of 'art' on the conception of 'Chinese art'. By applying this new concept, 'art', to its own tradition, China became involved in a world system of art where 'painting' was the common field for dialogues and debates which would take place between cultures of different artistic traditions; as such,

⁸⁵ 'Huiyin xianru shouxie yizhu', *GX*, 4.10 (1908).

‘painting’ then came to be regarded as the targeted art form for promoting ‘national essence’. And it was also within this new framework of *meishu*, which brings different genres of art together at the same time, that the ascendance of ‘painting’ and its subsequent dominance in the hierarchy of Chinese art was made most explicit, as demonstrated in the advertising rhetoric and the materiality of the *Shenzhou guoguang ji*.

Perhaps even the practice of ‘reproducing the traditional practices of art appreciation’ was also in itself a kind of rhetoric in the original market setting of these art reproductions. Insofar as ancient Chinese objects of art were regarded as national patrimony (i.e., not only as components of a collective heritage but also as something for personal enjoyment), one can hardly neglect the commercial aspect of these art reproductions. Although it is far beyond the scope of the present thesis to give a comprehensive account of the market for and behind these art reproductions, a brief look at the commercial practices relating to the market for art reproduction—most pronounced in the competition between the House of SG and Youzheng Books—will enrich our understanding of the complexity of art reproduction in early twentieth-century China.

The market for and behind art reproductions

The relationship between the House of SG and Youzheng Books was an amicable one in the beginning. The Shanghai-based *Shibao* (co-founded by the owner of Youzheng Books, Di Baoxian) even dedicated a ‘special column’ in 1905 to the release of the journal *Guocui xuebao*, as an endorsement from the newspaper of the journal’s proposition of cultural preservation.⁸⁶ Advertisements for new publications

⁸⁶ ‘*Zhuanjian* 專件’ (Special column), *Shibao*, 2 March 1905, *ban* 7. The ‘Inaugural Statements’ and

from the House of SG, and for the latest issues of both the *Guocui xuebao* and the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, were also seen regularly in *Shibao*. However, the relationship between the two companies gradually turned sour after Youzheng Books launched their own periodical of art reproduction, *Famous Chinese Paintings*, in late 1908—four months after the *Shenzhou guoguangji* had successfully opened the market for collotype art reproduction in the name of preserving national artistic culture.⁸⁷ Like the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, *Famous Chinese Paintings* also employed collotype and halftone processes for printing illustrations, and succinct information on the provenance and current ownership of the reproduced work was also given in this periodical. However, the similarities between the two soon led to confusion among contemporary readers, many of whom even made inquiries to Youzheng Books about the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, rather than about their own product *Famous Chinese Paintings*. Such cases happened so frequently that Youzheng Books had to run an advertisement in an attempt to clear up the misunderstanding.⁸⁸

Being a latecomer to the market in art reproduction aspiring to preserve national artistic culture, Youzheng Books came up with strategies slightly different from those deployed by the pioneer of this field, the House of SG. Unlike the latter, which placed great importance on the quality of reproduction, Youzheng Books strongly emphasised the authenticity of the reproduced original in its advertising rhetoric. In one advertisement from 1909, potential customers were asked four rhetorical questions regarding the rarity of extant genuine paintings, the difficulty of identifying a genuine work from forgeries, the merits of viewing a fine collotype reproduction of a genuine work which shows no difference from the original, and the evils of

the 'General Remarks' of the journal *Guocui xuebao* were published word for word in this column.

⁸⁷ 'Zhongguo minghua diyiji quanji zhuangcheng chuban 中國名畫第一集全集成出版' (Release of *Famous Chinese Paintings*, vol. 1), *Shibao*, 25 November 1908, *ban* 1.

⁸⁸ 'Gouhuaji zhujun jian 購畫集諸君鑑' (To all those who would buy collected reproductions of painting), *Shibao*, 15 February 1909, *adv.*

circulating reproductions of fakes. It was subsequently claimed that all paintings reproduced and published by the Youzheng Books had been authenticated by many a true, famous connoisseur; ‘even if a painting were found to be questionable in authenticity after its being etched onto a printing plate, this finished plate would still be destroyed immediately to prevent further circulation of the image and the harm it may do to students of painting’.⁸⁹

As the authenticity of a reproduced original was generally believed to be more or less guaranteed by the reputation and prestige of its collector, Youzheng Books managed to secure contributions from the most well-known collectors at the time. The publisher established a network of ‘core patrons’ composed of high officials (e.g., Fan Zengxiang 樊增祥, 1846-1931) and wealthy merchants (e.g., Pang Laichen) who would frequently, if not regularly, contribute images of paintings from their own collections for reproduction and publication. The most notable and powerful among these core patrons of Youzheng Books was Duanfang, then the Governor-general for Jiangsu and Jiangxi. Duanfang seems to have granted the publisher a monopoly in reproducing works in his collection (including those of rubbings, model-letters, and paintings), since advertisements for photographic reproductions of his collection, published by Youzheng Books, were so frequently seen in *Shibao* until 1911.⁹⁰ Di Baoxian was himself also born into a family with an extensive art collection; his ‘Pavilion of Equilibrium’ (*Pingdengge*) had once housed one of the greatest masterpieces in Chinese painting history, a work by the renowned painter Wang Meng 王蒙 (1308-1385), who was one of the ‘Four Masters’ of painting of the Yuan

⁸⁹ ‘*Ganwen gouhua zhujun* 敢問購畫諸君’(Questions for those who would buy [reproductions of] paintings), *Shibao*, 16 March 1909, adv.

⁹⁰ Although works from the collections of Duanfang and Pang Laichen appear from time to time in the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, most of these reproduced works are rubbings, rather than paintings. In addition, the frequency of the appearance of their collections in this periodical is far lower than that in the publications released by Youzheng Books. For Duanfang’s life as a collector, please refer to Chapter 1, n. 62 (p. 44).

dynasty (Fig. 2-30).⁹¹ Di's 'Notes in the Pavilion of Equilibrium' (*Pingdengge biji* 平等閣筆記), originally a column in *Shibao*, also serialised some selections from the 'Poetical Comments on Painting Composed in the Studio of the Profitless and Beneficial' (*Wuyi youyizhai lunhuashi* 無益有益齋論畫詩)—a piece written by the acclaimed connoisseur Li Boxun, who had been appointed by Duanfang to organise and record his painting collection—where works published in *Famous Chinese Paintings* were referred to.⁹² In comparison, the patrons of the House of SG appeared to be less grand; in fact, Luo Zhenyu seems to have been the only core patron of the House who was comparable to the patrons of Youzheng Books in terms of his fame and the extent of his collection.

The battles fought out in advertising campaigns between the two publishing houses became more and more intense, even though both sides never openly pointed out their real targets. Youzheng Books waged war against its competitor by putting out an advertisement defending their collotype reproductions against complaints of their being too dark and ill-reproduced. In defence of their own collotype products, the publisher insinuated that the company which produced reproductions of better quality either must have been cheating their customers or were simply incapable of telling the genuine from the fake. Youzheng Books explained that fine paintings from the Song and Yuan periods were mostly painted on silk, which in itself gets dark easily as time goes by; since the original was already dark and difficult to photograph clearly, its reproduction naturally looked darker. The publisher then admonished the reader that one should not care more about the quality of the reproduction than about the authenticity of the reproduced original, since a glass plate could yield at least five to

⁹¹ The painting 'Retreat in Mt. Qingbian' (*Qingbian yinjutu* 青卞隱居圖) is now in the collection of Shanghai Museum.

⁹² Part of Li's writing was published in three instalments in Di's column; see *Shibao*, 11-13 June 1909, p. 4. For a relevant discussion, see Chapter 4.

six hundred prints, or thousands at best, and a consistent printing performance was hard to achieve—which was why the first printing often appears very dark while the second printing gets better and clearer. Youzheng Books then instructed the reader that ‘paintings with clean surfaces are forgeries nine out of ten’, and that without careful connoisseurship, ‘it is of course an easy thing to release within a year hundreds and thousands of items of art reproduction which are praised by non-experts as having been well-reproduced’. However, when one ‘spends money on useless reproductions of a fake, and even treasures them as rare jade, imitating after these forged paintings, one is indeed cheated and fooled’. Youzheng Books thus advised the customer that one should always judge collectors or connoisseurs themselves before following their opinions: ‘if the collector does not have a good eye, it is for certain that out of a hundred items [in his collection] not a single one is genuine’. The publisher even warned that ‘there are one or two collectors who would have their fake collections reproduced and published by a third party in order to sell them for a high price’.⁹³ It is difficult to imagine that the House of SG was not one of the ‘cheating’ companies referred to in this passage, as it released new products of reproduction every so often.

Three months later, when the much delayed Issue 9 of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* finally came out,⁹⁴ the House of SG dedicated three quarters of a periodical page to an announcement reiterating the importance of high-quality art reproduction, in which the authenticity of the reproduced original was also touched upon. The publisher

⁹³ ‘*Gougua zhujun buke bukan ci gaobai* 購畫諸君不可不看此告白’(A must-read announcement for those who would buy [reproductions of] paintings), *Shibao*, 2 August 1909, adv. [紙白版新之件贗鼎居其十九...則一年內雖出數百種數千種, 亦非難事, 目可轉博外行人之稱譽...諸君之必欲費有用之金錢購無用之贗鼎, 卻寶持若拱璧, 朝夕以臨摹之, 此真蘇語所謂之勿失頭、京語所謂之冤大頭矣。...亦有一二收藏家專喜以贗件付人代印, 印後則其物易售且可得大價]

⁹⁴ Issue 9 was released in November, 1909, five months after the previous issue came out on the market; see ‘*Shenzhou guoguangji dijiuji chuban* 神州國光集第九集出版’(Issue 9 of SG is released), *Shibao*, 19 November 1909, *ban* 1. The delay resulted from the publisher’s moving houses and their experimenting in colour printing, which is probably why the House of SG did not fight back immediately. See ‘*Tebie guanggao*’, *SG*, 9.

guaranteed all their published works to be genuine since these paintings were coming from families with a long tradition of art collecting and were being authenticated by famous connoisseurs before being recommended to the editors for selection. Needless to say, the publisher claimed, works of disputable provenance would never be printed; even doubtlessly genuine works were not always reproduced, since ‘a painting must possess altogether the qualities of being “genuine” (*zhen* 真), “fine” (*jing* 精), and “fresh as new” (*xin* 新) to be qualified for reproduction’. The publisher further explained that ‘families good at preservation would have had their ancient paintings kept as white as jade through hundreds of years’; these paintings ‘are not only genuine and fine, but also fresh as new, qualities which make these paintings precious’. As such, ‘one should not simply regard the paintings rendered and dyed dark by artisans of forgery as really old’.⁹⁵ In other words, the age of a reproduced original was not an excuse for bad reproductions, since the so-called ‘old’ (and therefore dark) paintings were more likely to have been forgeries deliberately ‘made old’ by counterfeiters. The editors of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* also argued that ‘the initiator of an enterprise tends to be the best performer, while the followers are inferior—which is because the initiator aspires to prestige, regardless of the cost and labour invested, whereas the followers aim only at profits and cannot care less about the quality of their products’.⁹⁶ It is almost certain that Youzheng Books was one of the ‘followers’ referred to in this passage, since this company had claimed outright that old paintings often looked ‘dark’. Moreover, it was in this same issue that the publisher of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* revealed that their Artotype reproductions were able to produce only 200 prints per plate (which must have been a great contrast to the massive

⁹⁵ ‘*Jingao guohua zhujun*’, *SG*, 9. [必則其真精新三字俱全者印之。...夫善於收藏之家有古畫歷數百年而紙白如玉者，以其能真而精，精而新，故可貴。非必以偽工薰染闇黑之畫便可謂之古也。]

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* [凡業創始者精，繼起者劣。蓋創始者不惜工本，祇求擴充其名譽，繼起者志在爭利，則不計物之優劣。]

productivity of Youzheng Books, which claimed that a collotype plate of theirs was able to yield 500 to 1000 prints).⁹⁷ Also in the same issue, the reader was instructed in how to distinguish reproductions in collotype from those in photolithography and halftone.⁹⁸

The criticisms made by both companies are not entirely unfair.⁹⁹ However, what is more intriguing is the way in which the authenticity of their art reproductions was argued. Youzheng Books drew its rhetoric from the traditional practice of art collecting, in which the authenticity of the original was highly stressed, and it considered the commodity value of a reproduction to have been acquired solely from its relationship to the reproduced work. On the other hand, the House of SG embraced not only the traditional culture of art collecting but also that of art appreciation, in which a copy under some circumstances could also be treated as the original. While the authenticity of the reproduced works was also claimed as being prerequisite for any activity of art reproduction, the House regarded the commodity value of an art reproduction as also existing within itself, in the quality of its execution, as well as in the authenticity of the original from which it is reproduced. Consequently, the idea of treating a finely made reproduction as if it were the original was strongly encouraged. Within the discourse where art reproduction was regarded as one of the best means of preserving the national essence, it is not surprising that the rhetoric and practices of the House of SG—such as the prevailing use of *xuan* paper and the association of such a use with the preservation of traditional practices of art appreciation—found

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ 'Tebie guanggao', SG, 9.

⁹⁹ Although both periodicals contain paintings which would be regarded by modern scholars as fake or not as old as claimed, there are indeed more paintings regarded today as masterpieces found in *Famous Chinese Paintings* than in the *Shenzhou guoguangji*. In addition, by my impression, *Famous Chinese Paintings* also seems to have employed cheaper printing methods such as photolithography and photogravure, which may have contributed to the poorer quality of the illustrations. However, this is only my own speculation and requires further investigation.

more resonance in the market than those of Youzheng Books.

The competition between the two companies also contributed to unexpected technical innovations, in addition to the use of *xuan* paper. Just as the House of SG claimed to be able to print 4-foot high hanging scrolls in May 1909, Youzheng Books also advanced its printing techniques in November of the same year by releasing a new product of reproduction: ‘extremely big hanging scrolls, twice as large as the previously claimed viable three/four-foot ones’.¹⁰⁰ Their rivalry in the market for art reproduction seems to have reached a point where any advertising campaign for the *Shenzhou guoguangji* could no longer be tolerated in *Shibao*, a newspaper affiliated with Youzheng Books; the advertisement for the tenth issue of *Shenzhou guoguangji* was the last one for this art periodical that was seen in *Shibao*, although the newspaper still occasionally accepted advertisements for other publications from the House of SG.¹⁰¹ The battlefield between the two publishing houses also extended to products other than art reproduction, as can be seen in the publication of the reprint of *Jiangcun’s Records on Passing Summers* (*Jiangcun xiaoxialu*), a catalogue of the paintings collected by the renowned seventeenth-century collector Gao Shiqi. The book was first reprinted by the House of SG in March 1910;¹⁰² however, Youzheng Books issued their own edition in April 1911 and advertised it with a comment remarking: ‘This kind of book allows no errors; otherwise it would cause infinite harm to learners. Accordingly, [we] publish its initial edition in photolithography...please take a look and [you] will know our words are true’, which

¹⁰⁰ ‘*Shenzhou guoguangshe xinyin sichi dafu boliban huazhou bazhong* 神州國光社新印四尺大幅玻璃版畫軸八種’(Eight newly printed 4-foot sized big hanging scrolls by the House of SG), *Shibao*, 29 May 1909, *ban* 1; and ‘*Keluoban yin dazhongtang chuban* 珂羅版印大中堂出版’(Big hanging scrolls in collotype), *Shibao*, 23 November 1909, *ban* 1.

¹⁰¹ ‘*Shenzhou guoguangji dishiji chuban* 神州國光集第十集出版’(Issue 10 of SG released), *Shibao*, 16 December 1909, *ban* 1.

¹⁰² ‘*Shenzhou guoguangshe jingyin jiuji guanggao* 神州國光社精印舊籍廣告’(Advertisement for finely printed old books released by the House of SG), *Shibao*, 21 March 1910, *ban* 1; and ‘*Xinchu jingyin guben jiuji*’, *GX*, 6.4.

can be understood to imply that the edition recently published by the House of SG was full of errors.¹⁰³

Competition for commercial success suggests the existence of a considerable market for products of art reproduction. It is difficult to assess how many copies of *Famous Chinese Paintings* were ever produced, since reprinting information for early issues is generally absent in extant specimens.¹⁰⁴ Issue 19 is an exception, recording its release in late 1916 and first reprinting in 1921; if one assumes that each edition comprised 500 to 1000 copies (based on the number of prints Youzheng Books claimed a collotype plate was able to produce), there would have been between 1000 and 2000 copies of this issue circulated by 1921. As to the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, one can only estimate the number of copies in circulation by assuming that only 200 copies were produced for each edition (as it was claimed that an Artotype plate could only yield 200 prints), and depending on the luck of chancing upon a late edition. Based on the information given in the copies held in the Fu Ssu-nien Library, Taipei, the first issue of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* went through 5 reprints within a span of three years, from 1908 to 1911; in other words, we can estimate that there were at least 1000 copies of Issue 1 being circulated on the market by 1911.

The market for art reproductions was not confined to Chinese territories, but extended to an international level. The House of SG claimed that a lot of their products of art reproduction had been purchased by people from 'Japan, Britain,

¹⁰³ 'Jiangcun xiaoxialu zhao chuban jingyin 江邨銷夏錄照初版精印' (Fine reprint after the first edition of *Jianzhun xiaoxialu*), *Shibao*, 26 April 1911, *ban* 1.

¹⁰⁴ I have consulted the copies of *Famous Chinese Paintings* in the Shanghai Library, the library of the Hong Kong University, and the Bodleian Library, Oxford. The reprinting information referred to below is found in the edition in Hong Kong. It should also be noted that these copies sometimes present conspicuous differences in presentation even of a same painting, as seen in Fig. 2-30 (a, b). Since early issues do not contain information about the edition to which they originally belong, it is hard to know which copy comes first, and why there would be such differences.

France and Germany’;¹⁰⁵ and for this foreign market, the publisher even provided an English description of the company in late 1909 (Fig. 2-31).¹⁰⁶ This practice could not have escaped the attention of Youzheng Books, which later released a bilingual edition (Chinese-English) of some issues of their art periodical *Famous Chinese Paintings* (Fig. 2-28b).¹⁰⁷ Such engagement with the foreign market would seem to have contradicted the *Shenzhou guoguangji*’s alleged reason for its launching, which was to raise awareness among Chinese people of the national art’s ‘suffering from exportation day by day’.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, the purchase of art reproductions by foreigners was understood to fulfil one of the stated missions of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* (i.e., to ‘propagate to the world the precious jewels of the divine land and to display the characteristics of our nation’s art’). As a matter of fact, the publication—with its provision of images of art objects, along with the current owner of the original clearly being specified and the publisher serving as the middleman—could hardly avoid being used to facilitate both domestic and international transactions in the antique market. Wrapped in the high-minded, nationalist rhetoric of cultural preservation, these art periodicals could still be used in a way as art dealers’ sale catalogues.

In fact, the House of SG started dealing in antiques itself in late 1909, as announced in Issue 10 of the *Shenzhou guoguangji*:

Since the Society launched the *Shenzhou guoguangji* and asked for contributions from within the seas of famous art objects by the ancients, such works have piled up. As Shanghai is well-located, people from four directions can easily approach the House to have the old paintings in their collections sold or authenticated; such cases happen ten-odd times each month. Although after authentication the House would select from these works the finest ones for collotype reproduction, the originals, whether on loan to the House for photographing or for sale at a fixed price, continue to accumulate, to the extent that the House can no longer afford the

¹⁰⁵ ‘Jingao guohua zhujun’, *SG*, 9.

¹⁰⁶ However, this ‘business card’ in English appears only in *SG*, 10 (1909).

¹⁰⁷ The bilingual version is seen only from Issues 11 to 15 (according to the advertisements in *Shibao*, they were released between June 1910 to August 1911). However, it is uncertain whether there also existed an edition ‘only in Chinese’ for these issues.

¹⁰⁸ Deng Shi, ‘*Xu*’, *SG*, 1, p. 3.

deposit on them. The House hence comes up with a solution for putting them into circulation: all these works, whether having been photographed by the House or not, will be exhibited and priced at their cost prices for purchase. Great collectors who wish to put out their own collections can also send and entrust the originals to the House for that purpose. However, no forgery will be admitted.¹⁰⁹

Lists of the objects for sale (including rubbings, calligraphy, paintings, and some three-dimensional objects)—along with their prices and a mark distinguishing those which had been previously reproduced by the House from those which had not—were published in the *Shenzhou guoguangji* from Issue 12 onwards. This practice strongly reminds us of the warning given by Youzheng Books, which implies that some cunning collectors would like to have their own collections published by a third party in order to get a better market price. However, the House of SG emphasised that, unlike ordinary antique shops, which would deliberately raise the asking price for customers to bargain over, their list price was the original cost price and hence allowed no room for discounts.¹¹⁰ After the Republic of China was founded in 1912, the Society for Preserving National Learning, run primarily by Deng Shi, went so far as to establish a ‘Department for Circulating Antiques’ (*Guwu liutongchu* 古物流通處) as part of their project of ‘disseminating ancient learning’ (*liutong guxue* 流通古學).¹¹¹ The fact that a nationalist organisation so dedicated to elevating the status of ‘art’ to that of national patrimony turned out to have a hand in antique dealing is not so surprising; even after ‘art’ was widely recognised as national patrimony, it still retained its original function as a class of objects intended for personal enjoyment.

¹⁰⁹ ‘*Jishou ji chenlie mingren shuhua* 寄售及陳列名人書畫’(Sale and displaying calligraphy and paintings by the acclaimed), *SG*, 10 (1909), [bio.] p.4. [本會自創刊神州國光集，徧徵海內古人名蹟，收羅日夥，加以滬上處江海交通之區，四方之以名人舊畫見寄或攜帶至本社託為代售、請為鑒別者，月有十數起，本社既經同仁審定，擇其精品印作玻璃版，但原作有借影者、有備價購售者，日積而多，本社不能常墊巨資，因思得一流通之法，凡本社已經攝影之件及未經攝影之件，一併陳列，開明實價，以供 諸君採購。其有海內收藏巨家有欲將所藏出售者，亦可將原件送交本社寄售。惟贗品則一概不收也。] Perhaps it was also because the House of SG began dealing in antiques that the advertisement for the *Shenzhou guoguangji* became intolerable to *Shibao*.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ ‘*Ni tuiguang benhui zhi zhiyuan*’, *GX*, 7.8.

One only wonders whether or not the Department for Circulating Antiques would sell Chinese objects to foreign buyers.

Art reproductions produced and circulated in early twentieth-century China had multifaceted cultural functions and significance, which cannot be approached purely from the perspective of nationalism or of market mechanisms. In a letter addressed to Luo Zhenyu, then residing in Japan, Wang Guowei mentions his recent acquisition of art reproductions, in a statement which demonstrates the importance of art reproductions in facilitating the study of Chinese learning:

... I have bought the photographic reproduction of the rubbing collected by Duan Zhongmin [Duanfang] of the remnant characters of the Stone Classics. I knew Huang's copy had been published in the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, but did not realise [until now] the reproduction of Ruan's copy was also printed and published separately. The copy once collected by Meixi [Sun Xingyan 孫星衍, 1753-1818] is without a doubt a fake; the problem that remains is who forged it...¹¹²

The rubbing of the Stone Classics in Duanfang's collection is the one once collected by the scholar Ruan Yuan 阮元 (1764-1849), hence called 'Ruan's copy', and was published on its own by Youzheng Books in August 1909.¹¹³ The so-called 'Huang's copy' refers to the rubbing of the same Stone Classics that used to be in the possession of the scholar Huang Yi 黃易 (1744-1802), and was serialised in the *Shenzhou guoguangji* in 1908.¹¹⁴ For a scholar-buyer, the photographic information circulated on the market must have been a great help in his pursuit of knowledge and even in allowing him to realise his dream of beholding objects he had only read about but had never seen. At least for Wang, then, the original purpose of these art reproductions,

¹¹² Wang Guowei, 'Letter of 7, 8 July 1916', in Wu Ze 吳澤 (ed.), *Wang Guowei quanji shuxin* 王國維全集 書信 'Collected works of Wang Guowei: Letters' (Taipei, 1985), p. 88. [端忠敏之石經殘字影本已購得，向知黃本刊於神州國光集中，不知阮本有單行印本也。梅溪藏本知偽殆已無疑，惟不識作偽者何人。]

¹¹³ 'Han shijing canzi 漢石經殘字' (Remnant characters of Stone Classics of the Han), *Shibao*, 13 August 1909, *ban* 1.

¹¹⁴ In SG, 1, 3, 4, 6 (1908).

that of promulgating and promoting traditional learning, was duly fulfilled.

However, without either the overwhelming discourse of nationalism—within which art was equated with the national essence to be made known and protected from extinction—or the commercial competition between different publishers, so many works of great cultural and historical significance probably would not have been made visible through publication. With the help of modern photographic printing methods, the nationalist discourse encouraged collectors to share visual images of their precious collections, while the commercial competition between publishing houses also prompted rival publishers to find more works of great fame for printing. The noble ideals of not only promoting national learning, but also preserving and reproducing the traditional artistic culture were thus realised precisely through the commercial practices of publishing, advertising, and competition; while at the same time, the financial prosperity of the same market in art reproduction was also facilitated by such a nationalist discourse. The market for and behind art reproductions did not render the ideal of preserving national artistic culture less sincere, but instead depended upon the sincerity of this ideal for its very success.¹¹⁵ The prevailing use of *xuan* paper is one of the examples in which the seriousness and sincerity of the proposition of cultural reproduction was expressed.¹¹⁶ If these periodicals of art reproduction were meant only to be dealers' sale catalogues, whether *xuan* paper was used or not would have made little difference to the publisher or the buyer, and such a practice would not have been followed quite so widely by other publishers.

By contrast, colour printing did not receive as much attention in the rhetoric of

¹¹⁵ Pierre Bourdieu describes such 'sincerity' of belief in a cultural field as one of the preconditions of symbolic efficacy which allows a certain cultural product to establish and sustain its position in the field. See Bourdieu, 'The Production of Belief: Contribution to an Economy of Symbolic Goods', in *The Field of Cultural Production*, pp. 74-111 (77-81, 95-97).

¹¹⁶ If *xuan* paper really causes the glass plate to wear out more quickly, as Fan Muhan maintains (see p. 81 n. 71), the cost of production for collotype reproductions on *xuan* paper (or on silk) would probably have been considerably higher than that for normal collotype prints.

advertising as did the use of *xuan* paper, even though it was more advanced in technological terms and its eye-catching effect better suited for promoting the sale of certain artworks. Apart from the fact that colour printing itself was too time- and labour-consuming to be frequently applied, the relatively less frequent mention of the technological features of colour printing was also due to the fact that the method itself had not become integrated into the perceived discourse on art collection and art appreciation in China. As such, colour printing was thus reduced to a mere advertising device. Perhaps this is why most of the colour reproductions in the *Shenzhou guoguangji* are of works of lesser known artists, and almost all (except the colour collotype print in Issue 12 of a painting then in Huang Binhong's collection, painted by the famous Qing flower painter Yun Shouping 惲壽平, 1633-1690) are from the collection of 'Chamber in the Winds and Rains', belonging to the editor Deng Shi, who was by all accounts in charge of dealing in art objects on behalf of the House.¹¹⁷ This demonstrates that not all of the latest Western technologies were either appropriated or welcomed in China with the same zeal and rhetoric. And a colour print, whether produced in the halftone or collotype processes, and however much more eye-catching than an exquisitely-made black-and-white collotype reproduction, was thus more associated with commercial gain than cultural fame.

While the editors of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* imposed, whether consciously or not, their value judgements on the reproduced works through different printing methods, these art reproductions also silently shaped and inculcated such values in the reader's conception of 'Chinese art' through their specific materiality, in which 'painting' was to replace 'calligraphy' as the crowning pinnacle of all Chinese visual arts. Although

¹¹⁷ Deng's dealing in antiques is also recorded in the letters written by Wang Guowei, who used to buy paintings for Luo Zhenyu from Deng Shi; see Wang Guowei, 'Letter of 27 August 1916', in Wu Ze (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 109.

the ‘imagery of *meishu*’ seemed to be confined only to ‘*Jinshi*’ and ‘calligraphy and painting’, the Society’s engagement with the Chinese textual tradition on art embraced more art forms, attempting to mark out the boundaries of the knowledge of *meishu* in the Chinese knowledge system by integrating the new Western concept of ‘art’ (represented by the neologism ‘*meishu*’) with the traditional Chinese notion of ‘arts’ (known as ‘*yishu*’). The next chapter will thus focus on this negotiating process, in which the knowledge originating in the antiquarian and material culture of the Chinese literati was brought together to map out a newly-structured ‘Chinese art’ that not only reiterates the prominence of ‘painting’, but also transformed the traditional notion of ‘*yishu*’.

Ch 3 Art as the Intersection of Leisure Pursuit and Antiquarianism: *Meishu congshu*, 1911-1918

In the attempt to propagate ‘specialised knowledge’ (*zhuanmen zhixue* 專門之學) on ‘*meishu*’, the Society for Preserving National Learning turned its eyes to the traditional practice of publication of *congshu* 叢書 (‘collectanea’) and launched the *Meishu congshu*, or ‘Book Collection on Art’. *Congshu* is a publishing practice operating in a way similar to today’s book series (or book collection), which groups and publishes under the same series title texts sharing certain commonalities, be it a particular theme, ownership, or authorship.¹ Issued by the House of SG, the *Meishu congshu* came out before the downfall of the Qing dynasty, and its life continued well into the first decade of the Republican period. As one of the company’s two major enterprises in art publishing, the *Meishu congshu* engaged specifically with ‘knowledge of *meishu*’ and was arguably the first attempt in China to apply the new framework of *meishu* to the practice of text collecting and grouping. It was also considered by the editors to be complementary in function to its sister publication, the art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji*, which featured only the images of ‘objects of *meishu*’ (Chapter 2).²

The *Meishu congshu* was therefore a result of the aspiration to create a new field equivalent to that of ‘art’ in European culture. However, the texts selected to substantiate this ‘specialised knowledge’ were hardly new; rather, the majority of

¹ In fact, the ‘Preface’ to the *Meishu congshu* claimed that previously the texts in a *congshu* had been those either coming from the same collection of a certain bibliophile, or being written by an individual author or by authors originating from the same place; rarely was there seen any ‘thematic’ *congshu*, like the *Meishu congshu*, which featured a specific, specialised subject. See Deng Shi, ‘*Xulüe* 序略’ (Preface), *MC*, 1.1 (1911), individually paginated, pp. 1-2 (1). For *congshu* as a publishing practice, see Craig Clunas, *Superfluous Things: Material Culture and Social Status in Early Modern China* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 10-11.

² ‘*Lüeli* 畧例’ (General Remarks), *MC*, 1.1 (1911), individually paginated, pp. 1-2a (2a).

them were, by the early twentieth century, existing and even well-known (although sometimes rarely seen) texts written by authors from previous generations.³ Such a combination of the old (texts) and the new (framing concept) might have been made possible on the grounds that they were assumed to be compatible and negotiable. However, the selection of old texts also suggests the possibility that this seemingly new look might have been little more than a new disguise for an old concept. Was the *Meishu congshu* aimed at appropriating the new concept *meishu*, or merely at rebranding the old conception ‘*yishu*’ with a new label? Was the ‘*meishu*’ in this book collection aspiring to introduce the authentic Western idea of ‘art’, or attempting to smuggle the authentic Chinese notion of ‘art’ into the modern age? Questions concerning the exact designation of the category ‘*meishu*’ and its validity as a ‘new’ concept hence arise.

The *Meishu congshu* not only collated existing texts relevant to the subject ‘*meishu*’, but also proposed, initially, five categories (*lei* 類) by which texts were to be selected (or excluded) and grouped. The House of SG published in total three series of the *Meishu congshu*. Each series comprises ten volumes (*ji* 集); each volume contains four fascicles (*ce* 冊), which are bound in traditional sewn-book style and packed together in a cardboard casing (*zhi* 帙) (Fig. 3-1).⁴ Originally, the publisher had planned to publish only the first series, which was released volume by volume every month from the second to the eleventh lunar months of 1911, to make up a complete

³ Most of the texts in the first three series of the *Meishu congshu* were writings of the Ming and Qing periods. The most recently composed texts are Xu Zhiheng 許之衡(1877-1935), ‘*Yinliuzhai shuoci* 飲流齋說瓷’(Studio of Drinking Stream on the subject of porcelain), *MC*, 3.6 (1916); and Deng Shi, ‘*Tanyilu* 談藝錄’(Notes on art), *MC*, 3.10 (1918). My own impressions are that there are a considerable number of texts prefaced after 1840; however, since not all the texts retain information of completion date, it is difficult to give a precise figure here.

⁴ The physical condition of the *Meishu congshu* discussed in this chapter is based on the observation of the copy of the first edition collected in the SOAS Library.

set of ten volumes.⁵ Nevertheless, since the first series was able to accommodate only a limited number of the texts already available to the editorial board, the publisher decided to compile a ‘Continuing Series’ (*xuji* 續集) in 1913 and 1914, to follow the first ‘Primary Series’ (*zhengji* 正集).⁶ Due to the unexpectedly enthusiastic reception from within the country and abroad (mainly Japan, Europe, and North America), a third ‘Latter Series’ (*houji* 後集) was therefore released between 1915 and 1918.⁷ Thus, the publication of the first three series of the *Meishu congshu* stretched over a period of seven years from 1911 to 1918.⁸ Obviously, it would not be surprising if the selecting and classifying principles of the book collection, as well as the editors’ conception of ‘*meishu*’, had undergone certain changes during this period.

Central to this newly-created discursive space was the tension between the old and the new framing concepts, as the Western notion of ‘*meishu*’ was introduced to reframe the existing texts in China. Such tension was best manifested in the mutual penetration of the meanings of the two terms ‘*meishu*’ and ‘*yishu*’ (‘*geijutsu*’ in Japanese) —the latter can be translated as ‘art’, too, and was an established term existing in China at least since the fifth century;⁹ in late nineteenth-century Japan, the term was applied to translating the Western concept of ‘art’ (like ‘*bijutsu*’), and subsequently travelled back to the modern Chinese language as a return loan from Japanese.¹⁰ The present chapter hence endeavours to map out the boundaries of the category of ‘*meishu*’ as it was perceived by the editors of the House of SG, as well as

⁵ ‘*Xinhainian xinchu jingkan Meishu congshu guanggao* 辛亥年新出精刊美術叢書廣告’ (Advertisement for the new production in *Xinhai* year of exquisitely edited *Meishu congshu*), *GX*, 6.11 (1910), [adv.] p. 1b.

⁶ ‘*Zaichu Meishu congshu xuji shiji guanggao* 再出美術叢書續集十集廣告’ (Advertisement for the 10-volume continuing series of *MC*), *MC*, 1.10 (1911).

⁷ ‘*Zaichu Meishu congshu houji shiji guanggao* 再出美術叢書後集十集廣告’ (Advertisement for the 10-volume latter series of the *Meishu congshu*), *MC*, 2.10 (1914).

⁸ For the publishing date of each volume, see Ogawa Hiromitsu, ‘*Bijutsu sōsho*’, p. 49.

⁹ One of the earliest usages of the term ‘*yishu*’ is found in Fan Ye 范曄 (398–445), *Hou Han Shu* 後漢書 ‘History of the Later Han’ (12 vols., Beijing, 1965), i, *juan* 5, p. 215.

¹⁰ See Frederico Masini, *The Formation of Modern Chinese Lexicon*, p. 213.

to examine the differentiation in publishing practices between the concept of ‘*meishu*’ in the *Meishu congshu* and the category of ‘*yishu*’ as seen in the eighteenth century imperial book collection *Complete Library of the Four Treasuries* (*Siku quanshu* 四庫全書, hereafter, the *Four Treasuries*).¹¹ The bibliographical classifications in the *Four Treasuries* served as the most prevalent model for later book collections and thereby offered the most widely-accepted, imperially-structured (but of course not absolutely definitive or stable) view of the organisation of the Chinese knowledge system as it was before Western learning had made its overwhelming impact on China from the second half of the nineteenth century.¹² It is hoped that a comparison between ‘*Meishu*’ and ‘*Yishu*’ will shed light on questions such as: how the field of ‘*meishu*’ was defined through the practice of text grouping in the book collection; whether or not this new framework of ‘*meishu*’ was really modelled on a translated and specific Western conception of ‘art’ or ‘fine art’; and whether or not the whole corpus of these reproduced texts on ‘knowledge of *meishu*’ could still occupy its original position in the Chinese knowledge system.

However, it should be borne in mind that there exist today in total six series of the *Meishu congshu*, in which only the first three series were put out by the House of SG when the publishing house was still run by Deng Shi.¹³ Since this thesis is concerned mainly with the publishing enterprises in the first decade of the twentieth century, and with those particularly undertaken in hopes of preserving Chinese artistic culture, the discussion of the present chapter will focus only on the first three series.

¹¹ Ji Yun et al. (eds.), *Yingyin Wenyuange Siku quanshu* 景印文淵閣四庫全書 ‘Complete library of the four treasures in the Wenyuan Hall’, photographic reprint of the 18th century edition (Taipei, 1986). For the compiling history of the *Four Treasuries*, see Guy, *The Emperor’s Four Treasuries*.

¹² Chang Bide 昌彼得 and Pan Meiyue 潘美月, *Zhongguo muluxue* 中國目錄學 ‘Chinese bibliography’ (Taipei, 1986), p. 216.

¹³ The fourth series was compiled from 1928 to 1936 after the publisher was taken over by Chen Mingshu in 1928, and the fifth and sixth series were published in Taiwan after 1949. A more detailed publishing history of these three later series will be given below.

An alternative approach

The question of whether the ‘*meishu*’ in the *Meishu congshu* was really a new framing concept or was simply an old conception dubbed with a new name points to the contested nature of this category of knowledge, and hence has attracted much scholarly attention.¹⁴ As a graphic loanword from Japanese, the term ‘*meishu*’ seems to have a meaning dependent on the fusion of the three elements: the original European concept of art, the European concept of art mediated by Japanese language, and the existent Chinese concept of ‘art’ (for the sake of convenience, we may perhaps assume this traditional Chinese concept was ‘*yishu*’). Scholars thus tend to grasp at the meaning of this neologism by paying particular attention to the degree to which the original idea (i.e. the Western concept of ‘art’) was through translation brought in to China as a package of ideas, for the term ‘*meishu*’ is generally accepted as a translation of a foreign concept.

Such an approach is exemplified in articles by Chen Zhenlian and Ogawa Hiromitsu.¹⁵ Both scholars have traced the usage of the term in China and striven to capture the fluid conception of the term ‘*meishu*’ as it would have been understood by contemporary authors in its original context. However, particularly in the case of the publication of *Meishu congshu*, both scholars place this publishing event in a linear development in which the European concept of ‘fine arts’ — understood by both scholars as the idea from which the term ‘*meishu*’ was translated and hence was

¹⁴ In addition to the two articles to be discussed below, Shao Hong also writes briefly about the *Meishu congshu*. He maintains that the categories seen in the *Meishu congshu* were not so much different from the Western classification of ‘*meishu*’ introduced by Wang Guowei, and implies that the endeavour of compiling Chinese texts on art echoed the late nineteenth-century European practices such as *Quellenschriften für Kunstgeschichte und Kunsttechnik des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit* (1871-1908), edited by Rudolph von Eitelberger. However, Shao arrives at his conclusion without pondering the fluidity of the meaning of the term ‘*meishu*’ at that time, and his suggestion of Eitelberger’s influence, although interesting, not only lacks substantial evidence but also neglects the role played by the traditional practice of text compilation in China. See Shao, ‘*Meishushi dongjian*’, p.109.

¹⁵ Chen Zhenlian, ‘*Meishu yuyuan kao*’, 2004.1, pp. 18-19; and Ogawa, ‘*Bijutsu sōsho*’.

believed to have centred on the ‘visual arts’, especially ‘architecture’, ‘sculpture’ and ‘painting’— would eventually be received in its entirety in China. With such a teleological view in mind, one can hardly avoid imposing views which are taken for granted today (i.e., our own conception of ‘art’ or ‘fine arts’) upon materials which were not necessarily produced out of these same concerns.

As such, Chen approaches this book collection by highlighting only the part in accordance with what he regards as today’s understanding of the term ‘*meishu*’, which, he maintains, takes ‘painting’ as the highest art form and also embraces other categories of visual art, such as sculpture, seal carving, etc. He is thus amazed at the striking resemblance of the ‘*meishu*’ seen in the *Meishu congshu* to the final definition of the term ‘*meishu*’ today and concludes that the concept of ‘*meishu*’ in the *Meishu congshu* was ‘ahead of its time’—since, he argues, the meaning of the term had apparently been quite ‘clear’ to the editors of the book collection (in the sense that it was very close to today’s understanding) while the same term was still causing conceptual confusion among most people at the time.¹⁶ Such an interpretation focuses only on the similarities between the idea of ‘*meishu*’ then and in the present and ignores the incongruence, as we shall see below, which sets the concept at that time apart from the way it is conceived of today.

The same can be said of Ogawa’s endeavour. Having in mind the fact that the term ‘fine arts’ is now generally rendered in modern Chinese as ‘*meishu*’, Ogawa takes this Chinese term to be equivalent to the European concept of ‘fine arts’, which he regards as having been established at the time of Giorgio Vasari (1511-1571) and composed of three categories: ‘architecture’, ‘sculpture’, and ‘painting’.¹⁷ Based on this

¹⁶ Chen Zhenlian, ‘*Meishu yuyuan kao*’, pp. 18-19.

¹⁷ Ogawa, ‘*Bijutsu sōsho*’, pp. 38, 40. However, Ogawa’s understanding of this Western concept of ‘fine arts’ is also different from the canonical view proposed by Paul Kristeller that the modern system of the fine arts—with five major arts of painting, sculpture, architecture, music, and poetry as its

hypothetical equivalence between the two terms ('fine arts' and '*meishu*'), which he holds as the premise of his argument, he sees the compilation of the first three series of the *Meishu congshu* as being situated somewhere along the course on which the specific meaning and connotations of this European concept would ultimately be imported as a whole to take up residence in its Chinese equivalent. Therefore, he examines the aforementioned three categories of the 'fine arts' in relation to the texts selected and the categorisations proposed in the *Meishu congshu* and concludes that the idea of '*meishu*' in this book collection is still based on the traditional notion of '*yishu*'. He assumes this notion to have been represented in the bibliographical classification of the eighteenth-century imperial book collection the *Four Treasuries*, an argument based on the dissimilarity of the '*meishu*' in the *Meishu congshu* to the European concept of 'fine arts'. Ogawa notes that the *Meishu congshu* still includes treatises on 'music' and 'crafts'—categories that, in his opinion, should not have appeared in this book collection since they are not considered to be 'fine arts' in European consciousness; he also points out the absence in the first three series of texts of 'sculpture', or '*diao*ke 雕刻'— a category which he believes should have been included, for it is one of the European categories of 'fine arts'. Similarly, the lack of a category on 'architecture' in this book collection was thus attributed to the Japanese mediation, as 'architecture' was not mentioned at all when the European concept of fine art was first introduced to Japan.¹⁸

Ogawa's approach is to a certain degree justifiable as the hypothetical equivalences between languages 'tend to be makeshift inventions in the beginning and become

nucleus components—was not established until the eighteenth century; see Kristeller, 'The Modern System of the Arts', pp. 163-165. Kristeller's view has recently been challenged by James Porter, who denies the ontological existence of this modern system; see Porter, 'Is Art Modern? Kristeller's "Modern System of the Arts" Reconsidered', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 49.1 (January, 2009), pp. 1-24.

¹⁸ Ogawa, '*Bijutsu sōsho*', pp. 40-41.

more or less fixed through repeated use or come to be supplanted by the preferred hypothetical equivalences of a later generation'.¹⁹ The reason why Ogawa has specifically examined the concept of '*meishu*' in relation to the European concept of 'fine arts' is precisely because the former is now generally used to translate the latter. However, such an approach in the case of the *Meishu congshu* is, I argue, in itself an attempt to assess the extent to which this publishing project had 'fulfilled' and 'realised' the very end of an established and 'fixed' European concept of 'fine arts' eventually being imported in its entirety into China. This approach thus fails to question in the first place whether the term '*meishu*' was used in the *Meishu congshu* to a greater degree with the intention of introducing 'the' European concept of 'fine arts'. If the '*meishu*' in this Chinese book collection was not intended to designate the pre-existing, well-established, and specific concept of the European notion of 'fine arts', one is of course unlikely to see this book collection bearing any significant resemblance within its framework to the European concept on which it is assumed the former would have been modelled.

Before deciding what exactly the term '*meishu*' meant to contemporary authors, one should not assume that all the uses of this translated term in the early twentieth century were in the hopes of introducing the same Western concept or that which was mediated by Japanese interpretation, for the situation is exceptionally complicated. In theory, the term '*meishu*' itself is undeniably a neologism coined in an attempt to translate a foreign concept; however, its semantic meaning did not depend on the concept it was originally aimed at translating, but was instead contingent upon the interaction between the three elements that may have been involved in the formulation, transmission, and reception of this translated term: the perceived original concept (say,

¹⁹ Lydia Liu, 'Legislating the Universal', p. 137.

‘the’ European concept of ‘fine arts’), the appropriated meaning in the mediated language (i.e., the Japanese ‘*bijutsu*’), and the ‘neologistic imagination’, as Lydia Liu puts it, in the host language (i.e., the Chinese ‘*meishu*’).²⁰ Notwithstanding, we immediately find ourselves facing methodological peril, for even the Japanese ‘*bijutsu*’ was originally coined in 1872 not to translate ‘the’ concept of ‘fine arts’; rather, it was seen in the same document as translating two German terms: ‘*Kunstgewerbe*’ (‘art and craft’) and ‘*bildende Kunst*’ (‘pictorial art’), neither of which is the German equivalent of ‘fine arts’ (‘*schöne Kunst*’).²¹ Furthermore, ‘the’ European concept of ‘fine arts’, against which Ogawa develops his arguments, had in itself been undergoing a great change since the second half of the nineteenth century.²² Under such circumstances, to regard the term ‘*meishu*’ as destined to designate a ‘fixed’ European concept of ‘fine arts’ is in itself an ahistorical conception of the conditions in which the term ‘*meishu*’ emerged as one of the most powerful tropes in the nationalist discourse.

Not knowing exactly the targeted concept of which the Japanese term ‘*bijutsu*’ was rendered as a translation in the first place, and unsure of which foreign idea the Chinese term ‘*meishu*’ intended to address, perhaps we should first liberate the concept of ‘*meishu*’ from this presumed translingual context, leaving the quest for its ‘original’ European and ‘mediated’ Japanese concepts aside for a while. Instead, I propose that we place ‘*meishu*’ in the cultural field where it appeared as a new mode of representation and rose, to borrow Bourdieu’s idea, as a ‘position-taking’ in a given

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Kitazawa Noriaki 北澤憲昭, *Me no shinden: ‘Bijutsu’ juyōshi nōto* 眼の神殿:美術受容史ナート ‘Temple of the eye: on the reception of *bijutsu*’ (Tokyo, 1989), pp. 139-145, cited in Satō Dōshin 佐藤道信, ‘*Nihon bijutsu’ tanjō: Kindai nihon no ‘kotoba’ to senryaku* 〈日本美術〉誕生—近代日本の「ことば」と戦略 ‘The birth of “Japanese art”: “vocabulary” and strategies of modern Japan’ (Tokyo, 1996), pp. 34-35.

²² See Larry Shiner, *The Invention of Art: A Cultural History* (Chicago and London, 2001), pp. 225-301.

cultural field, eventually challenging the position of an established concept.²³ In this particular case, the most likely candidate which ‘*meishu*’ was to confront is the concept of ‘*yishu*’ in China, for its position in the Chinese knowledge system would have been immediately seen as ‘traditional’ by the simple appropriation of the new framing and grouping concept of ‘*meishu*’. Therefore, instead of looking for the meaning of ‘*meishu*’ in the middle zone between the term itself and the presumably targeted foreign notions, we should situate this concept in relation to the similar, established concept in China, ‘*yishu*’, whose semantic contents and discursive position were to be shifted and transformed by the introduction of a new mode of representation. As such, the question of whether or not the notion of ‘*meishu*’ in this publishing project was differentiated from that of ‘*yishu*’ in the *Four Treasuries*, in both its meaning and its position in the knowledge system, becomes all the more important. Only once this question is sufficiently attended to can we properly assess how new and how foreign the concept of ‘*meishu*’ seen in the *Meishu congshu* was and how it differs from the past and our present perceptions of ‘art’.

To probe this question, it is important to view the relationship between a ‘semantic form’ (the characters as a form without meaning, like ‘*meishu*’) and its assumed ‘semantic field’ (the designation of meaning) as one mutually constructed and defined, rather than one dependent upon the meaning of third or fourth parties (such as ‘the’ original European concept of ‘fine arts’). That is, in the case of the *Meishu congshu*, the ‘semantic form’ ‘*meishu*’ will be approached in this chapter as being defined by the texts selected for inclusion in this collection; it is these texts that constituted the ‘semantic field’ and gave meaning to the ‘semantic form’, ‘*meishu*’. Meaning resides

²³ Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, pp. 131-141. The idea of ‘positions’ and ‘position-takings’ refers originally in Bourdieu’s analysis to the structural relation between position-occupants and position-seekers within a field where strategies of competition are mediated by individuals’ dispositions, or ‘habitus’. Here this idea is appropriated to address a situation in which *yishu* and *meishu* sought to differentiate from one another in a discursive field.

precisely in the practices of text collecting and grouping, not in a presumed notion of European or Japanese concept of ‘art’.

This is not to say that the concept of ‘*meishu*’ in early twentieth-century China had nothing to do with any European or Japanese ideas. Quite the contrary, foreign ideas were shadows of transformation too great to be approached without pondering how exactly they had been perceived by the Chinese people who had appropriated these translated terms. As we shall see in this chapter and Chapter 4, the term ‘*meishu*’ was by no means meant to designate a fixed European concept of ‘fine arts’ centring on ‘architecture’, ‘sculpture’, and ‘painting’. Rather, there was more than one possible way in which the Chinese people were able to exercise their imagination with regard to this neologism ‘*meishu*’, and attach the semantic form ‘*meishu*’ to more than one type of the ‘semantic field’. However, these semantic ‘imaginings’ were not strictly defined nor confined, and their variations cannot be exhausted either, as they were invoked according to each individual’s own perception of how the valorisation of the concept of ‘*meishu*’ might be able to help China escape her predicament in relation to the imperial powers of Japan and the West. Nevertheless, although each person’s understanding of this idea may have differed, it is still possible to observe in them modes of tendency with which the term ‘*meishu*’ was perceived and appropriated. The grouping concept ‘*meishu*’ seen in the *Meishu congshu* was only one of these tendencies; and, as will be elaborated on below, this particular concept was perceived to be those things that the cultivated literati would appreciate and indulge in, which is different from the previously established category ‘*yishu*’, denoting the skills and accomplishments one was able to acquire and master. The former refers to splendours of the visual and the material in the world outside; the latter pertains to the abilities and accomplishments possessed in oneself. To explore this question, it is necessary to

examine the overall categorising principles, and, most important, the position of ‘*meishu*’ in the knowledge system in which it was situated.

Classification in the *Meishu congshu*

The bibliographical classification of this book collection is clearly stated in the ‘General Remarks’:²⁴

- ‘Calligraphy and Painting’ (*shuhua lei* 書畫類)
- ‘Carving and Seals, with Objects of the Studio Appended’ (*diaohe moyin lei* 琯刻摹印類, *wenfang gepin fu* 文房各品附)
- ‘Ceramic, Bronze, Jade, and Stone’ (*citong yushi lei* 磁銅玉石類)
- ‘Literary Art: *Ci*, *Qu* Poems and *Chuanqi* Drama’ (*wenyi lei* 文藝類, *ciqu chuanqi* 詞曲傳奇)
- ‘Miscellaneous Notes’ (*zaji* 雜記)

These five categories served not only as principles for text selection but also for demarcating the scope and boundaries of this book collection. It was promised in the ‘General Remarks’ that there would always be texts drawn from at least three to four of these categories in each volume; and the category ‘Calligraphy and Painting’ was explicitly specified as the category into which the most effort would be invested. ‘Painting’ was even regarded as ‘the finest among all forms of *Meishu* of the Divine Land’, a statement that echoes the publishing practices of the art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji*. However, ‘Metal and Stone [inscription]’ (*jinshi*) as a category of study was, as specified, to be excluded, for the publisher decided that a specialised field as this deserved a book series of its own²⁵—even though ‘*jinshi*’ was placed in the domain of ‘*meishu*’ in some of the publisher’s other projects.²⁶ In addition, as these

²⁴ ‘*Lüeli*’, p. 1b.

²⁵ ‘*Lüeli*’, pp.1b, 2a.

²⁶ For instance, rubbings of stone or bronze inscriptions, objects for the study of ‘*Jinshi*’, are reproduced in the art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji*. Also, the change in structure of the journal *Guocui xuebao* from 1910 appended ‘*Jinshi*’ to the subject of ‘*Meishu*’, an arrangement which is

five categories might not always be present altogether, the ‘Table of Contents’ in each volume listed only the title and author of each text without grouping it under a heading corresponding to the category to which a text was considered to belong (Fig. 3-2). As such, a few texts do cast questions about why they were selected and to which category they were considered to belong, such as the text ‘Manual on Growing Orchids’, which may appear to us to be out of place in this classification system.²⁷

Although this bibliographical classification is far from a ‘system’ of ‘*meishu*’ as a field of study which would have had clear boundaries and fixed components universally agreed to and abided by, it nevertheless demonstrates the publisher’s aspiration to establish an independent space for this new subject. This classification system can thus be approached for gauging the boundaries of the field of ‘*meishu*’ as they were conceived by the Society for Preserving National Learning at that time. However, some problems remain unnoticed in previous research, such as the fact that even after the ‘General Remarks’ had been released, small adjustments were still made to this classification system, which reveals the process through which the conception of ‘*meishu*’ was constantly being modified and revised in the publishing process of this book collection. As such, the compilation and publication of this book collection was in itself an ongoing process, one which is best exemplified in the development of ‘Literary Art’ as a category in this classification—a development still being ignored today, since all scholarly attention is without exception focused on the other components of the classification system which seem to be closer to today’s conception of ‘*meishu*’, commonly regarded as being composed only of visual arts.²⁸

In addition, the seemingly established terms used in these five categories also tend

different from the bibliographical classification of the *Four Treasuries*, which sorts ‘*Jinshi*’ under ‘History’. See ‘*Diliunian Guocui xuebao gengding limu* 第六年國粹學報更定例目’ (Change in structural classification from the 6th year of the *Guocui xuebao*), *GX*, 6.1 (1910), p. 1 (1b).

²⁷ Liu Wenqi 劉文淇, *Yilanji* 藝蘭記, *MC*, 1.1 (1911).

²⁸ Chen Zhenlian, ‘*Meishu yuyuan kao*’, pp. 18-19; Ogawa, ‘*Bijutsu sōsho*’, p. 37.

to blind us to the fact that some of these familiar terms may not have meant at that time the same as we generally understand them today, a fact which could greatly affect our understanding of ‘their’ conception of ‘*meishu*’. This is particularly true of the use in this classification of the Chinese term ‘*diao*ke’ (written as ‘琯刻’ in the ‘General Remarks’ but also written in the form of ‘雕刻’ elsewhere in the *Meishu congshu*): literally, ‘chiselling and carving’, which is now generally understood as its modern meaning of ‘sculpture’, rather than with the original meaning as intended by the editors. This is why Ogawa maintains that in this book collection there is no text on ‘sculpture’, a term now normally translated into Chinese as ‘*diao*ke 雕刻’.²⁹ While it is correct to say this if one assumes that ‘*diao*ke’ denotes ‘sculpture’, as in Ogawa’s argument, it is problematic to believe that there is no text on ‘*diao*ke’ in the sense understood by the editors.

As such, how do we categorise some of the odd texts in this book collection, such as ‘Manual on Growing Orchids’? How can we explain the presence of the category ‘Literary Art’ in this bibliographical classification of ‘*meishu*’, if ‘*meishu*’ was supposed to include only visual arts? And what exactly did ‘*diao*ke’ mean to the editors? In fact, all these questions can be answered by examining the original state of the first edition, in which there still exist original advertisements and editorial notices which were removed in later reprints.³⁰

The original scope of the project of the *Meishu congshu* was made clear in the announcements of the titles of the texts that the editors wanted to publish in the successive volumes; such an announcement was first seen in the inaugural volume

²⁹ Ogawa, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

³⁰ The following observation is based on the editions housed in the SOAS Library and the Hong Kong University Library. I am convinced that both are first editions, as the advertisements and editorial notices are unseen in later reprints. However, the HK edition was rebound, probably before its entering the library, while the SOAS edition has retained its original form, even including the casing for each four-fascicle volume (Fig. 3-1).

(Fig. 3-3).³¹ These titles, along with their attributed authors, are arranged more or less in accordance with the order of the five categories proposed in the ‘General Remarks’, even though they are not formally sorted under any headings. Apart from these lists of titles to be published, there is also an editorial notice in Vol. 1.3 requesting contributions of the texts desired for the compilation.³² All these lists hence constitute the original publishing plan for the *Meishu congshu*: 203 titles in total, inclusive of the desired ones.³³ Apparently, the plan was too ambitious for a ten-volume series, and the Second Series had to be launched soon after the First Series was completed. Another long list (presented on a folded page) of the text titles intended to be published was likewise advertised in the first volume of the Second Series (1913), a list which serves as an important source of information for understanding the categorising principles of this book collection. The list not only includes all the text titles that had appeared in previous advertisements but had not yet been published, but also adds some new ones for a total of 224 titles, although only about 36 percent of them were eventually printed in later volumes or series.³⁴ Titles that were still unavailable to the editorial board at the time are marked with ‘○’ (Fig. 3-4). Most important of all, all of the titles are categorised under the headings of ‘Calligraphy’ (29 titles), ‘Painting’ (109 titles), ‘Carving and Seals’ (24 titles), ‘Ceramic, Bronze, Jade, and Stone’ (17 titles), ‘Objects of the Studio’ (30 titles), and ‘Miscellaneous Notes’ (15 titles)—which gives us a clearer idea of the sorting principles of the

³¹ ‘*Meishu congshu daikan shumu* 美術叢書待刊書目’ (List of book titles to be published in the *Meishu congshu*), MC, 1.1 (1911), pp. 1-4a. In the First Series advertisements as such also appeared in volume 1.3 and 1.4. See ‘*Meishu congshu xu daikan shumu* 美術叢書續待刊書目’ (Continuing list of book titles to be published in the *Meishu congshu*), MC, 1.3 (1911), p. 1; ‘*Meishu congshu sanxu daike shumu* 美術叢書三續待刊書目’ (Second continuing list of book titles to be published in the *Meishu congshu*), MC, 1.4 (1911), p. 1a.

³² ‘*Meishu congshu zhengkan shumu* 美術叢書徵刊書目’ (List of book titles desired for publishing the *Meishu congshu*), MC, 1.3 (1911), pp. 1b-2.

³³ There are 133 titles in MC 1.1; 28 intended titles and 30 wanted titles in MC 1.3; and 16 titles in MC 1.4. However, 4 titles in MC 1.4 overlapped with those which had already appeared in MC 1.3.

³⁴ On this list there are only 80 titles which were eventually released in the Second and Third Series.

Meishu congshu.³⁵

First, one can hardly fail to notice the absence of the category ‘Literary Art’ on this list. In fact, texts on *chuanqi* drama (considered to belong to the category of ‘Literary Art’) which had been listed in the first ‘List of Titles To Be Published’ came to be regarded in a later editorial notice of the same year (1911) as improper for the present project since, according to the editors, they were in nature not as much characteristic of ‘*meishu*’ as of ‘*wenxue* 文學’ (literature).³⁶ Given that the editors of the Society had been exposed to the aesthetic ideas proposed by Wang Guowei—that ‘poetry, dramas, and novels’ were the pinnacle of all arts (Chapter 2)—such abandonment, first of the texts on *chuanqi* drama and then of the whole category of ‘Literary Art’, was a deliberate choice meant to differentiate ‘*meishu*’ from the generic sense of ‘arts’ inclusive of forms of visual, literary, and performing kinds. This view differed from the one still held in 1913 by Lu Xun (1881-1936), later to become an renowned writer and powerful cultural figure in China, who treated the term ‘*meishu*’ as a generic term for painting, sculpture, music, and literature in an essay much discussed by modern scholars.³⁷ The awareness of such a differentiation on the one hand demarcated the domain of ‘*meishu*’ in relation to other fields within a broader cultural field as being related to things visual, tangible, and non-textual, and narrowed it down as a subject parallel to, rather than inclusive of, ‘Literature’; on the other hand, this awareness also implies that the discursive space of ‘*wenxue*’ had been sufficiently established to the extent that it seemed improper to some people to discuss it indiscriminately along as, or even alongside, ‘*meishu*’.³⁸

³⁵ ‘*Zaichu Meishu congshu xuji shiji guanggao* 再出美術叢書續集十集廣告’ (Advertisement for the 10-volume continuing series of the *Meishu Congshu*), *MC*, 2.1 (1913).

³⁶ ‘*Fugao* 附告’ (Appended notice [to *Meishu congshu sanxu daikan shumu*]), *MC*, 1.4 (1911), p. 1b. This notice is not seen in the reprints.

³⁷ Lu Xun, ‘*Ni bobu meishu yijian shu*’, pp. 10-12.

³⁸ The modern meaning of ‘*wenxue*’ as ‘literature’ does not seem to have been widely accepted until

The revision of these categories itself demonstrates the publisher's continuous efforts to grasp and present a 'proper' understanding of '*meishu*'. The editors' willingness and flexibility to revise their conception of the term makes all that remains unchanged in this book collection more essential to the concept of '*meishu*' as it was actually maintained by the publisher. What still existed after the exclusion of 'Literary Arts'—in particular the book titles which at first glance seem odd to our modern eyes but were still published in this collection—defined how such a concept was understood by the publisher, for the remaining categories had survived the editors' constant revisions of their own conception of '*meishu*'.

Furthermore, a close look at the text titles listed in this advertisement under the heading 'Carving and Seals' also suggests a different perspective of the meaning of the term '*diao*ke' (琯刻 or 雕刻, both forms existing in the first edition of the *Meishu congshu*), which is now almost a standard translation for the Western notion of 'sculpting' or 'Sculpture' and which may thus mislead us into thinking that the texts grouped under this category would have been about statues, statuettes, and high- and bas-reliefs. While '*diao*ke' literally means 'the skills of carving and chiselling', it became a categorical heading no later than the late sixteenth century in China. It refers primarily to small carved statuettes in precious stone, wood, bamboo, ivory, silver, etc., and the carvings worked into daily objects and even on walnut stones. More important, grand statues or reliefs in architectural settings are hardly ever mentioned in the context of this category.³⁹ Therefore, when one is to translate the

the first decade of the twentieth century; see Theodore Hutters, *Bringing the World Home: Appropriating the West in Late Qing and Early Republican China* (Honolulu, 2005), pp. 76-80. However, how '*wenxue*' came to be perceived as being different from '*meishu*' still awaits further exploration.

³⁹ For examples, see Zhang Yingwen 張應文, '*Lun diaoke* 論雕刻' (On carvings), in *Qingmizang* 清祕藏 'Pure and Arcane Collecting', *Siku* edition, vol. 872, *juan* 1, pp.26b-27a; Gao Lian 高濂, '*Lun tihong woqi diaoke xiangqian qimin* 論剔紅倭漆雕刻鑲嵌器皿' (On carved red lacquer, Japanese lacquer, carvings, and inlaid objects and vessels', in *Zunsheng bajian* 遵生八牋 'Eight discourses on

term ‘*diao*ke’ in its traditional sense into English, it is more accurate to render it as ‘carving’ rather than ‘sculpture’. This traditional understanding of ‘*diao*ke’ still persisted in the *Meishu congshu*, as evidenced by the inclusion of the title ‘Records of Bamboo Carvers’, originally prefaced in 1807, by Jin Yuanyü 金元鈺.⁴⁰

Nevertheless, it is the listing of the text ‘Manual for Formulating Movable Types’, prefaced in 1774, that sheds light on a particular meaning of the term which completes our picture of the range of the things the term was able to signify, a meaning that has ceased to exist in modern vernacular Chinese; that is, to denote the act of ‘book printing’.⁴¹ This signification is not at all absurd, given that the making of xylographic books entails the carving of wooden print blocks. One of the earliest examples of such usage is found in the title of a late-ninth-century text, a work about raising funds for printing monastic codes, which uses the term ‘*diao*ke’ to express the meaning, ‘putting into print’.⁴² Similar examples are never lacking in later periods.⁴³ This neglected aspect of the term *diao*ke not only explains why a text on movable-type book printing could be grouped under the category of ‘*Diao*ke and Seals’, but also shows how inappropriate it is to assume the term *diao*ke in the *Meishu congshu* meant in the early twentieth century exactly the same as its modern meaning, which is regarded as being very close to the Western notion of ‘sculpture’.

the art of living’, *Siku* edition, vol. 874, *juan* 14, pp. 73-78; and Wen Zhenheng 文震亨, ‘*Hailun tongyu diaoke yaoqi* 海論銅玉雕刻窯器’ (General views on bronzes, jades, carvings and kiln objects), in *Zhangwuzhi* 長物志 ‘Superfluous Things’, *Siku* edition, vol. 872, *juan* 7, pp. 23-25.

⁴⁰ Jin Yuanyü, *Zhuren lu* 竹人錄, MC, 2.5 (1913).

⁴¹ Jin Jian 金簡, *Juzhenban chengshi* 聚珍版程式, MC, 3.8 (1917).

⁴² Sikong Tu 司空圖 (837-908), ‘*Wei dongdu Jing’ ai si jianglüseng Huique huamu diaoke lü shu* 爲東都敬愛寺講律僧惠確化募雕刻律疏’ (Statements written for Monk Huique, who preaches Vinaya at the Jing’ai Temple in eastern capital on raising contributions for carving monastic codes’, *Sikong Biaosheng wenji* 司空表聖文集 ‘Collected Works by Sikong Biaosheng’, *Siku* edition, vol. 1083, *juan* 9, p. 4.

⁴³ For example, see *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要 (Annotated Catalogue of the Complete Collection of Four Treasuries), eds. Yongrong et al. (4 vols., Shanghai, 1933), ii, *juan* 86, p. 1793, where the author uses the expression ‘*weiji diaoke* 未及雕刻’ (‘has yet to be carved’) to indicate that a certain text (*Jiang tie ping* 絳帖平) had not ever been published in print form by a certain time.

While placing a text on ‘*diao*ke as book printing’ in the domain of ‘*Meishu*’ might seem bizarre to our modern eyes, it was, nonetheless, by all means consistent with the publisher’s conception of ‘*meishu*’, a fact which can be easily seen in their rhetoric on publishing practices. The photolithographic reprint of the book *Complete Works of Xie Xifa* was advertised as preserving the ‘essence of our nation’s *meishu*’ as it retained the appearance of each carefully printed page of the original book;⁴⁴ articles on the history of book printing were also sorted in the ‘*Meishu*’ section in the *Guocui xuebao*.⁴⁵ The appreciation of ‘book printing’ should not be hastily assumed to be a sign of the elevation of ‘Crafts’ into the realm of ‘Arts’, as one might expect in European art history of the same period, when the Arts and Crafts movement called for overcoming the separation between arts and crafts.⁴⁶ Rather, it should be understood within the context of the traditional practice of book collecting in China, in which not only is the age and rarity of a book valued, but the style and quality of the block-carving also matters.⁴⁷ Hence ‘Old Books of the Song and Yuan’ was among the ten groups of ‘Objects of *meishu*’ advertised for contribution in the *Guocui xuebao*.⁴⁸

The culture of book collecting and connoisseurship in book printing in China not only earned ‘printing’ and rare books a place in the field of ‘*meishu*’ in the *Meishu congshu* but also echoed the contemporary fascination with modern printing technology introduced in Chapter 2. Hence the printing firm ‘National Glories Press’

⁴⁴ ‘Xie Gaoyu xifa quanji 謝皋羽晞髮全集’(Complete works of Xie Gaoyu), in ‘*Guocui congshu disanci chuban guanggao* 國粹叢書第三次出版廣告’(Advertisement for the third release of the book series *Guocui congshu*), GX, 2.8 (1906), inside back cover.

⁴⁵ Such as Huang Jie’s ‘*Banjikao* 版籍考’(On printed books), GX, 4.10, pp. 1-5; and 4.12 (1908), pp. 1-4.

⁴⁶ Shiner, *The Invention of Art*, pp. 227-228; 234-245; see also Elizabeth Cumming and Wendy Kaplan, *The Arts and Crafts Movement* (London, 1991).

⁴⁷ The concerns about the style of carved characters, layout, and paper used for printing a book involving connoisseurship in rare books are best exemplified in Ye Dehui 葉德輝, *Shulin qinghua* 書林清話 ‘Elegant talks on books’, prefaced by the author in 1911, published in 1920 (edition collected in the Chinese Studies Library, Oxford), esp. *juan* 6.

⁴⁸ ‘*Zheng meishupin zhonglei*’, GX, 2.8.

was established for, among other things, the advancement of the study of ‘*meishu*’;⁴⁹ similarly, the renewal of the movable types used for printing the journal *Guocui xuebao*, along with the self-acclaimed high quality of their halftone printing, was also considered worthy of mention in an advertisement.⁵⁰ The attention paid to book printing eventually led to the invention of Chinese printing ink specifically designed for printing books on Chinese paper, an achievement which was thus perceived as a proof of the progress of ‘*meishu*’.⁵¹

The list of books to be published in the Second Series also shows that the category ‘Miscellaneous Notes’ not only accommodated (as this heading literally suggests) texts consisting of assorted notes on connoisseurship in general—on subjects such as antiques, books, and various ‘superfluous things’, as well as on the collecting of them—but also included treatises on specific subjects which were not covered in the other categories, such as the text entitled ‘On Using Incense without Producing Smoke’.⁵² Therefore, the text ‘Manual on Growing Orchids’ must have been selected for this book collection out of the same concern and would have been grouped under the category of ‘Miscellaneous notes’, since it could not be attached to any of the other categories but was still regarded as relevant to the knowledge of ‘*meishu*’. Similarly, texts on *qin* zithers should also be grouped under this category, for they were out of place in any of the other proposed categories in this book collection.

In fact, even after the editors had been made aware of the inappropriateness of the presence of texts on ‘Literary Arts’ in this book project, ‘odd’ texts whose subjects

⁴⁹ ‘*Guoguang yinshuasuo jigu zhangcheng*’, *GX*, 3.3.

⁵⁰ ‘*Benbao tebie guanggao* 本報特別廣告’(Special announcement of the journal), *GX*, 4.3 (1908), inside back cover.

⁵¹ ‘*Guoguang yinshuasuo xinzeng putong/ jingliangbu ji faming yong zhongguomo yinshua guanggao* 國光印刷所新增普通/精良部及發明用中國墨印刷廣告’(Announcement for the newly established ‘general’ and ‘advanced’ printing divisions in the National Glories Press and the invention of Chinese printing ink), *MC*, 1.4 (1911), [adv.] p. 3. The same advertisement is also seen in ‘*Guanggao*’, *GX*, 79 (1911), p. 2; and ‘*Guanggao*’, *SG*, 19 (1911), p. 4.

⁵² Dong Yue 董說 (1620-1686), *Feiyan xiangfa* 非烟香法, *MC*, 2.4 (1913).

ranged from dresses to accessories for men,⁵³ from making tea to making sweets,⁵⁴ from flower arrangement to keeping pet fish,⁵⁵ were still published throughout the first three series of the *Meishu congshu*. In other words, these titles never came to be considered irrelevant or inappropriate to this new field of ‘*meishu*’. While other more established categories such as ‘Calligraphy and Painting’, ‘*Diaoke* and Seals’, etc. may have served as the core elements by which the concept of ‘*meishu*’ was meant to be grasped by and registered in readers’ minds, it is these ‘odd’ texts—in the sense that they are both unusual by today’s conception of ‘*meishu*’ as well as related to various subjects and not really matching any proposed grouping category except ‘Miscellaneous Notes’—that mark out the very boundaries of the idea of ‘*meishu*’, as it was understood by the editors and embodied in the *Meishu congshu*.

These ‘odd texts’ all concern the material enjoyments in which a person of refined tastes might indulge, which to a greater extent defines what ‘*meishu*’ is all about to the editors of this book collection and which, as we shall see below, gives this concept of ‘*meishu*’ a unique character which differentiates it from that of ‘*yishu*’. The subjects and objects addressed by these texts are not restricted to visual culture alone (as using incense without causing smoke reduces the visual effect that the act of incense scenting can offer); rather they also bring in the pleasures belonging to senses other than vision, such as smell, taste, and hearing. These pleasures exist in various aspects of material life and are only deemed worth pursuing when someone holds an appreciative attitude towards the world surrounding them. As shown in the selected

⁵³ Such as Zhang Chou 張丑, *Yefukao* 野服考 ‘Studies in the Garments for the Wild’, *MC*, 2.10 (1914), on the sartorial styles and accessories for recluses; and Wang Tingding 王廷鼎, *Zhangshan xinlu* 杖扇新錄 ‘New Notes on Canes and Fans’, *MC*, 2.8 (1914), documenting various styles of canes and fans.

⁵⁴ Such as Zhang Qiande 張謙德, *Chajing* 茶經 ‘Book of Tea’, *MC* 2.10 (1914), on the production and the making of tea; and Wang Zhuo 王灼, *Tangshuangpu* 糖霜譜 ‘Treatise on Frost-like Sugar’, *MC*, 3.5 (1916), on making white sugar.

⁵⁵ Such as Yuan Hongdao 袁宏道, *Pingshi* 瓶史 ‘History of Vase Flowers’, *MC*, 1.6 (1911), on flower arrangement; and Zhang Qiande, *Zhusha yupu* 硃砂魚譜 ‘Treatise on Vermilion Fish’, *MC*, 2.10 (1914), on how to keep a kind of small red fish with a hint of yellow colour as pets.

text titles, such pleasures lie not only in the thing itself, but also in the relationship between the person and the thing (as in the case of keeping pets). This intimate relationship did not present any contradiction to the other groupings in this book collection, as the texts in these categories are all about the ‘things’ outside of the self to be enjoyed, and more or less correspond to the material culture created and indulged in by the cultivated literati. ‘*Meishu*’ in this book collection can hence be understood as the incarnation of the literati’s elegant, sensory leisure pursuits in the material world.

From the perspective which takes ‘*meishu*’ as things to be enjoyed with an appreciative mind, the inclusion of the texts on *qin* zithers in this book collection poses an intriguing question as to the extent to which the concept of ‘*meishu*’ as seen in the *Meishu congshu* resembles the existent idea and grouping principle of ‘*yishu*’, particularly the one exemplified in the imperial book collection the *Four Treasuries*, which also accommodates texts on *qin* zithers. Do these texts on *qin* zithers appear in the *Meishu congshu* for the same reason as they do in the *Four Treasuries*? Does the conception of ‘*meishu*’ in the *Meishu congshu* by and large reproduce the hierarchical structure of knowledge proposed in the *Four Treasuries*, where the category of ‘*yishu*’ is situated? To probe these questions, it is necessary not only to trace the semantic development of both terms, but also to examine and compare the positions occupied by the categories of ‘*yishu*’ and ‘*meishu*’ within the knowledge systems evident in these two book collections.

Positions of ‘*yishu*’ and ‘*meishu*’ in Chinese knowledge system

The preference for the term ‘*meishu*’ over ‘*yishu*’ in the title of the *Meishu congshu* was more likely a decision intended to differentiate the contents and concepts of

‘*meishu*’ from those of ‘*yishu*’ (particularly as seen in the *Four Treasuries*) than an attempt to rebrand the old concept ‘*yishu*’ with a fancy new name. Compiled in the 1770s and 1780s, the bibliographic classification of the *Four Treasuries* enjoyed paradigmatic importance since the time of its release.⁵⁶ Its significance was so great that the editors of the Shanghai-based journal *Guocui xuebao* felt the need to explain why the new journal’s structure did not adhere to the model set forth by this imperial book collection, which treats ‘*jinshi*’ as a category under the branch of ‘History’.⁵⁷ The editors’ awareness of this predominant bibliographic classification thus implies that the use of the term ‘*meishu*’ in the *Meishu congshu* was a deliberate departure from the *Four Treasuries* tradition: an attempt to open up a new discursive space no longer subject to this tradition.

Differentiation sometimes implies a certain degree of resemblance between the things to be differentiated. ‘*Meishu*’ and ‘*yishu*’ bear similarities to one another in more than just their similar semantic construction of ‘x+*shu* (skills, or methods)’. Like ‘*meishu*’, the category ‘*yishu*’ in the *Four Treasuries* is broken down into several subcategories, such as ‘Calligraphy and Painting’, ‘*Qin* Zither Music Scores’, ‘Seal Carving’, and ‘Miscellaneous Skills’ (including *jie* drum beating, *jiegu* 羯鼓, and *go* game playing, *qi* 棋).⁵⁸ Two of these same subcategories in ‘*yishu*’ also appear as grouping categories in the classification of the *Meishu congshu* (i.e., ‘Calligraphy and Painting’ and ‘Seal Carving’); and texts on ‘*Qin* Zithers’ are incorporated into this early twentieth-century book collection as well, although not as an independent category of its own. In addition, the ‘*yishu*’ in the *Four Treasuries* also significantly distinguished itself from not only the field of ‘Divination’ (*shushu* 術數) but also

⁵⁶ Chang and Pan, *Zhongguo muluxue*, p. 216.

⁵⁷ ‘*Diliunian Guocui xuebao gengding limu*’, *GX*, 6.1, p.1b.

⁵⁸ *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*, iii, *juan* 112, p. 2321; *juan* 3, pp. 2364-2370.

practical skills and abilities such as ‘Gardening’ and ‘Medicine’, which might otherwise have been accommodated within the category of ‘*yishu*’ if one considers the comprehensive meaning of the term, which embraces all kinds of skills and abilities (like ‘arts’ in English in the sense of ‘skills’).⁵⁹ The fact that the ‘*yishu*’ in the *Four Treasuries* centres only on the kinds of accomplishments pursued by a man of leisure further enhances the impression that the two terms in both contexts seem to address the same thing.

However, ‘*yishu*’ and ‘*meishu*’ are in fact different in meaning as well as in their positions within the knowledge system. First, all the subcategories in ‘*yishu*’ are grouped on the grounds of their being the many ‘accomplishments’ pursued by the literati, skills to be mastered and abilities to be possessed; whereas the texts that appeared in the *Meishu congshu*, as discussed above, are more on the topic of ‘things’ outside the self, things intended to be enjoyed with an appreciative mind. Such a distinction can be explained by the fact that no texts on *go* games or drum beating were published in the *Meishu congshu*. The ‘skill-orientated’ meaning of the term *yishu* can also be observed in its subcategory, ‘Miscellaneous *skills*’, which is for accommodating ‘odd’ texts relevant to *yishu* but unable to form a characteristically distinct group of their own. A look at the historic usage of the character ‘*yi*’ shows its association with the acquired abilities related to leisure pursuits of intellectuals, as in the catchy phrase extracted from Confucius’s *Analects*, ‘to ramble among *yi*’ (*youyuyi* 游於藝). The *yi* here refers to the ‘six arts’ (*liuyi* 六藝) practices in ancient times which were supposed to be mastered by a cultivated person, practices including rituals,

⁵⁹ The term ‘*yishu*’ in pre-Song texts generally means the ability to prophesy about the future or the skill to employ forces of *yin* and *yang*. This usage is apparent in the standard histories compiled before the Song in which ‘*yishu*’ is used to group biographies of people who possessed such an ability or skill.

music, archery, charioteering, language, and arithmetic.⁶⁰ However, these are skills to be acquired by an individual through constant and persistent practice, rather than ‘things’ situated in the outside world that are meant for us to appreciate, to form a relationship with, as are the subjects included in the *Meishu congshu*.⁶¹

Second, the classification in the *Four Treasuries* also demonstrates a highly hierarchical structure in which ‘*yishu*’ occupies a rather low position, a fact which was best demonstrated in the ‘Complete Annotated Catalogue of the *Four Treasuries*’. This document, compiled by the editors of this imperial book collection, gives a lengthy exposition of the hierarchical order of the classification and the principles for grouping individual texts.⁶² ‘Classics’ (*jing* 經), the first branch in this knowledge system, was by all accounts the highest and most revered, whereas the category of ‘*yishu*’, placed in the third branch ‘*zi*’ 子, is defined in a negative tone as being for texts on insignificant but pursuable subjects. For instance, ‘*qin* music’ is included in this category because it was considered inappropriate for inclusion in the higher category of ‘Music’ under the branch of ‘Classics’; according to the editors of the imperial book collection, *qin* music had by that time been abused by the free creation of the commoners and therefore no longer qualified as ‘elegant music’, as that suitable for State rituals and grouped under the ‘Music’ category. It was also argued that the various kinds of game playing—in spite of their having been mentioned in *Classic of Rites*—were not really about rituals and should be ‘degraded’ [from ‘Classics’] to ‘*yishu*’ (*tuilie yishu* 退列藝術). As for gambling, dancing, etc., the editors of the *Four*

⁶⁰ Chichung Huang, *The Analects of Confucius (Lun Yu): A Literal Translation with an Introduction and Notes* (New York, Oxford, 1997), ‘Book 7 (Yong ye)’, p. 87

⁶¹ For example, although ‘Manual on Growing Orchids’ appears at first glance to be a text on gardening, in the text the orchid is treated as if it were a real human being to be taken care of and loved.

⁶² ‘*Siku quanshu fanli* 四庫全書凡例’ (General remarks of the *Four Treasuries*), in *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*, i, pp. 1-7. See also Guy, *The Emperor’s Four Treasuries*, pp. 108-111, 114.

Treasuries regarded these as multifarious trivial skills and maintained that simply grouping them together under ‘Miscellaneous skills’ would save a great deal of trouble. Even the presence of ‘Calligraphy’ and ‘Seal Carving’ in ‘*yishu*’ was also justified by stressing how improper it would have been to have put them in the category of ‘*xiaoxue* 小學’, the study of the origin and development of words, under the branch of ‘Classics’.⁶³ In other words, from the point of view of these editors, ‘*yishu*’ consisted merely of minor skills—those not as significant as those which constituted real learning, such as ‘Classics’—which nonetheless were considered to be acceptable as a kind of knowledge.

This depreciating attitude towards ‘*yishu*’ did not cast a shadow on ‘*meishu*’ as seen in the *Meishu congshu*, largely because the term ‘*yishu*’ was not appropriated in this early-twentieth-century book collection. Perhaps the use of ‘*meishu*’ was a deliberate challenge to the hierarchical structure of knowledge in the *Four Treasuries*—in which ‘*meishu*’ had no place (and would not have been regarded as serious learning even if it had)—given both the high position ‘Classics’ enjoyed and the slighting references ‘*yishu*’ received in this Imperial book collection. Employing the neologism ‘*meishu*’ was probably a better way to introduce a new concept which would not have to be subject to the previously superior position of ‘Classics’, and would more easily have addressed the needs of the time as representing the essence of the nation. In fact, in the *Meishu congshu*, ‘*meishu*’ was praised even more highly than ‘Classics’ and was regarded as the only subject of learning that could win the competition for survival against the West. As Deng Shi stated in the ‘Preface’ to the *Meishu congshu*:

When European learning began to have an effect on China, the traditional learning of our nation also suffered from decline. The times have changed, and so has the trend. Six *Classics* have now become no more than unwanted dregs, and Confucius’s thinking seems like empty promises. Only [our] learning of ‘*meishu*’

⁶³ *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*, iii, *juan* 112, p. 2321.

has been universally recognised as unique and peerless.⁶⁴

This is not to say that ‘*meishu*’ had truly risen even above the ‘Classics’ to the top of the Chinese knowledge system. Nevertheless, this passage reveals the freedom granted by the neologism ‘*meishu*’ to the reasoning by which ‘*meishu*’ as a new subject of learning was able to emerge, while at the same time the traditional knowledge system and its hierarchical structure seems to have remained intact. It should be borne in mind that the specific aspect of the newness of the learning on ‘*meishu*’—such as how it differed from ‘*yishu*’, as discussed above—was never clearly expressed in this book collection, while the actual contents of ‘*meishu*’ seem to be undoubtedly old, as all the texts except the ones by Deng Shi and Xu Zhiheng were written by the ancients. Consequently, although the employment of the neologism ‘*meishu*’ liberated this new concept from being subject to the inherent hierarchy of the tradition, the presence of these old texts enabled ‘*meishu*’ to be incorporated into a project aimed at preserving the national essence, even though the grouping concept was actually new and fundamentally different from the traditional ‘*yishu*’.

Moreover, the discursive power of ‘*meishu*’ was acquired largely through its alliance with the predominant nationalist discourse, which rendered it of indispensable importance to the nation. Hence, Deng argued that ‘*meishu*’ was the only comfort one could still turn to in this time of great turmoil, and such comfort was the key to keeping one’s love for the nation alive:

Were there none of *meishu*’s comforts, the hearts of the nation’s people would surely die. While a perished nation may still be restored, a dead heart can never be brought back to life. These books of dozens of *juan*, which make worries forgotten and anger appeased, are merely hoping to rescue the dying hearts of the people of such a nation.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Deng Shi, ‘*Xulüe*’, p. 1b. [自歐學東漸，吾國舊有之學遂以不振。時會既變，趨向遂殊，六經成糟粕，義理屬空言，而惟美術之學則環球所推為獨絕]

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 2b. [使無美術以解釋而慰藉之，則一國之人心死矣。國死可復興，心死無復活，然則

In other words, the significance of ‘*meishu*’ lay also in the fact that it was believed to be able to help China out of her predicament in relation to the imperial powers, for it kept hope alive. As ‘things’ to console one’s mind, and with the strong support of nationalist discourse, ‘*meishu*’ was no longer a depreciative, insignificant subject like ‘*yishu*’, but was elevated to the point of being not only one of the most important subjects of national learning, but also one of the most attractive tropes in the discourse on national essence. Therefore, art publishing enterprises stood out from all the other cultural projects attempted by Deng Shi and the Society, and became the endeavours which received the most investment and brought in the most profits, as discussed in Chapter 2.

Imagery of *meishu* and knowledge of *meishu*

Keeping in mind the distinction between ‘*yishu*’ and ‘*meishu*’ in terms of both their meanings and their positions in the respective knowledge systems, it is now clear that the texts on *qin* zithers appearing in the *Meishu congshu* were not selected for the same reasons as those on the same subject in the *Four Treasuries*, which were seen as something inappropriate for the nobler branch of knowledge, ‘Music’. In addition, most of the texts on *qin* zithers in the *Four Treasuries* are *qin* music scores for *qin* playing, while those in the *Meishu congshu* are more about the *qin* zither as a collectable object,⁶⁶ whose material properties, rather than musical ones, can be photographically reproduced (Fig. 3-5). In fact, it was stated in the ‘General Remarks’ of the *Meishu congshu* that this book collection should be regarded as the companion

此十數卷忘憂捐忿之書，聊拯一國方死未死之人心]

⁶⁶ However, not all texts on *qin* zithers in the *Four Treasuries* are music scores; there is one on ‘History of Qin’ (*Qinshi* 琴史) by Zhu Changwen 朱長文. Texts on *qin* zithers as collectables can be seen in Tu Long 屠隆, *Qinjian* 琴箋 ‘Discourse of *Qin* zithers’, MC, 1.6 (1911).

for the journal *Shenzhou guoguangji*, which had been launched three years prior to the time the *Meishu congshu* first came out. Everything included in the art periodical was said to be ‘genuine works by the ancients’, and everything included in this book collection was regarded as the ‘spirit of the ancients’; it was thus reasoned that the two publications should be consulted side-by-side and that neither of them should be neglected.⁶⁷ However, ‘objects of *meishu*’—that is, those reproduced in the *Shenzhou guoguangji*—and the ‘learning of *meishu*’—or that which was gathered in the *Meishu congshu*—did not always match up exactly. For example, rubbings of stone and bronze inscriptions, as well as bronze objects, were reproduced frequently in the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, while the studies on ‘*jinshi*’ were considered too specialised to be included in the *Meishu congshu*. Similarly, many a text on ceramics appeared in the book collection, whereas very few illustrations of ceramic objects appeared in the *Shenzhou guoguangji*.⁶⁸

As such, a discrepancy seemed to exist at that time between the ‘imagery of *meishu*’ and the ‘knowledge of *meishu*’; the former was exemplified by the photographic images of art, and the latter by the texts collected in the book collection. The art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji* gives most of its space to images. Although brief and succinct comments sometimes appeared after the title of an object in the ‘Table of contents’ related to the whereabouts as well as the importance of the item, these passages are too short to form a narrative that would supply the reader with the background knowledge required to appreciate fully the value of the published objects (Fig. 3-6). Hence, the editors of the Japanese art journal *Kokka* felt that this Chinese art periodical fell short in terms of providing research data on and criticism of the

⁶⁷ ‘*Lüeli*’, p. 2a.

⁶⁸ Interestingly, there are no pictures of ceramic pots or vases illustrated in this art periodical, as might immediately spring to our mind when we think of the category of ‘Ceramics’.

published works in the issue.⁶⁹ Such laconic descriptions of, and often complete lack of information about, the reproduced objects also implies that the target readers of this art periodical were supposed to have certain knowledge about the published works already. Therefore, even though the publisher had a grand cultural aim of preserving Chinese artworks by raising public awareness of the value of these national glories, there existed little pedagogic effort to lead the actual reader—who may or may not have been as cultivated as the ideal reader of the periodical—to engaging fully with these works of art. Therefore, the periodical itself still for the most part retained its practical function as a dealer's catalogue for players in the game of exchanging and accumulating art collections.

By contrast, the book collection *Meishu congshu* centred predominately on knowledge presented in textual form, to the extent that, for example, the original illustrations for the text 'Illustrated Records of Teapots', prefaced in 1874 and written in Chinese by the Japanese author Oku Genbō, are completely stripped out. According to the editors, the reasons were twofold: first, it was not so convenient to print the graphical illustrations of the book together with the text; second, since the text itself gave the dimensions of these teapots—including the diameters of the lids and bodies, the capacities of the containers, and the sizes of the spouts and handles—the forms of these teapots were thus vividly recorded 'as if the object were right in front of our eyes'.⁷⁰ Despite the limitations imposed by the letterpress printing technology of that time, an attitude which assumed that a verbal description alone could sufficiently replace illustrated examples and even function as the actual presence of an illustration, perhaps reveals the deeply-rooted separation in the conceptual framework of

⁶⁹ 'Shinshū kokkō shū 神州國光集', *Kokka*, 226 (1909), p. 242.

⁷⁰ The editor's comment is seen in Oku Genbō 奥玄寶, *Minghu tulu 茗壺圖錄*, MC, 3.3 (1915), p. 13a.

knowledge in China between texts and images, prioritising the former over the latter.⁷¹

The separation between the visual and the textual seen in the physical arrangement of the *Shenzhou guguangji*, as well as in the very fact that the publication of the visual and the textual were assigned separately to different publishing projects (the former to the *Shenzhou guoguangji* and the latter the *Meishu congshu*) not only reveals this polarity in the conceptual framework of mind at the time, but also tells us how difficult it must have been to conjure up what one is now so accustomed to in terms of the modern art history book, in which the texts are supposed to be accompanied by illustrations.

Although the attitude that holds texts in higher regard than images still existed in the *Meishu congshu*, the advancement and availability of photographic printing technologies had nonetheless piqued an interest in visual perception, which is evident from the fact that the launch of the *Shengzhou guoguangji* for reproductions of Chinese works of *meishu* came three years prior to the textual compilation on the subject of art. Not only was the priority of texts over images gradually revised during this period, but a balance between the two was also introduced. The release of the *Meishu congshu* can thus be viewed as an attempt to overcome the weakness of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* seen in its lack of exposition on the published images, although the two publications by no means provide one-to-one references to each other. Also, perhaps the art publishing enterprises established by the Society—which engaged, although separately, with both texts and images—prompted the possibility of bridging the gap between these two genres via publications on art. Therefore, a new editorial column written by Deng Shi, ‘Talks on the topic of the editorial work’ (*Jilu yutan*), was added to the *Shenzhou guoguangji* from the 19th issue (1911) onwards, right after

⁷¹ Such downplaying of illustrated books, as well as illustrations, was not new in China; see Craig Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality in Early Modern China* (London, 1997), p.164.

the *Meishu congshu* was launched, giving the editors a forum in which they were able to explain the intentions behind the selection of objects and provide relevant anecdotes to stimulate the readers' interests.⁷² The contents of this column are similar to those brief entries for exhibited objects found in a modern exhibition catalogue, although the column was still kept physically in the front of the publication, away from the images of the objects about which the information is provided.

The contested status of the category '*jinshi*' within the knowledge system and in the territory of '*meishu*' can also be understood in terms of this dichotomy of text and image. Reproductions of images of inscribed objects and rubbings were no doubt reproductions of *meishu*, but when it came to texts on '*jinshi*', the massive bulk of records and research on this subject soon became too huge for a project like the *Meishu congshu*; the topic soon found itself transformed into a 'specialised field' which required another separate book series to accommodate it. This 'double attitude' towards '*jinshi*' positioned the conception of '*meishu*' at the intersection of the literati's leisure pursuits and antiquarianism, where part of the antiquarian tradition of the Chinese literati did not convert into the new subject '*meishu*'. The study of '*jinshi*' inevitably split into two fields: one remained cosily within the reach of 'History' and '*Xiaoxue*', mainly the aspects related to the deciphering of ancient scripts and the critical comparisons of different versions of rubbings, as well as the ways in which the findings from such an approach could be used for historical writing; the other field veered away only to find a home within the domain of the study of 'art', concerning primarily the visual properties of objects in bronze and aiming to elucidate their transformations in form through the ages. The latter branch of scholarship eventually gave rise to the new field of study in Chinese art history in the 1920s: the study of

⁷² '*Zi benji qi gaiyong xuanzhi lingzhuan yinhua guanggao*', SG, 9.

bronzes, or the study of three-dimensional objects (*qiwxue* 器物學).⁷³

***Meishu* and the Western concept of Art**

An investigation into the framing principles of the book collection *Meishu congshu* reveals differences between the traditional concept of ‘*yishu*’ and the newly introduced concept of ‘*meishu*’. The former, exemplified in the classification of the *Four Treasuries*, was concerned more with the accomplishments to which a cultivated person should apply himself, while the latter addressed the things outside the self from which a cultivated person could derive pleasure. ‘*Meishu*’ was therefore not modelled on the traditional paradigm of ‘*yishu*’, but instead was a new category which endeavoured to embrace the sensuality of material life. In this particular respect, ‘*meishu*’ in this book collection may have sprung from European aesthetic theory of the eighteenth century, when a work of art began to be viewed as an object for disinterested contemplation.⁷⁴ This ‘contemplation model’ of aesthetic theory, as M.H. Abrams calls it, was touched upon in Wang Guowei’s essay ‘Commentaries on *The Dream of the Red Chamber*’ where the relationship between ‘*meishu*’ and a perceiver was described as that between ‘things’ (*wu* 物) and the ‘self’ (*wo* 我).⁷⁵ Since the ‘Preface’ to the *Shengzhou guoguangji*, written by the executive editor Deng Shi,

⁷³ Shi Shouqian 石守謙, ‘*Qingshi shoucang de xiandai zhuanhua—jianlun qiyu zhongguo meishu shi yanjiu fazhan zhi guanxi* 清室收藏的現代轉化—兼論其與中國美術史研究發展之關係’ (The transformation of the Ch’ing imperial collection in the early twentieth century), *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術季刊 ‘National Palace Museum Quarterly’, 23.1(Sep. 2005), pp. 1-33(19-23); Cheng-hua Wang, ‘Luo Zhenyu, His Collection, and the Categorical Formation of *Qiwu* in the 1910s’, paper presented at the workshop ‘Lost Generation: Luo Zhenyu, Qing Loyalists and the Formation of Modern Chinese Culture’, hosted jointly by School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London and Christie’s Education London, 28-29 August 2008.

⁷⁴ Jeremy Stolniz, ‘On the Origins of “Aesthetic Disinterestedness”’, *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 20.2 (winter 1961), pp. 131-143; M.H. Abrams, ‘From Addison to Kant: Modern Aesthetics and the Exemplary Art’, in *Doing Things with Texts: Essays in Criticism and Critical Theory* (New York and London, 1989), pp. 159-187.

⁷⁵ The first chapter of Wang’s essay centres on how art (*meishu*) is able to transcend mundane relationships between ‘things’ and the ‘self’; see Wang, ‘*Honglouloumeng pinglun*’, pp. 40a-44.

demonstrates an ideological connection to this particular essay of Wang's (Chapter 2), it can therefore be argued that the very idea of *meishu*, as presented in the text selection of the *Meishu congshu*, as something outside of the 'self', something to engage with and comfort the soul, had in fact appropriated part of European aesthetics. As such, the appropriation of the Western concept of art, in the case of '*meishu*' in this book collection, did not lie in the reproduction of the subcategories within the European concept of 'Fine Arts', but in its conception of 'arts' which pertained no longer to the deployment of human skills, but to the things situated in the outside world to be engaged with and from which comfort could be sought.

The fact that the subcategories within '*meishu*' bore little resemblance to those which we would regard as indispensable in the European notion of 'Art' or 'Fine Arts' indicates the complexity of cultural exchange, which did not always operate on a wholesale basis. Although the Chinese editors might have had a rough idea of what 'art' meant in the European sense, the classification and the hierarchy in this appropriated discourse either was not really received or was simply neglected. Perhaps a comprehensive transplantation of the European concept of art was never attempted in this publishing project; rather, turning Chinese cultural tradition into a category equivalent to that of European 'art' was all that mattered at the time. Hence, all the efforts at appropriation were centred on reframing what already existed in China into this new framework of '*meishu*', even though many of this new framework's elements were not to be found in the European model. Nevertheless, what existed in both the Chinese and European conceptions of 'Art' would rise above all and become the most important and powerful trope in the discourse of art. This perhaps accounts for the discursive power 'Painting' has enjoyed since this time.

Despite all these efforts made to appropriate the Western concept of art, the

conception of ‘*meishu*’ in this book collection was merely one of the ways in which contemporaries were able to understand the term. The fact that the conception of ‘*meishu*’ in this book collection still incorporated book making, fish keeping, orchid growing, incense using, and *qin* playing makes it seem odd from today’s point of view. Its deviation from our present understanding of the term suggests a lack of recognition in later periods of the conception of ‘*meishu*’ seen in the *Meishu congshu*. Nevertheless, such a conception was still valid and widely accepted in its time, and evidence for this acceptance can be seen in the reception of the book collection at the time and the inspiration it provided for other publishing enterprises.

We have no idea how many copies were originally produced for the first three series. However, a decade after the first edition had been published, a newly edited republication came out in 1928 to meet market demands, by which time the publishing house had been taken over by Chen Mingshu, with Huang Binhong being appointed the chief editor of the art department of the company.⁷⁶ It is claimed that the pre-orders for this republication had exceeded the planned quota of 1000 copies, which prompted the publisher to release 500 more copies for pre-order customers.⁷⁷ In the meantime, a fourth series under the same series title was also compiled under the supervision of Huang Binhong with the assistance of Sun Tagong 孫貽公,⁷⁸ who would continue this project after Huang left the publishing house in 1931⁷⁹ and bring it to completion in 1936.⁸⁰ These four series were later published as a whole in Western binding in 1947 and would become the one which is now generally regarded

⁷⁶ Deng Shi was too ill to run the publishing house then. See Wang Zhongxiu, *Huang Binhong nianpu*, pp. 186-187.

⁷⁷ Advertisement originally published in *Shenbao*, 22 August 1929, cited in Wang Zhongxiu, *op. cit.*, p.237.

⁷⁸ Wang Zhongxiu, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 268.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 377.

in mainland China as the ‘complete’ set of the *Meishu congshu*.⁸¹ They were thus re-issued in 1986 and 1997 by the Nanjing-based *Jiangsu guji chubanshe* 江蘇古籍出版社 (Jiangsu Publishing Company of Old Books).⁸² Nevertheless, the allure of this series title did not cease to exist with the release of the 1947 edition; instead, it clearly attracted further efforts to continue and even to ‘complete’ this book collection on ‘*meishu*’. A fifth and sixth series were compiled and published along with the first four series in Taiwan in 1964 and 1975, respectively, by *Yiwen yinshuguan* 藝文印書館 (Yee Wen Publishing Company), which had no connection with the original publishers.⁸³

The favourable reception of the *Meishu congshu* may itself have caused the fusion of ‘*yishu*’ into ‘*meishu*’; beginning in the mid-1910s, there arose a tendency to see ‘*yishu*’ as addressing things appreciable, rather than a term denoting ‘skills’ and ‘accomplishments’. This fact is evidenced by two publications: ‘Book Collection of *Yishu*’ (*Yishu congshu* 藝術叢書), published by the Hall of Preserving the Essence (*Baocuitang* 保粹堂) in 1916, and ‘Compendium of *Yishu*’ (*Yishu congbian* 藝術叢編), released from 1916-1920 by the University of the Sage Cangjie of Brightness and Wisdom (*Cangsheng mingzhi daxue* 倉聖明智大學). These two book collections were published while the *Meishu congshu* was still releasing new volumes; as a result, a distinction in series title was necessary, even though the nature of the contents was more or less the same as those of the *Meishu congshu*. The former was a selection of texts from the ‘*zi* 子’ section of the ‘Book Series of the Chamber of Green Bamboos’ (*Cuilanggan guan congshu* 翠琅玕館叢書), published also in 1916 by the same

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 486. SOAS library has a copy of the 1947 edition.

⁸² The publisher has now changed its name to ‘*Fenghuang chubanshe* 鳳凰出版社’ (Phoenix Publisher).

⁸³ Both editions can be found in National Taiwan University Library.

publishing house; it excluded texts on medicine and *go* playing in its original book series (i.e., ‘Book Series of the Chamber of Green Bamboos’) and covered roughly the same subjects as those covered in the *Meishu congshu*.⁸⁴ The other example, ‘Compendium of *Yishu*’, was more like a scholarly periodical which published not only studies but also reproductions of inscribed stones, bronzes, and their rubbings, as well as of paintings and Buddhist sculptures.⁸⁵ This periodical was proposed by Wang Guowei, and was used as a venue for publishing the collection owned by Wang’s patron, Luo Zhenyu.⁸⁶ Although it was titled ‘*Yishu congbian*’, its contents were often referred to as ‘*meishu*’ in the epistolary correspondence between Luo and Wang.⁸⁷ The three categories published in this periodical—‘*Jinshi*’, ‘Calligraphy and Painting’ (*shuhua*), and ‘Ancient Objects’ (*guqi* 古器)⁸⁸—were not so different from those which were released in the periodical *Shengzhou guoguangji*, a fact which further demonstrates the strengthening fusion of the two terms.⁸⁹ The fusion of the meanings of ‘*meishu*’ and ‘*yishu*’ may also be attributed to Japanese mediation, since the term ‘*yishu*’ is now regarded as a ‘return loanword’ imported back into China at the turn of the twentieth century from Japan, where both terms had come to be used interchangeably to designate the Western concept of ‘art’. The fact that Luo and Wang both had resided in Japan for a period may also serve as a support for such an attribution. Interestingly, Wang Guowei, considered in many modern scholarly works to be responsible for the introduction into China of the neologism ‘*meishu*’ as the Western concept of ‘art’, now in the 1910s used these two terms almost without

⁸⁴ See *Zhongguo congshu zonglu* 中國叢書綜錄 ‘Comprehensive records of the compendia in China’, ed. Shanghai Library, new 1st edn (3 vols. Shanghai, 1982), i, pp. 223-224, 748.

⁸⁵ This periodical can be consulted in the libraries of SOAS, Oxford and Cambridge Universities.

⁸⁶ For Wang and Luo’s involvement in the publication of the *Yishu congbian*, see Wu Ze (ed.), *Wang Guowei quanji shuxin*, p. 53.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 52-53.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

⁸⁹ In Wang’s letters to Luo, there are plenty of examples in which the two terms were interchangeable. See *ibid.*, pp. 50, 52, 53, 77.

differentiation.

Nevertheless, in the aforementioned cases, the interchangeability between the two terms was based on the fact that ‘*yishu*’ was no longer understood solely by its original meaning as embodying skills and accomplishments, but was instead perceived as being related to the things meant to be appreciated and collected, which brought its meaning closer to that of ‘*meishu*’. However, in the following chapter, we shall examine another text which desperately wanted to apply the semantic form of the neologism ‘*meishu*’ to the traditional conception of ‘*yishu*’, which clearly denoted manual skills and abilities—an endeavour which demonstrates yet another attempt in early twentieth-century China to exert the ‘neologistic imagination’ with respect to the new term ‘*meishu*’.

Ch 4 A Road Not Taken: *Zhongguo yishujia zhenglüe*, 1914

Endeavours to reproduce old texts within the new framework of ‘art’ in early twentieth-century China were by no means monopolised by the Society for Preserving National Learning (Chapters 1-3); a similar approach was also seen in a text entitled *Zhongguo yishujia zhenglüe*, or ‘Attested Sketches of Chinese Artists’ (hereafter, *Zhenglüe*, Fig. 4-1). This book was published in 1914 in a newly-Republican China, and was in itself composed of excerpts taken from other texts—a feature not exactly the same as the *Meishu congshu*, which mainly comprised complete individual writings. *Zhenglüe* was compiled, organised and authored by Li Fang (1884-1926, Fig. 4-2), son of the renowned late Qing connoisseur of Chinese painting, Li Baoxun. The Lis believed they were descended from a family in Yizhou 義州 (Liaoning province), in Manchuria, where the Qing ruling Manchus also claimed to have originated. Perhaps for this reason, although his true ethnicity was not specified in records, Li Fang clearly self-identified more with the ‘bannermen’ (*qiren* 旗人), a term referring to the group of people organised under the military units ‘Eight Banners’, which had become an ethnic identity by the nineteenth century.¹

Zhenglüe’s relevance to our discussion of the concept of *meishu* in early twentieth-century China lies in its use of the term *yishu*, embedded within the term ‘*yishujia* 藝術家’, now normally translated into English as ‘artist(s)’. Because of the way in which this Chinese term is constructed—*yishu* (art) -*jia* (person or

¹ The ‘Eight Banners’ comprised not only Manchus but also Mongols, the Turkic and Tungusic peoples of Manchuria, Koreans, and the Chinese who migrated to the Jurchen territories. The Eight Banners served as the foundation for the unified identity of the conquest elite in the early Qing period, enjoying not only state stipends but also social prestige, leading a life separate from the Han Chinese. As Manchus became increasingly identified as ‘people of the banners’, the ethnic categories of ‘Manchu’ and ‘bannermen’ became conflated. See Pamela Kyle Crossley, *Orphan Warriors: Three Manchu Generations and the End of the Qing World* (Princeton, 1990), pp. 13-30; and Mark C. Elliott, *The Manchu Ways: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China* (Stanford, 2001), pp. 14-17.

master)—‘*yishu*’, or the author’s conception of ‘*yishujia*’ (‘makers of art’) was inextricably associated with his perception of such terms as ‘*yishu*’, ‘*meishu*’, or ‘art’. Oddly enough, from today’s point of view, the term *yishujia* in this book refers to people who are skilled workers adept at making bronzes, jades, ceramics, lacquers, bamboo, and wood carvings; famous makers of *qin* zithers, embroideries, and miniature carvings; or specialists possessing the knowledge and skills necessary for making astronomical instruments, military equipment, and architectural constructions. Their biographies are further sorted in *Zhenglüe* by the materials they were known to have mastered. In other words, these ‘artists’ are people who in the present time are more likely to be categorised as ‘artisans’, ‘craftsmen’, or even ‘technicians’, rather than ‘artists’.

Li Fang’s perception of ‘*yishu*’—a traditional term in the Chinese language denoting ‘skill’ and ‘accomplishment’ that one is able to acquire and master (see Chapter 3)—would appear less strange had he not proposed an ‘alternative title’ to this book, ‘History of Chinese *Meishu*’ (*Zhongguo meishushi* 中國美術史), found on the first page of the book’s ‘Complete Contents’ (Fig. 4-3). This alternative title not only indicates the author’s own historical ambition but also suggests a certain equivalence and interchangeability between the two terms ‘*yishu*’ and ‘*meishu*’—which inevitably provokes questions such as why this book might have needed an alternative title, and on what grounds the assumption of an equivalence between these two terms may have been established. What exactly made the alternative title not appropriate enough to be the ‘official’ title? Why did the inappropriateness of the alternative title not preclude its having been omitted completely? Was the presumed equivalence rooted in a belief that the traditional term ‘*yishu*’ had now acquired the meaning of the new Western concept of ‘*meishu*’; or that

the neologism ‘*meishu*’ was considered by the author not to differ greatly in meaning and conception from that of the traditional ‘*yishu*’, and was hence an already existent tradition long before Western powers marched into China?

Li Fang had good reason to name this book a ‘History’, given that most historical writings in China took the form of biographies, and accounts of the lives of important historical figures have always been a predominant presence in standard histories.² The practice of historicising the past in the field of calligraphy and painting was no exception.³ However, to write a history of Chinese ‘*meishu*’ was unprecedented. This is not merely because ‘*meishu*’ was then a new concept just introduced into China and still had taken up no particular space within the traditional knowledge system at the time, but also because most of the so-called ‘artists’ chosen for representation in *Zhenglüe* were people (mostly artisans and craftsmen) who had hardly been deemed worth documenting as practitioners within the more highly-regarded sphere of art creation: namely, calligraphy and painting. Accounts of these ‘unworthy’ people, of their arts, skills, and lives, were hence scattered among all kinds of writings and records; not to mention that no specific history had ever attempted to group these people together under the rubric of *yishujia*, and to celebrate the activities for which they had once been famous. The fact that there had not been a specific field within which these records might be presented as a whole is evidenced in the great variety of the sources cited in *Zhenglüe*. Against the backdrop of this value system and the scattered state of the source materials, the alternative title of *Zhenglüe*—‘History of

² This tradition of biographies as a predominant genre in official historical writings and its transformation in the twentieth century are explored in Brian Moloughney, ‘From Biographical History to Historical Biography: A Transformation in Chinese Historical Writing’, *East Asian History*, 1992:4, pp. 1-30.

³ For example, *Records of Famous Paintings through the Ages* (*Lidai minghua ji* 歷代名畫記) by Zhang Yanyuan 張彥遠 (active in mid 9th C. A.D.), a work as canonical in China as Vasari’s *Lives* in Europe, also devotes a large section to painters’ biographies. Entries labelled as ‘history of painting/calligraphy’ in pre-modern China are almost all composed of biographies.

Chinese *Meishu*'—not only legitimises and elevates the status of these 'artists' as a subject worthy of historical inquiry but also proposes an attitude different from the traditional one towards the makers of 'things'.

However, the fact that *Zhenglüe* is not approached today as an historical writing with a unique point of view, but is instead used mainly as a reference book for looking up biographies or written records of 'artists'—records which are otherwise scattered or buried within a great array of sources—deserves our attention.⁴ Apparently, the historical dimension that *Zhenglüe* once claimed to have embraced seems now to have faded into complete oblivion. Consequently, the book is hardly thought of as an extraordinary example embodying a particular historical moment when the concept of *meishu* was still subject to each individual's neologistic imagination. With the benefit of hindsight, *Zhenglüe*'s effort to engage with the traditional practices of 'art'-making from the point of view of the so-called 'concept of *meishu*' may be viewed in our modern eyes as an unsuccessful attempt, since it failed to gain wider acceptance in later periods. Indeed, shortly before the book was published, the very agenda Li proposed in *Zhenglüe* had been implicitly ridiculed by some of his more influential contemporaries. Nevertheless—although the project embarked upon by *Zhenglüe* was followed by no successors in any sense—it is exactly through the book's failure to be accepted as the norm not only that the clashes of competing voices concerning the definition and connotations of the neologism '*meishu*' can be most vividly perceived, but also that the power relations operating within the process towards a standardised understanding of the concept of *meishu* is most clearly demonstrated.

Hence *Zhenglüe* both allows us to probe the range of the meaning of the term '*meishu*' and the boundaries of the discourse on 'art' at the time, and illustrates the

⁴ *Zhenglüe* is regarded as 'one of the key reference works of the early Republican period, to which recourse is often made when confronted with a signed object' in Craig Clunas, *Chinese Carving* (London, 1996), p. 6.

power struggles between different, contemporaneous opinions on *meishu* that were competing for legitimacy in the early Republican period. Its importance, therefore, lies not in the book's influence on shaping the contemporary conception of art, but precisely in the book's very failure to have its idea of *meishu*, and of the 'history of Chinese art', be accepted as the norm. This book exemplifies not merely another attempt at incorporating into the concept of *meishu* the material achievements existing on Chinese soil, but also the repression, whether consciously or not, of opinions that had taken root during the process of the appropriation and domestication of the Western concept of art. This book's oblivion, or even obsolescence, is hence my point of departure; and this chapter intends to investigate the conditions under which *Zhenglüe* was first compiled, in the conviction that it could serve more than adequately as a complete history of Chinese *meishu*, but which subsequently fell out of sight in the discursive field of *meishu* in China. By investigating this book's material character, text selection, and the author's own statements on art in relation to other contemporary opinions on the same subject, this chapter explores how the concept of 'meishu' in *Zhenglüe* found itself losing ground within the very field it had striven to honour.⁵

Enquiry into the front matter

As an object, the earliest edition of *Zhenglüe* is a two-volume book of five *juan* 卷, string-bound and printed in movable lead type (*qianying* 鉛印). These features are significantly different from those in the editions produced after Li Fang's death, which are composed of six *juan*, printed in xylography, and divided into three or four volumes (Appendix 4-1).

⁵ Unless otherwise specified, the following observations on the five-*juan* edition of *Zhenglüe* are based on the copy owned by Prof. Craig Clunas.

Apparently, the people associated with the production of *Zhenglüe* were without exception men who lived in or travelled to Tianjin, where the book was published. The book title on the front cover was inscribed by Wu Bin 吳邨 (*juren* 1893, Fig. 4-1), whose father Wu Chongxi 吳重熹 (1838-1918) was the writer of the inscription on the following ‘title page’ (Fig. 4-4).⁶ Wu Chongxi himself was the second son of Wu Shifen 吳式芬 (1796-1856, an acclaimed official and epigraphist) and a close friend of Li Baoxun’s. He had been a high official in the Qing government, and, after the establishment of Republican China in 1911, led a life of retreat in Tianjin, where the Li family also resided.⁷ Based on information printed on the imprint page, *Zhenglüe* was published in Tianjin in the tenth lunar month of 1914 (Fig. 4-5). A photographic portrait of the author Li Fang is also included, surrounded by printed colophons composed by Li himself in 1914 to commemorate his thirty-first birthday (Fig. 4-2). The portrait is followed by four prefatory pieces, three of which were written by Wu Chongxi, Di Yu 狄郁, and Jin Shouxi 金綬熙 during the period from the mid-seventh to eighth lunar months of 1914.⁸ The last preface was by the author, originally written in 1911 and revised in 1914. These prefaces, as we shall see below, suggest that the present *Zhenglüe* is only one component of a bigger project that was probably never fully completed.

⁶ Some scholars of bibliography might call this page, along with the ‘imprint page’ referred to below, the ‘cover page’, in order to distinguish it in form from the ‘title page’ in Western books; see Sören Edgren, ‘The *Fengmianye* (Cover Page) as A Source for Chinese Publishing History’ in A. Isobe (ed.), *Higashi Ajia shuppan bunka kenkyū. Niwatazumi* 東アジア出版文化研究—にわたり ‘Studies of Publishing Culture in East Asia’ (Tokyo, 2004), pp. 261-267. However, for the convenience of the discussion below, the terms ‘title page’ and ‘imprint page’ are still used to address the complexity of the production of *Zhenglüe*.

⁷ For Wu’s biography, see Zhang Yu 章鈺, ‘*Haifen Wu fubu muzhiming* 海豐吳撫部墓誌銘’ (Tomb inscription for Mr. Wu from Haifeng), in *Sidangzhai ji* 四當齋集 ‘Collection of *Sidang Studio*’, collected in Shen Yunlong 沈雲龍 (ed.), *Jindai zhongguo shiliao congkan disanbian* 近代中國史料叢刊第三編 [Collection of historical materials on Chinese modern history, series 3] (10 vols., Taipei, 1989), iv, *juan* 8, pp. 4b-6a.

⁸ As indicated at the end of their prefaces, Di Yu and Jin Shouxi were both then sojourning in Tianjin. Wu’s and Di’s prefatory pieces were both written in the seventh lunar month, and Jin’s in the eighth lunar month of the same year 1914. All the prefaces are individually paginated.

The purposes of *Zhenglüe* and the presentation and categorisation of entries on ‘artists’ are to be found in the ‘General Remarks’ (Fig. 4-6). It was specified in this section that the original source for each excerpt would be provided at the end of each entry for readers’ reference, a practice that echoes the meaning of the character ‘zheng 徵’ in the book title, indicating that all the accounts gathered in the book were credible and could be ‘attested’ to. As also briefly indicated in the ‘General Remarks’, *Zhenglüe* was divided into 15 categories; it first employed the existing system of the ‘eight sounds’, *bayin* 八音, originally used to classify Chinese musical instruments:⁹

- metal [*jin* 金]
- stone [*shi* 石]; jade materials are appended
- silk [*si* 絲, originally referring to string instruments]; hair embroidery is appended
- bamboo [*zhu* 竹, originally referring to reed instruments]
- gourd [*pao* 匏]
- earth [or clay, *tu* 土]; ceramics and earthenware are appended
- skin [*ge* 革, e.g. drums]; feathers and horn material are appended
- wood [*mu* 木]

The skills and materials which were not able to be accommodated in this ‘eight-sound’ system are further divided into seven categories:

- calligraphy and painting [*shuhua* 書畫]
- astronomy [*tianwen* 天文]
- wheels and axles [*lunlie* 輪捩]
- mounting [*zhuanghuang* 裝潢]
- carving [*diaoke* 雕刻]
- lacquer [*xiuqi* 髹漆]
- miscellaneous skills [*zaji* 雜技]

The lives of artists are arranged chronologically within these 15 categories. It can

⁹ ‘*Liyan* 例言’ (General Remarks), *Zhenglüe*, p. 1. For the ‘eight-sound’ musical system, see Walter Kaufmann, *Musical References in the Chinese Classics*, Detroit Monographs in Musicology No. 5 (Detroit, 1976), p. 157.

therefore be concluded that ‘material’, as well as ‘skill’, served as the two structural principles of grouping, and likewise through ‘material’ and ‘skill’ each individual’s achievement was focused upon and valued in *Zhenglüe*.

The section of front matter ends with a detailed table of contents, where the alternative name of the book, ‘History of Chinese *Meishu*’, is presented right beneath the heading ‘Complete Contents’ (Fig. 4-3). Over six-hundred ‘artists’ in total are listed within the rubrics of the fifteen categories (Table 4-1).

Ch1	Artists in general	62	Ch3	Earth	64	Ch5	Carving	46
	Metal	56		Skin	8		Lacquer	21
	Stone	53		Wood	73		Miscellaneous skills	44
	Silk	16	Ch4	Calligraphy & Painting	32 ¹⁰		Addition of omissions ¹¹ _	1
Ch2	Bamboo	97		Astronomy	23		Calligraphy & Painting	
	Gourd	4		Wheels & Axles	19		Addition of omissions_	4
				Mounting	12	Total: 635 (including those in ‘Artists in general’ which may have also appeared in their respective categories)		

Table 4-1 The numbers of artists listed in the ‘Complete Contents’ under each category

However, six short sections ‘Artists in General’ remained independent from, and thus were placed in front of, the categorisation; these six sections give general accounts of artists in China through the prism of time and space, as exemplified by the sections ‘artists in the Tang, Song and Ming dynasties’ and ‘artists of Jinling 金陵 [present Nanjing]’.

However, it should be pointed out that the headings of these six sections do not use

¹⁰ Although listed in the ‘Complete contents’, the entry for Wang Chang 王常 is absent in the main text. Therefore, the actual number of artists in the category of ‘Calligraphy and Painting’ should be 31.
¹¹ The ‘Addition of omissions’ is not listed in the ‘Complete contents’, but seen in the main text.

the term *yishujia*, as is used in the official book title, but instead show a preference for the term *meishujia* 美術家, a form derived from the term *meishu*, as used in the alternative book title (Fig. 4-3). The choice to use a term consistent with the alternative book title rather than with the official one is worth pondering. Does it mean that these two terms, ‘*yishujia*’ and ‘*meishujia*’ had exactly the same meaning to Li Fang? If so, why was the term *yishujia*, having been legitimised as the term used in the official book title, not given preference within the headings for general discussions on Chinese artists?

Another equally important question—that concerning whether *Zhenglüe* is a completed publication on its own or a part of a bigger project that was only partly realised—is presented in the prefatory writings. According to Wu Chongxi, *Zhenglüe* was composed of a five-juan ‘primary compilation’ (*zhengbian* 正編) and a one-juan ‘supplementary compilation’ (*fubian* 附編), which, along with the two-juan ‘Attested Sketches of Chinese Artworks’ (*Zhongguo meishupin zhenglüe* 中國美術品徵略, hereafter, *Sketches of Artworks*), constituted Li Fang’s ambitious publishing project which I will refer to as the ‘Attested series’ (Fig. 4-7). Wu’s preface is the only text in *Zhenglüe* that mentions the overall project, a project which attempted to gather these three components (containing two book titles: *Zhenglüe* and *Sketches of Artworks*) into ‘one compilation’ (*hewei yibian* 合爲一編).¹² However, other prefatory writings seem to concern only *Zhenglüe*. Di Yu’s preface describes *Zhenglüe* as having a five-juan ‘primary compilation’ and a one-juan ‘supplementary compilation’, constituting six *juan* in total.¹³ Li Fang’s own preface and the ‘General Remarks’ also

¹² Wu Chongxi, ‘*Zhongguo yishujia zhenglüe meishupin zhenglüe xu* 中國藝術家徵略美術品徵略序’ (Preface to *Attested Sketches of Chinese Artists and of Artworks*), *Zhenglüe*, p. 1 (1a).

¹³ Di Yu, ‘*Xu* 序’ (Preface), *Zhenglüe*, pp. 1-2a (1). [正編五卷...附編一卷...都凡六卷,名之曰中國藝術家徵略]

refer only to the book title *Zhenglüe* as containing the ‘primary compilation’ and ‘supplementary compilation’.¹⁴

As such, the book titles written on the front cover by Wu Bin (which clearly specifies the book is the ‘primary compilation’ of *Zhenglüe*, Fig. 4-1) and on the title page by Wu Chongxi (which states that there are five *juan* in the book, Fig. 4-4), as well as the section entitled ‘Complete Contents’ (which covers only the contents in the ‘primary compilation’), all suggest that the five-*juan* edition available today is merely the ‘primary compilation’ of *Zhenglüe* and only part of the original scheme. This observation is further confirmed by the list attached to the 1915 edition of *Zhenglüe* advertising the book titles to be published, where the ‘supplementary compilation’ of *Zhenglüe* and *Sketches of Artworks* were promised for release in due course (Fig. 4-8).

However, the remaining two components of Li Fang’s ‘Attested series’, to my knowledge, are unknown today, and for such an absence no explanation was given in either later editions of *Zhenglüe* or other bibliographic records. Is this simply because these two parts failed to survive after their release? Or were these ‘missing parts’ never actually published? If they were never published, why was the original publishing plan for these two parts eventually called off? Was their absence in the extant editions of *Zhenglüe* a deliberate omission made by the author himself to reconcile his own perception of ‘art’ with more widely-recognised views on the same concept?

Before returning to these questions, it is necessary to construct a general idea of what exactly Li Fang meant by the term ‘*yishujia*’ and on what grounds this particular term was perceived as being interchangeable with ‘*meishujia*’.

¹⁴ ‘*Liyan*’, *Zhenglüe*, p. 1a, Item 2.

The so-called ‘artists’

Zhenglüe seems to be the first Chinese book which had applied to its title the term *yishujia*, a term generally regarded today as the equivalent of ‘artist(s)’ in English. The book’s alternative title also makes it the first ‘History of Chinese Art’. However, when examining the composition of each category in *Zhenglüe*, one constantly encounters things unexpected or beyond the imagination, a signal indicating the clashes between different ways of thinking, between the past and the present.

The first category, ‘metal’, contains not only makers of objects constructed of materials such as bronze, gold, silver, iron, pewter, and cloisonné,¹⁵ as well as makers of statues of gold and bronze;¹⁶ it also included those who were brilliant at faking ancient coins,¹⁷ imitating ancient bronzes,¹⁸ and casting iron pictures¹⁹, wrought iron,²⁰ and iron seals. Even those who were said to know how to make weapons and artillery were also included in this category.²¹ The objects they made could also be ordinary things, as long as the object’s intricacy testified to the maker’s craftsmanship, as in the case of a certain Wang, who specialised in making ball-shaped incense containers and locks and was celebrated by an anecdote about his unique ability to open an intricate foreign lock imported into China as tribute.²² It did not matter either whether or not the skill to be glorified in the book had originated in China, as long as the maker mastering the skill was exceptionally dexterous. Thus a certain Pan from

¹⁵ Such as Wang Shixiong 王世雄, *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 1, p. 13a.

¹⁶ Such as Anigue 阿尼哥 and Liu Zhenfu 劉貞甫; *ibid.*, pp. 3b-4a, 8b-9a.

¹⁷ A certain Xue (Xue Mo 薛某, aka. Xue Chongquan 薛重泉) and Li Baotai 李寶台 were famous for faking ancient coins; see *ibid.*, pp. 12b-13a.

¹⁸ For example, Hu Wenming 胡文明, Xu Shousu 徐守素, and those recorded in the entry ‘Famous for making bronzes’, ‘Famous for carving pewter works’; *ibid.*, pp. 6, 7b-8a.

¹⁹ Such as Tang Peng 湯鵬, Liang Yingfeng 梁應逢 and Zhuge Sheng 諸葛生; *ibid.*, pp. 9b-10.

²⁰ Such as ‘the person from a Wang family (Wang xing 王姓)’, *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 1, p. 12b.

²¹ Such as Yang Gong 楊恭, Yisu mayin 亦思馬因, Alao wading 阿老瓦丁, Lin Jun 林俊, and Pang Bingquan 龐秉權; *ibid.*, pp. 2b, 3, 7, 12a.

²² ‘Wang mo 王某’, *ibid.*, p. 5b.

Zhejiang is selected for inclusion in *Zhenglüe* because he was said to be adept at making Japanese-style utensils, such as a kind of ruler which contains in one piece ten writing accessories and a pair of folding scissors—a skill he learned during his captivity at the hands of Japanese pirates.²³

The second category, ‘stone’, to which jade materials are also appended, is mainly dedicated to accounts of famous makers of inkstones, among whom a person who specialised in repairing broken inkstones is also recorded.²⁴ In addition, there are nine ‘artists’ adept at carving ‘seal knobs’, *yinniu* 印鈕 (the carved decoration at the top of a seal),²⁵ and eight known as remarkable architects of rockwork in gardens.²⁶ The acclaimed Ming jade carver, Lu Zigang 陸子岡, is of course listed in this category,²⁷ while lesser-known craftsmen such as Xi Shangjin 席上錦—said to be able to carve dragon-shaped stone pillars effortlessly without using any preparation drawings—is also given a place.²⁸ Extraordinary examples are particularly worth noting. Pan Feng 潘鳳, known as a dexterous maker of *liaosideng* 料絲燈 (glass material lanterns), is categorised here because the material he used for making lantern containers was said to be extracted from minerals such as agate and violet quartz.²⁹ A superb maker of Go game pieces (*qi* 棋), Li Dezhang 李德章 from south Yunnan, is also found in this category because his manufacturing process involved melting minerals (‘stones’ in Chinese concept) such as violet quartz, nitrate, and lead, a technique known as the

²³ ‘Pan mo 潘某’, *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 1, p. 6b.

²⁴ ‘Han Wen 韓文’, *ibid.*, p. 14a.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 19b-21.

²⁶ They are Lu Dieshan 陸疊山, Zhang Lian 張漣, and those recorded in the entry ‘famous architects of rockwork’; see *ibid.*, pp. 14a, 21b-23a.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 21b.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 14b-15a. For *liaosi* lanterns, see Wu Shan 吳山 et al. (eds.), *Zhongguo gongyi meishu dacidian* 中國工藝美術大辭典 ‘Dictionary of Chinese industrial arts’ (Nanjing, 1988), p. 887.

‘firing method’ (*shaoqi zhifa* 燒棋之法).³⁰ A certain Akou 阿扣, known only by his nickname, is recorded for his expertise in faking the patina on ancient jades.³¹ These cases also show that as long as the relevance of the manufactured product to the material (to which the category is dedicated) could be established, makers could acceptably be positioned in this category.

The third category, ‘silk’, is occupied predominantly by females, for it accommodates makers of textiles, clothing, and embroideries.³² Nevertheless, there are still two male makers listed here,³³ one of whom even specialised in hair embroidery, a skill normally associated with women.³⁴ The fourth category, ‘bamboo’ is for ‘artists’ skilled at carving on the bamboo surface of arm-rests, brush-pen containers, fan ribs, etc., or good at carving bamboo seals or making bamboo objects, such as bird cages,³⁵ and musical instruments like bamboo flageolets, *dongxiao* 洞簫,³⁶ and bamboo *qin* zithers.³⁷ The ‘gourd’ is seen as the smallest group in *Zhenglüe*, containing those who are said to be skilful either at making containers with the shell of the gourd or at decorating such containers by carving designs or inscriptions on their surface. The ‘earth’ as a category, however, shows a greater variety: the most common are makers of ceramic and pottery objects such as tea sets, cricket pots, and vessels in ancient styles; it also includes people said to specialise in painting or

³⁰ *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 1, p. 15.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 23a.

³² Grace S. Fong, ‘Female Hands: Embroidery as a Knowledge Field in Women’s Everyday Life in Late Imperial and Early Republican China’, *Late Imperial China*, 25.1 (June 2004), pp. 1-58.

³³ ‘Tao Cheng 陶成’ and ‘Xia Yong 夏永’, *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 1, p. 23b.

³⁴ Yuhang Li, ‘Communicating with Guanyin through Hair: Hair Embroidery in Late Imperial China’, paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, Chicago, March 26-29, 2009.

³⁵ ‘Zhan Cheng 詹成’, *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 2, p. 1a.

³⁶ ‘Wang Shanglian 王尚廉’, ‘Ge Luting 戈蓼汀’ (including Hu Jiefan 胡子凡), and ‘Che Gun 車袞’, *ibid.*, pp. 1b-2a, 17b-18.

³⁷ ‘Pan Xigeng 潘西鳳’, and ‘Liucheng nüzi 嚮城女子 (A women from Liu town)’, *ibid.*, pp. 19b, 21a.

carving inscriptions on pottery³⁸ as well as those who were able to sculpt statues and figurines in clay.³⁹ Other less conceivable objects in this category are pottery seals, inkstones, and *qin* zithers,⁴⁰ as well as tea pots moulded in clay and coated with pewter (*shatai xihu* 砂胎錫壺).⁴¹

The seventh category, ‘skin’, including such materials as feathers and animal horn, lists mainly people adept at carving seals and cups in ivory or horn. In addition, Hu Chun 胡春, who ‘uses goose quills to make flute pipes’ (*yi eguan zuo xiaodi* 以鵝管做簫笛), and Sun Wei 孫威, known to be the maker of the famous feather-leather armour (*linggen tijin kai* 翎根蹄筋鎧), are both registered in this category.⁴² The category ‘wood’ is the last one in the ‘eight-sound’ classification, containing famous makers of *qin* zithers,⁴³ wood carvings, wood seals, wood statues, and rattan objects.⁴⁴ A number of ‘artists’ in this category are recorded as being brilliant at carving olive or peach stones, particularly of the subject matter ‘Su Dongpo on an outing to Red Cliff’, in which the whole tiny kernel is carved into a boat on which Su Dongpo, his friends Monk Foyin and Huang Tingjian, their boatmen and servants, as well as the architectural and interior settings on the boat, are all said to be vividly represented (Fig. 4-9).⁴⁵ However, many ‘artists’ listed in this category are themselves in fact carpenters who had contributed to public constructions like palaces

³⁸ For example, ‘Chen Chen 陳辰’, ‘Meng Chen 孟臣’, and ‘Xue Huai 薛懷’; see *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 3, pp. 10b, 12b, 14b.

³⁹ ‘Tian Qi 田圻’, ‘Yuan Yuchang 袁遇昌’, ‘Ma Tianlai 馬天駱’, ‘Liu Yuan 劉元’, ‘Jiang Yougong 江右工’, ‘Jiang Minggao 江鳴皋’, ‘Zhong Sheng 仲升’, ‘Huang Shuyuan 黃叔元’, and ‘Niren Zhang 泥人張’ (the Zhang specialising in making clay figurines), *ibid.*, pp. 1-2, 15.

⁴⁰ For pottery seals, see ‘Zhou Shichen 周時臣’ and ‘Jia Xuan 葭軒’, *ibid.*, pp. 3, 12b-13a; for pottery inkstones and *qin* zithers, see ‘Qi Na-an 齊訥菴’ and ‘Kang Gao 康誥’, *ibid.*, pp. 3b-4a.

⁴¹ ‘Zhu Jian 朱堅’, *ibid.*, p. 14b.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19a, 24b.

⁴⁴ ‘Wu Ruzi 吳孺子’, *ibid.*, pp. 23b-24a.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 21-23a, 25-26. For nut-carving, see Cai Meifen 蔡玫芬, ‘*Hezhouji* 核舟記’ (On carved olive-stone boats), *Gugong wenwu yuekan* 故宮文物月刊 ‘The National Palace Museum Monthly of Chinese Art’, 23 (Feb. 1985), pp. 75-77.

and bridges⁴⁶ or had been expert in interior decorations,⁴⁷ furniture making,⁴⁸ and miniature architectural models.⁴⁹

From the survey of the people grouped in these categories, as well as of the objects they are recorded to have made, it is clear that the ‘eight-sound’ classification system in *Zhenglüe* functions as a conceptual framework within which a category accommodates objects or skills in a broad sense associated with the designated material. For instance, the category of ‘silk’ does not apply only to objects made with silk, but also to those in a broader sense related to ‘threads’, namely, textiles. Similarly, the category ‘skin’ pertains to the outer layer of the animal body, be it horns, feathers, or the skin itself. Such flexibility is most observable in the category of ‘stone’, where objects involving a variety of hard minerals in their production are included. The principle of ‘classification by material’ inevitably grouped together different skills that could be applied, broadly speaking, to the ‘same’ material, such as in the case of the category ‘bamboo’, where the skill of making musical instruments is listed along with the skill of carving on bamboo surfaces, skills which are by nature fundamentally different. As such, an emphasis was already being placed on the material aspect of the object, rather than on the specific skill possessed by the artist; and such focus on materials also gives more prominence to the object itself than to the maker of the object whom *Zhenglüe* purported to valorise, for it is only through the fields—created by an awareness of the diversity of materials—that ‘artists’ listed in *Zhenglüe* were supposed to be commemorated and glorified. The results of this approach are twofold: first, it creates an impression that the ‘art works’ and ‘artists’

⁴⁶ ‘Cai Xin 蔡信’, ‘Yang Qing 楊青’, ‘Xu Gao 徐杲’, ‘Zhao Dexiu 趙得秀’, and ‘Huang Panlong 黃攀龍’, *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 3, pp. 19b-20, 24b.

⁴⁷ ‘Kuai Xiang 蒯祥’, *ibid.*, p. 19b.

⁴⁸ ‘Xiao He 小賀’, and ‘Da Shan 大汕’, *ibid.*, pp. 20b-21a, 28b.

⁴⁹ ‘Emperor Xi of the Ming’, ‘Liang Jiu 梁九’, and ‘Wang Shuming 王叔明’, *ibid.*, pp. 19, 24a, 29.

listed in *Zhenglüe* are mutually defined; for instance, one tends to regard the intricate lock made by that certain Wang as, to the author Li Fang, also a work of art, and Wang was thus being identified as an artist. Second, it prompts a shift in context in which some of the makers featured in *Zhenglüe* are perhaps meant to be viewed in a way very different from how they used to be, an issue we shall return to below.

Since the ‘eight-sound’ classification cannot accommodate all materials and skills, another seven categories were introduced to complete Li Fang’s scheme. As these seven categories do not reflect such an existing, received classification system as the ‘eight-sound’ system, their inclusion shows how the parameters of ‘*yishu*’ and ‘*yishujia*’ in this book extended beyond any known framing system.

According to the ‘General Remarks’, ‘Calligraphy and painting’ along with ‘seal carving’ were the fields that had been come to be commonly viewed in recent times as representing ‘*meishu*’. However, since too many masters existed within these categories to be exhaustively registered, only the ‘special and extraordinary’ (*shuyi* 殊異) were selected and recorded here.⁵⁰ In contrast with the opinion probably most commonly held at the time, the conventional production of these art forms, with which we are now more familiar, were in *Zhenglüe* not intended to be regarded as the most highly valued forms of *meishu*. To Li Fang, perhaps only those ‘special and extraordinary’ works of calligraphy and painting fit more into his conception of *meishu*. For instance, most calligraphers selected for inclusion in *Zhenglüe* were believed to be able to write characters in a size either extremely small or exceptionally large, as demonstrated by such feats as writing several or more characters on a single sesame seed⁵¹ or writing characters on such a massive scale that the texture of each

⁵⁰ ‘*Liyan*’, *Zhenglüe*, p.1a, Item 3.

⁵¹ ‘Song Lian 宋濂’, ‘Weng Tanxi 翁覃溪’, ‘Dong Wengong 董文恭’, ‘Ji Wengong 稽文恭’, ‘Ru Rui 茹葵’, ‘Dong Yao 董耀’, ‘Wang Chaozhong 王朝忠’, ‘Tong Xinyan 童心言’, ‘Chen Bunong 陳補農’

brush stroke would appear like the patterns of rocks.⁵² A certain Huang Dasheng 黃大笙 is listed for being able not only to write with his left hand, but also to do mirror writing, which would look from the reverse side as if the writing had been done in the normal way.⁵³ As for ‘painting’, there is even greater variety. ‘Size’ is still a concern, as the lives of six artists of miniature painting were selected.⁵⁴ ‘Style’ is also a criterion, for those who were able to paint in a Western style are also included.⁵⁵ The ability to form an image of the Immortal of Longevity with its outline made up of a number of the character ‘*shou* 壽’ (longevity)—a visual effect which is probably similar to an image of the Bodhisattva Guanyin where the deity’s robes are formed from tiny characters which make up the text of a chapter of the Lotus Sutra (Fig. 4-10)—is no doubt exceptional enough for the artist to be selected for inclusion.⁵⁶ However, many entries are about people who made pictures with devices or media other than brush pens: such as painting with the bark of *tao* 栳 (mallotus japonicus) and *hua* 樺 (a type of birch, *betula alba* var. *vulgaris*),⁵⁷ ‘plucking’ images out of the paper with nails and needles,⁵⁸ knitting paper strips into pictures,⁵⁹ and making

and ‘Zhu Yucheng 祝玉成’, *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 4, pp. 1-3a, 4.

⁵² ‘Ning Xungong 甯遜公’, *ibid.*, p. 3.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 3b.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 3b-5a.

⁵⁵ Such as ‘Liu Bin 劉賓’ and ‘Huang Shiling 黃士陵’, *ibid.*, pp. 5b, 7b. Paintings of Western style are also mentioned in entries of ‘Chen Mei 陳枚’ and ‘Yao Song 姚宋’, *ibid.*, pp. 4b.

⁵⁶ ‘Zhang Heng 張恒’, *ibid.*, p. 5a.

⁵⁷ ‘Tian Sou 田叟’, *ibid.*, p. 1a. It should be noted that there is a typo in this entry in *Zhenglüe* where the original character *tao* 栳 is mistaken for *dao* 稻 (rice), and hence the name for this kind of ‘painting’, ‘*taohua* 栳畫’, is wrongly put as ‘*daohua* 稻畫’. Many later books have inherited the mistake in failing to crosscheck the original source, in Yuan Haowen 元好問, *Xu yijianzhi* 續夷堅志, collected in *Biji xiaoshuo daguan* 筆記小說大觀 (17 vols., Yangzhou, 1984), v, *juan* 1, p. 5a. An example of such an error can be found in Zhou Nanquan 周南泉 and Feng Nai’en 馮乃恩 (eds.), *Zhongguo gudai shougongyijia zhi* 中國古代手工藝家志 ‘Records of ancient Chinese handicraft-persons’ (Beijing, 2008), which, written in vernacular Chinese, is clearly based on *Zhenglüe* (p.364). Perhaps in finding the term ‘*daohua*’ in *Zhenglüe* unintelligible in the context, Zhou and Feng further changed it into ‘*qiahua* 掐畫’ in the main text, although the original (and correct) text in *Xu yijianzhi* is also appended (p. 668).

⁵⁸ ‘Wang Qiushan 王秋山’, *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 4, pp. 5b-6a. This kind of painting is called *zhuhua* 摺畫 (pounded painting).

pictures by pasting fabrics of different colours onto a silk surface.⁶⁰ Also included are artists who made pictures on surfaces other than paper or silk, artists such as Pan Yunke 潘雲客, who is said to have been able to paint on the reverse side of glass.⁶¹ Although some of the aforementioned skills and objects may seem difficult to understand only by textual descriptions, in addition to the fact that no samples remain to prove their existence, none of them is as miraculous as that which is described in the entry ‘mouth painting’—the practice of a person’s forming images of buildings, birds and animals, or flowers and trees on a wall or door by spitting on the surface pieces of various colours of paper that had been chewed in his mouth.⁶²

The category of ‘astronomy’ contains people who were able to make astronomical instruments and instruments for measuring time, such as clepsydrae, sundials, and hourglasses. ‘Wheels and axles’ is a category for makers of mechanical instruments or objects, such as ‘novel instruments’ (*qiqi* 奇器), wooden oxen,⁶³ dogs,⁶⁴ roosters,⁶⁵ little boys,⁶⁶ small models of the demon-queller Zhong Kui 鍾馗,⁶⁷ and small boats,⁶⁸ all of which had certain mechanical devices inside their bodies that enabled the objects to move around by themselves without electrical power. In addition to things so marvellous that the accounts of them seem rather ridiculous, there were other less extraordinary objects included in this category involving the use of wheels

⁵⁹ ‘Lu Xianghuan 陸湘鬢’, *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 4, p. 8a; and Li’s note in p. 6a. The skill seems to have been known as *zhihua* 織畫 (knitted painting).

⁶⁰ ‘Wu Shenrong 吳慎容’, and ‘Qiao Xiaohong 喬小紅’, *ibid.*, p. 7b-8a. Although the names for the skills in these two entries are different (the former is called *duibohua* 堆帛畫, and the latter *tieronghua* 貼絨畫), they seem to have come from a similar concept.

⁶¹ *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 4, p. 5.

⁶² ‘Kou Hua 口畫’, *ibid.*, p. 8.

⁶³ ‘Xie Chun 謝純’, ‘Jiang Yong 江永’, ‘Cheng Jiayin 程嘉蔭’, *ibid.*, pp. 13a, 16-17a.

⁶⁴ Such as ‘Zhang Mou 張某’, ‘Huang Lü Zhuang 黃履莊’, and ‘Zhong Yixü 鐘彝叙’, *ibid.*, pp. 14b-16a, 17a.

⁶⁵ ‘Mou Bibu 某比部 (a certain official)’, *ibid.*, p. 17a.

⁶⁶ ‘Bo Zili 薄子理’, *ibid.*, p. 13.

⁶⁷ ‘Li Shushi 李術士’, *ibid.*, pp. 12b-13a.

⁶⁸ ‘Wu Woyao 吳沃堯’, *ibid.*, p. 17b.

and axles, such as guns, self-chiming clocks, machineries for mills,⁶⁹ and irrigation equipment.⁷⁰

The category ‘mounting’—a specific skill applied to works of calligraphy and painting as a final touch for future display and preservation—shows that mounters were included in a relatively homogenous grouping; the same applies to the fourteenth category, ‘lacquer’, in which only lacquer makers are included. However, the eleventh category, ‘carving’, seems to be more contested. The term ‘carving’, *diao* 雕刻, with the character *diao* of the radical *yu* 玉 (jade)—a term which also appears in the categorisation of *Meishu congshu* in Chapter 3)—refers to the technique of carving or objects made by the act of carving, and hence can be applied to various materials, even including those categorised otherwise within the ‘eight-sound’ system. Although its contents more or less overlap with those in the previous categories, this category does not seem to have been entirely repetitious or redundant. Although this category includes carvers of stone inscriptions, of woodblocks for book printing, and of calligraphic model books (and was similarly perceived by the editors of *Meishu congshu* as including these subjects),⁷¹ it is dedicated mainly to seal carvers, or simply carvers who were able to work on more than one material, or those whose specialised material was not clearly recorded. Furthermore, the term ‘*diao*’ as it is used in *Zhenglüe* also means ‘incision’, or ‘engraving’. A certain Guo Fuheng 郭福衡 is recorded in this category—rather than, like others, in the category of ‘wood’.⁷² Given that it is particularly specified in the text that he carved the plum kernels with a kind of stick-like device used for smoking opium (*yanqian* 煙簽, whose edges are

⁶⁹ ‘Qiaogong Qushi 巧工瞿氏’, *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 4, p. 13a.

⁷⁰ ‘Shan Junliang 單俊良’, *ibid.*, p. 13a.

⁷¹ *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 5, pp. 1, 7.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 9b.

unlikely to have been sharp enough for chiselling), the product is unlikely to have been the kind of curio-like, round, sculptured little boat that we have come across elsewhere in the category of ‘wood’ (Fig. 4-9), but instead an engraving on a plum kernel. Such understanding also makes the inclusion of Wu Fengzi 武風子 in this category appear less strange: he was known to have been able to ‘paint’ on bamboo chopsticks with red-hot coals.⁷³ Given the parameters of this category as suggested by other entries, those fire-kissed chopsticks must have had the sunken, depressed effect found in intaglios. In addition, the act of seal-carving can also be broadly perceived as ‘engraving’, which probably accounts for the presence of a relatively larger number of seal carvers in this group.

The last category in *Zhenglüe* is dedicated to ‘miscellaneous skills’, pertaining to civil engineering (*tumu* 土木, ‘earth and wood’),⁷⁴ or making things such as lanterns,⁷⁵ fans,⁷⁶ and paper (including paper fifes, or paper *go* game pieces),⁷⁷ in addition to the skills of making composite-rubbings,⁷⁸ fabricating antiques,⁷⁹ culturing pearls,⁸⁰ and designing gardens and architecture.⁸¹ Some rarely-seen skills are also included, such as moulding figurines in wax, ‘painting’ images with incense, and ‘branding’ pictures with red-hot iron wires on a kind of fan made with the sheaths of bamboo shoots.⁸² Still a few entries are of versatile people, specialising in more than one type of craft, adept at music, embroidery, gastronomy, ceramics, and so

⁷³ *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 5, pp. 3-5a.

⁷⁴ Such as ‘Zhang Zhongyan 張中彥’, ‘Niu Cunxi 牛存喜’, ‘Xie Shenguan 謝深灌’, *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 5, pp. 14-15a, 19a; in addition, ‘Yao Weichi 姚蔚池’, ‘Gu Licheng 谷麗城’, ‘Wen Qi 文起’ can also be labelled as such; *ibid.*, p. 19.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 15b-16a.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 14b; and ‘Pan Junzhong 潘君仲’, p. 17b.

⁷⁸ ‘Da Shou 達受’, *ibid.*, p. 18.

⁷⁹ ‘Ba Weizu 八慰祖’, *ibid.*, p. 17a.

⁸⁰ ‘Lin Mou 林某’, *ibid.*, pp. 17b-18a.

⁸¹ ‘Dao Heng 道衡’, ‘Yao Weichi’, ‘Gu Licheng’, ‘Wen Qi’ and ‘Xu Lü-an 徐履安’, *ibid.*, pp. 18a, 19.

⁸² ‘Laji 蠟技’ and ‘Hu Yunfeng 胡雲峰’, *ibid.*, pp. 18b-19a.

forth;⁸³ or of people whose specialty cannot be named in terms of the materials designated in the ‘eight-sound’ system or of the skills described in other categories.⁸⁴

The most extraordinary is the entry for ‘Xie Shenshan 謝身山’ who is said to have been able to make moist earth balls that he then put on bamboo sticks; these balls were then made to appear to fly as swallows and sparrows, which may seem more like the practice of magic or illusion than anything else.⁸⁵

In all the early editions I have consulted, following the last category is a section entitled ‘Addition of omissions’ (*buyi* 補遺), which is not listed in the table of ‘Complete Contents’(Fig. 4-11). This section was supposed to have added to the categories of ‘calligraphy and painting’ and ‘wheels and axles’ new entries which were thought to have been left out in the initial edition.⁸⁶ However, I have not come across any edition which does not contain the ‘Addition of omissions’ section, and it is thus more likely to be a section of the initial edition.

All in all, without a relatively complete picture of the semantic range of the Chinese terms ‘*yishujia*’ and ‘*meishujia*’ as they are seen in *Zhenglüe*, it would be impossible to get a sense of what these terms could truly have meant to the author Li Fang. The diversity of their contents and their divergence from our understanding of the terms today all point to the question posed at the beginning of this section: is ‘*yishujia*’, as referred to in *Zhenglüe*, a translation of the Western concept ‘artists’, or a Chinese term that is now conventionally translated as ‘artists’? Or, to put it in another way, should we translate the term *yishujia* not as ‘artist(s)’, but instead as ‘artisan(s)’, as suggested by the social identity of the subjects selected in this book?

⁸³ ‘Wan Shouqi 萬壽祺’, ‘Zhu Yijian 朱彝鑑’, ‘Lu Shoushi 陸授詩’ and ‘Sun Yijun 孫義鈞’, *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 5, pp. 16b-17. In addition, there are still many people mentioned before as having specialised in a particular craft, who are also said to have been capable of other skills.

⁸⁴ ‘Zhou Qizeng 周齊曾’ and ‘Cheng Ruorong 成若容’, *ibid.*, pp.16, 17a.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 20a.

⁸⁶ *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 5, p. 20b.

Given that what is recorded in the book is what we may term today as ‘crafts’, and whose semantic range went even beyond what the modern concepts of ‘decorative art’ or ‘industrial art’ may suggest (as *Zhenglüe* even includes engineering in its scheme), it seems reasonable to translate ‘*yishujia*’ as ‘artisans’. However, such a translation, although accurate in meaning, would inevitably fail to acknowledge the most fervent aspiration of the author Li Fang, which was to make the Chinese tradition of *yishu* as relevant to the modern world as *meishu* was believed to have been at the time.

The situation we are facing here is similar to that experienced by the English translators and scholars of Giorgio Vasari’s *Lives of the Artists*, who learned that Vasari did not employ the contemporary Italian word ‘*artista*’ (‘artists’) in his book, nor did he use the term ‘*artigiano*’ (‘artisan’) consistently; rather, he prefers the word ‘*artificer*’, often used in theoretical writings to refer to God the Creator. It is precisely through such usage that Vasari registered his revolutionary interpretation of the artist’s stature in the Renaissance and transformed the social status of the people recorded in *Lives* from that of a mere craftsman into that of a divine genius.⁸⁷

As we shall see below, the employment of the term *yishujia* or *meishujia* in *Zhenglüe* was also an endeavour more or less as noble as Vasari’s use of ‘*artificer*’—that is, to elevate the status of ‘nobody’ to that of ‘somebody’, even though the social, historical and religious conditions at Li Fang’s time were completely different from those of the Renaissance. As such, I propose to translate both of the terms ‘*yishujia*’ and ‘*meishujia*’ as they are used in *Zhenglüe* into English as ‘artists’ in order to do justice to the historical aspiration behind the compilation of *Zhenglüe*. At the same time, however, it should be borne in mind that the meaning of

⁸⁷ Julia Conaway Bondanella and Peter Bondanella, ‘Introduction’, in Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of the Artists*, trans. Julia Conaway Bondanella and Peter E. Bondanella. (Oxford, 1991), p. xii. See also James V. Mirollo, ‘Vasari’s Language and Thought in the *Lives*’, *Mannerism and Renaissance Poetry: Concept, Mode, Inner Design* (New Haven, 1984), pp. 4-10; and T. S. R Boase, *Giorgio Vasari: The Man and the Book* (Princeton, 1979), pp. 124-128.

‘artist’ in *Zhenglüe* is not quite the same as that in the Western context.

In the name of ‘history’

Given the conception of historiography of his time, Li Fang had every reason to believe he was compiling a historical book on Chinese art; the problem is why his historical aspiration was only humbly suggested in the alternative title of the book, placed inside the book and printed in a smaller size (Fig. 4-3). Another equally important question is why we, the people of modern times, no longer regard *Zhenglüe* as a legitimate history.

Gathering together excerpts of artists’ biographical accounts, *Zhenglüe* took a form similar to traditional historical writings in China. It is widely accepted that biographies were one of the most persistent writing forms in which official dynastic histories took shape. As dynastic histories served as the model for a variety of historical writings—having been produced either as official commissions or private endeavours—biographies likewise became the most common way in which historical materials were presented. Emulating the structure and form of official dynastic histories, Zhang Yanyuan’s *Records of Famous Paintings through the Ages* (written around 847) is composed mainly of biographies of painters arranged in dynastic chronological order, except for the opening three chapters on general subjects regarding the historical production, appreciation, and collection of painting.⁸⁸

By grouping together biographies according to specific themes, a discursive field was also created.⁸⁹ Although Zhang’s book title, *Records of Famous Paintings*,

⁸⁸ See Zhang Yanyuan, *Lidai minghuaqi*, in Yu Anlan (ed.), *Huashi congshu*, i, pp.1-126. For an annotated English translation of Zhang’s text, see William R. B. Acker, *Some T’ang and Pre-T’ang Texts on Chinese Painting* (2 vols, Leiden, 1954 and 1974), i, pp. 59-382; and ii.

⁸⁹ Such a way to invent a tradition by creating retrospectively a new category and lineage in historical writings is discussed in Mark Csikszentmihalyi, ‘Constructing Lineages and Inventing Traditions through Exemplary Figures in Early China’, *T’oung Pao* (Leiden), 89 (2003), pp. 59-99.

mentions only ‘paintings’, the book actually includes texts about both paintings (the objects) and painters (the makers); the latter even occupied the majority of the book. This case demonstrates how a specific type of object can be used to represent an entire discursive field. In the case of Zhang’s history of painting, not only the famous paintings but also the human agents who made painting a subject worthy of historicisation are justly treated. Since occupying a niche in history was considered to be one of the ways to achieve immortality, creating grouped biographies of these human agents—in whose hands a specific field was thought to have been able to come into being—was also a means by which a new field might legitimise itself and perpetuate its existence within the Chinese cultural context. Although historians were endowed with the power to exert ‘praise-and-blame’ (*baobian* 褒貶), the creation of a new thematic history was often a positive recognition of a new field, rather than a listing of the blameable. In this sense, grouped biographies and the discursive field they represented were in a reciprocal relationship, in which the valorisation of a specific field was realised in the very documenting of the people categorised in this field; and through this specific field and its documentation, an individual was thought to obtain his/her historical immortality.

As such, *Zhenglüe* was made in an attempt to valorise the new field of *meishu*. Starting with overviews of the *meishujia* (‘artists’) and followed by biographical accounts of individual artists, *Zhenglüe* more or less echoes the structure seen in Zhang’s *Records of Famous Paintings*. Against the backdrop of the tradition of historical writing outlined above—to which *Zhenglüe* clearly attached itself—the two titles of the book, the wording, and the use of the concepts of *yishujia* and *meishu* together make Li Fang’s historical intention all the more explicit. The ‘official’ title followed the precedent set by the book *Attested Sketches of Poets of the Current*

Dynasty (*Guochao shiren zhenglüe* 國朝詩人徵略)⁹⁰ and turned the people listed in the book into a meaningful group of individuals (*yishujia*) worthy of historical treatment. *Zhenglüe*'s 'alternative' title further makes it explicit that the book was created for the new field '*meishu*'. In this sense, the compilation of the biographies of *yishujia*, however sketchy it may seem, was simultaneously a recognition of the new field called *meishu*.

To recognise the new field *meishu*—thus elevating its status and tracing the origins of its indigenous tradition in China—was, Li Fang believed, an urgent need in China. This point of view was also shared by the authors of the prefaces to *Zhenglüe*, in which the polarity between *dao* 道 (the 'Way', the 'Principles') and *qi* 器 ('object', 'utensil' or 'tool')—not to mention the long-standing neglect of the latter in Chinese culture—was singled out in order to account for China's lack of competitiveness when confronting the Euro-American powers in the country's recent history. They argued that such a separation was only a recent phenomenon and had never been intended by the ancients. As Wu Chongxi states in his preface, 'The ancients put equal emphasis on *dao* and *qi*, regarding them as *ti* 體 ('substance') and *yong* 用 ('function') complementary to each other. Since in later generations morals were more revered, people of our nation stopped working on matters within the form [*qi*].'⁹¹ The same opinion can be found in Di Yu's preface, where he maintains that 'Abandoning the matter to explore the idea, and forsaking the *qi* to enjoy the pleasure of the Way, is the

⁹⁰ Zhang Weiping 張維屏, *Guochao shiren zhenglüe* (1830), collected in *Xuxiu siku quanshu* 續修四庫全書 'Continuing compilation of the *Four Treasuries*' (1800 vols., Shanghai, 2002), vol. 1712-3. This text gathers from a variety of sources biographical accounts of poets of the Qing up to the year 1830, with references to the source materials from which the excerpts are taken; these are features also seen in *Zhenglüe*.

⁹¹ Wu Chongxi, 'Xu', p. 1a. [道與器，古聖人初無偏重，猶體與用之互相濟也。後世尊重道德，吾國人遂不肆力形下之事]

flaw of contemporary China. Our ancestors would never have done so'.⁹² They believed that this unbalanced emphasis between *dao* and *qi* had led to the difficult situation in which China then found herself. As Wu Chongxi pointed out, 'After the West found their way to China and demonstrated their unrivalled mastery of navigation, land transportation, aviation, and matters relating to sound, light, chemistry, and electricity, we began to feel inferior [to them] in intelligence'.⁹³

An emphasis on the significance of *qi* and a rediscovery of China's long tradition of the making of *qi* was therefore brought forth. In order to re-evaluate the importance of crafts, Li criticised the long-established prejudice against craftsmanship, a prejudice regarding dexterously-made objects as 'the work of devils' (*guigong* 鬼工) produced by 'devil barbarians from the Western lands (*xiyu gui zuo* 西域鬼作)'— objects which could never have been made by people of an unspoiled nature. Li believed it was this prejudice against 'the works of devils' that undermined the development of crafts and industry in China, and thus he drew examples from the West:

Countries in the West and East give a special weight to *gong* 工 ['crafts', 'industry', or 'labour']. In these countries, people who created novel instruments would be knighted or awarded with medals, issued with patents, or supported in marketing and selling; bureaus of standards [*kaogongchang* 攷工場, 'place to inspect works'] are established to determine whether the products are neat or rough; and expositions [*bolanhui* 博覽會] are held to examine whether the objects are refined or crude. All those we have derogated as [mastering] curious techniques and fiendish skills, viewed as devil makers from the Western lands, are in these countries regarded especially highly, lauded with the name *meishujia* ['artist']; their works are called *meishupin* ['works of art'] and are stored in specifically constructed halls (foreign countries have the *meishuguan* 美術館 ['museum', or 'hall of *meishu*']). Most of these measures taken to encourage and inspect [industry] indeed correspond to those found in our own ancient system.⁹⁴

⁹² Di Yu, 'Xu', p. 1a. [廢事而理解是探，捨器而道妙是悅，此中國近代之蔽，前民豈其然歟?]

⁹³ Wu Chongxi, *op. cit.*, p. 1a. [泊泰西道通，遂以輪路飛行聲光化電專擅其長，吾人自慚智力不足]

⁹⁴ Li Fang, 'Zhongguo yishujia zhenglue zixu 中國藝術家徵略自序' (Self-preface to *Zhenglue*), *Zhenglue*, pp. 1-3a (1b). [比者東西各國，視工特重，凡能創造奇器者，或予以世爵、獲獎以徽章，或許其專利，或助其行銷。而更設攷工廠以查工作之巧拙，立博覽會以驗器物之良窳，吾所斥爲奇技淫巧、目爲西域鬼作者，彼則視之尤重。至嘉其名曰美術家，稱其所作曰美術品，而別設館以貯之(外國別有美術館)。其所以勸掖而省試之者，多與吾古制相合。]

Judging from the use of the term *meishu* and of its associated compounds, it is clear that Li Fang regarded *meishujia* as the highest honour a man of skills could be granted, and *Zhenglüe*, the ‘History of Chinese *Meishu*’, was compiled to grant such honours. To Li Fang, calling these exceptionally dexterous people ‘*meishujia*’ would have been a way to exert his own power of ‘praise’ as an historian.⁹⁵

Nonetheless, the mentality of the scholar-officials in China, Li Fang observed, devalued the objects made in China and embraced those made by foreign hands. As such, even though they had been both told about and shown intriguing objects produced domestically, these people were still suspicious of and not impressed with Chinese objects—an attitude which, Li believed, would make other countries wealthier and stronger and China poorer and weaker. Nonetheless, Li was convinced:

[T]he dexterity found in foreign countries is mostly that of the machinery, which appears marvellous at first glance but can be learned quickly by all; the dexterity found in China is all that of humans, which can only be mastered but not transmitted, even between fathers and sons. The downside is that they [the foreign countries] save more effort [*gong*, ‘labour’] and gain more results, whereas we put in greater effort but get less reward. Nevertheless, since there is a difference in the effort put in, there is also distinction in the refinement of *yi* [‘skills’, ‘arts’]. The antiques of our Three Dynasties and Qin and Han periods alone, which cannot be replicated, even today, in addition to the carved lacquers made in the capital [Beijing], the ceramics in Raozhou, and the silk in Jiangzhe region, are also praised by Westerners as the ‘three specialties’ of Chinese *gongyi* 工藝 [‘handicraft’, ‘industrial art’], which even they themselves are unable to rival. Should the authorities adopt a bit more of the ancient system to encourage and inspect [the arts], even though a revival of the past cannot be achieved, such an endeavour would surely result in great rewards. Alas, why on earth are the roots forgotten and neglected!⁹⁶

What exactly the ‘ancient system’ had been in the past is not clearly elucidated in the

⁹⁵ However, this assumption also makes Li Fang’s eventual use in the official book title of the term *yishujia*, instead of *meishujia* (a term in his mind probably of a higher status), even more puzzling.

⁹⁶ Li Fang, ‘*Zixu*’, p. 2a. [殊不知彼之巧多在乎機械，其始雖神，及其既成而學之，則人盡可能；我之巧純恃乎人工，能唯獨擅，即父亦不能傳諸子。所弗如者，彼則用力省而工多，我則用力艱而工少耳。然力之艱省既殊，則藝之精粗亦異。無論我三代秦漢之古物，非彼所能為，即如今日京師之雕漆、饒州之瓷、江浙之綺羅綾錦，彼亦且推為中國工藝之三長，而自以為不及。使在上者更稍采用古制，於以勸掖省試之，則縱未能遽復於古，然亦必有可觀者。奈之何竟忘其本而忽之也。]

book; however, the main purpose of *Zhenglüe* was clearly to revive the serious attitude towards ‘*gong*’ and to re-establish the mentality in which ‘*gong*’ was valued as highly as the ‘Principles’ (*dao*). The way to achieve this purpose, Li Fang believed, was through the power of history, in which the valorisation of a group of people was at the same time the recognition and celebration of the field in which that same group of people had established themselves. This is why the book was officially titled ‘Attested Sketches’ (*zhenglüe* 徵略): because there were disbelievers in Chinese *yishu/meishu*; because a history of Chinese *yishujia* had yet to be composed; to demonstrate that there was indeed a tradition of *meishu* in China; and because there were people who were indeed accomplished at *meishu*. Therefore, ‘the practitioners [of *yishu*] will be encouraged to improve themselves day by day. Thus *dao* and *qi* will both blossom, and the Euro-American countries will no longer monopolise the advancement of technology.’⁹⁷ In the name of nationalism, by the token of revivalism, a history of Chinese *meishu* was thus created, and a tradition invented.

The individuals gathered in *Zhenglüe*, labelled as *yishujia* or *meishujia* (artists), were thus treated as a subject worthy of historicisation and able to testify to the value of the field they represented. As Wu Chongxi puts it in his preface, ‘through [this book] each individual and each skill, however humble and trivial it may seem, will be remembered forever’.⁹⁸ It should be noted that *Zhenglüe* includes a lot of entries even of those ‘artists’ who are known only by their family names, such as ‘a certain Yang (Yang *sheng* 楊生)’; or by the nicknames associated with their trades, as in the cases of ‘Lu Dieshan 陸疊山 (the Lu who piles up fake mountains)’ and ‘a certain official (*mou bibu* 某比部)’; or by the places they had lived, such as ‘a clerk in Canton

⁹⁷ Wu Chongxi, ‘*Xu*’, p. 1b. [從此執行之士日進而日精焉。道與器並臻極盛，不使歐美之藝獨擅其長。].

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1b. [使一人一技之微，無不藉傳永久]

(Guangdong *li* 廣東吏)'.⁹⁹

The lack of certainty in identification of these 'artists' on the one hand demonstrates the intention of this book to turn nobody into somebody, a hero worthy of historical commemoration. On the other hand, however, it also reveals that *Zhenglüe*—a book aimed at providing evidence to testify to the fact that China had had great 'artists' long before the Western powers impressed China with their advanced skills—is composed of accounts of people whose identities cannot even be certain. Consequently, it is necessary to examine how *Zhenglüe*, a self-described history book, was made, and also what it was made of.

Citations as 'attested' accounts

Comprised of 541 entries, *Zhenglüe* cites a total of 185 book titles and personal sources (Appendix 4-2).¹⁰⁰ A reference to the source material is provided at the end of each entry in a smaller font size (Fig. 4-12).¹⁰¹ For the convenience of discussion, I have grouped these source materials by their textual genre into five groups: I. 'thematic record', featuring a particular subject such as 'pottery', 'jades', etc., but not written in the form of biographies; II. 'thematic biography', such as biographies of painters, etc.; III. 'gazetteer'; IV. '*biji* 筆記 (brush notes)', which forms the largest group; and V. 'personal source', where the reference points to a person rather than a book—which also means that the quotation might not exist in textual form.

⁹⁹ *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 1, pp. 11b, 14a; *juan* 4, p. 17-18.

¹⁰⁰ For the sake of convenience, the book titles cited in *Zhenglüe* will be referred to by their numeration in Appendix 4-2 in brackets [# number].

¹⁰¹ These 541 entries do not include Li Fang's own notes, which often start with 'Fang *an* 放按' ([Li] Fang comments...). There are in total 189 book titles cited in *Zhenglüe*; however, four titles among them are variations on their official titles, which narrows the exact number of cited book titles down to 185. These four titles are *Liechao shizhuan* 列朝詩傳 [#176] (a shorthand for *Liechao shiji xiaozhuan* 列朝詩集小傳 [#175]); *Mingren xiaozhuan* 名人小傳 [#178] (a shorthand for *Zhodai mingren xiaozhuan* 昭代名人小傳 [#177]); *Moyu lu* 墨餘錄 [#125] (a shorthand for *Duishan shuwu moyulu* 對山書屋墨餘錄 [#61]); and *Jiaoxuan zalu* 蕉軒雜錄 [#128] (a variation of *Jiaoxuan suilu* 蕉軒隨錄 [#127])

Despite its attempt to position itself within the genre of ‘history’, *Zhenglüe* is hardly a work executed with the skills that a traditional Chinese historian would be expected to have mastered. The basic skills of a historian—such as distinguishing facts from hearsay, verifying the materials gathered, and presenting an individual or an event in a coherent way in order to exert his power of praise-and-blame—are absent in the compilation of *Zhenglüe*. The lack of verification is also manifested in the fact that records of a ‘certain Wang’—i.e., of individuals whose identity cannot be sufficiently proved—are still ubiquitously present throughout this book. As such, *Zhenglüe* appears more like a scrapbook into which numerous anecdotes and fragments of hearsay from various textual sources were pasted and organised without any formal process of verification.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the author, Li Fang, did not always gather his materials directly from the books to which he referred as the source material; rather, he cited writings from other thematic anthologies or encyclopaedias where original sources are also provided. In other words, Li Fang may have taken passages from various existing anthologies and encyclopaedias that had been compiled and edited by other authors, rather than from the original text referred to at the end of each entry. This is why the same texts are often referred to inconsistently in different places in *Zhenglüe* (see p.170 n. 101): because the same text is referred to differently in different anthologies (or encyclopaedias) from which Li Fang cited the accounts. As such, accounts referred to in *Zhenglüe* as coming from the same ‘original’ text might have actually been drawn from different source anthologies or encyclopaedias. Moreover, although the excerpts gathered in *Zhenglüe* more or less retain the textual features of the ‘actual’ source materials from which Li Fang quoted the passages (such as typos, ellipses, or specific wordings), it is still difficult to establish (even by careful

textual comparison) Li Fang's textual borrowing from other publishing projects, especially the *Meishu congshu*.

Twenty-one book titles published in the first three series of the *Meishu congshu* are cited in *Zhenglüe*, nineteen of which were released before *Zhenglüe*. Insofar as variations in wording and ellipsis may still have occurred even if Li Fang had cited passages from the *Meishu congshu* edition, the textual relationship between them is extremely difficult to determine. This is exemplified by the case of *Jiading zhurenlu* 嘉定竹人錄 ('Records of Bamboo Makers in Jiading' [#1]) by Jin Yuanyu, an independent text in its own right published in the *Meishu congshu*. It is also one of the two texts whose section of biographies is fully cited in *Zhenglüe*.¹⁰² A comparison between the text in the *Zhenglüe* and the *Meishu congshu* edition shows only a few variations; nevertheless, since the *Meishu congshu* edition seems to be the only early edition still available today, the differences between these two versions, however minor, might still be attributed to another (now no longer extant) version which served as the actual source material for *Zhenglüe*.¹⁰³ Therefore, such a comparison is still insufficient to establish the direct relationship between the two versions.

Even under circumstances where more than one early version of the text is available for comparison, and where texts in *Zhenglüe* do exhibit more resemblance to the *Meishu congshu* version than to others, the situation is still complicated by the possibility that both *Zhenglüe* and the *Meishu congshu* are based on the same original text—and hence a direct borrowing of *Zhenglüe* from the *Meishu congshu* cannot be adequately established. For instance, the entry 'Famous makers of *qin* zithers', cited

¹⁰² Jin's *Jiading zhurenlu* appears in *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 2, pp. 3b-17b. The other book whose biography part is fully cited in *Zhenglüe* is *Yangxian mingtaolu* 陽羨名陶錄 ('Famous potters in Yangxian' [#2]) by Wu Qian 吳騫, appearing in *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 3, pp. 4-13a, from the entry 'Yangxian taoren 陽羨陶人' to 'Zheng Ninghou 鄭甯侯', without specifying that the whole section was indeed taken from Wu's book.

¹⁰³ *Zhongguo congshu zonglu*, ii, p. 799.

in *Zhenglüe* as having been drawn from the text *Yunyan guoyanlu* 雲煙過眼錄 ('Records of the works passing by the eye as clouds and mists disperse' [#115]), demonstrates more deviation from the edition collected in the *Four Treasuries* than from that in the *Meishu congshu*.¹⁰⁴ However, it is still possible that another early edition had existed, one serving as the source material for both *Zhenglüe* and the *Meishu congshu*. Consequently, Li Fang's practice of 'citation from citations' and his approach of 'copy-and-paste' inevitably hinders our attempt to map out either the exact source materials involved in the making of *Zhenglüe* or the textual relationship between *Zhenglüe* and other major contemporary publishing projects which were also endeavouring to reorganise old, existent texts within the new framework 'meishu'.

Nevertheless, it is certain that the excerpts from the article '*Si qiaogong zhuan* 四巧工傳' ('Biographies of Four Ingenious Artisans' [#25]) by Huang Zhi 黃質 (better known as Huang Binhong, a renowned painter in twentieth-century China) must have been cited directly from the edition originally published in the *Guocui xuebao* in 1909, where the essay was listed under Huang's pseudonym, 'Yuxiang 予向'.¹⁰⁵ This argument is supported by the fact that this same essay was reprinted and credited to an anonymous author in the art supplement of *Shibao*, *Meishu zhoukan* 美術週刊 ('Weekly Meishu'), in 1919, five years after *Zhenglüe* had come out.¹⁰⁶ Given that the

¹⁰⁴ See '*Zhuoqin mingjia* 琢琴名家', *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 3, p. 18a, and the same passage in *Yunyan guoyan lu*, MC, 2.2, *juan* 2, p. 23, and in the *Siku* edition, vol. 871, *juan* 4, pp. 3b-4.

¹⁰⁵ Yuxiang (Huang Binhong), '*Si qiaogong zhuan*', in 'History' section, GX, 5.7 (1909), pp.1-2. Excerpts from this essay are found at entries of 'Xie Qian 蟹鉗', 'Wang Fuqing 汪復慶', 'Zhang Lifu 張立夫', and 'Cheng Yifan 程以藩', *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 1, pp. 9, 16b; and *juan* 5, pp. 7, 13a.

¹⁰⁶ This essay was reprinted on 26 August and 2 September 1919. See Wang Zhongxiu, '*Fuluyi: Huang Binhong shiwen zhuzuo xinian* 黃賓虹詩文著作系年' (Appendix I Chronology of Huang Binhong's writings); and '*Fulu'er: Huang Binhong zhuzuo yinan wenti kaobian* 附錄二：黃賓虹著作疑難問題考辨' (Appendix II: Studies into questions about Huang Binhong's writings) in Wang Zhongxiu (ed.), *Huang Binhong wenji* 黃賓虹文集 'Collected writings of Huang Binhong' (6 vols., Shanghai, 1999), vi, pp. 3-49 (28) and pp. 50-86 (62-65), respectively. In Wang's article, it is pointed out that the same essay was also reprinted in 1914, in the column '*Binghong zalu* 冰飢雜錄' (Assorted jottings by Binghong) in *Shenzhou ribao* 神州日報 'Divine Land Daily', where the author was credited as 'Hong

essay was originally credited to Yuxiang rather than Huang Zhi, the fact that Li Fang clearly knew that the author was Huang suggests a personal connection between the two people, although the exact details of the situation are far from clear. Nevertheless, the direct textual relation between *Zhenglüe* and the *Guocui xuebao* indicates that Li Fang was by no means unaware of the cultural agenda or the publishing endeavours of the Society for Preserving National Learning. No wonder the first item in the ‘General Remarks’ in *Zhenglüe* took the promotion of *meishu* as the primary means of preserving national essence:

This book is aimed to promote *meishu* [arts], preserve the national essence, honour talents of the past, and encourage people of the present. All those, within the reach of my reading, among recorded acclaimed craftsmen of ingenious skills and objects for leisure pursuits, which are deemed special and extraordinary, worthy of the name of *meishu*, are hereby recorded.¹⁰⁷

This is indeed the kind of rhetoric expressed most ardently by the Society for Preserving National Learning (see Chapter 1).

Furthermore, the fact that *Zhenglüe* did not rely entirely on the texts published in the *Meishu congshu* also suggests that the latter was not only a project dedicated to re-arranging existent texts within the framework of *meishu*, but also an effort to make more accessible the knowledge previously limited to the privileged social stratum of literati to which Li Fang also belonged.

Apart from an awareness of contemporary publishing endeavours aimed at preserving the national essence, Li Fang’s book also incorporates a great number of Qing and more recent texts. Excerpts taken from the genre of *biji* had been written

餽’ (p. 62). However, the ‘*Binghong zalu*’, collected by Wang in *Huang Binhong wenji*, iii, pp. 35-213, does not contain the essay in question. Although there indeed is a short piece of writing similarly titled ‘*Xinan qiaogong* 新安巧工’ (Ingenious artisans in Xinan) in ‘*Binghong zalu*’ (pp. 86-87), this text is not the same as the essay cited by Li Fang. If there had been no reprints of the essay in question before 1919, it can be certain that Li Fang cited the excerpts from the *Guocui xuebao* edition. The complete text of the essay ‘*Si quigong zhuan*’ can be found in *Huang Binhong wenji*, iv, pp. 488-489.

¹⁰⁷ ‘*Liyan*’, *Zhenglüe*, p.1a. [是編以提倡美術，保存國粹，表揚前哲，策勵今人爲要指。舉凡典冊所記工巧名流及諸玩好器物，其有殊常異眾，不媿美術之稱者，瀏覽所及，概爲登錄].

predominantly by Qing authors; only 28 out of 112 book titles in this group are pre-Qing texts. Among them, *Luochuang xiaodu* 蘿窗小牘 (‘Notes Taken at the Window Where Creepers Grow’ [# 3]) is of particular importance, for it provides sources for 36 entries in *Zhenglüe* and hence is the most prominent contributor of all, except for the two texts fully cited in *Zhenglüe* (#1 and 2). Moreover, *Luochuang xiaodu* was by all accounts a contemporary text available to Li Fang, since it includes a renowned contemporary writer, Wu Woyao 吳沃堯 (1866-1910), who died only 4 years before *Zhenglüe* was released.¹⁰⁸ However, *Luochuang xiaodu* seems to have completely faded into oblivion, and the same can be said of many a book listed as the source material for *Zhenglüe*.¹⁰⁹

However, it is the ‘personal sources’ cited in *Zhenglüe* (#26, 184-188) that best exemplify the ‘hearsay’ nature of *Zhenglüe*. The approach of ‘copy-and-paste’—which suggests that the text collected in *Zhenglüe* had already gone through numerous instances of transmission before it came to be found there—together with the almost unavoidable typos made by anonymous typesetters (see p. 159 n. 57), all undermine the reliability of *Zhenglüe* as a history book. However, not all of Li’s contemporaries seem to have been bothered by its unreliability. In fact, this approach of ‘copy-and-paste’ was praised by Wu Chongxi, because ‘every word is drawn from established books and not a single sentence shows off [the author’s] own witty mouth’. As such, Wu was convinced that *Zhenglüe* ‘deserves its name of attested accounts (*zheng* 徵)’.¹¹⁰

To Wu Chongxi, and many of Li Fang’s contemporaries, ‘citing’, rather than ‘writing’, seems to have been the more acceptable principle for historical objectivity.

¹⁰⁸ *Zhenglüe*, juan 4, p. 17b.

¹⁰⁹ Such as *Gengyantian zhai biji* 耕研田齋筆記 [# 64] and *Bixi caotang shigao* 碧溪草堂詩稿 [#118], to name just a couple.

¹¹⁰ Wu Chongxi, ‘Xu’, p. 1a. [言必徵成書，無一語自逞牙慧...名以實徵，可無愧矣].

Therefore, what we might deride today as a lack of critical thinking may have been the legitimately prevailing episteme at that time in China. As such, a book like *Zhenglüe* would not have seemed at all eccentric or absurd from a contemporary point of view; rather, such a textual form was believed to have been able to alter the contemporary prejudice against Chinese art. According to Wu Chongxi, written records were powerful evidence that were able to make people believe:

Modern new inventions—such as the cloisonné of the Capital [Beijing], the innovative ceramic industry in Liling, the lacquers by Shen Shaoan in Fuzhou, the cast seals by Xu Jitang in Weixian,¹¹¹ the inlaid silver works by Tian Liangfan, and the portrait of the Italian queen and the black-and-white hair embroidery of Guanyin bodhisattva by embroiderers—all caused a sensation at the time. However, since they have never been recorded, there are still people who do not believe in them, for they are not supported with written records’.¹¹²

If the reason why there were ‘disbelievers’ (who had no trust in the craftsmanship of Chinese ‘artists’) was thought to be the lack of written records of these artists, it seems perfectly reasonable that Li Fang, in the hope of altering his contemporaries’ ‘wrong’ perception, took the ‘copy-and-paste’ approach in order to realise his ambition of writing a history of Chinese *meishu*.

Shifts in context

As Li Fang laid out the new field that he perceived as *meishu*, a conceptual configuration was also introduced, in which a few acclaimed cultural figures were to be viewed from a completely different perspective. As in the case of Wu Woyao, best remembered for his satirical novel *Bizarre Happenings Eyewitnessed over Two Decades*, readers of the twenty-first century would have been amazed to discover that Wu had been placed in the category of ‘Wheels and axles’ for his ability to make a

¹¹¹ Xu also appears in *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 1, p. 11b.

¹¹² Wu Chongxi, ‘Xu’, p. 1 [今之新發明者，京師琺瑯、醴陵之改良瓷業、福州沈少菴之髹漆、濰縣胥芑堂之鑄印、田兩帆之嵌銀、以及繡工所出之義大利后象、黑白髮繡觀音象、皆聞傳一時，第未經有人箸錄，遂無徵不信者，又比比然也。].

boat that could sail on its own, while his literary achievement was completely unmentioned in *Zhenglüe*.¹¹³

Although the practice of ‘citation from citations’ often lent to a single entry more information than that which Li Fang had wished to focus on, the categories by which the cited texts were sorted in *Zhenglüe* manage to remedy this drawback by directing the reader’s attention to a single, specific aspect. Such shifts in context occurred most prominently in people who would normally be grouped within the category of ‘Calligraphy and painting’, the most persistent and unchallenged sphere in the modern construction of the discourse on *meishu*. For example, Dai Jin 戴進 (1388-1462), a famous painter of the Ming dynasty and revered as the first master of the Zhe painting school, was celebrated in *Zhenglüe* as an ingenious silversmith, placed in the category of ‘Gold’. Albeit the cited text in this case is about Dai’s abandonment of his career as silversmith to become a painter, the position of this entry still highlights the fact that Dai had been an adept silver maker, an aspect through which Dai had hardly been focused upon before.¹¹⁴ The same is true of Gao Fenghan 高鳳翰 (1683-1748), who is now best known as one of the ‘Eight Eccentrics in Yangzhou’ for his idiosyncratic style of painting and calligraphy (done with his left hand). However, his talent in engraving inscriptions on ink stones is highlighted in *Zhenglüe* and placed within the category of ‘Stone’, although the cited text also praises his painting and calligraphy.¹¹⁵ The acclaimed poet and literati painter of the late Ming dynasty, Li Liufang 李流芳 (1575-1629), is positioned within the category of ‘Bamboo’ for his gift in bamboo carving, which he took to be one of his leisure pursuits.¹¹⁶ Even Shitao 石濤

¹¹³ *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 4, p. 17b. For Wu Woyao’s literary achievement, see Theodore Huters, *Bringing the World Home*, pp. 123-172.

¹¹⁴ *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 1, p. 5b.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 16a.

¹¹⁶ *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 2, p. 1a.

(1642-ca. 1707), one of the most celebrated painters of the early Qing dynasty, is found within the category of ‘Stone’ and mentioned together with other famous architects of garden mountains, rather than being placed in the category of ‘Calligraphy and painting’, where he might otherwise have been positioned.¹¹⁷ The contexts in which the aforementioned people had acquired their reputation as painters and were commemorated as such are no longer of equal importance; instead, it is proposed in *Zhenglüe* that these figures be seen as an ingenious silversmith, an ink-stone engraver, a bamboo carver, or an architect of fake mountains, even if the excerpts themselves still insist on treating them as painters.

The category of ‘Calligraphy and painting’ in *Zhenglüe* is also not what would normally have been expected. The painters and calligraphers listed here are no longer those whose works were believed to possess a certain aesthetic quality; rather, they are people who could do tricks through that same medium—the brush pen—or through the same actions of painting and writing. As such, Song Lian 宋濂 (1310-1381), an established official and scholar of the early Ming, and Weng Fanggang 翁方綱 (1733-1818), an influential scholar and epigrapher in the late Qing period, are featured in *Zhenglüe* as incredible calligraphers who were able to write minuscule characters on seeds of millet or sesame.¹¹⁸

Such a shift in context is a shift in emphasis that would necessarily occur in the introduction of a new discursive field. Although Li Fang still agreed that ‘calligraphy, painting, and seal carving are generally regarded today as *meishu*’, the fact that he recorded only ‘the special and extraordinary’ also highlights that it was the unusual aspects of calligraphy and painting, the aspects which had been neglected for so long,

¹¹⁷ *Zhenglüe*, juan 1, p. 22b. For Shitao’s life and paintings, see Jonathan Hay, *Shitao: Painting and Modernity in Early Qing China* (Cambridge, 2001)

¹¹⁸ *Zhenglüe*, juan 4, p. 1.

that Li genuinely believed were worthy of the name ‘*meishu*’.¹¹⁹

Based on this observation, one could have concluded that the *meishu* perceived by Li Fang actually meant ‘crafts’, or ‘handicraft’, and the ‘*yishujia*’ in *Zhenglüe* should be understood as ‘artisans’, ‘craftsmen’, or—as suggested by Japanese bibliographer Harada Kinjirō 原田謹次郎 (1882-?)—‘*kōgeika* 工藝家’ (industrial artists).¹²⁰ However, given that civil engineering, astronomical instruments, artillery, machinery, and even magic were all included in *Zhenglüe* as the epitome of *meishu*, the range of ‘*meishu*’ as perceived by Li Fang was wider than the terms ‘crafts’, ‘handicrafts’, or ‘industrial arts’ could accommodate; rather, it seems to have been understood as the utmost exertion of one’s manual skills with regard to object making, manifested in the advancement of a nation’s ‘industry’. Although ‘*meishu*’ still retained the old connotation of ‘*yishu*’, of technical skills, it also excluded such skills as medicine, geometry or *go* game playing, and seems to have focused solely on skills of object making.

In hindsight, it is easy to dismiss Li Fang’s perception of *meishu* as a misconception; but this definitive, clear-cut conclusion would only obscure the situation which people in the early twentieth century must have faced. Such a view not only oversimplifies the struggles towards the construction of a more or less consensual discourse on *meishu*, but also takes the eventually triumphant opinion as having been historically inevitable, and fails to take into consideration the conditions in which the dominating idea rose to acquire its winning seat, silencing other equally prevalent, simultaneously existing opinions. On the other hand, a conception is only deemed a misconception after another point of view comes to be recognised as the

¹¹⁹ ‘*Liyan*’, *Zhenglüe*, p. 1a.

¹²⁰ Harada Kinjirō 原田謹次郎, *Chūgoku gagakusho kaidai* 中國畫學書解題 ‘Descriptive bibliography of books on Chinese painting’ (Kyoto, 1975), reproduced from *Shina gagakusho kaidai* 支那畫學書解題 originally published in Tokyo, 1938, pp. 455-6.

only one which is legitimate and correct. Before that time, opinions that will later find themselves obsolete may still have considerable currency in society and attract supporters who are willing to see the world in the way dictated by these very views. As such, identifying a ‘misconception’ is only a start; questions such as how such a misconception might have occurred and how it finally lost its grasp on the public consensus probably reveal more of the real circumstances of the time.

The conflation of *yishu* and *meishu*

The ‘misconception’ that caused the terms ‘*yishu*’ and ‘*meishu*’ to be conflated was probably held in the early twentieth century by people like Li Fang, who had been brought up in a traditional environment and had little firsthand knowledge of the outside world. By all accounts, the approach of ‘copy-and-paste’ and the practice of ‘citation from citations’ seem to have been the only ways that Li, and people of a similar upbringing, believed historical writing about art ought to have been conducted. Born into a cultivated family, Li Fang had easy access to various collectables and developed a lifelong interest in these ‘works of art’, which eventually made *Zhenglüe* possible. As he recounted in his preface to *Zhenglüe*:

I have been following my father’s instructions from such an early age that, apart from studies, I also take an obsessive interest in works such as metal and stone inscriptions, calligraphy, painting, objects made from materials such as rhinoceros horn, jade, ivory, ceramics, bamboo, wood, gourd, and calabash shell, as well as engraved objects and lacquers. Whenever I encounter an object, I would seek my father’s opinions on its origin and history; if still not satisfied, I would consult records and accounts to testify to what I had been told. As my memory is not especially good, I always take notes in case I would forget later on. As the years have gone by, more than ten piles [of notes] have been accumulated. I have therefore tidied them up and made them into this book.¹²¹

¹²¹ Li Fang, ‘*Zixu*’, p. 2 [不佞幼承庭訓，學業而外，凡金石書畫犀玉牙瓷竹木匏蠡文鏤髹漆之屬，靡弗篤嗜。每見一器一物，即請吾父示其所以，所弗詳者，又考諸載籍以證明之。性苦弗能強記，輒筆之於書，以備遺忘。積歲十餘篇帙，歲富[復]理而董之，乃成此編。].

He seems to have lived with his father, Li Baoxun, and followed his father wherever life took him until the older man died in 1915. Such a life trajectory was not greatly different from Li Baoxun's.

In the 'Preface' to his *Wuyi youyizhai lunhuashi* ('Poems commenting on paintings at the Studio of the Profitless and Beneficial', hereafter, '*Lunhuashi*'), Li Baoxun recalled how his personal interest in paintings had developed when he was still being tutored at home by his father, Li Henian 李鶴年 (*jinshi* 1845; d. 1890), who had at one time been the governor of Henan province;¹²² the father would hold essay competitions between his sons, with works of calligraphy and painting as coveted prizes. Li Baoxun also accompanied his father throughout his career moves back and forth between northern and southern China, an experience which gave him great opportunities to become acquainted with renowned local collectors, such as Lu Xinyuan 陸心源 (1834-1894), and to obtain access to their precious collections. His much acclaimed knowledge of connoisseurship in painting and calligraphy was thus built up, and his reputation as a connoisseur was established no later than the late 1880s.¹²³

After his father died, Li Baoxun managed to earn a living as an advisor to a couple of governors,¹²⁴ until the Boxer Rebellion (1898-1901) drove him into the south. His

¹²² *Qingshigao jiaozhu* 清史稿校註 'Annotated Draft of the Qing History' (Taipei, 1986), *juan* 457, pp. 12546-12547.

¹²³ Li Baoxun, 'Xu', in *Wuyi youyi zhai lunhuashi*, pp. 1-4 (Bodleian edition). The text was probably first put into print by the author, and soon published in *Huaibin zazu congshu* 懷園雜俎叢書 'Book collection of Huaibin's' by the author's friend, Xu Naichang 徐乃昌 in 1909 (a copy of this edition is in the Chinese Studies Library, Oxford, and Bodleian library, Oxford); a new edition was published in 1916 by Li Fang under the title *Wuyi youyizhai duhuashi* 無益有益齋讀畫詩 'Poems commenting on paintings read at the Studio of the Profitless and Beneficial', in Li Fang (ed.) *Yizhou lishi congkan* 義州李氏叢刊 'Collected works of the Li from Yizhou' (a copy of this edition can be found in Fu Ssu-nien Library, Taipei). Part of its contents were serialised in Di Baoxian's newspaper column; see below.

¹²⁴ Chen Sanli 陳三立, '*Yizhou Lijun mubiao* 義州李君墓表' (Tombstone inscription for Mr. Li from Yizhou), in Wang Zhaoyong 汪兆鏞 (ed.), *Beizhuanji sanbian* 碑傳集三編 'Collected biographical and funerary writings, 3rd series', published in *Qing beizhuan heji* 清碑傳合集 'Collection of biographical and funerary writings of the Qing' (5 vols., Shanghai, 1988), v, *juan* 41, pp. 9-10.

own collection was destroyed and dispersed during the years of turmoil; and his book manuscript also went missing—a book recording the calligraphy and paintings he had come to appreciate; the book was entitled *Haiwang cun suojian shuhua lu* 海王邨所見書畫錄 (‘Calligraphy and painting viewed in the Haiwang village’) and was already in the process of publication in 1899. Nevertheless, in the autumn of 1908 in Nanjing, Li Baoxun met with Duanfang (1861-1911), one of the most important collectors at the turn of the twentieth century, who then recruited Li to compile, along with others, a catalogue of his painting collection, *Renyin xiaoxia ji* 壬寅銷夏記 (‘Records of whiling away the summer of the year *renyin* [1902]’).¹²⁵ It was in that same autumn in Nanjing that Li Baoxun made the acquaintance of Di Baoxian, founder of both the newspaper *Shibao* and the periodical *Famous Chinese Paintings* (see Chapter 2). Given that Duanfang was by all accounts the most important patron supplying Di Baoxian with paintings for reproduction, Li Baoxun and Di Baoxian probably met at a social event organised on behalf of Duanfang.

There is little doubt that Li Fang had accompanied his father until the latter passed away in 1915; at least, in 1909 Li Fang helped make a clear copy by hand of *Lunhuashi*, a copy probably then used for printing.¹²⁶ Li Fang later recalled that only approximately one hundred copies of *Lunshashi* were printed to give out to friends.¹²⁷ Di Baoxian received a copy, and in June 1909 he serialised part of it in his own newspaper column in *Shibao*, called ‘*Pingdengge biji*’. The part of the text concerns the paintings which had been reproduced in the periodical *Famous Chinese*

¹²⁵ For Duanfang’s life and art collection, see Thomas Lawton, *A Time of Transition*, pp. 5-63.

¹²⁶ Li Baoxun, ‘*Xu*’, p. 3a. Li Fang is referred to by his father as ‘Chongguo 充國’, his original name; however, in the edition re-carved by Li Fang (e.g., the Fu Ssu-nien edition), Li Fang is referred to as ‘Fang 放’.

¹²⁷ See Li Fang’s epilogue to *Duhuashi* (1916 edition collected in the Fu Ssu-nien library), *juan xia*, p. 14.

Paintings.¹²⁸

Like the majority of the traditional literati—to whom education meant Confucian classics and poetry the ticket to social networks—Li Fang had never been abroad, and all his knowledge about the present came from reading books and newspapers written in Chinese. The connection between *Zhenglüe* and the journal *Guocui xuebao* suggests that Li Fang must have been aware of both the art reproductions published either in the *Shenzhou guoguangji* or *Famous Chinese Paintings* and, more importantly, the rhetoric concerning the preservation of national essence and of ‘*meishu*’. Although the compilation of *Zhenglüe* was to a great extent in agreement with his own personal interests, Li Fang—like many other traditional literati in that time of such political and cultural turmoil (which began in the second half of the nineteenth century)—could not resist aligning his personal hobby with the larger nationalist agenda. Hence he concluded his preface to *Zhenglüe* as below:

If *gong* [‘industry’, ‘craft’, or ‘labour’] were not valued, how would trade develop? If trade were not developed, how would the nation acquire wealth and the people become stronger? In this sense, this unworthy book of several *juan*, although it has already been criticised by the learned, might not be dismissed by the ambitious. As to those scholar-officials who admire new and curious things, hopefully the book might make them realise that, even though other countries have intricate and quality objects, it is improper to deprecate ourselves, or to say that others’ works are always better than ours. This is the purpose of my writing!¹²⁹

The statements that China had had a great tradition of arts which were admired by foreigners, and that China would be strong again as long as she revived her own history, were *topoi* already commonly seen in the literature of the later Qing period. Such sentiments were still visible and of great consequence well into the Republican era, as evidenced by Li Fang’s and other authors’ prefaces.

¹²⁸ Di Baoxian, ‘*Pingdengge biji*’, *Shibao*, 11 and 16 June (1909), p. 4. This part is also seen in Di’s book *Pingdengge biji* (4 vols., Shanghai, 1922), i, pp. 13b-21a.

¹²⁹ Li Fang, ‘*Zixu*’, p. 2b. [惟是工之不講，則商何由興？商既不興，則國何由富？民何由強？然則此區區數卷書，雖已爲學者所詬病，或尚不爲志士所鄙夷也乎。兼以諗夫彼矜新炫奇之士大夫，俾知他國工雖巧，器雖良，然亦不宜妄自菲薄，遽謂其盡能勝吾也。是則不佞著述之微旨也夫！].

Such an understanding, which collapsed arts, crafts, and industry together, was probably an impression one would have had as a result of the organisation of the first nationwide industrial exposition ever held in China: the Nanyang Industrial Exposition (*Nanyang quanyehui* 南洋勸業會, hereafter, ‘the Exposition’), held in Nanjing in 1910.¹³⁰ The Exposition was intended to encourage industrial development in China, and the result was a massive display of the goods and products available all over the country, including both natural products and man-made artefacts. Out of more than a million exhibits, 5269 were selected to be awarded with prizes divided into six classes, and the six-month event was said to have attracted a total of 200,000 visitors.¹³¹

The idea of having a national industrial exposition was inspired and facilitated, if not initiated outright, in 1908 by Duanfang, then the Governor-general for Jiangsu and Jiangxi and Grand Minister for the Southern Seas. From 1905 to 1906, he had been abroad on an investigating mission to Europe and the United States, where he visited many Western museums and other modern public institutions and was very impressed with the role expositions played in the development of these nations’ industries.¹³² However, his proposal to hold a nation-wide exposition was to be realised only by his successor, Zhang Renjun 張人駿, as Duanfang was soon promoted to Governor-general for Zhili and Grand Minister for the Northern Seas, in the fourth lunar month of 1909.

¹³⁰ The exposition lasted for nearly six months, from 5 June to 29 November 1910. See Lin Xidan 林錫旦, ‘Guanyu Nanyang quanyehui zhi yanjiu 關於南洋勸業會之研究’ (About the Nanyang Industrial Exposition), *Zhejiang gongyi meishu* 浙江工藝美術 [Journal of] Zhejiang Industrial art, 1997.4, pp. 25-29. Lin’s paper also introduces important primary materials for research into this event.

¹³¹ This figure is given in secondary literature without referring to the primary source; for example, Wang Chuanrui 王傳瑞, ‘Qingmo Nanyang quanyehui de chansheng yu yingxiang 清末南洋勸業會的產生與影響’ (The causes and influences of the Nanyang Industrial Exposition in the Late Qing), *Anqing shifan xueyuan xuebao (shehui kexueban)* 安慶師範學院學報 (社會科學版) ‘Journal of Anqing Teachers’ College (social science edition)’, 18.1 (Feb. 1999), pp. 46-49, 54 (49).

¹³² Thomas Lawton, *A Time of Transition*, pp. 5-11.

It is not clear whether the Li family had followed Duanfang's move to Beijing or was still in the South when the exposition took place. However, wherever they were, this event was unlikely to have escaped Li Fang's attention, since the Exposition had attracted nationwide attention and enjoyed a great deal of media coverage.¹³³ It is very likely that Li Fang's perception of the idea of *meishu* seems to have been shaped by the scope and inclusiveness of the Exposition, given that many of the kinds of exhibits seen in the Exposition were also found in *Zhenglüe*—such as finely-carved wooden combs, ivory balls with multi-concentric spheres, carvings of peach kernels, and paintings made with coloured cottons.¹³⁴ It also seems likely that the rhetoric of encouraging industry through the establishment of expositions and museums mentioned in Li Fang's 'Preface' to *Zhenglüe* was an exact representation of the ideology that had made this Exposition possible.

Of the thirty-two exhibition halls of the Exposition, nine were dedicated to themes of 'Education (*jiaoyu* 教育)', 'Medicine (*yiya* 醫藥)', 'Aquatic animals (*shuizu* 水族)', 'Agriculture (*nongye* 農業)', as well as 'Industrial arts (*gongyi* 工藝)', 'Art (*meishu* 美術)', 'Weaponry (*wubei* 武備)', 'Machinery (*jixie* 機械)', and 'Communication and transportation (*tongyun* 通運)'.¹³⁵ Objects belonging to any of these nine categories could also be seen in other exhibition halls, presented by

¹³³ For example, media based in Shanghai and also enjoying a national readership, such as the monthly magazine *East Miscellany* (*Dongfang zazhi* 東方雜誌) and the newspapers *Shenbao* and *Shibao*, all reported this event with great enthusiasm. The fact that many newspapers, such as *Beijing shibao* 北京時報 (Beijing Times), and publishers, including the Society for Preserving National Learning, set up book stalls at the venue to promote their own publications also contributed to the visibility of the Exposition. See, Lin Xidan, 'Guanyu Nanyang quanyehui zhi yanjiu', p. 28; He Jiawei 何家偉, 'Shenbao yu Nanyang quanyehui 申報與南洋勸業會' (*Shenbao* and Nanyang Industrial Exposition), *Shixue yuekan* 史學月刊 'Historiography Monthly', 2006.5, pp. 125-128 (126); and SG, 13 (1910), advertisement unpaginated.

¹³⁴ Lin Xidan, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

¹³⁵ Hong Zhenqiang 洪振強, 'Nanyang quanyehui yu wanqing shehui fazhan 南洋勸業會與晚清社會發展' (Nanyang Industrial Exposition and the development of late Qing society), *Jiangsu shehui kexue* 江蘇社會科學 'Social Sciences in Jiangsu', 2007.4, pp. 204-10 (206).

regional governments or institutions. Among these categories, the last five thematic halls were clearly devoted to man-made objects.

It was these thematic halls that found resonance in Li Fang's *Zhenglüe*, as the coexistence of crafts, arts, and machinery in *Zhenglüe* bore a striking resemblance to the coexisting categories of man-made objects featured in the Exposition. Although these individual categories were not at all strange in the context of an exposition, it must have been a compelling experience when one moved from the thematic halls into a *regional* exhibition hall (focusing on the goods and produce of a specific area) and then saw things belonging to different categories displayed side-by-side. Even though each of the exhibits had been registered to a specific category, the juxtaposition of items from different categories in the regional halls must have created a connection between them which suggested a sense of sameness that might have made the boundaries of these categories seem somewhat less imperative.

On the other hand, the thematic exhibition halls also inspired disputes over the boundaries between the defined categories, particularly those concerning the Art Hall (*meishuguan*).¹³⁶ One of *Shibao*'s reports maintained that some paintings hanging in the Art Hall should not have been displayed there, for 'as to *meishu*, those which are not works of the finest quality do not deserve this name'.¹³⁷ The same newspaper published an image of an embroidered portrait exhibited in the Capital Hall, one of Elena of Montenegro (1873-1952), then Queen of Italy (1900-1946) (which is also the same work referred to in Wu Chongxi's 'Preface' to *Zhenglüe*). This newspaper

¹³⁶ The confusing state of the categorisation in the Exposition is explored in Xie Yijing 謝宜靜, 'Gong yu mei: Nanyang quanyehui meishu gainian de fanyi wenti 工與美:南洋勸業會美術概念的翻譯問題' (Gong [craft] and mei [beauty]: problems of translation concerning the concept of *meishu* in the Nanyang Industrial Exposition), *Wenhua yanjiu yuebao* 文化研究月報 'Cultural studies monthly' (online journal), 45 (April 2005), http://hermes.hrc.ntu.edu.tw/csa/journal/45/journal_park349.htm, access date 23 June 2010.

¹³⁷ 'Nanjing jinxin 南京近信' (Recent news of Nanjing), *Shibao*, 7 June 1910, p. 3. [至美術非精品不能當此二字]

illustration was accompanied by a description praising the maker Shen Shou 沈壽 (1871-1921) for her mastery of embroidery skills and regretting that the portrait, and other embroidered items, had not been displayed in the Art Hall, which seemed to be a more appropriate place to house such works (Fig. 4-13).¹³⁸ Shen Shou was also admired by another newspaper *Shenbao* as a great ‘*meishujia*’ (artist).¹³⁹ Judging from these opinions about what should, or should not, be exhibited in the Art Hall, it seemed that the term *meishu* was applied at that time generously to man-made objects of the highest quality, to objects executed with extreme dexterity, rather than to a limited number of specific categories deemed of great aesthetic value. In this sense, the coexisting terms *yishu* and *meishu* in *Zhenglüe* were not really interchangeable, but implied a value judgement that placed *meishu* at a position higher than *yishu*. In this conception, *yishu* still referred to all kinds of ‘skills’ as traditionally understood (see Chapter 3), while *meishu* was considered the superlative achievement of *yishu*, as ‘fine skills’. Furthermore, it seems that Li Fang’s extraordinary reading of *meishu* was made possible by a collapsing of the meanings of the characters ‘*gong*’ (‘labour’, ‘craft’, ‘industry’), ‘*yi*’ (‘skill’, ‘technique’, ‘art’), ‘*shu* 術’ (‘method’, ‘art’), and ‘*mei* 美’ (‘beautiful’, ‘fine’, ‘aesthetic’)—since these characters also form the three compounds ‘*gongyi*’, ‘*yishu*’, and ‘*meishu*’, which are so frequently associated with one another it is as if they were semantically interchangeable.

There were of course other ways of understanding the term ‘*meishu*’, such as the one exemplified in the *Meishu congshu*, which viewed *meishu* as the leisure pursuits of the literati (see Chapter 3). Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that Li Fang’s reading was perfectly valid and reasonable at the time and was not necessarily contradictory to other ways of reading. The likely conditions under which Li Fang

¹³⁸ *Shibao*, 3 October 1910.

¹³⁹ *Shenbao*, 31 July 1910, cited in He Jiawei, ‘*Shenbao yu Nanyang quanyehui*’, p. 127.

acquired such an understanding of *meishu*—such as hearing about the Exposition and making connections between these individual Chinese characters—suggest that this sort of a view of *meishu* was probably shared by a group of people who, like Li Fang, had been raised and educated in a traditional way and had little knowledge of foreign languages, with which they might have been able to investigate the origins of the neologism. Their understanding and perception of new terms could easily have been directed by the semantic connections between the new compounds made up of the Chinese characters whose individual meanings were familiar to them. Most important, an understanding acquired in this way was seen at that time as being legitimate enough, and was not perceived as a misconception.

Given the rhetoric in Li's 'Preface' to *Zhenglüe*, it can be certain that '*meishu*' was regarded by Li as the highest achievement of '*yishu*'. However, much as Li Fang wanted to praise the best Chinese *yishu* as '*meishu*', why did he not use the term '*meishujia*' or '*meishu*' in the official title of *Zhenglüe*, to make explicit his intention to valorise the tradition of Chinese '*meishu*'? Equally puzzling is the fact that the term '*yishujia*' (seen in the official title) was used only in the situation (such as in the prefaces) where the official book title was to be given, while the term '*meishujia*' was preferred in the main body of the book (Fig. 4-3) so that even in the 'General Remarks' it was '*meishu*', rather than '*yishu*', that readers were urged to promote (Fig. 4-6). Li's insistence on proposing an alternative title for *Zhenglüe* probably betrays his true intention; however, if this were really the case, it would probably also be true that he would not have hesitated to use the term '*meishu*' in the official title of the book. Then, why did he lack such confidence in his own perception of the term; why did he have to concede and not to use the term '*meishu*' in the official title of *Zhenglüe*? Before looking into these questions, it is necessary to turn to the 'missing

parts’ of *Zhenglüe*.

The ‘missing parts’

Given that none of the extant editions contains the ‘supplementary compilation’ of *Zhenglüe* and ‘*Sketches of Artworks*’, nor is there any comment lamenting their loss, it is very likely that these two sections were never published; and it is the eventual abandonment of this promised publishing project that requires our attention. Due to the lack of information, one can only speculate about the state of Li Fang’s ‘Attested’ series, but a probable situation can still be pieced together by investigating the written records and the physical features seen in extant editions.

A sketchy publishing history of *Zhenglüe* is preserved in some precious material found in a copy of Li Fang’s *Baqi hualu* 八旗畫錄 (‘Records of Painters of the Eight Banners’, 1919), where a dedication addressing a certain Mr. Dingsheng 定生 (or Dingweng 定翁) was handwritten by Li Fang’s son, Li Dachong 李大狔:

... Among the oeuvres of late Tongzheng Gong [Li Fang], the most popular should be *Yishu zhenglüe*. Published in three editions, all five-thousand copies have all sold out. Those purchased by Japanese people to sell in Japan numbered about two-thousand copies. Even though the book was priced at six Japanese *yen* each, it was still in great demand. The book was originally printed in lead type. Last spring, Chong [Li Dachong] especially ordered a woodblock edition to be made, which is now still a work in process. Once it is finished, a couple of copies will be presented to you.¹⁴⁰

This publishing information corresponds more or less with the extant editions, which can be divided into two groups by their printing methods: Group A, those printed

¹⁴⁰ ‘Tongzheng Gong’ is probably Li Fang’s posthumous honorific title. This copy of *Baqi hualu* is now in the library of the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. I am most obliged to the librarian, Yue Shu, who kindly sent me an image of this piece. Thanks also to Dr. Jan Stuart and Prof. Craig Clunas, who helped me in getting in touch with the library. This important material came to my attention through Nixi Cura, ‘Luo Zhenyu, Li Fang, and Qing Loyalist Values’, a paper presented at the workshop organised by Christie’s Education London and SOAS, ‘Lost Generation: Luo Zhenyu, Qing Loyalists and the Formation of Modern Chinese Culture’, 28-29 August 2008. [先通政公遺著中以藝術徵略為最風行，三版五千部，已一冊不存，僅日人購之至東瀛轉售者將兩千部，每部日金六元，而求索者尚不絕也。初為鉛印，狔於客春特刻木板，尚未竣事，俟印成當以數部奉贈也。]

using movable lead type; and Group B, those printed using xylography. However, it should also be noted that the ‘extant editions’ and ‘putative editions’ described by Li Dachong do not match perfectly (Appendix 4-1).

As shown in Group A, only two distinguishable extant editions represent the three ‘putative editions’: the 1914 edition and the 1915 edition. Each of the two extant editions is bound in two volumes and contains five *juan*, with a front imprint page claiming that the book was published in the tenth lunar month of 1914 (Fig. 4-5). The only difference between them is that a back imprint page (inserted after the text proper) is found in the 1915 edition, specifying that the book was published by Mochuang Studio (*Mochuang jingshe* 墨幢精舍) in the first lunar month of 1915 (Fig. 4-14). Unless a distinct third edition in Group A has eluded me, it can be certain that two of the three putative editions are identical.¹⁴¹ The 1915 edition is less likely to be the putative third edition, as it was unlikely that a book would run through three printings within four months (and only three printings in total, for a book said to be in such great demand). Hence, this 1915 edition was more likely to have been the second edition, and it can be certain that at least in 1915 Li Fang still harboured the hope of publishing the ‘supplementary compilation’ of *Zhenglüe* and *Sketches of Artworks*, because these two text titles were advertised on the reverse side of the back imprint page (Fig. 4-8). Therefore, the fact that the advertisement was discontinued in the following edition suggests that the plan to complete the ‘Attested’ series was abandoned sometime after 1915.

The two extant editions in Group B give us little hope of recovering the ‘missing parts’ either, as the *juan* 6 found in these editions has nothing to do with Li Fang, or even Li Dachong, and is by no means the one-*juan* ‘supplementary compilation’ of

¹⁴¹ As the 1915 edition is even more rarely seen than the 1914 edition, it is likely that the third putative edition would have looked like the earliest edition.

Zhenglüe. Although the exact publisher is not indicated in either of the two extant editions in Group B, both editions were very likely to have been published by Wenyou tang 文友堂 (‘Hall for Literary Friends’)—one of the biggest bookshops in Liulichang 琉璃廠, a district in Beijing famous for its old book and antique market—since the compiler of *juan* 6 (as listed in these editions), Wei Wenhou 魏文厚 (aka Wei Jingyu 魏經腴), was the owner of this bookshop (Fig. 4-15).¹⁴² The two Wenyou tang editions are printed using xylography, a feature corresponding with Li Dachong’s description. Both editions contain six *juan* without the photographic portrait of Li Fang and replace the original title page (inscribed by Wu Chongxi, Fig. 4-4) with the one inscribed by Feng Rujie 馮汝玠 (active 1910s-1930s) (Fig. 4-16); this replacement indicates that the book contains a total of six *juan*, rather than five, as seen in the original title page inscribed by Wu Chongxi. However, ‘Wenyou tang A’ is bound into three volumes, and its *juan* 6 has only three entries (which suggests an earlier publishing date); at the same time, ‘Wenyou tang B’ is bound into four volumes with its *juan* 6 containing 11 entries.¹⁴³ The actual publishing date is also not provided in either of these two editions. Nevertheless, the 4-volume ‘Wenyou tang B’ edition is advertised in the bookshop’s catalogue printed in 1936, which suggests a publishing date no later than that year.¹⁴⁴

The newly added *juan* 6 is so irrelevant to the previous five *juan* that it must have

¹⁴² For a concise introduction to Wenyou tang and how it served as a hub for book collecting, see Li Xiaowen 李小文 and Sun Jun 孫俊, ‘Wenyou tang suocang Fu Zengxiang shouzha 文友堂所藏傅增湘手札’ (Letters by Fu Zengxiang collected in Wenyou tang), *Wenxian* 文獻 ‘Archives’, 4 (Oct. 2007), pp. 153-160 (esp. 153 and n. 4).

¹⁴³ It is learned by visual examination that the listing of the additional eight entries in the ‘Wenyou tang B’ in the ‘Complete Contents’ was carved on the same woodblock as ‘Wenyou tang A’, which supports an earlier dating of the latter.

¹⁴⁴ *Wenyou tang shumu* 文友堂書目 ‘Catalogue of books published by Wenyou tang’, 1.1 (Beijing, 1936), in Wei Li 韋力(ed.), *Zhongguo jindai guji chubanshi ziliao congkan bubian* 中國近代古籍出版發行史料叢刊補編 ‘Supplement to the collection of archives of book publishing history of modern China’ (24 vols., Beijing, 2006), iv, pp. 1-218 (99).

been included in an attempt to make the book appear consistent with the description in the ‘General Remarks’, rather than based on any remaining manuscripts written by the original author Li Fang and provided by his son, Li Dachong.¹⁴⁵ Nor was it compiled according to the general principles Li Fang had set up for the book. Taking ‘Wenyoutang B’ as an example (Fig. 4-18), the irrelevance of *juan* 6 can be readily appreciated by considering its contents, which include a list of the taboo characters in the Song dynasty (960-1205); neologisms coined during the reign of Empress Wu Zetian 武則天 (r. 690-705); a biography of the influential thinker of the late Ming, Li Zhi 李贄 (1527-1602); a description of the imperial encyclopaedia of the Ming dynasty, *Yongle dadian* 永樂大典; etc. Only some of these entries provide documentation of the original sources of the information, and all of the referenced excerpts seem to have come from a single text, *Shanzhi chuji* 山志初集 (‘The initial volume of *Records in Mountains*’) by Wang Hong 王弘 (1622-1702). Given that the kind of information included and the reference style in *juan* 6 are both significantly different from those in the previous *juan*, it is almost certain that *Juan* 6 was compiled completely by Wei Wenhou.

It seems reasonable to assume that ‘Wenyoutang A’ was the woodblock edition commissioned by Li Dachong; however, it is still possible that there had been a ‘Li Dachong edition’ upon which the present two Wenyoutang editions were modelled. However, what is more unusual is that neither Li Dachong nor Wei Wenhou took the opportunity to lament the loss of the ‘missing parts’, or even the abandonment of their release. In fact, Wei’s effort to add *juan* 6 to *Zhenglüe* and to remove the original title

¹⁴⁵ It is a common practice in China to make a seemingly defective book appear to agree with the existing contents of the book. See James S. Edgren, ‘The Authentication and Dating of Chinese Rare Books’, in Ming Wilson and Stacey Pierson (eds.), *The Art of the Book in China* (London, 2006), pp.193-205(196-202).

page (inscribed by Wu Chongxi)—which clearly would have betrayed the incompleteness and incoherence of the book (Fig. 4-4)—only makes even more probable the prospect that the ‘missing parts’ were never put into print and were a project which remained uncompleted.

Nevertheless, additional text appears in the two Wenyou tang editions which is absent in the earlier 1914 and 1915 editions, and which might be the text that had been put together by Li Fang for *Sketches of Artworks*, as its approach to text selection is very similar to Li Fang’s. This addition was silently attached to *juan* 5 in both of the Wenyou tang editions (figs. 4-17, -18), and was placed in the main text immediately after the ‘Addition of omissions’ as if it were part of this section (Fig. 4-19). This addition is unlikely to have been compiled by Wei Wenhou, who would have put it into *juan* 6, which he made to ‘complement’ *Zhenglüe*. Therefore, this silent addition was very likely to have been present in the putative Li Dachong edition which served as the model for the present Wenyou tang edition(s).

This additional section is presented under the heading either of ‘Brocade’ (*jinlei* 錦類, in the ‘Contents’) or of ‘Brocade and Embroidery’ (*jinxiulei* 錦繡類, in the main text), a subject that was already covered by the category ‘Silk’ in the ‘eight-sound’ system. Insofar as this additional four-page text concerns not so much the biographies of ‘artists’ as the famous ‘artworks’ seen in written records, it echoes the theme of *Sketches of Artworks*. The section begins with a short general introduction explaining the terms ‘brocade’ and ‘embroidery’, followed by a subsection entitled ‘Famous brocades through the ages’ (*lidai mingjin* 歷代名錦), which includes short descriptions of brocades that had acquired a specific identity in the records and even served as literary allusions. Except for the last two entries, which list only the names of the textiles of the Song dynasty, each of the other eighteen entries are provided

with a brief description of their names and the stories behind them. These entries are presented in roughly chronological order: the first entry is for a piece of brocade full of patterns of the fabulous bird *luan* (*luanzhangjin* 鸞章錦), a piece used to decorate a pavilion by King Ling of the Zhou dynasty (Zhou Lingwang 周靈王, r. 571-544 B.C.). This was followed first by famous brocades of the Han dynasty, such as the ‘diagonal-patterned brocade’ (*xiewenjin* 斜文錦) used by Emperor Xuan 宣 (r. 73-49 B.C.) for wrapping his precious mirror from India, and then by celebrated brocades of the Tang dynasty (618-907)—including several brought into China from foreign countries as tributes, such as the waterproof ‘glittering brocade’ (*fuguangjin* 浮光錦).¹⁴⁶

Indeed, these descriptions are in nature closer to fictional tales than verified historical records, and this characterisation is supported in the source materials for these entries. All the passages found in this additional section were clearly taken from existing writings; however, unlike the other five *juan* in *Zhenglüe*, no references were provided for these excerpts mentioning their respective original sources. Nevertheless, with the help of the digital database of the *Four Treasuries*, it is now possible to identify most of the original sources. Only two of these entries came from standard histories: one is for the brocade of the ‘interlaced-dragon pattern’ (*jiaolong wen* 交龍紋) that the Wei regime gave to the Japanese empress around 237 to 239 A.D.; and the other is for the brocade embroidered with a long palindrome poem (*huiwen* 迴文) to express how the maker, a wife, missed her husband—a piece that had since become well-known as a literary allusion.¹⁴⁷ Other entries were originally from the books

¹⁴⁶ *Zhenglüe* (Wenyoutang B edition), *juan* 6, pp. 21-25.

¹⁴⁷ See *Zhenglüe* (Wenyoutang B edition), *juan* 5, p. 22b. The term ‘*jiaolong* 交龍’ was misprinted in *Zhenglüe* as ‘*wenlong* 文龍’. The former is originally recorded in *San guo zhi* 三國志 ‘Records of the

regarded by the editors of the *Four Treasuries* as being composed of anecdotes that were either groundless or in conflict with historical records, including three texts from the third century, *Xijing zaji* 西京雜記, *Dongming ji* 洞冥記 and *Shiyi ji* 拾遺記; two texts from the ninth century, *Duyang zabian* 杜陽雜編, *Yuefu zalu* 樂府雜錄; and one text from the seventeenth century, *Bowu yaolan* 博物要覽.¹⁴⁸

Nonetheless, most of these stories and tales, together with the references to their original sources, can be conveniently found in an encyclopaedic book, *Gezhi jingyuan* 格致鏡原 (‘Probing into knowledge and reflecting on the origin’) by Chen Yuanlong 陳元龍 (1652-1736), where one can even find the exact wording of the headings of the last two entries in this additional section.¹⁴⁹ Even if this additional text had not been compiled by Li Fang himself, it is conceivable that an encyclopaedic book like Chen’s must have been a great help for Li Fang in compiling *Zhenglüe*.

It should be noted that the approach taken by the unnamed compiler of this additional section to assembling excerpts about ‘Chinese artworks’ was very similar to Li Fang’s approach to the compilation of *Zhenglüe*, as this person was concerned more about the recorded marvels related to an object than the reliability of the records themselves. Instead of giving a ‘history’ of many an extant artwork (such as looking into its provenance and technical achievements, as today’s art historians would do), this author presented in this additional section the ‘historical’ artworks of China, those recorded in written texts as having amazed the world. Whether these objects really existed did not bother this author at all, nor did he feel it necessary to provide visual

Three Kingdoms’ (5 vols., Beijing, 1959), iii, ‘*Weishu* 魏書’ (Book of the Wei), *juan* 30, p. 857; and the latter in Fang Xuanling 房玄齡 et al., *Jinshu* 晉書 ‘History of the Jin’ (10 vols., Beijing, 1974), viii, *juan* 96, p. 2523.

¹⁴⁸ Comments on these books can be found in the *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*, iii, *juan* 140, pp. 2882-2884; *juan* 142, pp. 2943-2944, and 2949-2950; *juan* 113, pp. 2368-2369; and *juan* 130, p. 2716.

¹⁴⁹ Chen Yuanlong, *Gezhi jinyuan* 格致鏡原, *Siku* edition, vol. 1050, *juan* 27, pp. 5-13, 15-17.

evidence of the appearance of these objects. The fact that their unbelievable magnificence had had a presence in ‘records’ seems in and of itself to have been the point. Such historical mentions proved that China used to have the ability to make beautiful and unusual things and that the textiles produced in China had been sophisticated enough that certain types of brocades even acquired names of their own—even though one cannot help but notice that most of the Tang brocades listed in this additional section were not actually made in China but were tributes from foreign countries.

The hypothesis that this additional text is the only text remaining of that originally compiled by Li Fang for the *Sketches of Artworks* is further supported by the fact that this additional text was added silently into *juan* 5, and presented as if it were part of the section ‘Addition of omissions’. If authors were supposed to have been unfailingly credited, then the way this additional text was integrated in the book does suggest that it had been compiled by the author Li Fang and was probably inserted into *Zhenglüe* by his son Li Dachong, on the occasion of his re-carving the book in woodblock format. If this had really been the case, this additional text was probably the only part of the original manuscript which still survived at the time the putative Li Dachong edition was commissioned. Still, however, one cannot exclude the possibility that this additional text was compiled by Li Dachong himself, or perhaps even had nothing at all to do with the Li family. Nonetheless, whether or not this additional text was the surviving manuscript of Li Fang, it is certain that Li Fang, during his lifetime, had given up the idea of publishing the remaining part of his ‘Attested’ series, even though he had previously promised to do so. As such, it is nearly certain that the ‘missing parts’ were never published; otherwise Li Dachong would have had them likewise carved into the woodblock edition, and Wei Wenhou would not have had to

clumsily insert *juan* 6 in order to make the book appear more like what *Zhenglüe* had been intended to be.

If the ‘missing parts’ were never published, then why was the original publishing project stopped when it was already half way complete and had been quite well received at the time? Lack of money is probably not a sufficient answer, since at least two further publications were issued by Li Fang in the 1910s: first, the book series of Li Baoxun’s writings, entitled *Yizhou lishi congkan* 義州李氏叢刊 (‘Collected works of the Li from Yizhou’), published in 1916, following the father’s death in 1915; and second, *Baqi hualu*, which had been compiled by Li Fang himself and first released on its own in 1919.

Sinking into oblivion

Apart from the possibility of an idiosyncrasy on the part of Li Fang (for which we have little evidence), perhaps the obscurity of the ‘missing parts’ and Li’s concession in using the term *meishu* in *Zhenglüe*’s official title can also be explained by a cultural climate in which Li Fang’s perception of *meishu* and his exceptional way of presenting ‘history’ would have been deemed ridiculous and absurd, and in which the historical aspiration embodied in *Zhenglüe* would inevitably sink into oblivion.

In 1913, Lu Xun (1881-1936)—later to become one of the most influential writers in twentieth-century China—published in the initial issue of a Ministry of Education communiqué an essay entitled ‘Draft Proposal on the Dissemination of Art’ (see ‘Introduction’), which not only provided a definition of ‘*meishu*’ but also a criticism of the prevailing ‘misconception’ of the term at the time:

... The term is now perceived to carry the meaning of ‘beautiful’, which is not exactly what ‘*meishu*’ means ... There are three essential elements of ‘*meishu*’: ‘nature’, ‘idea’, and ‘aesthetic transformation’. As it must possess these three elements, *meishu* is strictly distinct from other things. The leaves carved in jade, or

the lacquer ware coloured to imitate real gold, although bearing great resemblance [to nature], cannot be called *meishu*. A square inch of ivory on which thousands of characters are written, or a tiny walnut kernel carved into layers of terraces and buildings, although extremely intricate, cannot be called *meishu*. Foldable tables, or portable utensils, although convenient to use, cannot be called *meishu*. Objects handed down from the remote past, or novel instruments brought back from distant territories, although rare, might not be called *meishu*. The dazzling radiance of heavy green and flamboyant red, although gorgeous, might not be called *meishu*. One should never fail to tell the difference.¹⁵⁰

The examples of ‘non-*meishu*’ listed in this passage were exactly the objects found in Li Fang’s *Zhenglüe*, and were also the kind of objects displayed and even awarded with prizes at the 1910 Exposition. One anecdote worth mentioning is that in 1910, when Lu Xun was still teaching at the Shaoxing County Middle School, he organised a school trip to Nanjing to visit the Exposition which had caused such a sensation.¹⁵¹ Given that this essay was written in 1913, three years after he witnessed his contemporaries’ ‘misconception’ of *meishu* manifested in the exhibits of the Exposition, it is not surprising that he would have particularly singled out these items to express his disapproval.

One can hardly know how heavily Lu Xun’s opinion (uttered in his early twenties) weighed with the general public at the time; nor can one accurately assess the institutional power this nascent governmental journal was at that time able to exert. Equally unknown is whether or not Li Fang had actually read this particular essay. However, Li Fang seemed to sense that his view of *meishu* was bound to become out

¹⁵⁰ Lu Xun 魯迅, ‘*Ni bobu meishu yijian shu*’, p.10-11. [顧在今茲，則詞中含有美麗之意，凡是者不當以美術稱。...故美術者，有三要素：一曰天物，二曰思理，三曰美化。緣美術必有此三要素，故與他物之界域極嚴。刻玉之狀爲葉，髹漆之色亂金，似矣，而不得謂之美術。象齒方寸，文字千萬，核桃一丸，台榭樹重，精矣，而不得謂之美術。几案可以弛張，什器輕於攜取，便於用矣，而不得謂之美術。太古之遺物，絕域之奇器，罕矣，而非必爲美術。重碧大赤，陸離斑駁，以其戟刺，奪人目睛，艷矣，而非必爲美術，此尤不可不辨者也。]

¹⁵¹ Shao Luzhi 邵魯智, ‘*Lu Xun shuai Shaoxingfu zhongxuetang shisheng fu Ning cangan Nanyang quanyehui shimo*’ 魯迅率紹興府中學堂師生赴寧參觀南洋勸業會始末’ (About Lu Xun’s taking the staff and students at the Shaoxing County Middle School to visit the Nanyang Industrial Exposition), in *Lu Xun shengping shiliao huibian* 魯迅生平史料匯編 ‘Collected sources of Lu Xun’s life’ (6 vols., Tianjin, 1981), i, pp. 448-454.

of date; he did not fit the type of intellectual that was about to lead public opinion. The view represented in Lu Xun's essay—which identified *meishu* as a borrowed term whose meaning should be gauged in its original context in the West and was fundamentally different from that of the exhibits at the Exposition—was probably the opinion that emerged forcefully to claim its dominance. Hence the sentence Li Fang put in his 'Preface', saying that *Zhenglüe* 'has already been criticised by the learned', was probably not merely conventional rhetoric of politeness, but a sign of his lack of confidence.¹⁵²

Although the semantic fields of the Chinese terms '*meishu*' and '*yishu*' had not yet been clearly differentiated in Lu Xun's essay, his negation of the view that people like Li Fang would have held was echoed by an important essay entitled 'Revolution of Art', published in 1918 by Lü Cheng (1896-1989), not long after his having studied aesthetics in Japan in 1915 and 1916. In this essay, Lü further clarifies the contemporary meaning of '*yishu*' and '*meishu*', which defined '*yishu*' as a generic term for all that embodies beauty and '*meishu*' as denoting spatial arts such as painting, architecture and sculpture which occupy a certain space (see Introduction). He then criticises his contemporaries:

However, most of our fellow countrymen do not understand this [i.e. the distinction between '*yishu*' and '*meishu*'], viewing all that which is deftly-worked and intricate as *yishu*, and regarding both spatial and temporal *yishu* as *meishu*. Such a perception is still understandable. As to the usage which combines *tuhua* [picture] and *meishu* into one term [*tuhua meishu*, literally 'pictorial fine arts'], one really has no idea what it means.¹⁵³

This description of and distinction between the two terms is probably the one closest to the modern dictionary explanation, although the position of 'Chinese art' within the universal framework of 'art' was still to be heavily debated.

¹⁵² Li Fang, 'Zixu', p. 2b.

¹⁵³ Lü Cheng, '*Meishu geming*', p. 26. [我國人多昧於此，常以一切工巧爲藝術，而混稱空間時間藝術爲美術，此猶可說；至有連圖畫美術爲言者，則真不知所云矣。]

It should be stressed that not before Lü Cheng's essay had the necessity to distinguish between *yishu* and *meishu* been strongly felt. Lu Xun and Lü Cheng's essays demonstrate the different stages in distinguishing between 'yishu' and 'meishu', which implies that the differentiation itself was a constructed idea and was made not only in hopes of more firmly grasping the Western concept of 'arts' and 'fine arts' (which has its own complicated history, and is indeed still changing), but also in an attempt to reconcile the confusing coexistence of these two Chinese terms by designating to each a distinctively different notion.

Perhaps using the term '*yishujia*' instead of '*meishujia*' in *Zhenglüe*'s title was a way to avoid such criticism as had been voiced in Lu Xun's essay. Perhaps Lu Xun would have had little objection if those eye-pleasing objects at the Exposition had been viewed by his contemporaries as *yishu* rather than *meishu*. Similarly, Li Fang probably felt more comfortable with the term *yishujia*, for it is free of any foreign connotations, of which he had little idea. Nevertheless, he seems to have also hoped at the same time that his historical aspiration, embodied and preserved in the alternative book title, would still manage to find some resonance.

In the newly-established Republican China, cultural power was gradually shifting to those who were able to learn about the West and the modern world through their knowledge of foreign languages.¹⁵⁴ Who were 'the learned' to whom Li Fang referred? Had the opinions of 'the learned' eroded Li Fang's confidence in using the term '*meishu*' straightforwardly in his book title, perhaps even causing him to put off the publishing plan for the 'supplementary compilation' of *Zhenglüe* and '*Sketches of Art Works*', two texts which would have appeared even more ridiculous to 'the learned'? There are probably no answers to these questions. However, in the context where the

¹⁵⁴ This is particularly true of the intellectual milieu after the May Fourth Movement (1919). See Wang Fan-sen, *Fu Ssu-nien: A Life in Chinese History and Politics* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 33.

concept of art was being gradually institutionalised, cultural consensus was more likely to have been given to the opinions which provided a proper provenance rooted in the West. Most importantly, under the circumstances where Li Fang's ethnic and social identity seemed to become more and more marginalised in the nascent Republican China, *Zhenglüe*'s historical aspirations and its approach to writing an art history book was inevitably destined to become a 'road not taken'. As such, viewing *Zhenglüe* as the first 'history of Chinese art' would seem from today's point of view to be an absurd idea, even though such a proposition was still regarded as legitimate enough by not just a few people in the early twentieth century.

Historical records do not present Li Fang's family as having been registered to any of the Eight Banners, not even to the Chinese-martial banners. However, Li's strong ethnic self-identification with the Manchus and bannermen was still manifested in his works. Most of his extant *oeuvre* is devoted to lesser known artists, to bannermen in particular. In addition to *Zhenglüe* (1914), he also compiled *Guochao shushi* 國朝書史 ('Calligraphy History of the Current Dynasty'), which no longer exists today; *Baqi hualu*, first published in 1919; and, later in his life, *Huang Qing shushi* 皇清書史 ('Calligraphy History of the Great Qing', 1924-26) and *Huajia zhixilu* 畫家知希錄 ('Records of the Painters Rarely Known', 1923), both published posthumously by Jin Yufu 金毓黻 (1887-1962) in the 1930s in the book series *Liaohai congshu* 遼海叢書 ('Collectanea of the Liao region', completed in 1936)—a book series dedicated to the Manchus' place of origin.¹⁵⁵ Li Fang's *Baqi hualu* was republished by his friend

¹⁵⁵ These two texts can be found in Jin Yufu (ed.), *Liaohai congshu* (10 vols., 1933-1936), v; a copy of this book series is collected in the Chinese Studies Library, Oxford. The manuscript of *Huang Qing shushi* had been found in Li's former residence by Tang Lan 唐蘭 (1901-1979, aka Tang Li'an 唐立庵, an acclaimed scholar of bronze inscriptions) long before the text was put into print. See '*Liaohai congshu zongmu tiyao* 遼海叢書總目提要' (Notes on the books collected in the *Liaohai Collectanea*), in *Liaohai congshu*, x, pp. 1-15 (6).

Yang Shoudan 楊壽枏(1868-1948) in 1928 in the book series *Yunzai shanfang congshu* 雲在山房叢書 ('Collectanea of the Mountain Dwelling [where] Clouds Reside'), with a preface to Li's book written by Yang Zhongxi 楊鍾羲 (1865-1939), himself a Chinese-martial bannerman and a friend of Li Baoxun's. Yang recounted in this 'Preface' that Li Fang's 'teeth and hair had already become aged' when the two people re-established their acquaintance in 1925 as Yang accompanied the abdicated emperor Puyi (1906-1967) in repatriating to Tianjin; by that time, Li Fang was only in his early forties. Yang was thus not surprised that the next year (1926) would see the '*chaolin zhitong* 巢賃之痛' (literally, 'the pain of renting out the nest') happen to Li, which I believe refers to his death.¹⁵⁶ Li Fang seemed to have been ill for years, according to Yang's 'Preface', but even in his later years, Li Fang still continued to compile artists' biographies and accounts as evidenced by the two works that were published posthumously.

It seems understandable that Li Fang would have identified himself more with the people of banners than with the Han Chinese, since he claimed Yizhou as his family's place of origin—a place somewhere outside the Shanhai Pass, which was traditionally regarded as marking the boundaries between the Chinese and the northern 'barbarian' tribes. As the 1911 Revolution by and large exploited the racial rhetoric that blamed the predicament of China on the Manchus and proposed the racial expulsion, and even extinction, of the 'barbarians', the aftermath of the revolution inevitably involved an

¹⁵⁶ No reference book to my knowledge explains this particular expression '*chaolin zhitong* 巢賃之痛'. Judging from the textual context, I believe this event refers to Li Fang's death. See Yang Zhongxi, 'Preface to *Baqi hualu*', in Yang Shoudan (ed.), *Yunzai shanfang congshu* (1928), pp. 1-2 (1b); a copy of this book series is in the Chinese Studies Library, Oxford. My speculation over Li Fang's death year (which is still a mystery to many authors of biographical dictionaries) corresponds to the year proposed in Wang Qingbo 汪慶柏 (ed.), *Qingdai renwu shengzu nianbiao* 清代人物生卒年表 'Chronological table of the birth and death dates of Qing figures' (Beijing, 2005), p. 262, although the editor of this reference book is unaware of Li's birth year.

increasing sense of isolation for banner men in society.¹⁵⁷ Their difficult social situation might have contributed to Li Fang's anxiety about the disappearance from the historical horizon of his own marginalised ethnic group and his insecurity about his social position.

In *Huangqing shushi*, one can find printed in the first column of each of the thirty-five *juan* the compiler's name in a specific style—starting with Li Fang's place of origin, birth name, and one of his alternative courtesy names, as in the example 'Yizhou Li Fang Chaoke *zuanlu* 義州李放巢客纂錄' (compiled by Li Fang, 'Nesting Guest' from Yizhou'). These courtesy names, 35 in total, make up an extraordinary display of the compiler's self-image, as only two of them are repeated; that is to say, Li Fang deliberately presented thirty-three alternative names for himself in a single book.¹⁵⁸ Most of these names portray the image of a recluse indifferent to politics, as shown in 'Juexiang 蕨鄉' ('fern village'); or a free-minded person beyond the confines of society's understanding, such as 'Langgong 浪公' ('wandering and self-abandoning person'); or a leftover of the previous dynasty, as in the case of 'Shengshan 剩山' ('remaining mountains').¹⁵⁹ Such a display of multiple selves is also seen in *Zhenglüe* surrounding his photographic portrait, which was taken on his thirty-first birthday, in the colophon questioning what a person he really was: 'A Confucian scholar, like an immortal, living among the mountains and waters with a thin appearance? An alcoholic from Gaoyang? A dog-butcher in the city of Yan?' (Fig.

¹⁵⁷ The alienating social situation in which a Manchu banner man would have found himself in early Republican China is best illustrated in the life of Jinliang; see Crossley, *Orphan Warriors*, pp. 162-213.

¹⁵⁸ The book claimed to have thirty-six *juan* but actually has only thirty-five *juan*. The thirty-sixth *juan* was intended to be a bibliography of cited books, but is found to be absent in the manuscript.

¹⁵⁹ See *Huang Qing shushi*, *juan* 13, 2, and 29, respectively. 'Juexiang' literally means 'fern village', alluding to the story of Boyi and Shuchi who hide in the mountains and eat only ferns to avoid what they regarded as the injustice of the authorities.

4-2).¹⁶⁰ Li Fang seems to have had an unsettled image of himself. He would probably have hoped to identify himself with a Confucian scholar who leads a transcendental life like an immortal; however, social realities would hardly have prevented him from feeling alienated from the rest of society. The change in a bannerman's social position silently taking place at that time must have contributed to Li Fang's insecurity about his 'self' and his own relationship with the nation and the world. His insecurity probably made him wonder how he was perceived by others: as an eccentric, or as the lowest of the low in society? The more need he felt to display his own perceptions of himself along with his various other names, the more anxiety he seems to have had about the effacement of himself as a worthy individual in society.

Perhaps it was Li Fang's insecurity about his own social position that led to his compromise in the book title, where he conceded the idea of making explicit his aspiration for rebranding the Chinese concept of 'yishu' with a modern neologism, 'meishu'. As the opinions of those such as Lu Xun and Lü Cheng gradually came to hold more and more sway, Li Fang also became increasingly silent about the issue involving these two ideas. Neither of these two terms was mentioned again in Li Fang's later works; and he seems to have made up his mind to avoid the battlefield debating in which direction Chinese arts should head, and he was afterwards content to confine his scholarly endeavours to the received traditional fields such as calligraphy and painting. Moreover, as Li Fang found himself socially alienated from the China he used to believe he was entitled to inhabit and to identify with as a Chinese, he probably soon became convinced that he was no longer in a position to

¹⁶⁰ The first two sentences feature the literary allusion established by Sima Xiangru 司馬相如; see Sima Qian, *Shiji* 史記 'Records of the Historian' (6 vols., Beijing, 1959), vi, *juan* 117, p. 3056. The term 'Gaoyang jiutu' in the third sentence originally refers to Li Yiji 酈食其 and is later used to denote people who take great pleasure in drinking and have unruly manners; see *Shiji*, v, *juan* 97, pp. 2691-3. The last allusion is used today to refer to people of low social status, originally found in *Shiji*, v, *juan* 86, p. 2522. [列仙儒歟?山澤臞歟?高陽之酒徒歟?燕市之狗屠歟?]

write a history of ‘Chinese’ artists. As such, most of his later works were devoted to the Manchus and bannermen, and we have no evidence that he ever aspired to write another book about ‘Chinese’ art.

Nevertheless, the failure of *Zhenglüe* as a ‘history’ of Chinese *meishu* was not just a matter of the institutional construction of the meaning of the term *meishu*, or of the power relationship between those who had knowledge of foreign languages and those who did not; nor was it simply Li Fang’s own marginalised social and ethnic identity that precluded him from being a cultural arbiter. An epistemological change was also taking place. Without exception, all the books Li Fang had compiled were made by the means of ‘citation from citations’ and appeared in the form of individuals’ biographies, without any third-person narration or illustrations. The new art history books do not look like this; they were written with a third-person narration and strove to show the development in, changes in, and continuity of the history; and most of all, they all include pictures—as seen in *Text Book of Art History for Normal Schools*, the first text book of art history written in Chinese, written by Jiang Danshu 姜丹書 (1885-1962) and published in 1917 (Fig. 4-20).¹⁶¹ The assumption that art history books should provide illustrations to demonstrate the appearance of the ‘art’ was to become the norm in the second half of the 1910s. Such a premise was partly prompted by the booming enterprise of art reproduction, and partly inspired by the Western model of art history writing, such as Stephen Bushell’s *Chinese Art* (see Chapter 5). As such, books compiled in the manner of *Zhenglüe* can now be used only as reference books, as biographical dictionaries which do not endeavour to present a

¹⁶¹ Jiang Danshu, *Shifan xuexiao xinjiakeshu meishushi* 師範學校新教科書美術史, originally published in 1917, 9th edn (Shanghai, 1923); a copy of it is collected in the Library of Institute of Chinese Literature and Philosophy, Academia Sinica, Taipei.

coherent, linear historical narrative.¹⁶²

Nevertheless, the ‘absurd’ perception of ‘*meishu*’ in *Zhenglüe* has not really disappeared entirely from our sight. Although those adept at making machines in the categories ‘Wheels and axles’ and ‘Astronomy’ seem no longer to have been viewed as ‘artists’ or ‘*meishujia*’ following Lü Cheng’s essay of 1918, some of these ‘artists’ in *Zhenglüe* still silently found their way into the *Dictionary of Chinese Meishujia* compiled by Yu Jianhua 俞劍華 (1895-1979) in 1963—where, for example, a woman named Qushi 瞿氏, who designed a clever mill for flour production, was still granted an entry.¹⁶³ Clearly then, the institutionalised, dominant opinion did not entirely purge the ‘unwanted’ views, and the vague and confusing distinction between *yishu* and *meishu* still persisted, even after the construction of meaning seems to have been completed. However, as the episteme of historical writing about art has changed, no one on earth would look up a ‘nobody’, an unimportant ‘artist’ with no proper identification—such as Qushi—in a dictionary of ‘artists’ such as Yu’s.

¹⁶² For a discussion of the Chinese historiography of Chinese art, see Aida Yuen Wong, *Parting the Mist*, Chapter 2, pp. 35-53.

¹⁶³ *Zhenglüe*, *juan* 4, p. 13a; Yu Jianhua, *ZMRC*, p. 1488.

Ch 5 Chinese Art under the Orientalist Gaze: Stephen W. Bushell's *Chinese Art* (1904, 1906) and Its Appropriation in China

As shown in previous chapters, the category of *meishu* was conceived rather differently by Chinese intellectuals in the early twentieth century than it is today; however, none of these endeavours to create in China a category equivalent to 'art' were made without reference to what were perceived as European practices. The origin of the idea of 'art' seems to have been widely acknowledged as being located in the European West, and such awareness made possible in China every utterance concerning 'Chinese art'. Nonetheless, did Westerners see Chinese art in the same way that the Chinese intellectuals viewed their own artistic culture? Did the construction of the Chinese category of 'art' featured in the previous chapters in any way relate to Westerners' understanding of Chinese art? If so, how and to what extent did Chinese awareness of the gaze from the 'Other' contribute to the construction of the category of 'Chinese art' in China?

Stephen Wootton Bushell's *Chinese Art*, the first book written in English dedicated to the category of 'Chinese art' (Fig. 5-1), provides a precious doorway into an investigation of these questions. Bushell (1844-1908) was a physician at the British Legation in Peking (Beijing), where he resided for more than thirty years (1868-1899).¹ During his long residence, he not only acquired impressive proficiency in Chinese but also developed an interest in Chinese artefacts that eventually led to his becoming an expert in that area. Despite the fact that he was not really an orientalist by institutional definition, he was commissioned later in his life by the Board of Education in Britain to write the two-volume *Chinese Art* for the Victoria and Albert

¹ See Nick Pearce, *Photographs of Peking, China 1861-1908: An Inventory and Description of the Yetts Collection at the University of Durham: Through Peking with A Camera* (New York, 2005), p. 44.

Museum's handbook series.² The first volume of the book was published in 1904 and the second in 1906, with a revised second edition released in 1909. By the mid-1920s, the first volume had undergone six reprints and the second volume had undergone four, a fact which suggests its popularity at the time among art lovers and collectors in Britain and, indeed, across Europe.³

It is known that the Chinese translation of Bushell's *Chinese Art* was first issued by the Commercial Press in 1923 and reprinted in 1934.⁴ However, cultural encounters do not necessarily occur at the places where translations are readily available. In fact, as we shall see below, as early as 1908, some of the illustrations exclusive to Bushell's *Chinese Art* were 'silently' (i.e., without acknowledgement) appropriated by the journal *Guocui xuebao*, one of the pioneering publications in China which applied the category of *meishu* to Chinese objects (see Chapter 1). The presence of Bushell's *Chinese Art* in China, whether in its entirety or not, hence provides a backdrop against which we can observe how the interplay between different cultures might have taken place, and whether the category of 'Chinese art' had been conjured up and constructed jointly by both China and the 'West'.

Central to this cultural encounter and prior to the Chinese translation of Bushell's book is the way in which the Western representation of 'Chinese art' was received in China, which at this time inevitably involves the issue famously proposed by Edward Said (1935-2003): 'Orientalism', by which Said refers to a manner of regularised writing, envisioning, and study, or a set of representations, via which the Orient is

² The Victoria and Albert Museum, previously called the South Kensington Museum, was then put under the control of the Board of Education, from which Bushell received the request for writing 'a handbook on the art and industries of China'. See Stephen W. Bushell, 'Preface', *Chinese Art*, 1st edn (2 vols., London, 1904, 1906), i, p. 3.

³ Bushell, *Chinese Art*, reprint of the 2nd edn (2 vols., London, 1924), the imprint page in each volume.

⁴ Aida Yuen Wong, *Parting the Mists*, pp. 38-39.

always brought into the Western consciousness as appearing weaker and inferior.⁵ One should bear in mind that it was the ‘authenticity’ (in the sense of creating the impression of being closer to the native practices and conceptions) of Bushell’s understanding of the indigenous practices of art collecting and appreciation in China that granted him a perceived authority over Chinese objects within the institutional framework of the museum.⁶ However, his being the author of a book addressing a field of knowledge whose geographic location was in the far Orient would inevitably place his book within the boundaries of contemporary Oriental scholarship, and him among other orientalists.

In all likelihood, Bushell acquired his knowledge of connoisseurship in Chinese artefacts by exposure to the antiquarian milieu in Peking in the latter half of the nineteenth century.⁷ His personal experiences in China, first-hand encounters with the locals, and exposure to the native value system of Chinese material culture in turn lent him a certain authority, which enabled him to act as an agent in Peking for purchasing specimens on behalf of the Victoria and Albert Museum in the 1880s⁸ and finally to be charged with the writing of the museum’s handbook on Chinese art. Of course, as Edward Said argues, residence in the Orient involves only personal experience and personal testimony of the region; contributions to the library of Orientalism and to its consolidation depend on ‘how experience and testimony can be converted from a purely personal document into the enabling codes of Oriental science’.⁹

⁵ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London, 2003), pp. 203-204.

⁶ For a discussion on the discursive authority over the collecting of Chinese art between private collectors and public museums, particularly the one between Bushell and the Victoria and Albert museum, see Judith Tybil Green, ‘Britain’s Chinese Collections, 1842-1943: Private Collecting and the Invention of Chinese Art’ (University of Sussex DPhil. thesis, 2002), pp. 213-214.

⁷ Nick Pearce, ‘Collecting, Connoisseurship and Commerce: An Examination of the Life and Career of Stephen Wootton Bushell (1844-1908)’, *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society*, 70 (2005-2006), pp. 17-25 (20).

⁸ See Pearce, *Photographs of Peking*, pp. 49-50; and ‘Collecting, Connoisseurship and Commerce’, p.21.

⁹ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 157.

Although, as Craig Clunas has pointed out, Bushell's ability to use Chinese sources for his study 'gave his work an orientalist authority',¹⁰ he was after all not an orientalist by training. His command of Chinese may have made him appear to be a reliable orientalist, but he still needed to become familiar with the 'the enabling codes' of Oriental science in order to be accepted in the field of Oriental scholarship. Furthermore, his *Chinese Art* was by no means addressing a field which had never been written about. Prior to his endeavour, as Bushell himself acknowledges in the preface to the first edition, there had been a 'graceful sketch entitled *L'Art Chinois*, by M. Paléologue [1859-1944]', published in 1887, that had already covered 'more or less the same ground'.¹¹ Under such circumstances, could Bushell's 'authentic' knowledge about Chinese art be acknowledged in the field of Orientalism without his subscribing to any existent framework that had already structured the Orientalist representation of China? What *were* the enabling codes of Oriental science?

It is unlikely that Bushell's *Chinese Art* was a transparent representation of what he had learned from his Chinese friends and from dealing with antique shops during his thirty-year residence in Peking. However, few modern scholars have questioned how Bushell's seemingly 'authentic' understanding of Chinese material culture was to converge with the then-established Orientalist representation of China, and how this encounter might be presented in this museum handbook—where Bushell inevitably faced the dilemma of how to structure and filter his 'authentic' knowledge in accordance with the expectations of the then-emerging scholarship on the same subject. His endeavour in *Chinese Art* to lay out the field of Chinese art using almost exclusively the holdings in British national museums is generally believed to have made possible, in Clunas's words, the 'distinctively British official definition of

¹⁰ Craig Clunas, 'Oriental Antiquities/ Far Eastern Art', p. 206, n. 45.

¹¹ Bushell, 'Preface', p. 3.

Chinese art’.¹² Consequently, previous studies have centred largely on Bushell’s importance to the formation of the category of Chinese art within the framework of the museum institution, and, accordingly, on the reconstruction of his life and his role as a collector and an art agent for individuals and institutions.¹³ However, little concern has been expressed about how Chinese art is represented by Bushell.

Hence, this chapter intends to illuminate some unnoticed aspects concerning the way in which Bushell wrote *Chinese Art*, and the book’s subsequent appropriation in China. It will first point out ‘the codes of Orientalism’ included in this book by a long-time foreign resident in China and then demonstrate how this Orientalised conception of Chinese art came to be involved, although in a rather oblique way, in the conception of the category of ‘Chinese art’ in China itself.

Orientalising Chinese art

Being an orientalist, that is, an expert who takes the Orient as the object of study, does not necessarily make one an Orientalist; subscribing to, whether consciously or not, the normalised, internalised, and institutionalised intellectual style termed by Said as Orientalism—in which the Orient is represented as an object for the West to dominate, restructure, and have authority over—makes one an Orientalist.¹⁴ The ‘Orientalist gaze’ highlighted in this chapter is strictly confined to representations which perceive the difference seen between Chinese art and its European counterpart as having been generated by the weaker nature of the Chinese people and hence

¹² Craig Clunas, ‘Oriental Antiquities/ Far Eastern Art’, p. 195.

¹³ For Bushell’s life, collecting activities, and significance in the institutionalisation of Chinese art in Britain, see Clunas, ‘Oriental Antiquities/ Far Eastern Art’, pp. 194-195; Nick Pearce, ‘Soldiers, Doctors, Engineers: Chinese Art and British Collecting, 1860-1935’, *Journal of the Scottish Society for Art History*, 6 (2001), pp. 45-52 (47-48); *Photographs of Peking* (2005), pp. 43-62; ‘Collection, Connoisseurship and Commerce’, pp. 17-25; Judith Green, ‘Britain’s Chinese Collections, 1842-1943’, pp. 97-119.

¹⁴ Edward Said, *Orientalism*, p. 3.

imposes on it a derogatory view that at the same time asserts the superiority of European values.

Bushell's particular experience in China—in particular his transformation from a non-specialist in Chinese language to an expert who, as was observed by one of his contemporaries, Edward Parker (1849-1926), Professor of Chinese at Manchester University, 'contributed more to accurate sinology than some others who profess too much',¹⁵—provides a neat example for observing the ways in which the knowledge he acquired *in situ* in the Orient was transformed through the process of representation into tangible knowledge that could be perceived by his fellow countrymen, add to the existent scholarship on the addressed area, and make a substantial contribution to the broader European discipline of Oriental studies.

Although a physician by profession, Bushell embraced the language, history, and culture of China from the moment of his arrival at the British Legation in Peking in 1868. His broad interests in things available in China soon turned him into an erudite expert, one whose speciality seems to have traversed a wide range of Chinese material culture. Soon after his arrival, he was elected a member of the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society¹⁶ and began his collecting activity almost immediately.¹⁷ Bushell's collecting activities, whether personal or on behalf of institutions (most notably the Victoria and Albert Museum) are regarded as one of the key factors that have contributed to the appearance of the new category of 'Chinese art' in Britain. Nevertheless, there is a difference in Bushell's collecting that separates his personal

¹⁵ Edward H. Parker, *China* (London, 1901), 'Preface', cited in Pearce, 'Collecting, Connoisseurship and Commerce', p.19.

¹⁶ As early as 1873, he had presented a paper to the society entitled 'Stone Drums of the Chou Dynasty', later published in the *Journal of the North-branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, N.S., VIII (1874), pp. 133-81, cited in Green, 'Britain's Chinese Collections', p. 101. The title, 'Member of Council of Royal Asiatic and Royal Numismatic Society', is even placed above his once actual profession, 'Late Physician to H.M. Legation, Peking', on the title page of the first edition of his *Chinese Art* (Fig. 5-1).

¹⁷ In his second year in Peking, he acquired three rubbings of inscriptions on a stone monument in the Dazhaosi temple, in Lhasa. See Green, 'Britain's Chinese Collections', p. 99.

pursuits from what he perceived as the interests of the museum. As Judith Green aptly observes, Bushell's personal interests lay in 'the object as the evidence of history, and the object as the surface for text', a preference that was 'modelled to some degree on the Chinese antiquarian collecting'.¹⁸ While his personal collection centred particularly on ancient bronzes, the purchases he made on behalf of the Victoria and Albert Museum were chiefly of porcelains.¹⁹ His personal collecting thus demonstrated a great contrast with his collecting for the museum, which tended to seek out specimens of Chinese workmanship, not objects which documented history.²⁰ Such different approaches to personal and institutional collecting were thus reconciled in Bushell's *Chinese Art*. The new category of 'Chinese art', as Green concludes, was 'firmly associated both with typologies and antiquarianism', as knowledge that 'on the one-hand ultimately aspired to organise Chinese objects according to some rational schemes of classification, and on the other, linked objects with the singular history for which they stood'.²¹

If a great difference between Bushell's private collecting and his collecting for the Museum can be observed, his knowledge of Chinese art was very likely to have been adapted for producing the museum handbook, and so were the illustrated examples. Although most of the illustrations in *Chinese Art* were drawn from pieces in the collections of the national museums in Britain,²² there are chapters in which no illustrations can be found of pieces from the holdings in these British museums; that is,

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 107.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 110-112; Stacey Pierson, *Collectors, Collections and Museums: The Field of Chinese Ceramics in Britain, 1560-1960* (Oxford and New York, 2007), p. 79.

²⁰ For an in-depth discussion of the emphasis on ceramics in Bushell's collecting for the Victoria and Albert Museum, see Judith Green, 'Britain's Chinese Collections', pp.112-115.

²¹ Ibid., p. 120.

²² Most of the illustrated objects are in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, while the examples of painting are drawn from the British Museum's collection. See Clunas, 'Oriental Antiquities/ Far Eastern Art', p. 194-195. Clunas stresses the absence of private holdings in Bushell's *Chinese Art*; however, a few illustrations of pieces were then on loan to the Museum from George Salting (i, Fig. 99; ii, Figs. 9, 26-27, 35-37, 40-42, 44, 47-49, 51-52, 56-57, 59) and Pierpont Morgan (ii, 21-24).

chapters on ‘Sculpture’ and ‘Architecture’.²³ The proposal by Craig Clunas suggesting that Bushell’s *Chinese Art* presumes, although never openly states, that ‘the collection of the South Kensington Museum can stand practically for the totality of Chinese art’ makes the existence of these two chapters, in which Britain’s museum objects are nowhere to be found, even more intriguing.²⁴ Clearly, there seems to have been a certain framing principle, one so great and overpowering that such temporary disengagement with the Museum objects in the museum handbook was deemed acceptable. This is not to say that the state of the Chinese collection in the Victoria and Albert Museum then did not matter as much as previously believed in shaping this ‘distinctively British official definition of Chinese art’; rather, the intention is to direct attention to a more powerful discourse with which even the Museum’s grouping of their own objects should negotiate. Therefore, it is necessary to look at Bushell’s *Chinese Art* along with earlier endeavours that were known to him and actively contributed to Bushell’s framing of the category of Chinese art.

Bushell started the first volume of the book by giving the reader an ‘Historical Introduction’ to China, a practice acknowledged as having followed the example of *The Art of the Saracens in Egypt* by Stanley Lane-Poole (1854-1931). This volume was published in 1886 as one of the series of the South Kensington Museum Art Handbooks, later to become the Victoria and Albert Museum Art Handbook Series, of which Bushell’s book was a part.²⁵ Bushell then breaks down the various categories of Chinese art with chapters on ‘Sculpture’, ‘Architecture’, ‘Bronze’, ‘Carving in Wood, Ivory, Rhinoceros Horn, etc.’, ‘Lacquer’, and ‘Carving in Jade and Other Hard

²³ Twenty-two illustrations appear in Chapter 2, ‘Sculpture’, of which none of the original pieces is held in any museum collection. Plate 43 in Chapter 3 ‘Architecture’, which displays 17 illustrations, is an image of an item collected in the Victoria and Albert Museum, but the image was used to demonstrate the impact of Islamic culture on Chinese art, not to give an example of a Chinese architectural model.

²⁴ Clunas, ‘Oriental Antiquities/ Far Eastern Art’, p. 194.

²⁵ Bushell, *Chinese Art* (1st edn), i, p. 3.

Stones'. The narration continues in volume II with chapters on 'Pottery and Porcelain', 'Glass', 'Enamels: Cloisonné, Champlevé and Painted', 'Jewellery', 'Textiles: Woven Silks, Embroidery, Carpets', and, finally, 'Pictorial art', a practice not without precedence either. Except for the chapters on 'Jewellery' and 'Textiles', which seem to have been derived from the *Catalogue of Chinese Objects in the South Kensington Museum*—written by Chaloner Alabaster (1838-1898) and published by the Science and Art Department of the Committee of Council on Education at the South Kensington Museum in 1872 (which gives a general idea of the types of the museum holdings of Chinese objects at that time and how Chinese objects were categorised in the Museum before Bushell's book)—most of the chapters structuring the category of Chinese art in Bushell's book find antecedents in *L'Art Chinois*. Published in Paris in 1887, this was one of the series of art books of the Bibliothèque de Enseignement des Beaux-Arts, Paris, by Maurice Paléologue (1859-1944), to whom Bushell gives credit in the preface. As we shall see, Paléologue's *L'Art Chinois* is the most important model for Bushell in which Chinese art was 'Orientalised'. Table 5-1 juxtaposes the contents of Bushell's book with those of the other three books, which not only preceded it but also, to various extents, had an influence on it.

Among the three books referred to and cited in Bushell's book, Paléologue's *L'Art Chinois* appears to have been the closest model for Bushell's *Chinese Art* in terms of the subject and the types of objects that were covered; even its title seems to have been the prototype for Bushell's. Maurice Paléologue (1859-1944) is best known as the French ambassador to Russia (1914-1918) during World War I and also a celebrated writer whose works range from essays, novels, and memoirs to literary criticism. However, little has been written by historians about his activities in China,

Bushell (1904, '06)	Alabaster (1872)	Lane-Poole (1886)	Paléologue (1887)
1.1 Historical introduction	Introduction	I. The Saracens of Egypt	[1] Le Bronze
1.2 Sculpture	I. Porcelain	II. Architecture	[2] L'Architecture
1.3 Architecture	II. Glass	III. Stone and Plaster	[3] La Pierre Sculptée
1.4 Bronze	III. Enamels	III. Mosaic	[4] Le Bois et L'ivoire Sculptés
1.5 Carving in wood, ivory, rhinoceros horn, etc.	IV. Woodwork, Lacquer, &c	IV. Wood-work	[5] Les Pierres Dures
1.6 Lacquer	V. Ivory Carvings	V. Ivory	[6] La Céramique
1.7 Carving in Jade and other hard stones	VI. Carved Stone, &c.	VI. Metal-Work	[7] Le Verre
2.1 Pottery and Porcelain	VII. Jewellery	VII. Glass	[8] Les Émaux [les émaux champlévé et cloisonnés]
2.2 Glass	VIII. Metal-work	VIII. Heraldry on Glass and Metal	[9] La Peinture
2.3 Enamels: cloisonné, champlévé and painted	IX. Musical instruments	IX. Pottery	[10] Les Laques
2.4 Jewellery	X. Textile Fabrics and Embroidery	X. Textile Fabrics	
2.5 Textiles: woven silks, embroidery, carpets	XI. Engravings and Wall paper	XI. Illuminated Manuscripts	
2.6 Pictorial art			

Table 5-1 List of the contents in Bushell, *Chinese Art* (1904, 1906), Alabaster, *Catalogue of Chinese Objects* (1872), Lane-Poole, *The Art of Saracens in Egypt* (1886), and Paléologue, *L'Art Chinois* (1887).

where he was sent after a post in Rome, which he held in 1885.²⁶ The publishing date of *L'Art Chinois* suggests that he was only twenty-eight years old when he wrote the book and had been in China for no more than three years. Although the exact length of his stay in China is not clear, it is certain that the times during which Bushell and Paléologue resided in Peking overlapped for some period. But no further evidence suggests that the two were at all acquainted with one another. Bushell described Paléologue in his first preface only as the 'sometime Secretary of Embassy at the French Legation at Peking', information that had been provided on the title page of the French book (Fig. 5-2), and Bushell probably did not know Paléologue in

²⁶ Spencer Tucker and Priscilla Mary Roberts (eds.), *World War I: Encyclopaedia* (5 vols., Santa Barbara, 2005), iii, pp. 889-90.

person.

Nevertheless, in addition to naming Paléologue's book in the preface to the first edition of his *Chinese Art*, Bushell also cited the French writer's words, with acknowledgement, in nine places throughout the two volumes of his *Chinese Art*.²⁷ The similarity between the two books is most easily observed in the types of objects that were discussed, and from the similar ways in which they broke down the vast domain of Chinese art, although the order of the listings and the wording of some chapters may differ. They both divided their chapters in terms of the material of objects and designated each of them as a legitimate subcategory to be understood on its own within the field of Chinese art. However, the most striking resemblance, which will be elaborated upon below, lies in the repetition of sentences about the representation of Chinese art, which betrays in both publications the ways in which the Chinese art came to be Orientalised in the practice of book writing.

If the affinity in categorisation between these two books entitled 'Chinese Art' reveals the scholarly lineage with which Bushell aligned himself in dealing with this particular subject, it is their divergence that demonstrates how this practice was domesticated within a distinctly British institution, the Victoria and Albert Museum. Bushell started his book with a chapter called 'Historical introduction' (to China), which finds no parallel in Paléologue's book. The chapter begins with the sentence 'The study of any branch of art supposes, as Mr. Stanley Lane-Poole justly observes in his handbook on the *Art of the Saracens in Egypt*, some acquaintance with the history of the people among whom the art was practised'. Apart from the attributing phrase, this sentence is exactly the same as the opening sentence of Lane-Poole's

²⁷ Bushell, 'Preface', p. 3; and *Chinese Art* (1st edn), i, pp. 130, 150; ii, pp. 66, 75, 107, 114, 134, 142.

book.²⁸ The book cited by Bushell is a part of the *South Kensington Museum Art Handbook* series, which changed its name to the *Victoria and Albert Museum Art Handbook* when the museum renamed itself in 1899.²⁹ Giving a general introduction to the history of the ‘Other’ whose art was to be featured seemed a common practice among these museum handbooks, although this introduction did not always take the form of a whole chapter.³⁰

Interestingly, Bushell’s ‘borrowing’ of Lane-Pool’s sentence also places him in the lineage of Edward Said’s Orientalism, for Stanley Lane-Poole (1854-1931) was not merely an acclaimed Orientalist in his own right, but also from a family with a strong Orientalist tradition. His uncle was Edward William Lane (1801-1876), author of the influential *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (*Modern Egyptians*, 1836), which earned him great reputation as an eminent figure in Orientalist scholarship.³¹ Lane-Poole’s father, Edward Stanley Poole (1830-1867), once worked in the Museum’s Science and Art Department and compiled the Appendix to the fifth volume of Lane’s *Modern Egyptians*—which in 1886, according to Lane-Poole, was still ‘the best authority on the subject of the sources of Arabian architecture’.³² Said saw Lane’s work as corresponding to the increased specialisation and institutionalisation of knowledge about the Orient, and Lane’s importance lies in the fact that he was able to ‘domesticate’ this knowledge for the West, making it

²⁸ Bushell, *Chinese Art* (1st edn), i, p. 11; Stanley Lane-Poole, *The Art of the Saracens in Egypt*, enlarged edition (London, 1886), p.1.

²⁹ Anna Somers Cocks, *The Victoria and Albert Museum: The Making of the Collection* (London, 1980), p. 13.

³⁰ For instance, George C. M. Birdwood’s *The Industrial Arts of India* (2 vols., London, 1880), first attributes the arts of India to the illustration of the religious life of the Hindus, and hence starts the book with a lengthy introduction to the history and religion in India; see i, p.1. Augustus W. Franks also claims in his *Japanese Pottery: Being a Native Report* (London, 1880) that before observing the history and ornamentation of this branch of decorative art, ‘we must consider some national peculiarities and customs which have had great influences on the arts of Japan, and especially its pottery’; see p. 1.

³¹ See Lane-Poole, *The Art of the Saracens in Egypt*, pp. vii-ix.

³² *Ibid.*, p. viii.

adaptable to Orientalism.³³ Although Bushell's appropriation of that particular sentence was probably just a coincidence, it nevertheless gives us an idea of the intellectual milieu of the Orientalist scholarship in which Bushell was encompassed.

The two separate chapters on 'Jewellery' and 'Textiles', also absent in Paléologue's book, seem to have been included to reflect the state of the Museum collection. This is particularly true of the chapter on 'Jewellery', in which Bushell admitted the subject itself was 'scarcely of sufficient importance to figure under a separate heading in a little handbook on art', but conceded that 'it is not unrepresented in the Museum'. And to make 'Jewellery' a subject worthy of pursuit in an independent chapter, Bushell turned to the authority of C. Alabaster's *Catalogue of Chinese Objects* (1872).³⁴ Having acknowledged Alabaster's work in the first paragraph, Bushell then paraphrased some of the expressions, sentences, and ideas in the former's catalogue in order to compose his own chapter without having to repeat the reference.

It is not difficult for a reader to appreciate the sincerity with which Bushell endeavours to present the best side of his subject, Chinese art; nevertheless, Bushell still makes some unflattering comments, particularly about the architecture, bronze, and painting in China. He admits that the first impression one might have of a Chinese city was that of monotony and wonders even the Chinese themselves seemed to have a feeling of the 'innate poverty of their architectural designs'.³⁵ He thought that the bronzes of antiquity revealed something not only about the archaic history but also about the 'primitive superstition' of China, and comments that, despite the fact that some of the vessels had 'a certain grace of form and purity of outline', the majority were 'heavy, barbaric, [and] of ill-balanced proportions', and that even 'the happiest

³³ See Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 164, 166.

³⁴ Bushell, *Chinese Art* (1st edn), ii, p. 88.

³⁵ Bushell, *Chinese Art* (1st edn), i, pp. 49, 51.

models’ were ‘not free from a vague impression of clumsiness, of hieratic stiffness’.³⁶ However, as to painting, he makes it explicit—by citing a certain M. R. Marguerye—that ‘to appropriate Chinese painting properly the westerner must forget his own mental preconceptions, and must throw over his artistic education, every critical tradition, and all the aesthetic baggage that has accumulated from the Renaissance’. Consequently, it seems to be more like a fair comparison than a deliberate derogation when Bushell remarks that the Chinese painters remained ‘incapable of representing solid and living forms’.³⁷ Nevertheless, he still regarded the painting of the Ming as having been ‘destined’ to become ‘*déjà froid et bientôt stérile*’ before the dynasty closed, and that the general decadence of the art was declared to have become ‘*un fait accompli*’ in the Qing dynasty.³⁸

Amazingly, the same pejorative passages quoted above from Bushell’s book—which treat China as an object for the West to observe, assess, and deem as inferior—appear in Paléologue’s *L’Art Chinois* as well. However, Bushell did not refer back to Paléologue when citing these passages and these points of view, as he had done elsewhere in his book. In fact, a comparison between the two reveals that Bushell’s version is nearly a word-for-word translation of Paléologue’s words, a translation presumably performed by Bushell himself. Here is an example taken from the opening paragraph of both English and French chapters on ‘Architecture’:

Bushell, <i>Chinese Art</i> (1904)	Paléologue, <i>L’Art Chinois</i> (1887)
The first impression given by the view of a Chinese city from the parapet of the city wall – whether it be Tientsin, with the 150,000 houses of its population of shopmen and artisans, or Peking, with its temples, its imperial and princely	Le première impression qui se dégage à la vue d’une ville chinoise – que ce soit Tien-tsin, avec les 150,000 maisons de sa population bourgeoise et ouvrière, ou Pékin, avec ses temples, ses palais impériaux ou princiers et ses edifices

³⁶ Ibid., i, pp. 71, 88-89.

³⁷ Bushell, *Chinese Art* (1st edn), ii, pp. 105-106, 109.

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 143, 144.

palaces and its public buildings – is that of a certain monotony, resulting from the predominance of a single type of architecture. After a long residence this impression still remains, and it is very rarely that a building stands out which is not reducible to one general formula. (p. 49)	publics – est celle d’une certaine monotonie résultant de la prédominance d’un type architectural unique. Après un long séjour, cette impression persiste encore, et quelques constructions seulement paraissent irréductibles à la formule générale. (p. 82)
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Passages of the same nature—that is, word-for-word translations of Paléologue’s writing without giving any acknowledgment of the original source—can be found sporadically in the chapters on ‘Architecture’, ‘Bronze’, and quite often in the chapter on ‘Pictorial Art’; and all the derogatory remarks observed in Bushell’s book, as mentioned above, can be found in *L’Art Chinois*.

It is not surprising that Bushell should have resorted to appropriating Paléologue’s voice when he found himself having to write a general introduction to Chinese architecture and painting—or, in his words, ‘pictorial art’—for his speciality lay more in bronzes and ceramics, rather than paintings and buildings. While Bushell appears to us today to be an all-round specialist in Chinese art, the unacknowledged repetition of Paléologue’s words in a sense exposes some of his weaknesses. Furthermore—although a close look at the ‘borrowed’ passages shows that some of them also served the purpose of structuring the subject in question, or of defining what one perhaps ought to know about this type of object—a representation of ‘Orientalised’ Chinese art, as seen in *L’Art Chinois*, was also reproduced in *Chinese Art*.

Not only did the text in Paléologue’s work contribute to Bushell’s book, but the illustrations in the French book, all in engraving, also served as models for Bushell to select his own. An illustration identical to the one appearing on page 122 in Paléologue’s *L’Art Chinois* (Fig. 5-3), an engraving made after John Thomson’s

photograph, appears in Bushell's chapter on 'Architecture'.³⁹ Another four illustrations are also of the same sites as are shown in the French writer's book, most of which were done from angles similar to those in *L'Art Chinois* (Figs. 5-4 to 5-7).⁴⁰ Both books feature a stone statue in the area of Ming Tombs, although the statues illustrated are not the same and are not seen from exactly the same angle (Fig. 5-8).⁴¹ Perhaps these pictures are simply those of some 'must-see' tourist attractions, and the repetition of illustrations found in Bushell's book only speak to the popularity of these sites at the time. But a specimen of *Double Vase de Cristal de Roche* would not have been as accessible as those tourist destinations; however, Bushell seems to have managed to find an object from the Museum collection which represented the same type of piece as that illustrated in Paléologue's book, and he labelled it with the same name in English, 'Double Vase of Rock Crystal' (Fig. 5-9).⁴²

As our travel experiences are more or less structured by the 'must-sees' recited over and over in the various tourist guidebooks put out by different publishers, this repetition seen in Bushell's *Chinese Art*—whether in the form of illustration or of text—serves the same purpose. It not only reveals how Bushell's *Chinese Art* was structured by an antecedent example, but also suggests how such 'must-knows' in this handbook were meant to structure the readers' experience and expectations when they encountered Chinese art objects. However, what was repeated in Bushell's *Chinese*

³⁹ Bushell, *Chinese Art*, i, Fig. 44; Paléologue, *L'Art Chinois* (Paris, 1887), p. 122; Pearce, *Photographs of Peking*, pp. 74-6, and Pl. 8.

⁴⁰ Bushell, *Chinese Art*, i, Figs. 28, 31, 36, 38; Paléologue, *L'Art Chinois*, pp. 91, 111, 109, 117. In fact, the illustration in *L'Art Chinois*, p. 111, is also an engraved reproduction of John Thomson's photograph, which, according to Nick Pearce, was also available to Bushell as it is found in the Durham collection. However, Bushell eventually chose an extremely similar photograph by an anonymous photographer, probably John Dudgeon (as Pearce argues), instead of the original one by Thomson; see Pearce, *Photographs of Peking*, pp. 81-85, and Pls. 10-11, the latter of which is used in Bushell's book. Given that the photographs in Bushell's *Chinese Art* of the sites that also appear in Paléologue's book were almost all taken by that same anonymous photographer, it seems possible that Bushell commissioned these photographs to be made in accordance with the illustrations in the French book.

⁴¹ Bushell, *Chinese Art*, i, Fig. 19; Paléologue, *L'Art Chinois*, p. 143.

⁴² Bushell, *Chinese Art*, i, Fig. 102; Paléologue, *L'Art Chinois*, p. 173.

Art is not merely transparent knowledge speaking only from a point of view of scientific neutrality, but also an attitude with which things were observed and perceived—particularly when these repeated points of view were presented not by referred citations or paraphrases, not by polemical arguments, but by unacknowledged, word-for-word translations of large portions of someone else’s text. A direct result of such unacknowledged citation is the reproduction of the rhetorical paradigm through which Chinese art was approached: as a subject under the observation of a far more civilised westerner, and found to be both monotonous and barbaric.

We should not regard Bushell’s translations as being less genuine than his own sentences would have been. After all, he was the author who authorised the entry of Paléologue’s words into his book and their transmogrification into his own voice. Whatever his reasons were, Bushell must have felt compelled to present the subject of Chinese art in this way, as if the words had originally been uttered in his voice. However, it is exactly the incongruence of the two voices coexistent in Bushell’s books—Bushell’s and that which originally was Paléologue’s—that leads to my discovery of Bushell’s ‘silent repetition’.

It is understandable that Bushell would have required recourse to another ‘authority’ in order to write chapters on architecture and painting. However, even in the chapter on ‘Bronze’, a subject in which he was an acknowledged expert and of which his personal collection was largely composed, the derogatory voice of Paléologue was also introduced—as if without some hint of criticism, true authority could not be established. Was he not able to speak in Paléologue’s voice? Indeed, he could; the descriptions of the stone statue (fig. 5-8) is a good example, where, after introducing basic information about the object, Paléologue remarked that ‘this is an art incomplete, without elevation, ideal, or imagination, incapable of interpreting the

forms of the physical and moral aspects of life, indifferent to the beauty of modelling or powerless to extract it'; while Bushell, in his own book, 'replaced' Paléologue's remark with more detailed information about the statue's surroundings and other similar statues placed there.⁴³ He not only had full control of his writing but clearly also had opinions different from Paléologue's. Nevertheless, in many instances, he still chose to let Paléologue's voice reside in his book, and in these instances assumed it as his own.

There is nothing special about finding traces of other authors' voices and points of view in a singly-authored book; after all, this is the way in which academia operates. Nevertheless, by citing and referring to other authors, one is not only amalgamating and producing new knowledge about certain objects, but also attaching oneself to a particular discursive field and indicating membership therein by demonstrating that one shares its collective attitudes towards the object studied. This is also the way in which the intellectual style of Orientalism regularises and reproduces itself. As Said succinctly puts it, 'Orientalism is after all a system for citing works and authors'.⁴⁴ Hence, the repetition found in Bushell's book is nothing but one of many such examples. However, what is most striking in Bushell's case is that the reproduction of Orientalism itself was not achieved by open references and citations alone, but, to a great extent, by what might by today's standard be termed 'plagiarism'.

As we have seen, Bushell did openly acknowledge Paléologue's work in the preface of his book and did refer to it in nine places where he cited the French writer's passages. Perhaps in the early twentieth century, such frequent acknowledgment was considered more than adequate and Bushell's free use of the translations of Paléologue's words would not have been regarded as outside the boundaries of

⁴³ Paléologue, *L'Art Chinois*, p. 143; Bushell, *Chinese Art* (1st edn), i, p. 43.

⁴⁴ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 23.

academic decorum. Whether or not Bushell's 'silent' translations of some passages from Paléologue's book had, by the contemporary standard, violated the academic rules at that time, we should not forget that most of these transplanted, word-for-word translations are passages in which Chinese art was presented as monotonous, barbaric, or at least rather peculiar from a European point of view. Of all the passages in Bushell's book, these translations by far reflect the most Orientalist gaze, and this quality more or less distinguishes these passages from the rest of the book. The question of why Bushell felt the need to adopt the passages Orientalising Chinese art, and, more importantly, why he ventured to use these translations without referring to their true author—not to mention how his conscience was able to remain clear even when he knew his book was to be translated into French—thus becomes all the more intriguing.

Perhaps the perceived necessity of the presence of these Orientalist views is where the phenomenon termed by Said as 'latent Orientalism' lurks. This unconscious positivism towards Orientalism places the Orient in 'a place isolated from the mainstream of European progress', presenting in every observation on the Orient its separateness, eccentricity, backwardness, and inequality with the West; in addition, statements about the Orient are infused with 'an enunciative capacity that could be used, or rather mobilised, and turned into sensible discourse for the concrete occasion at hand'.⁴⁵ Furthermore, since the latent Orientalism was perceived, consciously or not, by western readers as an actuality, its expression and utterance was very likely regarded as little more than the articulation of some kind of 'universal truth'. As one needs not seek any authority and needs no citation to speak 'universal truths', such as 'the Earth is round', it is possible that Bushell did not feel the need to attribute those

⁴⁵ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 206.

translated passages to Paléologue, because they were nothing but the ‘truth’ that all of his readers would have already acknowledged and expected to see in the writings of an Orientalist. If this assumption is correct, then the places where Paléologue’s words were adopted without acknowledgement should never have been perceived as plagiarism in the first place. Bushell was merely retelling a ‘universal truth’, which had also been uttered by Paléologue—who, like Bushell, was by no means the only person who ‘knew’ the universal truth about the Orient.

This pervasive acknowledgement of the ‘truth about the Orient’, and the strength of Orientalism, makes any search for the ‘original voice’ not only impossible but also pointless. Although Bushell’s ‘borrowing’ from Paléologue can be more or less tracked down, it does not mean that the ‘truths’ detailed by Paléologue can be similarly traced to a certain origin from which the Orientalist mentality sprung and flourished. However, Bushell’s selective employment of Paléologue’s language shows that an unspoken mechanism was at work, one known to every member of the Oriental field who clearly already knew what the universal truth about the Orient was and when it was the time to present it to the reader; a person like Bushell was no exception to this rule, as a man who had resided in the Orient for thirty years. Thus, with Bushell’s utilisation of this Orientalist mechanism, the Chinese art in his book was inevitably Orientalised.

The main point of this section is not to undermine Bushell’s overall achievement in this first English book on ‘Chinese art’ but to illustrate the various ways in which Chinese art was Orientalised in the early twentieth century, and the ways in which Orientalism as a world view reproduced itself. After all, the portions that Bushell borrowed from Paléologue’s book occupied just a tiny portion of the entire manuscript, the vast majority of which was the result of his own work. The book itself received

such an ‘unexpectedly favourable reception’ that an ‘homage’ to Bushell was delivered by M. Chavannes (1865-1918) at the French Academy in 1906, and ironically, a French translation of his revised *Chinese Art* was also undertaken at that time. This French edition finally came out in 1910, entitled, of course, *L’Art Chinois*, having been translated by H. D’Ardenne de Tizac (1877-1932), Conservator of the Musée Cernuschi⁴⁶—whose founder, Henri Cernuschi (1821-1896), interestingly enough had contributed 22 bronze pieces for the illustration of Paléologue’s *L’Art Chinois*.⁴⁷

Yet, no French scholar appears to have noticed the similarities between Bushell’s and Paléologue’s *L’Art Chinois*. Or perhaps they did, but judged the repetitions in Bushell’s book to be merely reiterations of the ‘universal truth’ about the Orient.

The ‘Return’ of Bushell’s *Chinese Art* to China

Bushell’s *Chinese Art*, the knowledge that this long-time British resident of Peking acquired in China and brought back to Britain, eventually made a return trip ‘home’ soon after its release. How the book was going to be received and presented in China, where knowledge about Chinese art had originated and developed—and how the ‘Orientalised’ perception of the value of Chinese art in the book would be viewed and appropriated by the Chinese intellectuals who used the book to facilitate the realisation of their own cultural aspirations—is where the complexity of cultural encounters manifests itself. Central to this process of the intercultural travelling of the same body of ‘text’ (including its text, its images, and the knowledge and cultural values promoted) at this time is the fluid nature of the category of Chinese art, a fluidity which is best illustrated at least as powerfully in the appropriation of pictorial

⁴⁶ Bushell, ‘Preface to second edition’, *Chinese Art* (1924 edition), i, p. vi.

⁴⁷ Paléologue, *L’Art Chinois*, pp. 25, 28, 30, 32, 35, 37, 38, 41, 43, 45, 49, 51, 53, 56, 58, 61, 62, 65-67, 77, 78.

illustrative practices as in the translation of text, with which previous scholarship has been primarily concerned.

The Chinese translation of Bushell's *Chinese Art*, entitled *Zhongguo meishu* 中國美術 in Chinese, was published in 1923 and reprinted in 1934 by the Commercial Press. It was translated by Dai Yue 戴嶽, then a research fellow in the Department of English at Peking University, along with Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培 (1868-1940), one of the university's most renowned principals (1917-1923) in the twentieth century, who was responsible for the final proofreading and approval of Dai's manuscript.⁴⁸ The Chinese translation was originally serialised from 1918 to 1919 in the university's daily news bulletin, *Beijing daxue rikan* 北京大學日刊 (Peking University Daily, or, as the bulletin preferred to call itself, 'Pekin-Universitato Chiutaga Gazeto', Fig. 5-10).⁴⁹ The translation had probably been commissioned by Principal Cai in hopes of propagating his ideas on aesthetic education, and was later integrated into the translation projects undertaken by the National History Compilation Bureau (*Guoshi bianzuan chu* 國史編纂處) at the same university.⁵⁰ Interestingly, Bushell's book seems to have been the only work on Chinese art written in English that was available to the university at that time.⁵¹ Since the library initially had a copy of only the second volume, it was this second volume that was translated and serialised first, and the translation of the first volume was only carried out once the library was able to

⁴⁸ Stephen Bushell, *Zhongguo meishu*, trans. Dai Yue, 1st edn (2 vols., Shanghai, 1923), a copy of which is in Shanghai Library.

⁴⁹ I would like to thank Lu Hsuan-fei for bringing it to my attention. The second volume began to be serialised from 8 June 1918 and completed its serialisation on 21 October of the same year, while the first volume started on 26 February 1919 and finished in the same year on 23 June.

⁵⁰ 'Guoshi bianzuan chu kaihui 國史編纂處開會' ([Minutes of] the Meeting of National History Compilation Bureau), *Beijing daxue rikan*, reprint (Beijing, 1981), 24 June 1918, *ban* 3.

⁵¹ The university library published a catalogue of the books about China written in English that had entered the collection before June 1917; Bushell's book was the only one in the catalogue that was about Chinese art. See 'Tushuguan suocang guanyu Zhongguo zhi yingwen shuji mulu 圖書館所藏關於中國之英文書籍目錄' (Library catalogue of the books written in English regarding China), *Beijing daxue rikan*, 18 March 1918, *ban* 5.

obtain of a copy of it. As it was considered inconvenient to print images in the bulletin, none of the illustrations were reproduced in the serialisation.⁵²

However, the ‘return’ journey of Bushell’s book was by no means made only in the form of translation, and what was not reproduced in the translation’s serialisation is precisely that which had been first, although only partly, presented to the Chinese audience at an earlier period. Prior to the serialisation of Dai’s translation, some of the illustrations exclusively seen in Bushell’s *Chinese Art* had already appeared in the journal *Guocui xuebao* (Chapter 1)—in 1908 to be exact, two years after Bushell had completed the second volume of the museum’s handbook in English, although Bushell’s name and the title of the book were not mentioned in the Chinese journal. As such, Bushell’s book—embodying the author’s ‘Orientalised’ conception of Chinese art, based on both traditional Chinese connoisseurship of art objects and current Western scholarship of Oriental studies, and tailored to suit the particular nature of the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum—thus arrived in China long before the book’s Chinese translation would become available, and began at that time to be integrated into the Chinese conception of ‘Chinese art’. A close look at the appropriation of Bushell’s illustrations by the journal *Guocui xuebao* will reveal that, in an age of growing fascination with the agency of art reproduction, the image played no less an important role than the text in the interactions between China and the then vaguely perceived West—interactions in which the Orientalist gaze from the West was to be received in China as a reassurance of the value of Chinese culture.

Appropriating images

The pictures appropriated from Bushell’s *Chinese Art* are found in the journal

⁵² ‘(Zhongguo meishu) yiwen zai Rikan dengbu (中國美術)譯文在日刊登布’ (Translation of *Chinese Art* published in *Daily*), *Beijing daxue rikan*, 8 June 1918, *ban* 3.

Guocui xuebao in the first issue of 1908 (Issue 4.1), which celebrated the third anniversary of the journal's launch (see Chapter 1). To mark the event, the journal wished to increase the number of reproductions of art objects in the section entitled 'Art Pictures (*meishu tuhua*)', which normally contained only two to four illustrations.⁵³ The publisher (i.e., the Society for Preserving National Learning) announced that it hoped to increase the number of illustrations via a collaboration between the editors and the readers;⁵⁴ indeed, the number of the 'Art Pictures' in that celebratory issue alone added up to thirty three pages, of which eleven pages were reproduced from the illustrations in Bushell's *Chinese Art*. Pictures taken from Bushell's book can also be found in successive issues of the same year, with two appearing in Issue 4.2 and one each in 4.3 and 4.4. In total, fifteen pictures in the journal were appropriated from the illustrations in Bushell's book (Appendix 5-1).

Not a single reference to Bushell's *Chinese Art* was given in this journal, or in any other publications issued by the same publisher; nevertheless, it is certain that these illustrations were taken from Bushell's book. It is unlikely that such a group of pictures which can all be found in a single source should have been gathered from various places. A comparison with the illustrations of the same painting titles in other books also supports such a conclusion. In 1905, for example, Herbert Giles published a book entitled *An Introduction to Chinese Pictorial Art*, which included two paintings that had also been featured in Bushell's book: the 'Admonition Scroll' and the landscape scroll attributed to the renowned Yuan painter Zhao Mengfu (1254-1322).⁵⁵ However, although both books had selected the same painting titles

⁵³ This section began in Issue 4.1(1908), which is the same issue in which illustrations in Bushell's book are found to have been appropriated.

⁵⁴ '*Guocui xuebao disan zhounian dazhudian jingzheng zhuci ji tuhua qi* 國粹學報第三週年大祝典敬徵祝辭及圖畫啓' (*Guocui xuebao* welcomes the contribution of celebratory inscriptions and pictures for the celebration of the third anniversary), in 'Report No. 16', GX, 3.11 (1907), p. 1b.

⁵⁵ Herbert Allen Giles, *An Introduction to the History of Chinese Pictorial Art* (Shanghai, 1905),

for reproduction, the sections of the paintings that were chosen for reproduction were not the same, and, clearly, the *Guocui xuebao* had copied Bushell's selections rather than Giles's (Fig. 5-11, 12). Published in Shanghai, Giles's book might have been a more convenient choice for this Shanghai-based Chinese journal, but it was the illustrations in Bushell's book that were eventually appropriated by the journal. However, although the practice of acknowledging the sources of images seems to have been considered standard protocol by that time—as in the case of Giles's book, in which he expressed his indebtedness to the Japanese art periodical *Kokka* for the permission to use four of their plates in his book's illustration⁵⁶—the editors of the *Guocui xuebao* did not bother to do so; no mentions of Bushell's book can be found anywhere in the journal.

It is not clear how the editors acquired these pictures illustrated in Bushell's book. It is possible that the images taken from Bushell's book were sent by one of the readers as a token of the celebration for the journal's third anniversary; in this case, Bushell's *Chinese Art* did not have to have been physically present in the publisher's hand, or even in China. However, it is more likely that the editorial board had somehow managed to get hold of Bushell's two-volume book, whether by purchase or borrowing. I shall argue that the book's presence in China not only contributed to and perhaps even led to the rise of the whole enterprise of modern art reproduction in early twentieth-century China, but also had a hitherto unnoticed impact on the practice of the presentation of art reproductions and the conception of what should be included under the classification of 'Chinese art'—given that the publisher of the journal *Guocui xuebao* was also the one that launched the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, the first art periodical in China featuring photographic reproductions of objects of

between pp. 16-17, 50-51.

⁵⁶ Giles, 'Preface', *Introduction to Chinese Pictorial Art*, p. vi.

Chinese art (see Chapter 2).

Although it has been proposed in Chapter 2 that the Japanese art publication the *Shinbi taikan* (*Selected Relics of Japanese Art*, 1899-1908) was a possible prototype for this Chinese art periodical—whether in terms of its size, form, use of collotype, and the mentioning of the dimensions of the reproduced objects—Bushell’s book also contributed to some of the presentational and taxonomical practices seen in the *Shenzhou guoguangji*, and may have served as a crucial catalyst that eventually put into motion the attempt to publish reproductions of Chinese art.

First, the publisher’s intention to publish the art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji* was announced in the same issue (4.1, 1908) in which the illustrations from Bushell’s book were first seen in the journal, which should not be viewed as a coincidence.⁵⁷ The predominant presence of illustrations in Bushell’s *Chinese Art*, with 104 plates in Volume I and 135 in Volume II, must have made an impression on the Chinese editors, although they might have had limited command of English. This heavily illustrated two-volume book, with the immediacy provided by photographic images of real objects inserted intermittently into the body of the text, must have seemed to be a good example of using ancient objects as evidence of history, which corresponded to one of the convictions held by the Chinese editors regarding the function of photographic reproductions. Furthermore, the principle used for structuring and grouping the illustrations in Bushell’s book—which places illustrations in the relevant chapters organised by materials of objects—seems to have been taken up by the *Shenzhou guoguangji* as well, which, unlike the chronological arrangement of the illustrations in the *Shinbi taikan*, also categorised the illustrations by the materials used in the reproduced objects.

⁵⁷ ‘*Fakan Shenzhou guoguang ji*’, *GX*, 4.1.

The effort to insert Bushell's illustrations into the journal *Guocui xuebao* also made the publisher realise the importance of, and also problems with, providing information about the dimensions of the reproduced object, although this practice was hardly unknown both in the context of *Shinbi taikan* and of the Chinese journal itself.⁵⁸ In order to make the measurements of the objects in Bushell's book (presented using the imperial system of measurement) understandable to Chinese readers, the journal seems to have converted them into the system used in China (App. 5-1, # 5, 6, 12; Figs. 5-13, -14). However, perhaps soon becoming aware of the regional discrepancies in the Chinese measuring system, the editors later abandoned such a practice and kept the original imperial measurements (*yingchi* 英尺, in Chinese) for other appropriated illustrations (App. 5-1, # 14, 15; Fig. 5-15).⁵⁹ Nevertheless, in an attempt to inscribe the dimensions of these Chinese objects in a pure Chinese space, the publisher further introduced in the inaugural issue of the *Shenzhou guoguangji* a measuring system based on an ancient ruler, said to have been used in the Jin dynasty (286-385), for the objects to be published in the art periodical (Fig. 2-6).⁶⁰ From then on, the information about dimensions became an essential component in this art periodical for the presentation of illustrations and applied to both two- and three-dimensional objects.

The detailed attention paid to the presentation of the illustrations must have carefully followed the examples set by Bushell's book and can also be observed in the translation of captions. Most of the titles of the appropriated images in the *Guocui*

⁵⁸ The first example in the *Guocui xuebao* that gives information about the size of the reproduced artwork is found in Issue 3.8 (1907), regarding a painting, 'A Pine Tree and Rocks' by Huang Daozhou 黃道周 (1585-1646). However, this is the only example seen before the journal's appropriation of Bushell's illustrations; furthermore, the illustration is that of a painting, and such practices were not rare in traditional painting inventories.

⁵⁹ Only five of the 15 illustrations taken from Bushell's book were presented with the dimensions of the reproduced object.

⁶⁰ Shen Zhilu, '*Jin tongchi*'. All articles in this periodical are paginated individually, starting with page 1. A unit is about 1.29 cm long.

xuebao were faithfully translated from English into Chinese, except for the bronze vessel in the shape of a rhinoceros (Fig. 5-13), whose identification had been changed fundamentally from a wine vessel, *tsun* 尊 (*zun*), to a food vessel, *ding* 鼎. In the example of a porcelain dish, the term ‘blue-and-white’ was even rendered literally in Chinese as ‘*lanbai* 藍白’ (‘blue and white’), rather than ‘*qinghua* 青花’ (blue patterned), the term by which this type of porcelain was known in China (Fig. 5-16).

However, the use of the five-character compound ‘*Zhongguo meishupin* 中國美術品’ (Chinese art object) to describe all of the objects in the appropriated illustrations except those of painting was an unprecedented practice in the journal. It should be noted that the term ‘Chinese art object’ itself does not appear in Bushell’s book; therefore, it was not a product of translation. Adding *Zhongguo* (China, or Chinese) to the three-character compound ‘*meishupin*’ (‘art object’)—which had already been used in the journal since Issue 2.8 (1906)⁶¹—was in fact quite unusual in a context where the published objects should without a doubt be understood as being ‘Chinese’. Although the journal was a great advocate of the preservation of national essence, there had never been a need to specify that the national essence in discussion was ‘Chinese’. A more likely expression in a context where the editors were addressing their fellow Chinese readers would have been something like ‘our nation’s art objects’ (*wuguo meishupin* 吾國美術品), rather than ‘Chinese art objects’; the former is a statement meant to consolidate the brotherhood, the sense of community shared by fellow countrymen, whereas the latter was used to distinguish oneself from the Other in terms of nation-state. Nevertheless, while the use of this five-character compound might have looked like a statement from an outsider’s point of view, it also made the statement itself appear to be neutral, objective, and disinterested, free of any partiality

⁶¹ ‘*Zheng meishupin zhonglei*’, *GX*, 2.8.

powered by nationalism.

This disinterested tone, I believe, was to a great extent inspired by Bushell's book, for this five-character compound *Zhongguo meishupin* was applied, as if it were a special label, only to the 'non-painting' illustrations taken from Bushell's *Chinese Art*. Other non-painting objects illustrated in the same journal issue in the section of 'Art Pictures' did not have such a label (Fig. 5-17). The application of this compound hence shows a strong connection to Bushell's book *Chinese Art*, since the items taken from the Bushell book were perceived specifically to be '*Chinese art* objects'. Consequently, it can be almost certain that Bushell's book was physically present in the editors' hands, given that the book title itself to a certain degree inspired the coinage of the compound '*Zhongguo meishupin*'.

Furthermore, this compound was without exception followed by a 'sub-label' indicating the type of material or the genre of production into which the illustrated object could be categorised, such as *loujinqi* 鑲金器 (bronze), *diao* (carving), etc. (App. 5-1). These 'sub-labels' more or less corresponded to the chapter titles in Bushell's book under which the illustrated object had been originally placed—except for the lacquer screen (App. 5-1, #8), sub-labelled as 'lacquer' but originally having come from the chapter on 'Carving' in Bushell's book. Even in the case where the *Guocui xuebao* miscategorised the drawings of 'sericulture' and 'silk weaving' (App. 5-1, # 10) as 'embroidery work', the mistake itself was most likely to have resulted from the fact that these two illustrations had been originally placed in Bushell's book in the chapter on 'Textiles', which further supports the theory that Bushell's *Chinese Art* was physically available to the editorial board.

It is perfectly possible that the editors were able to get hold of the latest publications from Britain, given that some illustrations of natural history (*bowu*)

painted by Cai Youshou and published between 1907 and 1908 were also copied from James Denis Hird's *A Picture Book of Evolution*, which had just been published in London in 1906 and 1907.⁶² According to Cheng Meibao, Cai Youshou had befriended William John Bainbridge Fletcher (1879-?), then a translator at the British Legation in Shanghai, and who might have been the key figure through whom Cai was supplied with these books of natural history.⁶³ As such, it was very likely that the editors of the *Guocui xuebao* might have borrowed a copy of Bushell's book through Cai's connection with Fletcher.

It should be noted that the term '*Zhongguo meishupin*' was not applied to painting, not even to those whose illustrations were taken from Bushell's *Chinese Art*.⁶⁴ However, given the prominent position occupied by 'Painting' in the section of 'Art Pictures'—being presented first in order, and from which category the greatest number of items had been appropriated from Bushell's book (App. 5-1. # 1-4)—the status of 'Painting' among all the art forms was absolutely without rival in the value system of the *Guocui xuebao*. Even for those 'non-paintings', the so-called 'Chinese art objects', many of them were probably chosen, more than anything else, for their pictorial nature. Among the eleven objects labelled as 'Chinese art objects', four could be termed 'images *on* objects', as the pictorial representation was the overpowering ornamentation on the body of the object (Fig. 5-16, 18, 19, 21); furthermore, one was actually a drawing in disguise—that is, the illustration of sericulture and silk-weaving, mistaken for 'embroidery work' (Fig. 5-19). Thus, we may conclude that the significance of 'Painting' as a category was so well established that it had already been perceived as a registered category in the then-emerging classification of art in

⁶² These appropriated illustrations were taken not only from Hird's book, but also from *The Royal Natural History* by Richard Lydekker (1849-1915), published in London in 1897. See Cheng Meibao, '*Fuzhi zhish*', pp. 97-102.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 104-105.

⁶⁴ There is no illustration of calligraphy in Bushell's book, so the discussion here centred on 'painting'.

China. As such, it did not have to enhance its value by being attached to a generalising term other than ‘painting’ itself.

Compared with ‘Painting’, which enjoyed great prominence above all forms of art in China, the term *Zhongguo meishupin* (Chinese art object) seems more likely to have been an explanation asserting the yet-unnoticed value of the object illustrated, rather than a widely-acknowledged label used to discriminate against those objects without it. Objects with this label were placed at the end of the ‘Art Pictures’ section, following illustrations of paintings from Bushell’s book, which came first, and those of objects sent from readers. Such arrangement not only indicates the journal’s association with Bushell’s *Chinese Art*—as the appropriated images were presented all together, except for those of painting—but also suggests the emergence of a new way of grouping which had never been seen in China: that is, the category of ‘art object’ (*meishupin*). Although the term ‘*meishupin*’ first appeared in the journal *Guocui xuebao* as early as 1906 (see Ch. 1, p. 37),⁶⁵ it was only after the celebratory issue that the term *meishupin* became a rubric for grouping pictures, parallel to ‘epigraphy’, ‘calligraphy’, and ‘painting’, in order to accommodate objects outside these categories (Fig. 5-22).⁶⁶

Furthermore, as the ‘sub-labels’ used in the descriptions of the appropriated illustrations were informed by the original groupings in Bushell’s book, the taxonomical approach seen in Bushell’s book thus entered the native discourse on ‘art’ and became integrated into the traditional way of grouping material objects in China. Bearing this relationship in mind, the form and conception of the categorisation in the *Meishu congshu* series (1911-18; see Chapter 3) appears even more intriguing. Released as a collection of existing texts on art by the same publisher as the journal

⁶⁵ ‘*Zheng meishupin zhonglei*’, *GX*, 2.8.

⁶⁶ See ‘Contents’, *GX*, 5.2, 5.6 (1909), 6.4, 6.6 (1910).

Guocui xuebao and the art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji*, *Meishu congshu* explored the space which the editors thought should have been occupied by knowledge of *meishu*. Under the heading of *meishu*, categories such as ‘Calligraphy and Painting’, ‘Carving and Seals, with Studio Objects Appended’, ‘Porcelain, Ceramics, Jade and Stone’, ‘Literary Art’, and ‘Miscellaneous Records’ were first proposed to demarcate this newly conceived domain (see Ch. 2, p. 116).⁶⁷ Although it is difficult to discern a one-to-one relation between Bushell’s book and the book series *Meishu congshu*, the shared taxonomical approach more or less gives resonance to the encounter in which Bushell’s *Chinese Art* met with the avid Chinese aspiration to establish the native category of *meishu*—a desire to integrate traditionally cherished objects and material enjoyments into the new concept of ‘art’.

Beyond translation

It is difficult to explain why only fifteen out of the 238 illustrations in Bushell’s *Chinese Art* were selected for inclusion in the *Guocui xuebao*. Equally perplexing is the question of why certain categories in Bushell’s book contained illustrations that were not at all selected for use by the Chinese editors, such as those in the chapters of ‘Sculpture’, ‘Architecture’, ‘Carving in jade and other stone’, ‘Glass’ and ‘Jewellery’.⁶⁸ The absence of such images from certain chapters in Bushell’s book should not be understood as an objection to the consideration of these categories as ‘Chinese art’, since the Chinese editors might also have taken into account the quality and cultural esteem of the illustrated objects themselves, not just the category alone. Nevertheless, from the illustrations that actually were appropriated, one can roughly

⁶⁷ ‘Lüeli’, *MC*, 1.1 (1911), p. 1b.

⁶⁸ The chapter ‘Lacquer’ is not counted on this list, since the lacquer screen (Fig. 5-17) illustrated in *Guocui xuebao* was considered to be a piece of lacquer, even though it was originally from the chapter on ‘Carvings’ in Bushell’s book.

ascertain the criteria the editors had applied to the selection of images. In addition to the pictorial nature of the objects illustrated in the *Guocui xuebao* and the already established high esteem for ‘Painting’, the idea of introducing treasures that had been looted and kept by Westerners also played an important part in the selection process.⁶⁹ Although almost all of the illustrations in Bushell’s book were objects then collected in the museums in Britain, in the *Guocui xuebao*, only the paintings and two objects of cloisonné enamel (Fig. 5-13, 22) were specifically labelled as being in the ‘Collection of a museum in Britain’ (*Yingguo bowuyuan cang* 英國博物院藏).⁷⁰ The two pieces of enamel were even specified as being part of the ‘Former collection of the Yiheyuan (Garden of Nurtured Harmony)’ (*Yiheyuan jiucang* 頤和園舊藏), evoking certain sad, shameful, and insulting memories of China from recent years. Interestingly, the original English caption says only, ‘Summer Palace’, which in the English texts of this period often refers to Yuanmingyuan 圓明園 (Garden of Perfect Brightness)—sacked by the Anglo-French joint expedition in 1860—although the term was applied to more than one imperial garden.⁷¹ However, the Chinese interpreters tended to link the term to a more recent event, taking this ‘Summer Palace’ to be ‘Yiheyuan’, which was partly destroyed by the Eight-Nation Alliance in 1900. The Chinese translation of Bushell’s *Chinese Art* by Dai Yue, published in 1923,

⁶⁹ For the cultural meaning of the Western ‘looting’ in China in the late nineteenth century, see James Hevia, ‘Loot’s Fate’, *History and Anthropology*, 6.4 (1994), pp. 319-345; and *English Lessons: The Pedagogy of Imperialism in Nineteenth-century China* (Durham, London, Hong Kong, 2003) by the same author.

⁷⁰ It should be noted that the Chinese ‘*Yingguo bowuyuan*’ could have also meant the current British Museum. However, since the two enamel pieces from the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum were also labelled as such, I have translated the term as ‘museum in Britain’ to avoid confusion.

⁷¹ The term ‘Summer Palace’ was used indiscriminately by Westerners to refer to a group of gardens used as an imperial summer resort and situated some miles to the north-west of Peking. There were in fact four separate gardens: Jingmingyuan (Garden of Quietude and Clarity), Changchunyuan (Garden of Everlasting Spring), Yuanmingyuan, and Wanshoushan (Hill of Longevity). Of these, Wanshoushan was rebuilt and renamed Yuheyuan (Garden of Peace and Harmony in Old Age) in 1889 and is generally known today as the New Summer Palace. See Pearce, *Photographs of Peking*, pp. 110-111. As foreigners then would mistakenly confuse the site of Wanshoushan with Yuanmingyuan, it was not surprising that the Chinese people in the early twentieth century would have regarded the ‘Summer Palace’ referred to in Western texts as being ‘Yiheyuan’.

reflects the same perception; all the mentions of ‘Summer Palace’ from Bushell’s book are invariably translated into Chinese as ‘Yiheyuan’, even in the places where Bushell had specified it as being ‘Yuanmingyuan’.⁷²

The discovery of *Guocui xuebao*’s appropriation of Bushell’s illustrations exemplifies just one of the many possible ways in which cultural encounters were able to take place in a period where the translation of a text was not readily available. The introduction of photographic printing methods not only facilitated the reproduction of the illustrations in Bushell’s book, but also freed the journal from the burden of translation, in which the structure, priority, rhetorical devices, and stigmatised opinions of the original text would have been more likely to have been kept intact. While the Chinese translation of 1923 was obliged to reproduce Bushell’s Orientalist gaze—whether willingly or unwillingly—the editors of the journal *Guocui xuebao* were able not only to remain ignorant of the unpleasant parts in the book, but also to impose their own views on the selected illustrations that they found suitable to introduce and reproduce. Although the physical presence of Bushell’s *Chinese Art* may have inspired the presentation of the illustrations in the *Guocui xuebao* and the art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji*, the order and priority of Bushell’s book was completely rearranged in the presentation of these appropriated illustrations, in which ‘Painting’ was no longer placed at the bottom, but at the top; ‘Sculpture’ and ‘Architecture’, which appear at the beginning in Bushell’s book, had no visibility; and most of the chosen objects had pictorial representations to accompany them. The views of Chinese architecture’s being monotonous, of Chinese bronzes’ being innately barbaric, and of Chinese painting as undergoing a decline were not received positively by the editors. The gaze that orientalised Chinese art for western audiences was

⁷² See Bushell, *Chinese Art* (1st edn), ii, p. 7 and Stephen Bushell, *Zhongguo meishu*, trans. Dai Yue, 2nd edn (2 vols., Shanghai, 1934), ii, p. 6. National Taiwan University Library has a copy of it.

therefore missing in the first Chinese reception of Bushell's book.

Furthermore, Bushell's book was most likely to be received in China as evidence of the attention that Westerners had paid to Chinese art, and hence was used to call for public awareness of the preservation and appreciation of Chinese art objects. The presentation of the illustrations taken from Bushell's book in the journal *Guocui xuebao* was accompanied by the concept of a 'Chinese' art object. This concept, together with the mention of the foreign museum that housed Chinese art, introduced a tone of objectivity into the discourse about art in China—one in which Chinese art was not only the national patrimony that should be cherished by the whole nation but also an artistic heritage that could be appreciated universally. And the rhetoric, often seen in this period, that emphasised 'even the Westerners, the foreigners, outsiders, knew more about the true value of Chinese art' on the one hand was used to inspire awareness of and confidence in the Chinese artistic tradition. On the other hand, it was used to urge caution concerning foreigners' buying and exporting art works from China and to justify the necessity of preserving national patrimony, as shown in the prefaces to the art periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji* and the book series *Meishu congshu* (see Chapters 2 and 3). Not only was the Orientalist gaze that might potentially have been inherited from Bushell's book at this time merely missing, but the very existence of a book like this was also perceived as a reassurance of the value of Chinese art, rather than a systematic treatment of Chinese art as knowledge subject to the authority of Western Orientalist scholars' observation and representation.⁷³

In establishing the discursive relationship between Bushell's *Chinese Art* and the art publishing enterprises initiated by the publishing arm of the Chinese Society for

⁷³ The same interpretation of the foreigners' interests in Chinese culture can be found in the section 'Aiguo suibi 愛國隨筆' (Patriotic notes) in this journal, which has been discussed in Lydia Liu, 'Rethinking Culture and National Essence', *Translingual Practices*, p. 246.

Preserving National Learning, one may of course find that some precedents for the practices discussed above had already existed in China's own tradition. For instance, the mentioning of the illustrated object's dimensions was not only seen in Chinese collectors' painting catalogues but also in the Japanese art periodical *Shinbi taikan*, and the taxonomical approach to classifying Chinese artworks was not alien to the traditional bibliographic classification system in China (see Chapter 3). However, as the Chinese editors gained reassurance of the value of Chinese art from the attention paid to it by westerners, the traditional practices could also simply have been reaffirmed by Bushell's application of a seemingly similar approach.

Compared to the impact of the physical presence of Bushell's book on the discourse of art in China before the textual contents of the book were introduced, the full Chinese translation of Bushell's *Chinese Art*, combining the text and the image, seems to have resonated less strongly in Chinese art historiography. The book seems to have been well received during the first decade after its publication, undergoing three printings within five years and with a reprint issued in 1934.⁷⁴ After *Chinese Art* was translated into Chinese, Bushell's name began to be known to the Chinese reader. However, the Chinese rendition of his name was not quite fixed, in that he was first known as Busuier 布綏爾 in the serialised translation in the *Peking University Daily*, and then Baixieer 白謝爾 in the back advertisement of the 1923 edition, Boxier 波希爾 in the 1934 reprint, and Baxiao 拔曉 and Puxiu 蒲休 in other books.⁷⁵ The inconsistency in the rendition of the original author's name can probably be viewed as

⁷⁴ See the imprint page of the 1934 edition (National Taiwan University Library).

⁷⁵ 'Baxiao' is seen in Liu Zifen 劉子芬, 'Zixu 自序' (Self-preface), in *Zhuyuan taoshuo* 竹園陶說 'Discourse on Ceramics of the Bamboo Garden' [prefaced in 1915], *MC*, 4.10 (Shanghai, 1936), p. 1 (1a). 'Puxiu' appears in Yu Fu 虞復, *Lidai Zhongguo huaxue zhushu mulu* 歷代中國畫學著述目錄 'Catalogue of the writings on Chinese painting through the ages' (Beijing, 1958), pp. 31, 39, 95. The variety of the renditions of Bushell's name is probably due to the fact that the original 1923 edition gives in its imprint page the original author's name in English while providing the publisher's translation in the back advertisement of the book, which may not necessarily have been noticed by the reader. 'Baxiao' and 'Puxiu' are probably rendered by readers themselves.

a result of the book's lack of discursive power in Chinese art historiography. However, in spite of its being regarded by Chinese reviewers merely as a 'record' rather than a real 'study',⁷⁶ or as 'containing quite a few errors',⁷⁷ Bushell's book always attracted a positive spin; it was used as proof of the statement, as Liu Zifen put it, that 'Foreigners who otherwise look down on our nation cannot help being in awe of our art and literature'.⁷⁸ As such, the Orientalist gaze in Bushell's book was once again missed by the Chinese reader, even in the entirety of its comprehensive translation.

⁷⁶ Aida Yuan Wong, *Parting the Mist*, p. 39. z

⁷⁷ Liu Zifen, 'Zixu', p. 1a.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1a. [外人每輕視吾國，至於美術藝文則不能不加嘆服。]

Conclusion

Introducing into China a new, foreign and, more importantly, ‘authentic’ Western idea of ‘art’, was perhaps not as important in the years leading to the establishment of Republican China as reframing existent cultural practices through the appropriation of the neologism ‘*meishu*’. The meaning of ‘*meishu*’ at this time was not entirely contingent upon the degree to which the ‘authentic’ European concept of ‘art’ was grasped by each individual, but to a greater extent depended on how the very idea of ‘*meishu*’ was conceived and claimed as also authentically Chinese. This is particularly true of the conception of ‘*meishu*’ in *Zhenglüe*, where this neologism was understood as ‘fine skills’ purely on the basis of the literal meaning of its two constituent characters in Chinese, an understanding which sought recourse to Chinese language instead of any foreign tongues as its source of authority, through which a sense of cultural authenticity could be maintained. Accordingly, each of the publishing projects studied in this thesis is viewed as a form of cultural reproduction which aimed at replicating, reiterating and preserving a certain quality perceived as authentic to the reproduced original. The success of a reproductive practice in sustaining itself in a given discursive field hence relies to a great extent on the reception and recognition of this implied quality of authenticity.

As such, unlike previous scholarship on the early history of ‘*meishu*’ in China, this thesis does not measure the disparate statements on ‘*meishu*’ by a singular European notion of ‘art’; instead, it takes the semantic field of ‘*meishu*’ as a site where different views on this same term contested against each other, and observes the ways in which cultural authenticity was argued in each case. This approach thus takes into consideration the cultural endeavours behind some seemingly strange understandings

of the term '*meishu*', and offers an interpretative framework within which the subsequent recognition or rejection of these statements can be analysed by their strategic approaches to claiming cultural authenticity.

In view of the fact that '*meishu*' and '*yishu*', two terms closely associated with the concept of 'art' in China, have now become almost undifferentiated in usage in modern Chinese, this thesis not only looks into the verbal statements on '*meishu*' in the texts of the twentieth century but also pays a special attention to the material practices related to the creation of this discursive field, such as the materiality of art reproductions and the collation of writings on art. Although a retrieval of the past is almost unattainable, it is still hoped that such an approach will help to gain a better comprehension of the ways in which these two terms shaped each other's meaning.

Each of the five chapters in this thesis discusses a distinct publishing project which, as a text as well as an object, has its own unique problems of production and, through its very production, presents a different perspective that will broaden the horizon of our enquiry. Chapter 1 focuses on the publication of the journal *Guocui xuebao* where the aspiration to create an equivalent category of 'art' in China was found situated in the discourse of 'national essence'. 'Art' was thus believed to serve as one of the most important attributes of the strength and power of a nation, and such a belief justified the search for this category of 'art' within China's own tradition. Therefore, keeping the integrity of the native culture while, to a certain degree, engaging with a newly imported Western idea, became a preoccupation shared by all the publishing projects studied in this thesis. It is this preoccupation that necessitates this thesis's reading of these publishing endeavours from the perspective of cultural reproduction.

Chapter 2 explores the enterprise of photographic art reproduction in early twentieth-century China, an enterprise established for widening visual access to the

nation's objects of art in the hope of promoting their preservation and appreciation. A study of the materiality of the periodical *Shenzhou guoguangji* reveals that the cultural authenticity argued in this periodical lay not just in the photographic reproduction of Chinese objects of art, but more importantly in the cultural practices of art appreciation centred on the specific medium of 'painting'. Meanwhile, the business in the market for photographic art reproductions also competed with each other by aligning themselves with different claims about the authenticity in an ideal copy, as seen in the advertising campaigns between Youzheng Books and the House of SG. While the former stressed the importance of the authenticity of the originals, the latter appropriated the traditional discourse on the copy and, accordingly, emphasised more the presentation of the reproduction itself, although it still took the authenticity of the original as an a priori assumption. Nevertheless, since the use of *xuan* paper in collotype reproduction was seen as an expression of national identity and hence authentically 'Chinese', this practice became so powerful a claim to cultural authenticity that it was soon taken up by many a publishing house and made previous disputes on the authenticity in a photographic reproduction less pronounced.

Chapter 3 turns the attention to the book collection *Meishu congshu* to illustrate the transition from the traditional concept of 'yishu' to the concept of 'meishu'. By equating the material pursuits and lifestyle enjoyed by the literati with 'meishu', the *Meishu congshu* appropriated a hint of the European aesthetic theory which sees art as those objects exterior to the self and capable of invoking refined sensory pleasures, an understanding significantly different from the previous conception of 'yishu', which, as seen in the imperial book collection *Four Treasuries*, is known as pertaining to skills and accomplishments of the literati. The *Meishu congshu*, a project appearing to reproduce the traditional concept of 'yishu', was in fact to a certain extent engaging

with a new foreign idea. However, insofar as the concept of ‘art’ seen in the *Meishu congshu* was not entirely in agreement with that which were thought to be ‘authentic’ European practices, such an understanding would eventually be consigned to marginality in a later period, when grasping the original and ‘authentic’ European idea was regarded as a more urgent concern for intellectuals, and reproducing Western ideas became a more highly valued cultural trope.

The same anxiety that drove to the periphery the conception of ‘*meishu*’ seen in the *Meishu congshu* also led to the oblivion of Li Fang’s *Zhenglüe* as the first ‘History of Chinese *Meishu*’. Viewed as an alternative story of Chinese art in this thesis, *Zhenglüe* is made by reproducing a traditional narrative mode of history writing which was not at all strange or illegitimate in its time. However, from the 1910s statements about the idea of ‘art’ began to be measured by whether the statement complied with that which was believed to be the original and authentic European definition. As such, Li Fang’s endeavour of writing a history of Chinese art failed to be appreciated. Nevertheless, the extraordinary understanding of the idea of ‘*meishu*’ in *Zhenglüe* as ‘fine skills’, and its close association with ‘industry’ still lingers in some important texts written in the early twentieth century. As such, without acknowledging Li’s effort, it would be impossible to understand why there were statements which believed that the advancement of *meishu* would benefit the development of Chinese industry.¹

Finally, Chapter 5 reveals that some of the illustrations originally seen in Stephen Bushell’s *Chinese Art* had been appropriated and reproduced in the Chinese journal

¹ For example, the statement ‘without the improvement of painting, there would be no industry’ made by Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858-1927), one of the foremost late Qing reformists, is clearly in line with Li Fang’s conception of *meishu*; see Kang, ‘*Wanmu caotang canghuamu* 萬木草堂藏畫目’ (Catalogue of the paintings collected in Hut of Ten Thousand Trees), in Lang and Shui (eds.), *Ershi shiji*, pp. 21-25 (22). Lin Shu also argues that the genres of painting most relevant to ‘*meishu*’ are ‘designs of Western machinery’ and ‘geometric graphs’; see Lin, *op. cit.*, p. 1b. These statements can be viewed as belonging to the same genealogy as *Zhenglüe*.

Guocui xuebao long before the book's Chinese translation came into being; and that Bushell's book, to a certain extent, may have contributed to the launch of the enterprises of art reproduction in China. Also presented in this chapter is an exceptional example illustrating how Orientalism reproduced itself by means of plagiarism, a practice based on the conviction that the Orientalised vision of Chinese art was the truth of the Orient. However, such an 'authentic' quality of Chinese art held by Orientalists was not shared by the Chinese journal, and was thus absent in the journals' appropriation of Bushell's book. Therefore, following up Craig Clunas's argument that the history of 'Chinese art' (as a category) begins in nineteenth-century Europe and North America, this thesis argues that the construction of the notion of 'Chinese art' in China is a product of negotiation in which an assertion of the cultural authenticity perceived by the Chinese also played a part.² With a discussion on the presentation of the illustrations in the *Guocui xuebao*, this chapter further demonstrates the necessity to map out the trilateral relationship between China, Japan and the European West, for understanding the complicated historical context within which cross-cultural exchanges of ideas took place in this period.

This thesis hence proposes that in early twentieth-century China there were at least three modes of attempts to approach this newly introduced but vaguely grasped Western idea of 'art': art as the elegant lifestyle of the literati (Chapter 3); as the ultimate deployment of human skills (Chapter 4); and as that which was so defined in the West (as seen in the statements from people such as Lu Xun and Lü Cheng). Although, in retrospect, history seems to have developed in line with the third mode (since this particular notion of 'art' has been generally regarded as present in the

² Craig Clunas, *Art in China*, p. 9.

‘source language’),³ some of the ideas originating in the former two modes still linger in the Chinese consciousness, and, through the physical existence of the objects embodying these ideas (such as art reproductions, written texts, book collections, and dictionaries), possibly continue to interact with our present perceptions of ‘*meishu*’ and ‘*yishu*’.

An articulation of the legacy of these disparate utterances will help to understand the relationship between the terms ‘*meishu*’ and ‘*yishu*’ in the texts produced in the early twentieth century, particularly those written in classical Chinese.⁴ The identification of these three modes of utterance can also serve as a basis on which a genealogy of the three modes can be established. Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis, my study of photographic art reproductions will perhaps help to shift the focus away from the much discussed aspect of ‘realism’ to ‘originality’ when it comes to discussions over the impact that photography might have had on artistic discourse in early twentieth-century China. This shift of focus on the discourse of ‘originality’ may in turn shed a new light on the works by painters such as Jin Cheng 金城 (1878-1926), the leading champion in the painting circle in Beijing, who aspired to stage a renaissance of Chinese painting by a return to the past. Echoing the current wave of rethinking the nature of art historiography, this thesis also offers a perspective which does not entirely depreciate the art historiographical tradition in China, and regards its abandonment in the present day as a result of the shift of episteme rather than of inherent weakness. This thesis thus adds a nuanced perspective to works

³ I use ‘source language’ here to stress its implicit concepts of authenticity, origin, and influence.

⁴ For instance, without an awareness of how ‘*yishu*’ came to be known as ‘skills’ and also ‘art’, the repeated use of the term ‘*yishu*’ in the article ‘*Wenrenhua zhi jiazhi* 文人畫之價值’ (‘The value of literati painting’), one of the most important modern texts on the theory of the literati painting in China by the renowned painter, Chen Hengke 陳衡恪 (1876-1932), can be very confusing, because at some places in the text this term means ‘skill’ and some others ‘art’. This text was originally published in 1921 in *Huixue zazhi* 繪學雜誌, or ‘Journal of the study of painting’, and later collected in Yu Anlan (ed.), *Hualun congkan*, v, individually paginated, pp. 1-4.

aiming at deconstructing the premises and preoccupations embedded in the Western tradition of art history.⁵ It is hoped that this thesis will prompt a more positive revaluation of the art historiographical tradition in China, a revaluation less laden with the preoccupations which have characterised the practice of art history since the nineteenth century.

Although the relationship between the three aforementioned modes of approaching the notion of 'art' are described in this thesis as competing for discursive dominance, and their subsequent failures in being accepted as the norm are explained from the perspective of the shift in the locus of cultural authenticity, the social foundation behind this discursive competition still awaits further exploration. This thesis, which has touched upon the connection between art reproductions and the contemporary antique market, between patrons of art reproductions and collectors hunting in the art market, is merely a preliminary sketch of the scene. A study into the social network woven by art patrons, dealers, artists, as well as objects, will surely enrich our understanding of the complicated interrelations between different utterances of 'art', art historiographies and artistic practices in China, and help to investigate these ideas and practices' continuity, mutation, and repression down to the present time.

⁵ Such as Donald Preziosi, *Rethinking Art History: Meditations on A Coy Science* (New Haven and London, 1989); James Elkins, *Stories of Art* (NY and London, 2002); and Jas' Elsner, 'Art History as Ekphrasis', *Art History*, 33.1 (2010), pp. 10-27.

Appendix 2-1 Early Chinese art periodicals

Name	Date	Publisher	Editor(s)	Total volumes
<i>Shenzhou guoguangji</i> 神州國光集 Collected National Glories of the Divine Land	July 1908 – 1912	<i>Shenzhou guoguangshe</i> 神州國光社 House of the National Glories of the Divine Land	Deng Shi 鄧實	21
<i>Zhongguo minghua</i> 中國名畫 Famous Chinese Paintings	November 1908 – 1924 (?)	<i>Youzheng shuju</i> 有正書局 Youzheng Books	Di Baoxian 狄葆賢	40
<i>Shenzhou daguanlu</i> 神州大觀錄 Collection of the Grand View of the Divine Land	1912 – 1922	<i>Shenzhou guoguangshe</i> 神州國光社 House of the National Glories of the Divine Land	Deng Shi 鄧實	16
<i>Mingren shuhua shanji</i> 名人書畫扇集 Collection of Painted and Calligraphic Fans by the Acclaimed	1914 – 1915	<i>Wenming shuju</i> 文明書局 Wenming Books	Lian Quan 廉泉	60
<i>Yiyuan zhenshangji</i> 藝苑真賞集 True Appreciation in the Field of Art	1915 – 1916 (?)	<i>Yiyuan zhenshangshe</i> 藝苑真賞社 House of Yiyuan zhenshang	Qin Wenjin 秦文錦	At least 10
<i>Mingren Shuhua</i> 名人書畫 Paintings and Calligraphy by the Acclaimed	1916 – 1922 (?)	<i>Shangwu yinshuguan</i> 商務印書館 Commercial Press	Wu Daiqiu 吳待秋	At least 23
<i>Guhua daguan</i> 古畫大觀 Imposing Arrays of Ancient Paintings	1916 – 1922 (?)	<i>Guohua shuju</i> 國華書局 Guohua Books	Lu Yanghui 陸養晦, Gong Shaoqin 貢少 芹	? (unseen)

Appendix 4-1 List of editions of *Zhenglüe*

I. Putative editions

Putative editions		Publishing information	Printing method	PS
A	First 3 editions	From 1914 to 1926 (the year the author died)	Movable lead type	5000 copies in total
B	Li Dachong edition	Sometime after 1926 (the year of Li Fang's death)	Woodblock	

II. Extant early editions

Extant early editions		Publishing information	Printing method	Features	Holding library/ person
A	1914 edition	Tianjin, 10th lunar month, 1914	Movable lead type	5 chapters in 2 volumes, with a photographic portrait of the author	Craig Clunas, Shanghai Library
	1915 edition	Tianjin: Mochuang jingshe 墨幢精舍, 1st lunar month, 1915	Movable lead type	5 chapters in 2 volumes, with a photographic portrait of the author	Shanghai Library (線普長 96569-70)
B	Wenyoutang A edition	Beijing: Wenyoutang, before 1936 ?	Woodblock	<u>6</u> chapters in <u>3</u> volumes, <u>without</u> a photographic portrait of the author (Chapter 6 contains only <u>3</u> entries,)	National Taiwan University (this copy is reproduced from the copy held in the library of Chinese University, Hong

					Kong)
	Wenyoutang B edition	Beijing: Wenyoutang, 1936 ?	Woodblock	<u>6</u> chapters in <u>4</u> volumes, <u>without</u> a photographic portrait of the author (Chapters 6 has <u>11</u> entries)	SOAS Library, Fu Ssu-nien Library (Academia Sinica, Taipei), Shanghai library

III. Modern reprints

Modern reprints		Publishing information	Printing method	Features	Holding library
A	Zhonghua edition	Taipei: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1968 and 1983	Photographic reproduction of a lead-type edition	5 Chapters, without a photographic portrait of the author	Library of Institute of Chinese Literature and Philosophy (Academia Sinica)
B	Guangwen edition	In the book series 'Hanxue huibian 漢學彙編', Taipei: Guangwen shuju 廣文書局, 1978	Photographic reproduction of a woodblock edition (Wenyoutang B edition)	6 Chapters, reproduced from the copy held in the Fu Ssu-nien Library	Library of Institute of Chinese Literature and Philosophy (Academia Sinica)

Appendix 4-2 Texts cited in *Zhenglüe*

#	Num. of occurrences	Title	Date	Author	Genre	PS
1	47	嘉定竹人錄	Qing	金元鈺	Thematic biography	MC 2.5 (06, 1913)
2	46	陽羨名陶錄	Qing	吳騫	Thematic biography	MC 1.3 (04, 1911)
3	36	蘿窗小牘	Cont.	?	<i>Biji</i> or others	Qing stories
4	21	墨林今話	Qing	蔣寶齡	Thematic biography	1911
5	18	飛鴻堂印人傳	Qing	汪啓淑	Thematic biography	
6	17	揚州畫舫錄	Qing	李斗	<i>Biji</i> or others	
7	12	前塵夢影錄	Qing	徐康	<i>Biji</i> or others	MC 2.6 (07, 1913)
8	11	蘇州府志			Gazetteer	
9	11	畫林新咏	Qing	陳文述	Thematic biography	
10	9	竹个叢鈔	Qing	?	<i>Biji</i> or others	Qing stories
11	8	遵生八牋	Ming	高濂	<i>Biji</i> or others	
12	8	國朝書史	Cont.	李放	Thematic biography	
13	6	張燕昌陽羨陶說	Qing	張燕昌	Thematic records	
14	6	墨香居畫識	Qing	馮金柏	Thematic biography	
15	5	池北偶談	Qing	王士禎	<i>Biji</i> or others	
16	5	廣陽雜記	Qing	劉獻廷	<i>Biji</i> or others	
17	5	朱炎陶說	Qing	朱炎	Thematic records	MC 2.7 (02, 1914)
18	5	松江府志			Gazetteer	
19	5	無聲詩史	Qing	姜紹書	Thematic	

					biography	
20	5	元史			Standard history	
21	4	舊學齋筆記	Cont.	李葆洵	<i>Biji</i> or others	
22	4	茶餘客話	Qing	阮葵生	<i>Biji</i> or others	
23	4	清祕藏	Ming	張應文	<i>Biji</i> or others	MC 1.5 (06, 1911)
24	4	輟耕錄	Ming	陶宗儀	<i>Biji</i> or others	
25	4	四巧工傳	Cont.	黃賓虹	Thematic biography	GX 5.7 (1909)
26	4	李元度		李元度 1821-1887	Personal source	
27	3	今世說	Qing	王昶	<i>Biji</i> or others	
28	3	尖陽叢筆	Qing	吳騫	<i>Biji</i> or others	
29	3	見聞隨筆	Qing	齊學裘	<i>Biji</i> or others	
30	3	享金簿	Qing	孔尚任	<i>Biji</i> or others	MC 1.7 (08, 1911)
31	3	妮古錄	Ming	陳繼儒	<i>Biji</i> or others	MC 1.3 (04, 1911)
32	3	居易錄	Qing	王士禎	<i>Biji</i> or others	
33	3	思勉齋集	Ming	徐允祿	<i>Biji</i> or others	
34	3	秋園雜佩	Qing	陳貞慧	<i>Biji</i> or others	MC 1.5 (06, 1911)
35	3	郎潛紀聞	Qing	陳康祺	<i>Biji</i> or others	
36	3	桃溪客語	Qing	吳騫	<i>Biji</i> or others	
37	3	清儀閣題跋	Qing	張廷濟	<i>Biji</i> or others	MC 3.1 (05, 1915)
38	3	雲間雜誌	Ming	楊慎	<i>Biji</i> or	

					others	
39	3	新齊諧	Qing	袁枚	<i>Biji</i> or others	
40	3	蝶埭外史	Qing	高繼珩	<i>Biji</i> or others	
41	3	養吉齋餘錄	Qing	吳振棫	<i>Biji</i> or others	
42	3	曠園雜誌	Qing	吳陳琬	<i>Biji</i> or others	
43	3	藝能編	Qing	錢泳	<i>Biji</i> or others	
44	3	江寧府志			Gazetteer	
45	3	印人傳 (周櫟園)	Qing	周亮工	Thematic biography	
46	3	嘉定三藝人傳(王鳴韶)	Qing	王鳴韶	Thematic biography	
47	2	元氏掖庭記	Yuan	陶宗儀	<i>Biji</i> or others	
48	2	六研齋筆記	Ming	李日華	<i>Biji</i> or others	
49	2	耳食錄	Qing	樂鈞	<i>Biji</i> or others	
50	2	張燕昌鴛鴦湖棹歌注	Qing	張燕昌	<i>Biji</i> or others	
51	2	耐冷談	Qing	宋咸熙	<i>Biji</i> or others	
52	2	香祖筆記	Qing	王士禎	<i>Biji</i> or others	
53	2	酌泉錄	Cont.	黃印 高學濂	<i>Biji</i> or others	
54	2	瓠臚	Qing	紐琇	<i>Biji</i> or others	
55	2	紫桃軒雜綴	Ming	李日華	<i>Biji</i> or others	
56	2	閩小紀	Qing	周亮工	<i>Biji</i> or others	
57	2	熙朝新語	Qing	徐錫林 錢泳	<i>Biji</i> or others	

58	2	嘯亭雜錄	Qing	昭槤	<i>Biji</i> or others	
59	2	履園叢話	Qing	錢泳	<i>Biji</i> or others	
60	2	潛研堂集	Qing	錢大昕	<i>Biji</i> or others	
61	2	對山書屋墨餘錄	Qing	毛祥麟	<i>Biji</i> or others	
62	2	續夷堅志	Jin 金	元好問	<i>Biji</i> or others	
63	2	觀古閣續叢稿	Qing	鮑康	<i>Biji</i> or others	
64	2	畊研田齋筆記	Qing	?彭蘊璿	<i>Biji</i> or others	Qing stories
65	2	周高起陽羨名壺系	Ming	周高起	thematic records	
66	2	琴牋	Ming	屠隆	thematic records	MC 1.6 (07, 1911)
67	2	讀畫閒評	Qing	俞蛟	thematic records	
68	2	太倉州志			Gazetteer	
69	2	宜興縣志(徐階鳳)	Qing		Gazetteer	
70	2	武進縣志			Gazetteer	
71	2	嘉興府志(萬曆)	Ming		Gazetteer	
72	2	兩浙人物志	Qing	沈廷芳	Thematic biography	
73	2	疇人傳	Qing	阮元	Thematic biography	
74	2	畫徵錄	Qing	張庚	Thematic biography	
75	2	圖繪寶鑑續纂	Qing	馮仙澍	Thematic biography	
76	1	小山居詩稿	Qing	何琪	<i>Biji</i> or others	
77	1	中州集歸潛志	Jin 金	元好問	<i>Biji</i> or others	(潛歸志 金 劉祁)
78	1	五石瓠	Qing	劉鑾	<i>Biji</i> or others	

79	1	太平清話	Ming	陳繼儒	<i>Biji</i> or others	
80	1	世廟識餘錄	Ming	徐學謨	<i>Biji</i> or others	
81	1	古夫于亭雜錄	Qing	王士禎	<i>Biji</i> or others	
82	1	白嶽庵詩話	Qing	余楙	<i>Biji</i> or others	
83	1	名山藏	Ming	何喬遠	<i>Biji</i> or others	
84	1	老學庵筆記	Song	陸游	<i>Biji</i> or others	
85	1	西吳枝葉	Ming	謝肇淛	<i>Biji</i> or others	?
86	1	西泠閨咏	Qing	陳文述	<i>Biji</i> or others	
87	1	志雅堂雜鈔	Yuan	周密	<i>Biji</i> or others	MC 3.3 (10, 1915)
88	1	見聞錄	Qing	徐岳	<i>Biji</i> or others	
89	1	周澍台陽百咏注	Qing	周澍	<i>Biji</i> or others	
90	1	東里集	Ming	楊士奇	<i>Biji</i> or others	
91	1	東海集	Ming	張弼	<i>Biji</i> or others	?
92	1	東臯雜鈔	Qing	董潮	<i>Biji</i> or others	
93	1	杲堂集	Qing	李鄴嗣	<i>Biji</i> or others	?
94	1	花間笑語	?	?	<i>Biji</i> or others	Yuan stories
95	1	初月樓聞見錄	Qing	吳德旋	<i>Biji</i> or others	
96	1	邵村雜記	Qing	方亨咸	<i>Biji</i> or others	
97	1	南中雜說	Qing	劉崑	<i>Biji</i> or others	

98	1	珊瑚網	Ming	汪珂玉	<i>Biji</i> or others	MC 2.1 (02, 1913)
99	1	眉公雜識	Ming	陳繼儒	<i>Biji</i> or others	
100	1	秋士先生集	Qing	彭績	<i>Biji</i> or others	
101	1	茆檐記	Ming	魏學洙	<i>Biji</i> or others	
102	1	述異記	Qing	東軒主人	<i>Biji</i> or others	
103	1	浪跡叢談	Qing	梁章鉅	<i>Biji</i> or others	
104	1	堅瓠志	Qing	褚人獲	<i>Biji</i> or others	
105	1	梅村文集	Qing	吳偉業	<i>Biji</i> or others	
106	1	清賞錄	Ming	包衡	<i>Biji</i> or others	
107	1	許次紓茶疏	Ming	許次疏	<i>Biji</i> or others	
108	1	陳鱣松硯齋隨筆	Qing	陳鱣	<i>Biji</i> or others	
109	1	陶庵夢憶	Qing	張岱	<i>Biji</i> or others	
110	1	棗林雜俎	Qing	談遷	<i>Biji</i> or others	
111	1	登齋筆錄	?	?	<i>Biji</i> or others	Ming stories
112	1	紫桃軒又綴	Ming	李日華	<i>Biji</i> or others	
113	1	詞苑叢談	Qing	徐鉉	<i>Biji</i> or others	
114	1	集翠軒集	Qing	?	<i>Biji</i> or others	Qing stories
115	1	雲煙過眼錄	Yuan	周密	<i>Biji</i> or others	MC 2.2 (03, 1913)
116	1	愚山文集	Qing	施閏章	<i>Biji</i> or others	

117	1	筠廊偶筆	Qing	宋肇	<i>Biji</i> or others	
118	1	碧溪草堂詩稿	Qing	朱文藻	<i>Biji</i> or others	
119	1	夢園叢說	Qing	方濬頤	<i>Biji</i> or others	
120	1	漁洋文略	Qing	王士禎	<i>Biji</i> or others	
121	1	漁磯漫鈔	Qing	雷琳	<i>Biji</i> or others	
122	1	閱微草堂筆記	Qing	紀昀	<i>Biji</i> or others	
123	1	餘墨偶談	Qing	孫櫟	<i>Biji</i> or others	
124	1	雙藤書屋詩集	Qing	何道生	<i>Biji</i> or others	
125	1	墨餘錄	Qing	毛祥麟	<i>Biji</i> or others	Shorthand for #61
126	1	橋西雜記	Qing	葉名澧	<i>Biji</i> or others	
127	1	蕉軒隨錄	Qing	方濬師	<i>Biji</i> or others	
128	1	蕉軒雜錄	Qing	方濬師	<i>Biji</i> or others	Variation of #127
129	1	隨園文集	Qing	袁枚	<i>Biji</i> or others	
130	1	隨園詩話	Qing	袁枚	<i>Biji</i> or others	
131	1	頤道堂集	Qing	陳文述	<i>Biji</i> or others	
132	1	舊雨集	Qing	?	<i>Biji</i> or others	Qing stories
133	1	霜紅龕集	Ming	傅山	<i>Biji</i> or others	
134	1	曝書亭集	Qing	朱彝尊	<i>Biji</i> or others	
135	1	隴蜀餘聞	Qing	王士禎	<i>Biji</i> or others	

136	1	韻石齋筆談	Qing	姜紹書	<i>Biji</i> or others	MC 2.10 (05, 1914)
137	1	觀古閣續叢稿三編	Qing	鮑康	<i>Biji</i> or others	
138	1	懷麓堂集	Ming	李東陽	<i>Biji</i> or others	
139	1	蠡塘漁乃詩注	Qing	吳騫	<i>Biji</i> or others	
140	1	西湖遊覽志	Ming	田汝成	<i>Biji</i> or others	
141	1	近人筆記	Cont.	?	<i>Biji</i> or others	Qing stories
142	1	王廷鼎杖扇新錄	Qing	王廷鼎	Thematic records	MC 2.8 (03, 1914)
143	1	玉紀補	Qing	劉心珩	Thematic records	MC 1.2 (03, 1911)
144	1	青霞館論畫絕句	Qing	吳修	Thematic records	MC 2.6 (07, 1913)
145	1	指頭畫說	Qing	高秉	Thematic records	MC 1.8 (09, 1911)
146	1	泉說	Qing	鮑康	Thematic records	
147	1	裝潢志	Qing	周嘉胄	Thematic records	MC 1.2 (03, 1911)
148	1	觀石錄 [高兆]	Qing	高兆	Thematic records	MC 1.1 (02, 1911)
149	1	後觀石錄 [毛奇齡]	Qing	毛奇齡	Thematic records	MC 1.3 (04, 1911)
150	1	太平府志			Gazetteer	
151	1	平湖縣志			Gazetteer	
152	1	吉安府志			Gazetteer	
153	1	吳縣志			Gazetteer	
154	1	宣城縣志			Gazetteer	
155	1	咸寧縣志			Gazetteer	
156	1	建德縣志			Gazetteer	
157	1	建寧府志			Gazetteer	
158	1	桐鄉縣志			Gazetteer	
159	1	高淳縣志			Gazetteer	

160	1	陝西通志			Gazetteer	
161	1	婁縣志			Gazetteer	
162	1	常州府志(于琨重修)	Qing		Gazetteer	
163	1	紹興府志			Gazetteer	
164	1	揚州府志			Gazetteer	
165	1	陽湖縣志			Gazetteer	
166	1	雲南通志			Gazetteer	
167	1	婺源縣志			Gazetteer	
168	1	嘉定縣志			Gazetteer	
169	1	嘉興府志			Gazetteer	
170	1	寧國府志			Gazetteer	
171	1	鄞縣志			Gazetteer	
172	1	蕪湖縣志			Gazetteer	
173	1	徽州志			Gazetteer	
174	1	懷慶府志			Gazetteer	
175	1	列朝詩集小傳	Qing	錢謙益	Thematic biography	
176	1	列朝詩傳	Qing	錢謙益	Thematic biography	Shorthand for #175
177	1	昭代名人小傳	Qing	吳修	Thematic biography	i.e. 昭代名人尺牘小傳
178	1	名人小傳			Thematic biography	Shorthand for # 177
179	1	湖海詩傳	Qing	王昶	Thematic biography	
180	1	畫友錄	Qing	黃鉞	Thematic biography	MC 1.4 (05, 1911)
181	1	皇明書畫史	Ming	劉瑋	Thematic biography	
182	1	畫史會要	Ming	朱謀壘	Thematic biography	
183	1	金史			Standard history	
184	1	李義梓	?		Personal source	
185	1	林璐	act. ca. 1665		Personal source	

186	1	金捧閭	1760-1810		Personal source	
187	1	傅占衡	1608-1660		Personal source	
188	1	戴榕	?		Personal source	

Appendix 5-1 Images in *Guocui xuebao* that are reproduced from Bushell's *Chinese Art*

<i>Guocui xuebao</i>		<i>Chinese Art</i>	
Issue	Title and Caption	Vol./Ch./Fig./Title	Collection / Provenance
4.1	1. 女史箴圖 [Admonition scroll] 英國博物院藏 [Collection of a museum in Britain]	v.2/ Ch6 Pictorial Art / Fig.125 / Pan Chao, Lady Historian and Superintendent of the Court, writing her book.	British Museum
	2. 宋徽宗白鷹圖 [White falcon by Emperor Huizong of the Song] 英國博物院藏 [Collection of a museum in Britain]	v.2/ Ch6 Pictorial Art / Fig.129/ Picture of a white falcon. Attributed to the Emperor Hui Tsung	British Museum
	3. 元趙松雪絹地山水圖 [Landscape painted on silk by Zhao Songxue of the Yuan] 英國博物院藏 [Collection of a museum in Britain]	v.2/ Ch6 Pictorial Art / Fig. 127/ Part of a painting on a landscape roll	British Museum
	4. 元趙仲穆元兵罷獵圖 [A Yuan soldier returning from the chase by Zhao Zhongmu of the Yuan]	v.2/ Ch6 Pictorial Art / Fig.128/ A Tangut horseman returning from the chase	Bushell collection
	5. 周犀鼎 [<i>Ding</i> vessel of the Zhou shaped as a rhinoceros] 中國美術品[Chinese art object] 鏤金器 [Bronze object] 高兩寸四分 長八寸二分 廣四寸 [H. 2'4, L. 8'2, W. 4 in. (probably in Chinese measuring system.)]	v.1/ Ch4 Bronze / Fig.55/ Wine vessel. <i>His Tsun</i> , moulded in the form of a rhinoceros. H. 3 1/2 in., L. 12 in., W. 6 1/4 in. (diff. from that in the revised edition)	V&A
	6. 七寶燒鑲象負瓶 [Elephant of cloisonné enamel carrying a vase] 中國美術品 [Chinese art object] 七寶燒鑲 [Seven-jewel cloisonné enamel] 高九寸半 長一尺一寸 [H. 9 1/2, L. 1'1 (probably in Chinese measuring system)] 頤和園舊藏[Former collection of Yiheyuan] 英國博物院藏 [Collection of a museum in Britain]	v.2/ Ch3 Enamels / Fig. 91/ Elephant of cloisonné enamel carrying a vase H. 14 in., L. 16 1/2 in.	V&A / Wells Bequest (from the Summer Palace)
	7. 萬曆藍白瓷器碟 [Blue-and-white porcelain dish of the Wanli period] 中國美術品 [Chinese art object] 磁器 [Porcelain]	v.2/ Ch1 Pottery & Porcelain / Fig.22/ Blue and white porcelain dish. Wanli Period.	Pierpont Morgan Collection
	8. 彩漆屏風中二幅壽仙圖 [Genie of Longevity in the two central panels of a coloured lacquer screen] 中國美術品 [Chinese art object] 漆器 [lacquer]	v.1/ Ch5 Carving... /Fig. 75/ Two central panels of Screen in Fig. 74 [Screen of Lacquered wood painted in	V&A

		coloured and gilded lacs. The Taoist Genii worshipping the God of Longevity.]	
	9. 彩絲金線織端午龍船圖 [Picture woven in coloured silk and golden threads of Dragon Boat Festival] 中國美術品 [Chinese art object] 織品 [Woven items]	v.2/ Ch5 Textiles / Fig. 116/ Picture woven in coloured silks and gold thread of the Dragon-boat Festival	V&A
	10. 織絲圖 [Illustration of silk weaving]、養蠶圖 [Illustration of sericulture] 中國美術品 [Chinese art object] 繡品 [Embroidery]	v.2/ Ch5 Textiles / Fig. 111ab/ Silk weaving; Sericulture.	Art Library
	11. 象牙雕刻亭台 [Carved model of pavilions in ivory] 中國美術品 [Chinese art object] 雕刻 [Carving]	v.1/ Ch5 Carving... / Fig.81/ Group of Pavilions in Ornamental Grounds. Model carved in ivory, etc.	V&A
4.2	12. 商爵 [Jui wine cup of the Shang] 中國美術品 [Chinese art object] 鍍金器 [Bronze object] 高六尺廣四尺六分半 [H. 6 in, W. 4'6 1/2 in. (probably in Chinese measuring system)]	v.1/ Ch4 Bronze / Fig. 53/ Libation Cup. <i>Chuo</i> . Shang dynasty. H. 8 1/8 in., W. 6 7/8 in.	V&A
	13. 白鑲圓碟 [Round dish of painted enamel] 西子湖景 [View of the West Lake] 中國美術品 [Chinese art object] 白鑲 [Painted enamel (literally, plain, or white, solder)]	v.2/ Ch3 Enamels / Fig. 100/ Round Dish. Painted enamel. A view of the bank of the lake at Hangchow.	V&A
4.3	14. 七寶燒鑲水匣通花蓋上鏤奇獅旁作兩人形 [Ice chest of cloisonné enamel with pierced cover surmounted by grotesque lion supported by two human figures] 中國美術品 [Chinese art object] 七寶燒鑲 [cloisonné enamel (literally, seven-jewel fired solder)] 高英尺二尺四寸半 長三尺七寸餘 [H. 2 ft. 4 1/2 in., L. 3 ft. 7 + in.] 英國博物院藏 [Collection of Britain's Museum] 乾隆時物 [Qianlong period] 頤和園舊藏 [Former collection of Yiheyuan]	v.2/ Ch3 Enamels / Fig. 92/ Ice chest of cloisonné enamel with pierced cover surmounted by grotesque lion, supported by kneeling figures. H. 2 ft. 4 1/2 in., L. 3 ft. 7 1/4 in.	V&A (from the Summer Palace)
4.4	15. 漢鏡 [Han mirror] 直徑九寸八分一 [Diam. 9 1/8 in.] 元梵文鏡 [Yuan mirror with Sanskrit inscription] 直徑三寸半 [Diam. 3 1/2 in.] 中國美術品 [Chinese art object] 鍍金器 [Bronze object]	v.1/ Ch4 Bronze / Fig. 60, 61/ Mirror with Græco-Bactrian designs. Han Dynasty, Diam. 9 1/8 in.; Mirror with Sanskrit inscription. Yuan Dynasty, Diam. 3 1/2 in.	V&A

*1 Chinese *cun* 寸 here ~ 1.47 inch

Selected Glossary

bowu 博物

bijutsu 美術 (Japanese)

Cai Youshou 蔡有守 (1879-1941)

Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培 (1868-1940)

daguan 大觀

Dai Yue 戴嶽

dao 道

Deng Shi 鄧實 (1877-1951)

Di Baoxian 狄葆賢 (1873-1921)

Di Yu 狄郁

diaoke 琯刻 or 雕刻

Duanfang 端方 (1861-1911)

geijutsu 芸術 (Japanese)

gongyi 工藝

gong 工

guocui 國粹

guocuihua 國粹畫

guogu 國畫

guoxue 國學

hua 畫

Huang Binhong 黃賓虹 (1865-1955)

Huang Jie 黃節 (1873-1935)

Huang Zhi 黃質

Jiangcun xiaoxialu 江邨銷夏錄

Jilu yutan 輯錄餘談

Jin Yuanyu 金元鈺

jinshi 金石

juan 卷

kokusui 國粹 (Japanese)

lei 類

Li Baoxun 李葆恂 (1859-1915)

Li Dachong 李大獅

Li Fang 李放 (1884-1926)

Lin Shu 林紓 (1852-1924)

Lü Cheng 呂澂 (1896-1989)

Lu Xun 魯迅 (1881-1936)

Luo Zhenyu 羅振玉 (1866-1940)

meishuguan 美術館

meishujia 美術家

meishupin 美術品

meishushi 美術史

mei 美

meishu 美術

Pang Laichen 龐萊臣 (1864-1949)

Pingdengge 平等閣

qi 器

Shen Shou 沈壽 (1871-1921)

Shen Tang 沈塘 (?-1921)

Shen Zhilu 沈廬廬

shuhua 書畫

shu 術

taikan 大觀 (Japanese)

tuhua 圖畫

Wang Guowei 王國維 (1877-1927)

Wei Wenhou 魏文厚 (aka Wei Jingyu 魏經腴)

Wenyoutang 文友堂

Wu Bin 吳瞿 (*juren* 1893)

Wu Chongxi 吳重熹 (1838-1918)

Wu Woyao 吳沃堯 (1866-1910)

Wu Zhiying 吳芝瑛 (1868-1933)

xia zhenji yideng 下真蹟一等

xuanzhi 宣紙

yishujia 藝術家

yishushi 藝術史

yishu 藝術

yi 藝

yong 用

zheng 徵

zhen 真

Zhongguo meishupin 中國美術品

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Fig. 1-1 Portrait of Mencius, GX, 1.2 (1905)

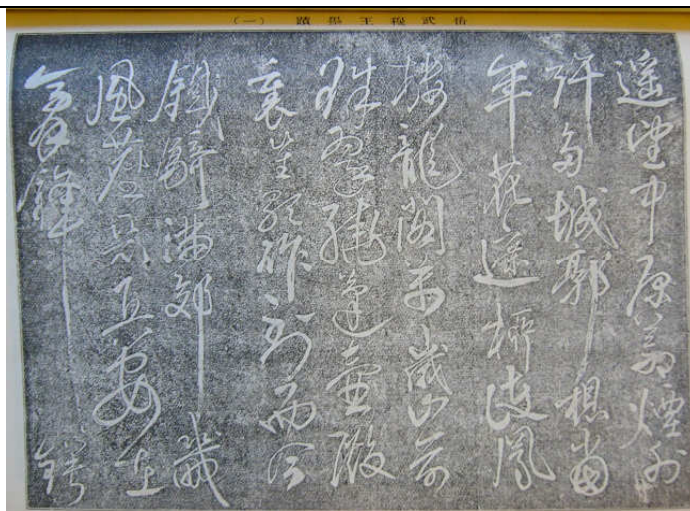


Fig. 1-2 Rubbing of the handwriting by Yue Fei 岳飛 (1103-1142), GX, 2.3 (1906)

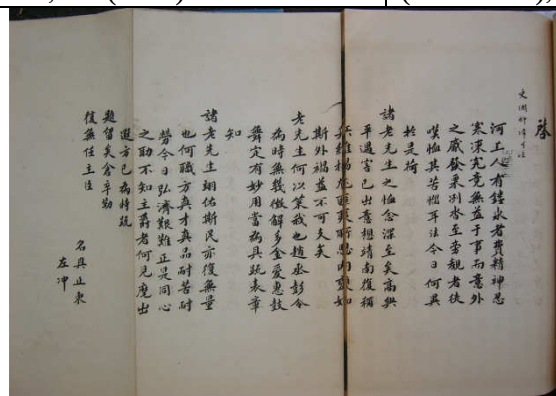


Fig. 1-3 Handwriting by Shi Kefa 史可法 (1601-1645), GX, 2.9 (1906)



Fig. 1-4 Double-lined copy of an ancient cliff inscription, GX, 2.9 (1906)



a.



b.

Fig. 1-5 a. Portrait of Yue Fei; b. A quotation of Yue's on the back side of the portrait ('Civilian officials do not care for money; military officers have no fear to die'), GX, 2.3 (1906).

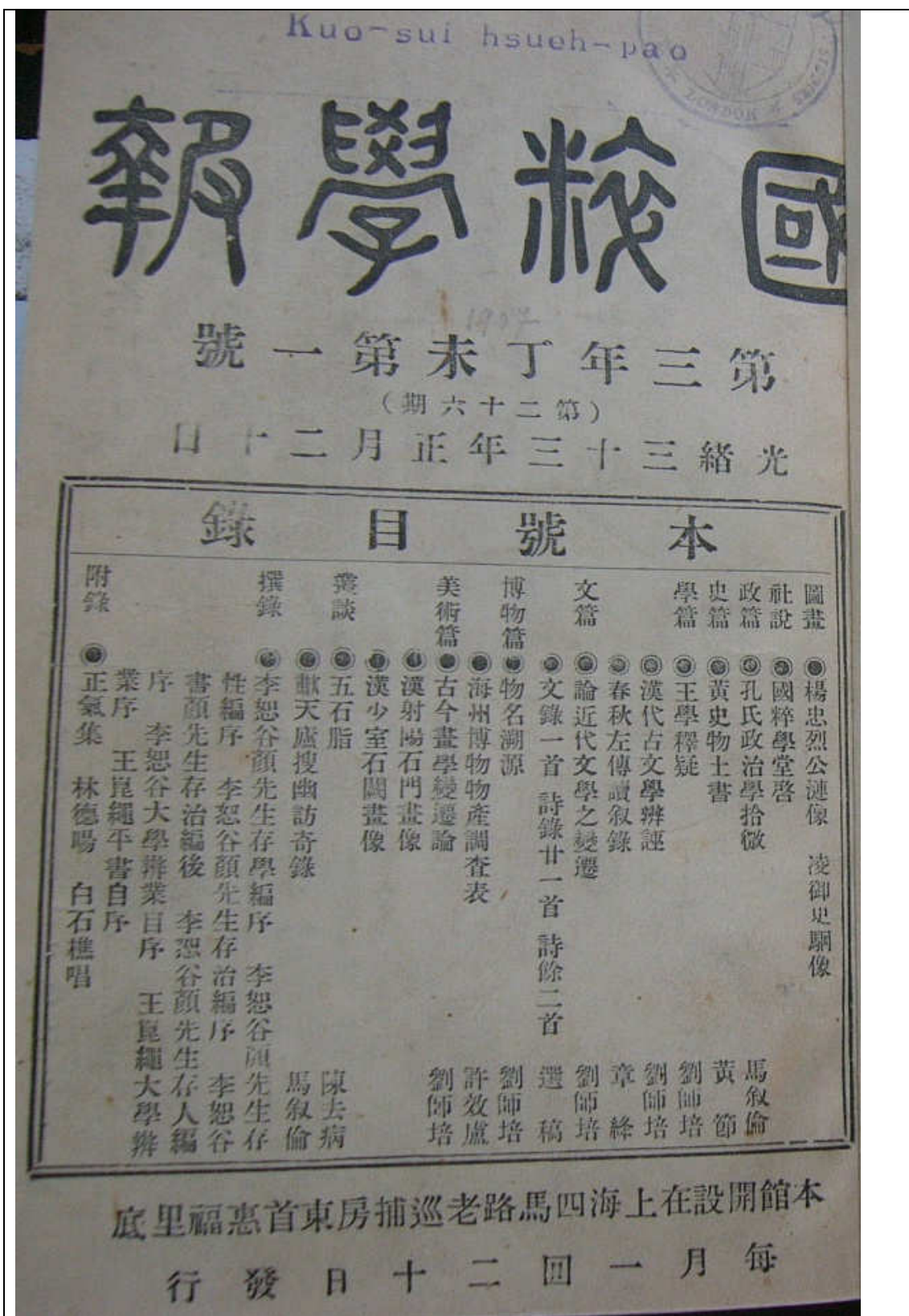


Fig. 1-6 Position of the 'Meishu' section in the GX, 3.1 (1907)



Fig. 1-7 Portrait of Hou Fangyu by Gu Yuncheng, GX, 3.6 (1907)



Fig. 1-8 Portrait of Dong Qichang attributed to You Qiu, GX, 3.11 (1907)

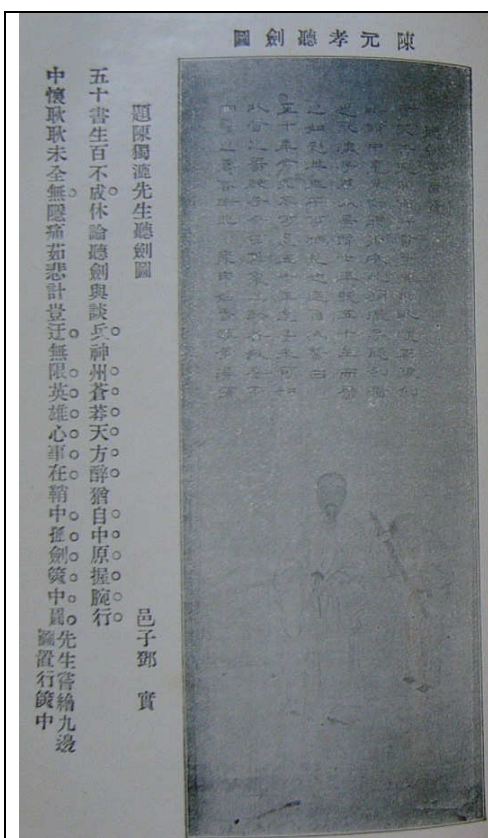


Fig. 1-9 Portrait of Chen Gongyin listening to the sword, GX, 3.9 (1907)

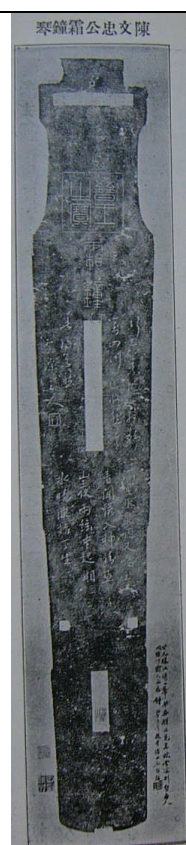


Fig. 1-10 Rubbing of the qin zither owned by Chen Gongyin, GX, 3.9 (1907)

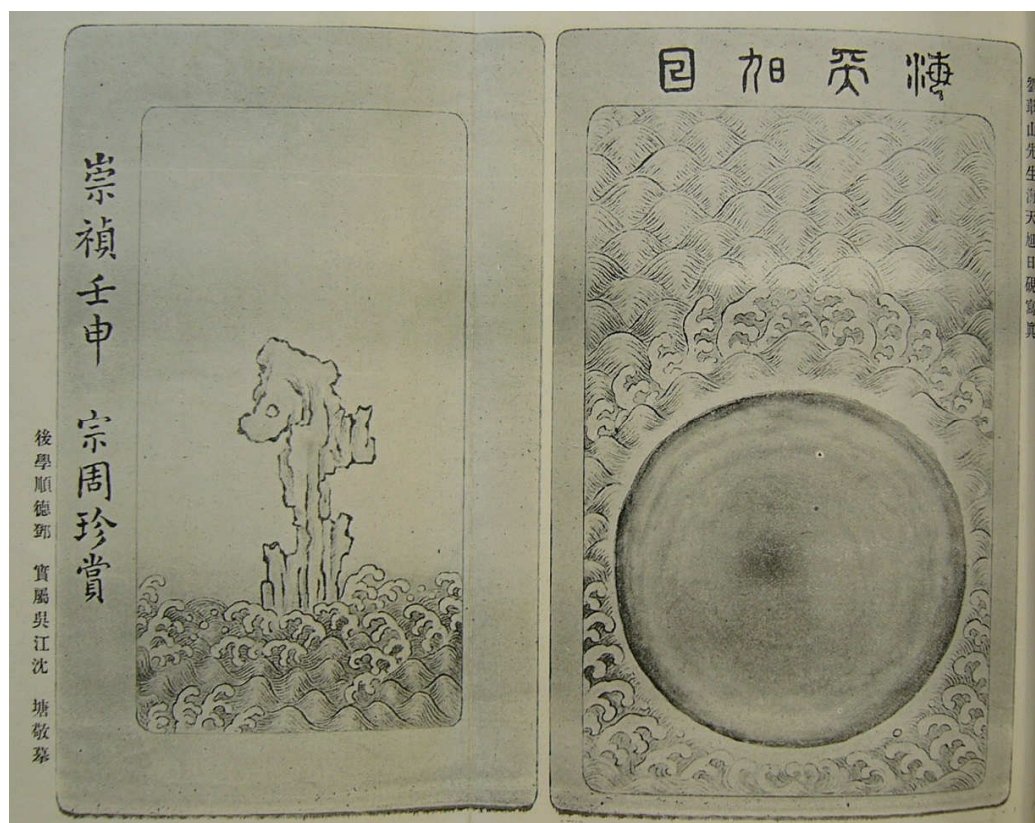


Fig. 1-11 Painted copy by Shen Tang 沈塘 of the inkstone owned by Liu Zongzhou, GX, 3.2 (1907)

國粹學報戊申第三號目錄	
題辭	○陳銳(原蹟)
圖畫	○顧玉山先生浴馬像
	○翁松禪題玉山像後原蹟
	○周堯峯山人像
美術圖畫	○趙忠毅公硯
	○黃石齋題蘇東坡墨妙亭詩殘石硯
	○七寶燒鐵水匣
博物圖畫	○桑扈 鳴 鴉 鷓鴣
社說	○嶺學源流
史篇	○鄧牧傳
學篇	○劉子政左氏說
文篇	○新方言
	○文錄一首詩錄二十六首詩餘三首遺稿
地理篇	○溫泉略志
	○遼史地理考
博物篇	○毛詩動植物今釋
	○夏小正條考
	○沈維鍾
	○劉師培
	○田北湖
	○章絳
	○章絳
	○鄧實
	○黃節

Fig. 1-12 'Contents', GX, 4.3 (1908)

國粹學報己酉第六號目錄	
畫像	○明代名臣遺像七
	○明代名臣遺像八
	○毛西河先生像
墨蹟	○明劉戡山先生遺墨
金石	○梁大同瓦
美術品	○明陳友諒璽
畫	○陳南華題周正岩手刻竹塢山居圖
博物圖	○明沈石谷秋林策杖圖
社說	○波羅蜜
	○孫仲容先生遺文
	○白虎通義攷上下 衛宏詔定古文官書攷
政篇	○論中國古代財政國有之弊
學篇	○荀子補釋
	○莊子解故
文篇	○新文典
	○抱碧齋詞話
	○文錄一首 汪榮詩錄二十首 汪宗詩餘四首
博物篇	○葉衡
	○毛詩動植物今釋
	○夏小正條攷
	○沈維鍾
	○薛瑩龍
	○陳銳
	○章絳
	○劉師培
	○劉師培

Fig. 1-13 Detail of the 'Contents' in GX, 5.6 (1909)



Fig. 1-14 Portrait of Xue Shiheng copied by Cai Youshou and Huang Binhong, GX, 3.5 (1907)



Fig. 1-15 Celebratory painting sent by reader Su Shichang from Taiwan, GX, 4.1 (1908)



Fig. 1-16 Deng Shi (the 4th from the right) and Hung Jie (the third from the right), in a photograph commemorating the launch of the Library, GX, 2.10 (1906)

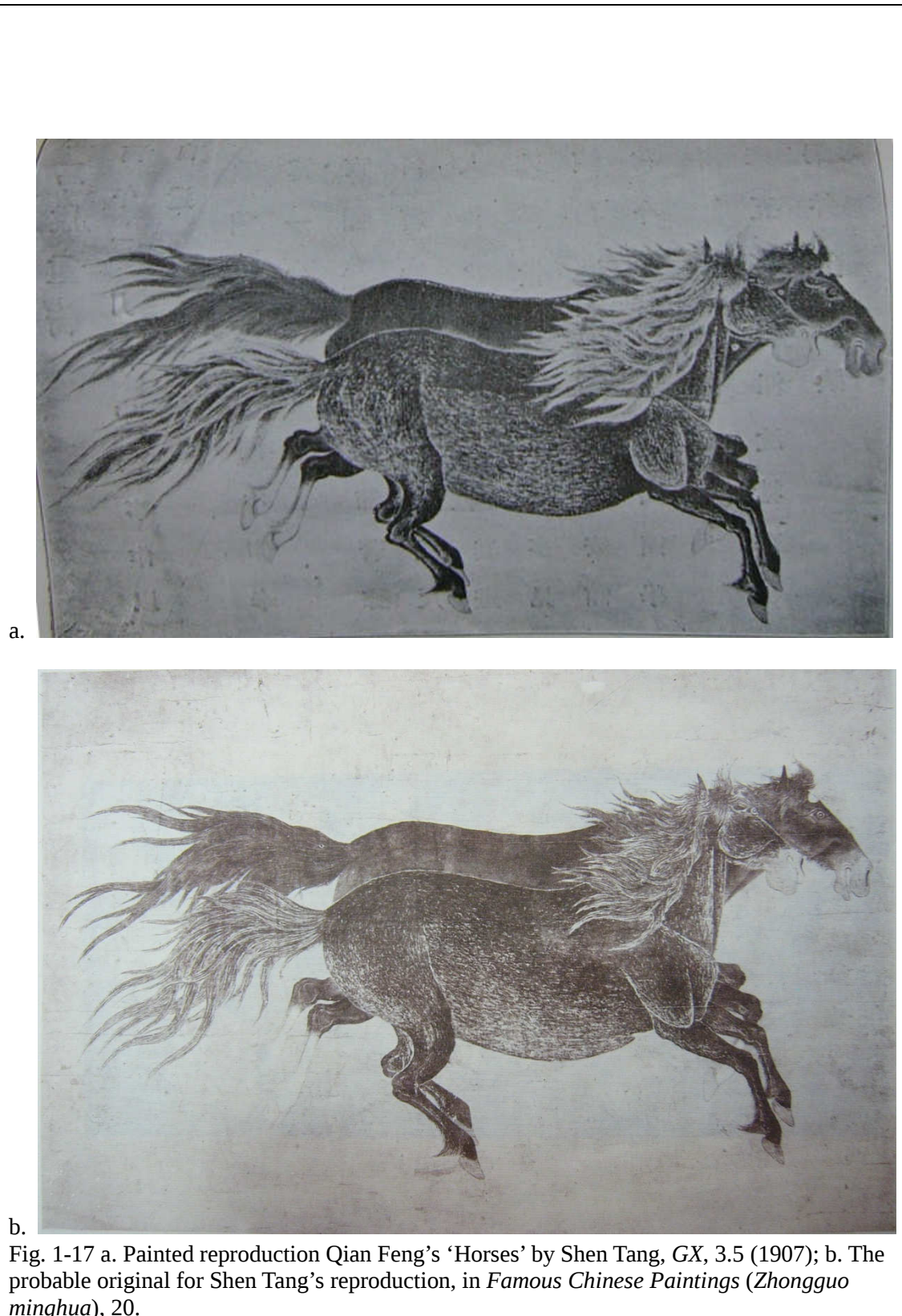




Fig. 1-18 Illustration of a copy of Li Gonglin's 'Manjuri Bodhisattva' by Cai Youshou, GX, 4.5 (1908)



Fig. 1-19 Illustration of a painted reproduction of Qian Feng's 'Horses' by Shen Tang, GX, 6.12 (1910)



Fig. 2-1 a. *Shenzhou guoguangji*

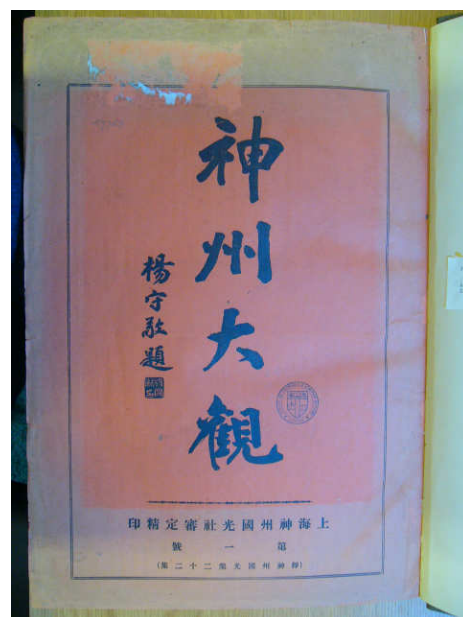


Fig. 2-2 *Shenzhou daguanlu*, 1912-1923



1909
Inscribed by
Wu Changshi
吳昌碩



1910
Inscribed by
Huang Binhong
黃賓虹



1911
Inscribed by
He Weipu
何維樸

Fig. 2-1 b. Front covers of *Shenzhou guoguangji*, 1909-1911



Fig. 2-3 (Left) The *Shenzhou guoguangji*; (right) the *Guocui xuebao*

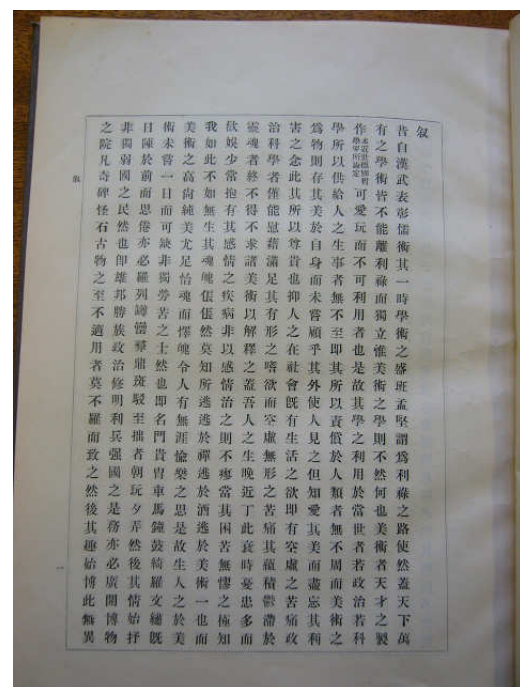


Fig. 2-4 Sample page of the text layout. SG, 1 (1908)

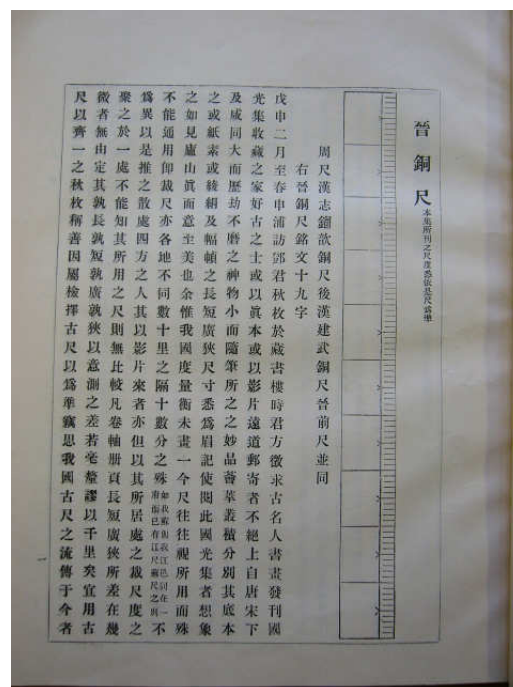


Fig. 2-6 The measurement used in the SG. Each full unit is about 1.29 cm long. SG, 1 (1908)



Fig. 2-5 Caption for the landscape album leaf by Huang Yi 黃易 (1744-1802), SG, 13 (1910), printed in collotype.

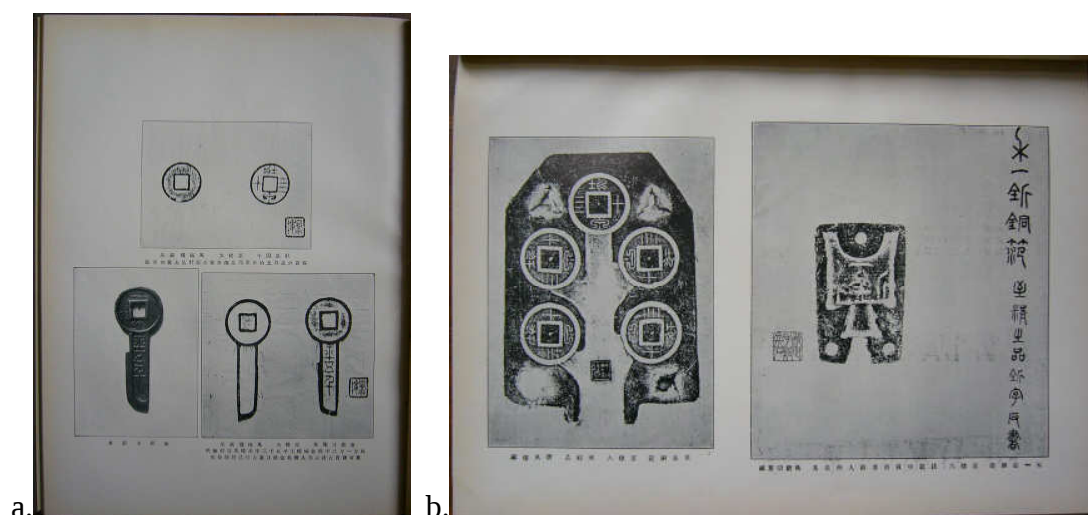
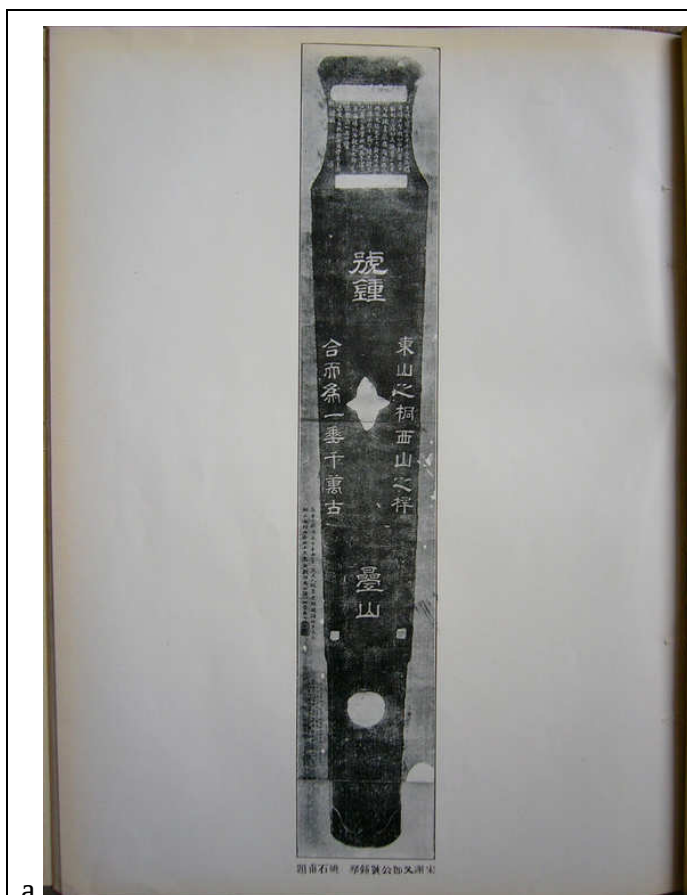


Fig. 2-7 a. Ancient coins, ca. 9-24 AD, SG, 18 (1910); b. Rubbings of coin moulds, SG, 10 (1909)



a.



b.

Fig. 2-8 a. Rubbing of the *Haozhong qin* 號鐘琴, SG, 19 (1911), printed in halftone process;
b. *Xiaohulei* 小忽雷, SG, 21 (1911), printed in collotype

神州國光集第七集目錄 己酉第一號	
南陽漢畫像磚	此漢畫像之最奇者
漢口時葬志	唐風樓藏 近年洛中治鐵路得之前人未見
魏黃初殘碑	唐風樓藏 石久佚至難得
隋郭雲銘	黃小松所得後贈李鐵橋 久佚此尚是在小松處初拓本
唐蕃合盟碑	唐風樓藏 羅君則存有釋文及跋
吳越黃妃塔華嚴經斷石	風雨樓藏
漢石洛候印	黃金製 有諸城李書山跋 唐風樓藏
漢寶武印	桂未谷題詠 唐風樓藏
莽布石範	錢範中奇品
乘充幣銅範	前人未見奇品
魏柏仁令曹望懷石造像	畫像文字皆極精 臨縣陳氏藏
北周陳巖銅造像	李竹朋所藏
宋刻東坡畫像	況君範筆新得
明鄺海雪綠綺臺琴	馬君武仲所寄
明鄺海雪硯	吳梅村題記
六朝人寫經一	
六朝人寫經二	
明陳白沙墨蹟	
明黃石齋墨蹟	
元倪雲林山水	董思翁題記
元馬文璧山水	
明唐六如春山伴侶圖	
明陸包山山水	
明楊無補山居讀書圖	
明楊無補墓誌銘	
錢蒙叟製	
明楊無補山居圖諸家跋尾	
明顧漸宇將隱齋圖	
吳梅村小像	
禹慎齋寫	
八大山人睡鳥圖	
惲南田叢菊圖	
王石谷仿黃鶴山樵南山真逸圖	
王麓臺仿設色倪黃小景	
蔣南沙畫扇	
沒骨法極精	
黃小松梅花	
朱茶堂梅花曝布	
陳南卡補美人	
附告	
本集戊申年六集已出舊今己酉第七集即接續出版所搜羅金石書畫名蹟愈益精審美頃本社所訂定向海內收藏巨家借影各種精品尚不下數百種當次第印入己酉年集內無一非神州至寶當從舊巨帙以成古今所未有之盛業而本社所製強士版其精工誠為海內第一無可與並如蒙批閱即請將定價及郵費價目表見下寄足自當依期寄奉不誤	

Fig. 2-9 Sample page of the 'Contents'. SG, 7 (1909)

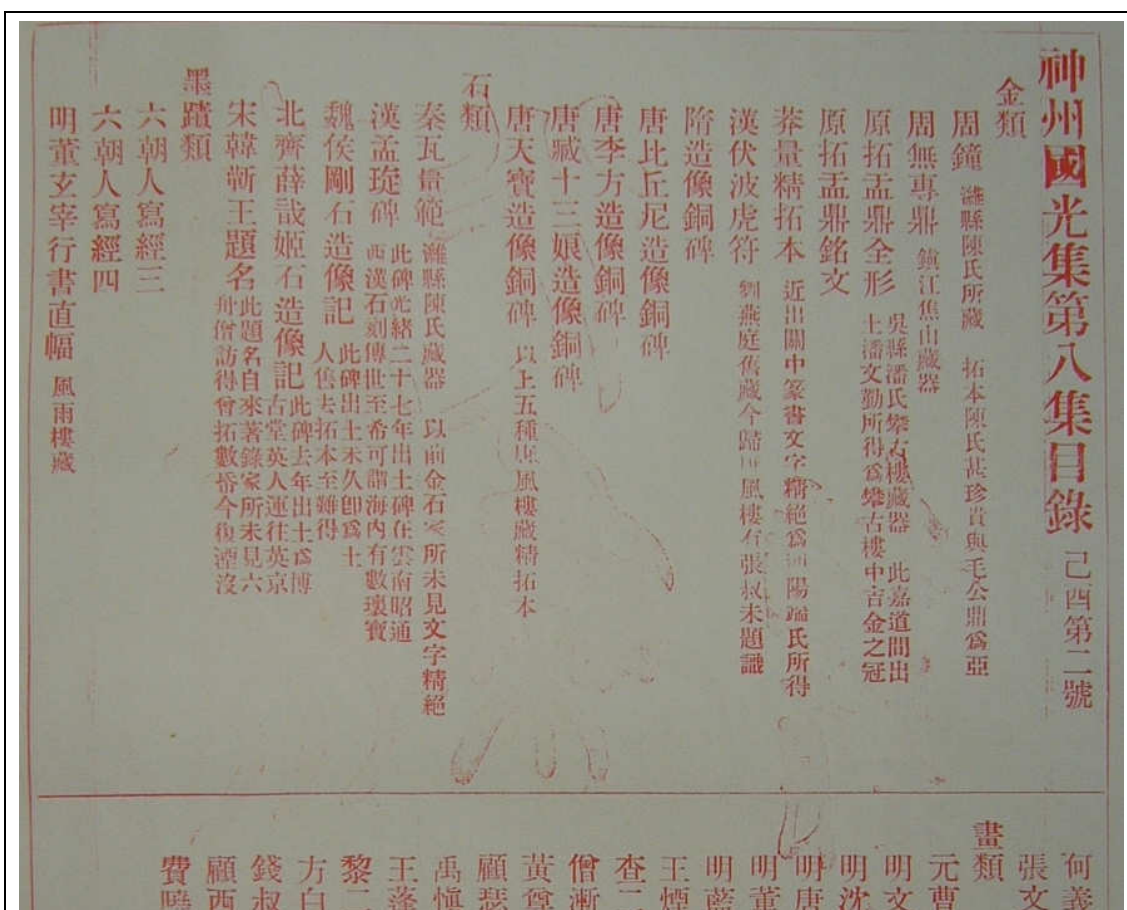


Fig. 2-10 The groupings in SG, 8 (1909)

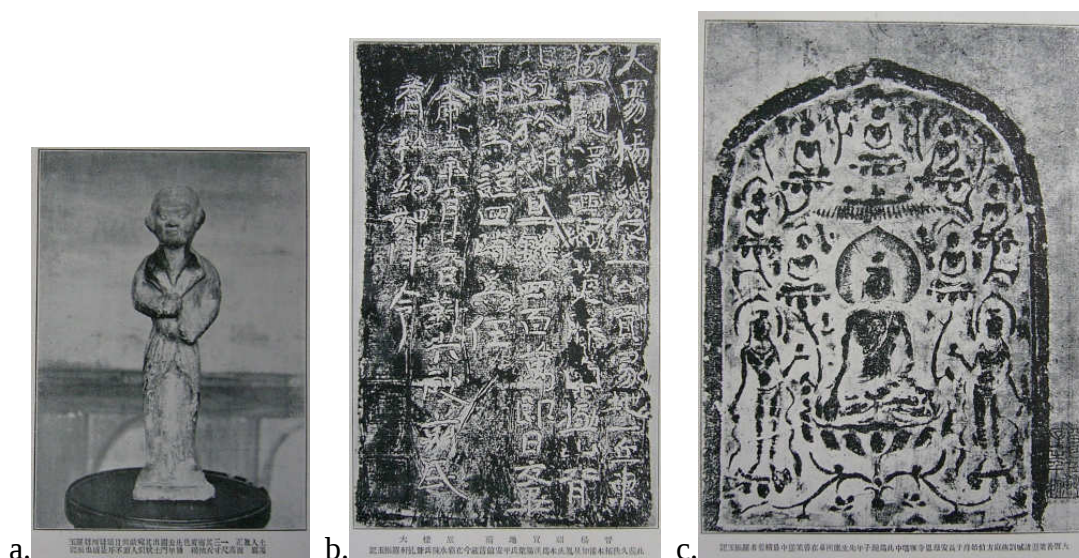


Fig. 2-11 Objects of 'ni' ('clay'): a. Tomb figurine, SG, 9 (1909); b. Rubbing of a title deed for land transaction engraved on a clay board, SG, 10 (1909); c. Rubbing of a shanye ni 善業泥 (clay of benevolent karma), a special kind of moulded brick made with the mixture of clay and human ashes, SG, 11(1909).

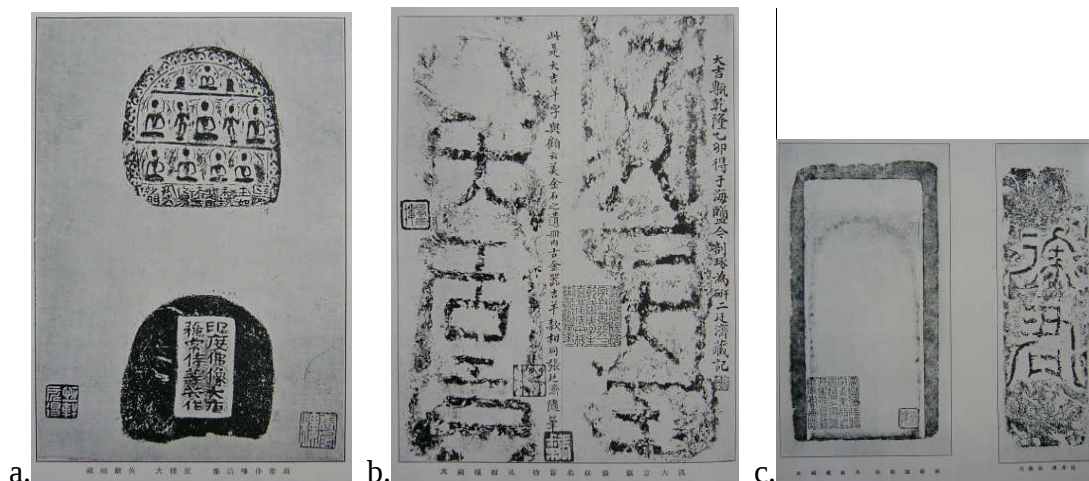


Fig. 2-12 Objects of 'zhuan' ('brick'): a. Rubbing of a brick with Buddhist icons on it, SG, 12 (1909); b. Rubbing of a brick incised of the characters 'daji', SG, 16 (1910); c. Rubbing of an inscribed brick used as an ink stone (left), SG, 17 (1910).

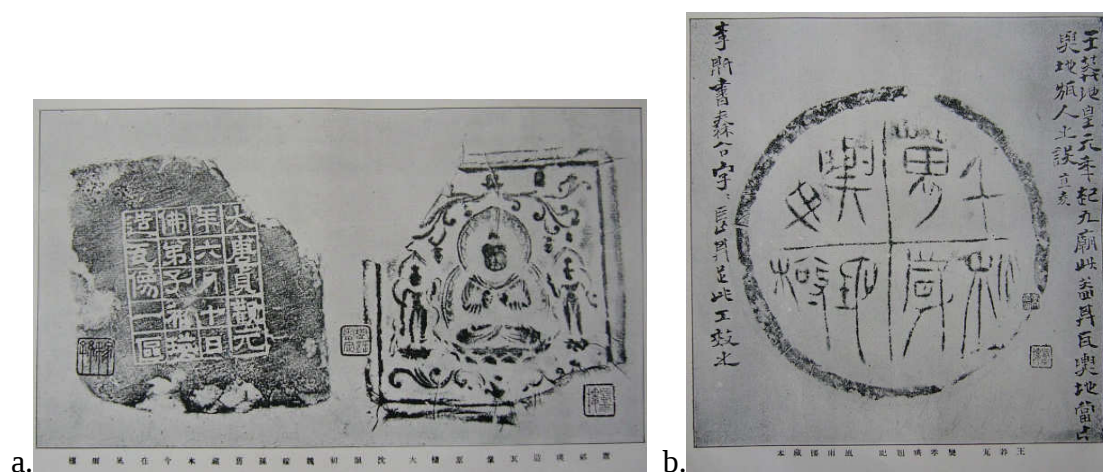


Fig. 2-13 Objects of 'wa' ('tile'): Rubbing of a Buddhist icon on a tile, SG, 18 (1910); b. A tile of the Wang Mang period (8-23 AD), SG, 21 (1912).



Fig. 2-14 Objects of 'zaoxiang' ('sculpted images'): a. A Taoist sculpture made in stone; b. A Buddhist sculpture in bronze; both from SG, 21 (1912)

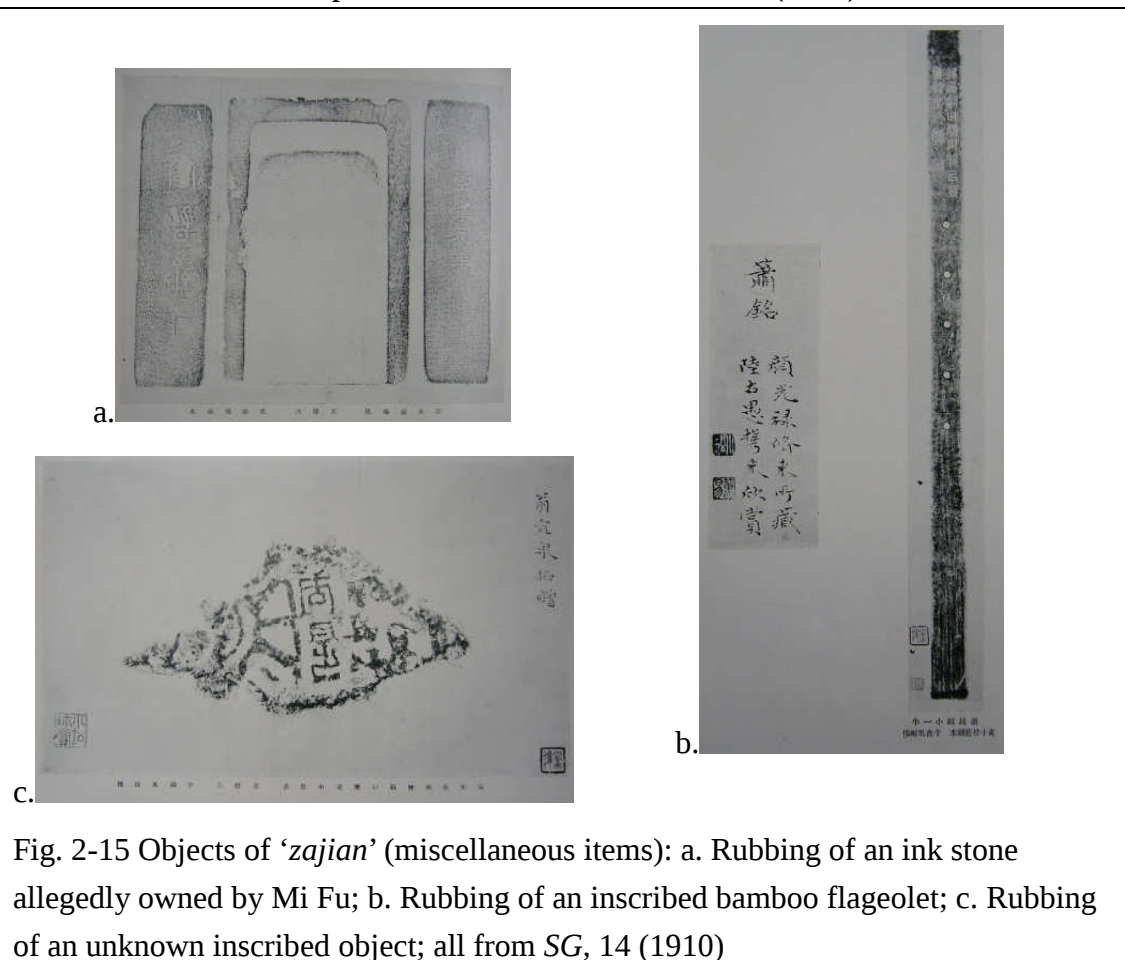


Fig. 2-15 Objects of 'zajian' (miscellaneous items): a. Rubbing of an ink stone allegedly owned by Mi Fu; b. Rubbing of an inscribed bamboo flageolet; c. Rubbing of an unknown inscribed object; all from SG, 14 (1910)

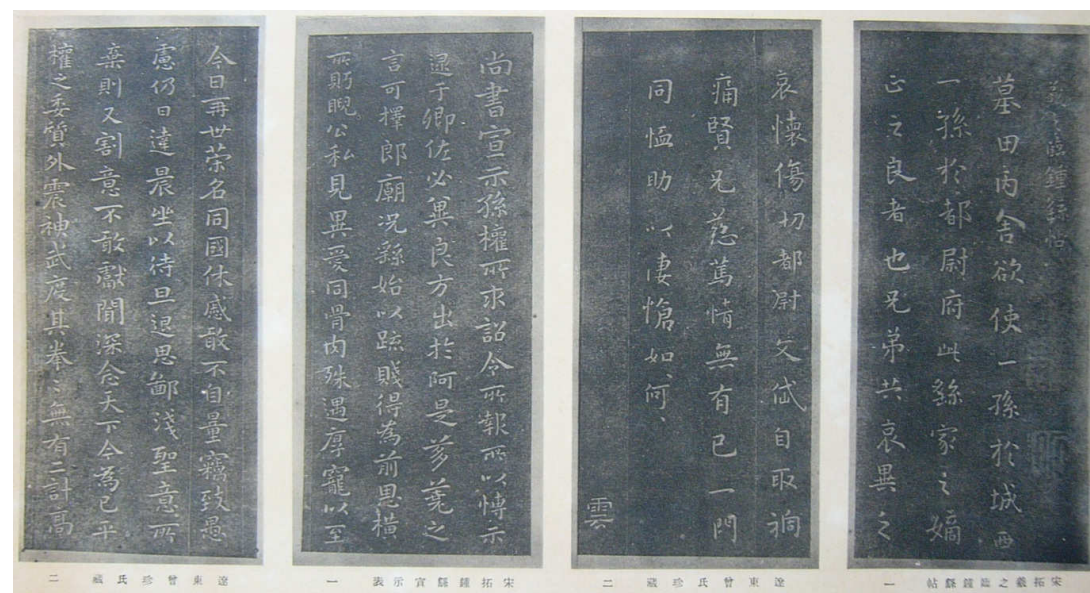


Fig. 2-16 Objects of 'tie'(model-letters), SG, 12 (1909), printed in collotype.



Fig. 2-17 'Dots' on a halftone screen. Illustration taken from Jan Poortenaar, *The Technique of Prints* (1933), Fig. 80



Fig. 2-18 Landscape by Fan Zongsi 范宗嗣, in the halftone process, SG, 3 (1908)

●神州國光集 清國にては利権回收熱の勃興と共に國粹保存の議唱へられ其の結果我が國華の如き美術雜誌の發刊せらるゝものあるに至れり。上海の神州國光社より毎年六冊宛發行せらるゝ神州國光集の如きは蓋しその一なり。同誌はコロタイプ及び網目版を用ゐ、古代金石拓本佛像をはじめ、元明清の繪畫を多く複製したるが、宋以前の畫の如きは餘り多く見えず。又た畫家の小傳を附載したるのみにして論説及び批評を登載せざれば、未だ遺憾なしとせず。又た同社に於いては別刷として明清諸家の畫集等を多く出版せり。

Fig. 2-19 Introduction to the SG, in *Kokka*, 226 (1909)



Fig. 2-20 *Shinbi taikan*, a. front cover, 1 (1899); b. a chromo-xylographic reproduction (in coloured wood engraving), vol. 1; c. a reproduction in black & white collotype, vol. 1.

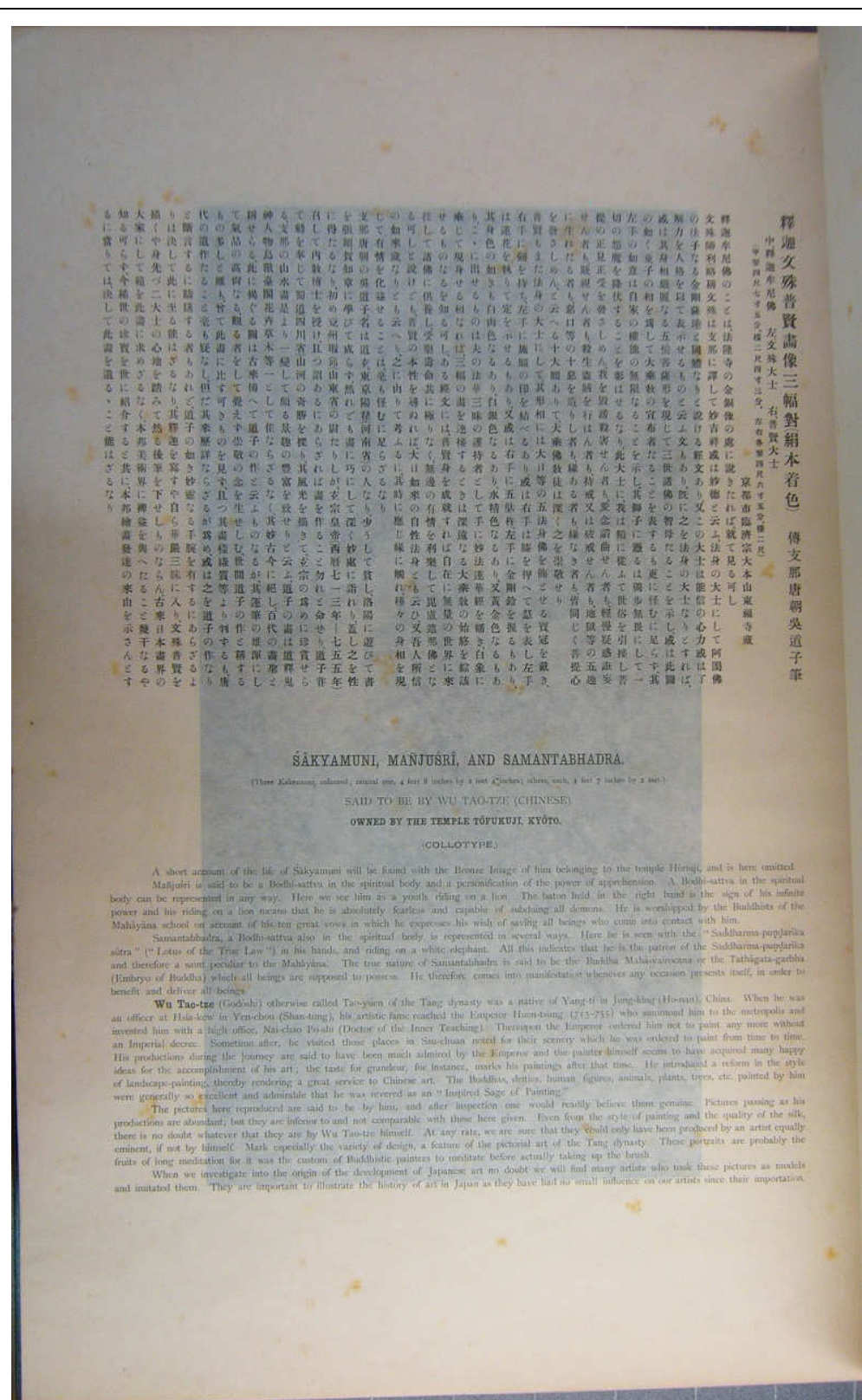


Fig. 2-21 Sample page of the protective sheet with introduction to the published object on it.

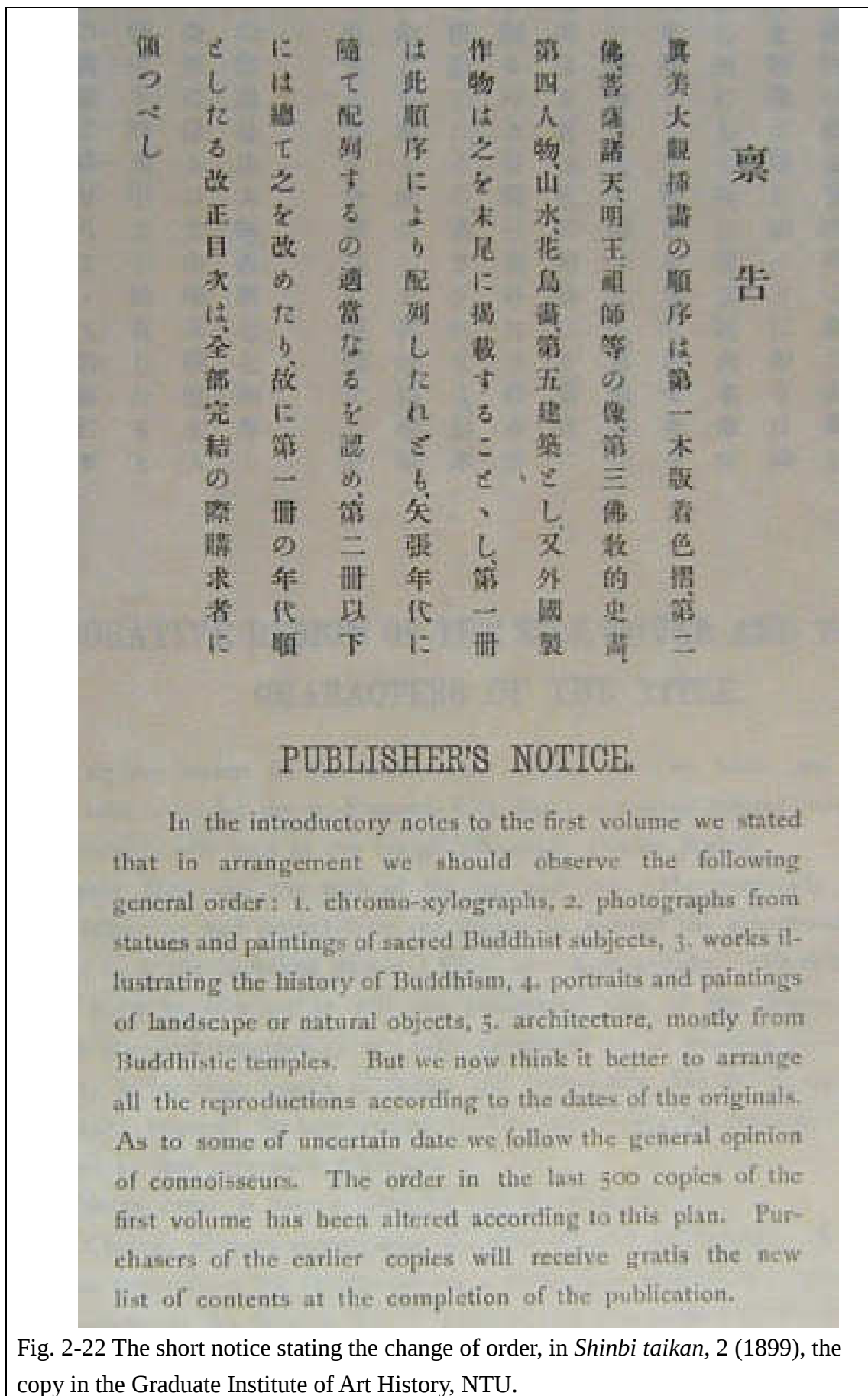


Fig. 2-22 The short notice stating the change of order, in *Shinbi taikan*, 2 (1899), the copy in the Graduate Institute of Art History, NTU.

點石齋印書書籍圖畫碑帖櫥聯價目

本齋於去年在泰西購得新式石印機器一付照印各種書畫皆能與元本不爽鑄錄且神采更覺煥發至照成縮本尤極精工舟車攜帶何無累壓之虞且行列井然不費目力誠天地間有數之奇事也今在申報館申昌書畫室出售合將印成每種價目列左

縮本字彙洋二角五分○晚笑堂畫傳洋三角五分○英字入門洋一角五分○新編圖洋五角○聖英字典洋五角○聖諭像解洋五角○簡明目錄連夾板七角五分○鴻雪因緣連夾板洋一元

空齋詩集未裱洋二角○紙面裝裱洋六角○玉夢樓冊頁未裱角五分○紙面裝裱洋三角五分○帶其昌成漢軒未裱八分又連裱洋一角六分○玉蘭十三冊未裱洋一角已裱一角八分○顏魯公家廟碑未裱洋一角五分○歐陽詢九成宮未裱洋一角五分○張玉衡書崇仁寺未裱一角五分○成親王限邪公家傳未裱八分又連裱洋一角六分○顏真卿多寶碑未裱洋一角八分又紙面裝裱洋二角八分○徐昌緒書陳方恭誥未裱五分○王羲之黃庭經未裱一角已裱洋一角八分○聖教序未裱二角五分又紙面裝裱每部五元五分○米南宮虎邱詩未裱一角二分又紙面裝裱二角六分○趙之謙書陳夫人家傳未裱洋二角又紙面裝裱洋三角五分○又琴旨未裱洋一角二分○紙面裝裱洋二角二分○梅野人草書未裱八分又紙面裝裱二角

毛意香對素裱白紙洋二角色紙二角五分裱成加二角○劉石索對未裱白紙洋二角色紙二角五分裱成加二角○朱對未裱白紙洋二角色紙二角五分裱成加二角○鮑德卿對未裱白紙洋二角色紙二角五分裱成加二角○桂芬對未裱白紙洋二角色紙二角五分裱成加二角○可法對未裱白紙洋二角色紙二角五分裱成加二角○伊秉綬對未裱白紙洋二角色紙二角五分裱成加二角○吳昌碩對未裱白紙洋二角色紙二角五分裱成加一角五分又描金琴對未裱洋二角連裱洋三角

任百年翎毛花卉大條幅每堂計洋三角又若色洋六角又琴條每堂一角五分又若色洋四角又聽琴圖立軸計洋六分又若色洋一角四分又歲朝圖立軸計洋六分又若色洋一角四分○王蘭峯人物大屏條每堂洋三角又應雄獨立圖堂幅二角若色洋三角五分○又四愛圖五尺條幅洋三角若色洋六角○又等嶽圖堂幅洋二角若色洋五角○又爛柯圖堂幅洋二角若色洋五角○又劉海圖堂軸洋二角若色洋三角五分○又子昂麻姑立軸洋六分若色洋一角六分○許慎生人騎琴條洋一角五分○白雲山人仙送子圖立軸洋六分若色洋一角八分○陸虎如山永琴條洋一角五分○龍眠山人劉海圖洋六分○王雲卿士女置條每堂洋二角○茗溪逸士山水每堂洋五分

點石齋主人吳查啓

Fig. 2-23
The 1879
advertisement
for photo-
lithographic
reproductions
in Shenbao, 27
July 1879



Fig. 2-24 Rubbing of the ‘*Lanting xu* 蘭亭序’, originally written in 353 AD, by the ‘Calligraphy Sage’, Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (303-361), collection in National Palace Museum, Taipei

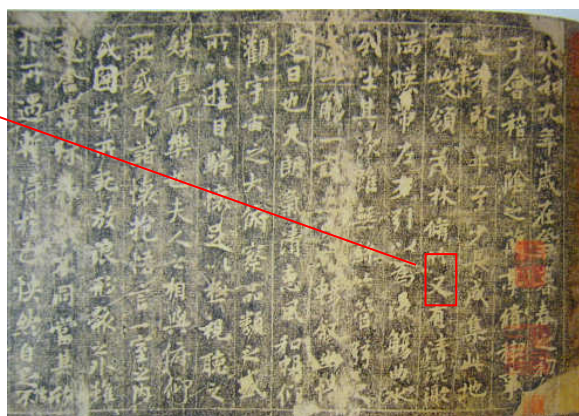
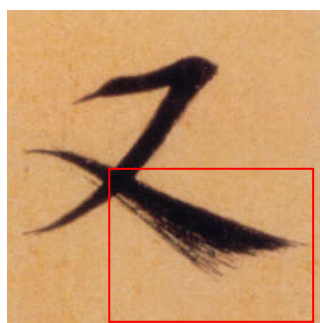


Fig. 2-25 (Left) The character *you* 又, taken from the ‘Tracing Copy of *Lanting xu*’ (*Mo xitie* 摹禊帖), by Lu Jishan 陸繼善 (active in the latter half of the 14th C.), collection in National Palace Museum, Taipei



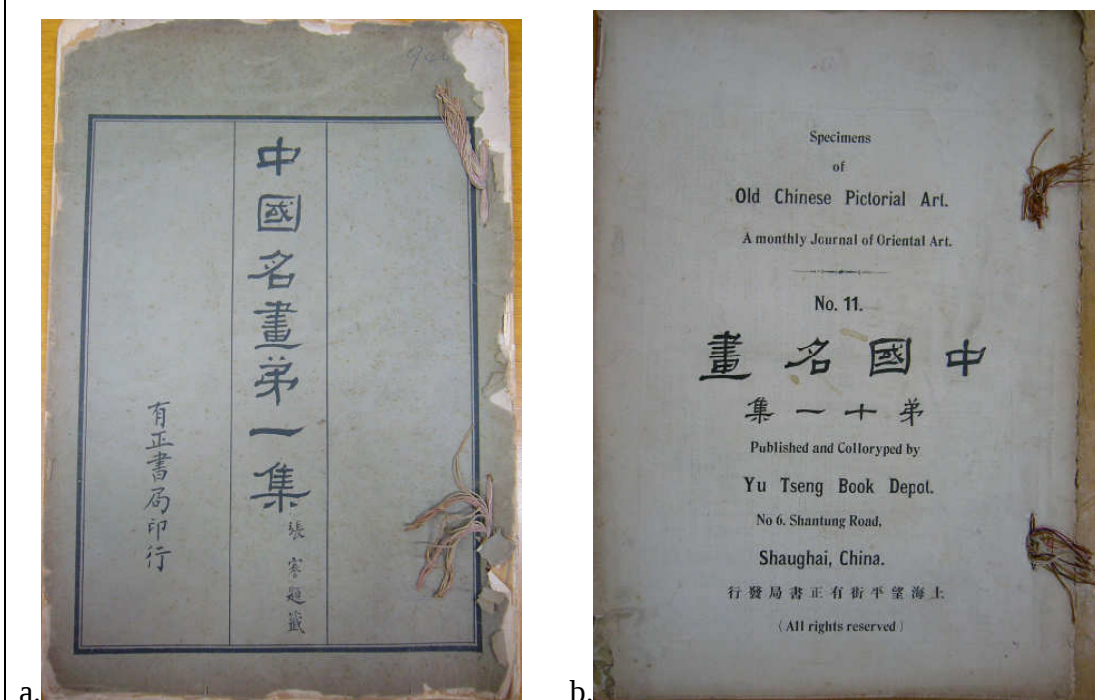
Fig. 2-26 Collotype reproduction printed on *xuan* paper, of an album leaf by Jin Nong 金農 (1687-1764), SG, 19 (1911).





c.

Fig. 2-27 Collotype reproductions printed on silk: a. of a landscape painting by Wang Hui 王翬 (1632-1717), SG, 19 (1911); b. of a landscape painting by Lan Ying 藍瑛 (1585-1664), SG, 20 (1911); c. (details of a.) weave of the silk.



a.

b.

Fig. 2-28 Front cover of *Famous Chinese Paintings*: a. Issue 1 (1908); b. Issue 11 (1910); both are from the edition held in the Shanghai Library.

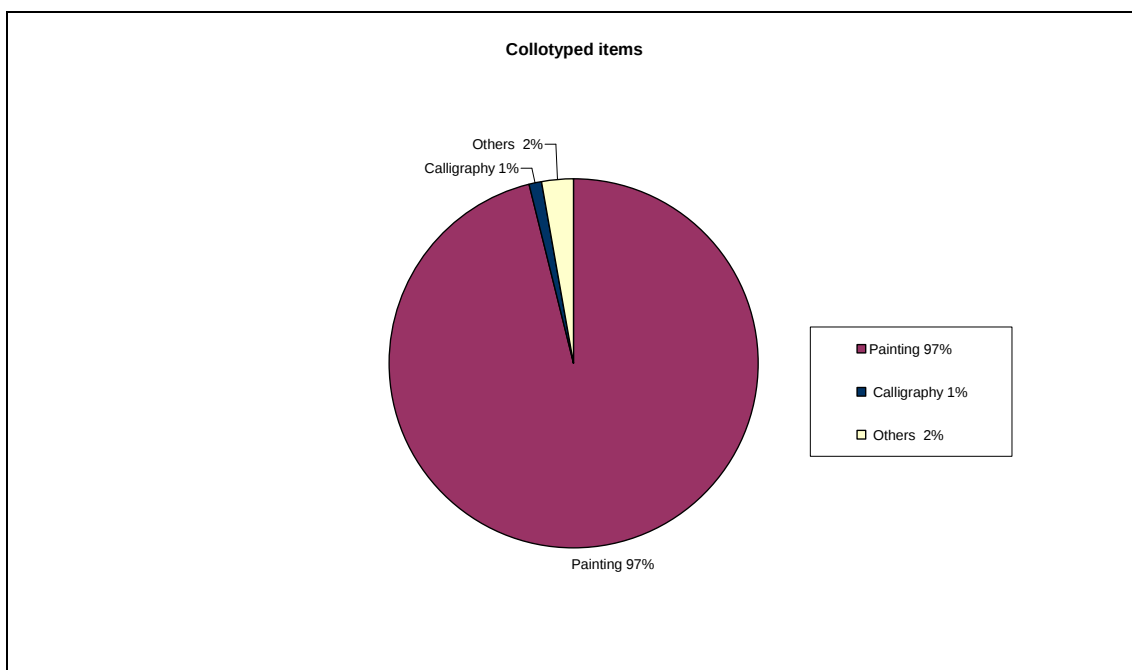


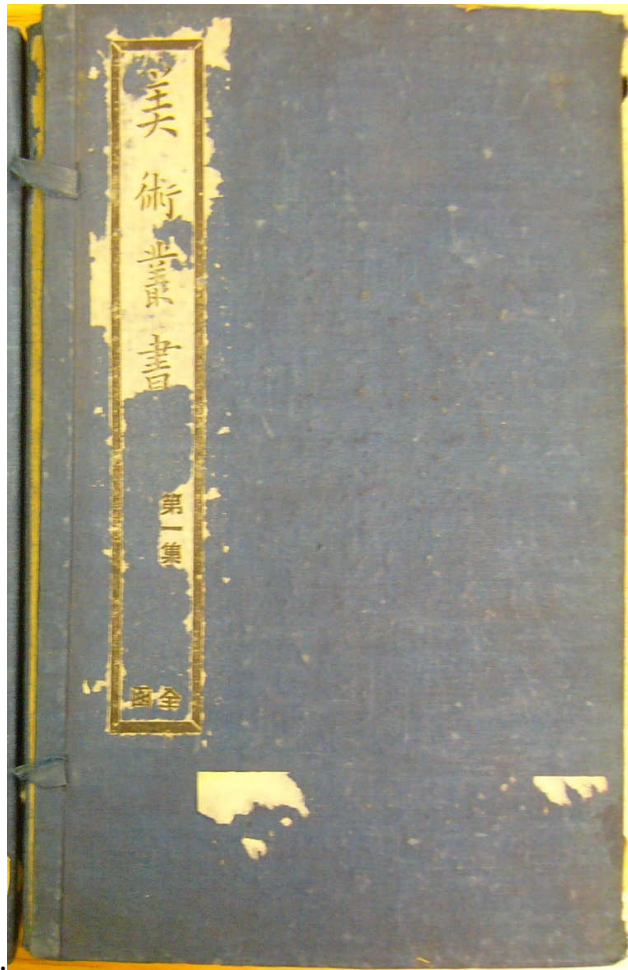
Fig. 2-29 Proportions of painting, calligraphy, and other objects to the total number of the collotype reproductions in the *Shenzhou guoguangji*.



Fig. 2-30 'Retreat in Mount Qingbian' by Wang Meng, *Famous Chinese Paintings*, 1 (1908), a. the copy in the Shanghai Library; b. the copy in the library of the Hong Kong University



Fig. 2-31 English description of the House of SG, SG, 10 (1909)



a.



b.

Fig. 3-1 a. the book casing (*zhi* 帙) for the first volume; b. the opening book casing and the four fascicles (*ce* 冊) inside. Photographs of the copy at SOAS library.

美術叢書第一集目錄			
書筏	書筌	畫訣	畫語錄
題畫偶錄	草心樓讀畫集	摹印述	墨經
琴學八則			
目錄			
笄重光	笄重光	龔賢	道濟
戴熙	黃崇惺	蘭甫	晁說之
程雄			

Fig. 3-2 'Table of contents', MC, 1.1(1911).

美術叢書待刻書目			
書品庾肩吾	書評袁昂	書斷張懷瓘	書法歐陽詢
書史米芾	翰林要訣陳繹曾	書法三昧元無名氏	鈍吟書要馮班
書法約言宋曹	筆法記荆浩	畫訓郭熙	
初月樓論書隨筆吳德旋	書學捷要朱履貞	頻羅菴論書梁同書	安吳論書包世臣
畫學秘訣王維	續畫品錄李嗣真	貞觀公私畫史袁孝源	

Fig. 3-3
'Advertisement for texts to be published', MC, 1.1 (1911)

再出美術叢書續集十集廣告

本書前編正集十集早已出齊所刊各種均屬佳本久荷同好歡迎惟限于卷帙待刊之書未印者尙夥又本社續蒐得舊鈔罕見之本不下數十種茲擬再編續集十集仍照前例每月出一集先行發售預定券三百張每張五元外埠加郵費五角以售完爲限限滿收實價十元不折本社同人殫心蒐羅細意選擇務欲勒成一完全大部叢書以供海內美術家之研究凡嗜古尙美之君子當所不棄也茲將續集擬刊書目列左

書類

寓意編 都穆

書品 庾肩吾

書斷 張懷瓘

書評 袁昂

述書賦 寶泉

書譜 孫過庭

續書譜 姜夔

書史 米芾

廣川書跋 董道

書法 歐陽詢

續書品 李嗣真

書法三昧 元無名氏

翰林要訣 陳繹曾

皇宋書錄 董史

墨戲 韋續

墨池瑣錄 楊慎

書訣 豐坊

東觀餘論 董伯思

翰墨志 宋高宗

續書斷 朱長文

字學憶參 姚孟起

筆元要旨 徐渭

書法雅言 項穆

寒山帚談 趙宦光

書眼 董其昌

書法粹言 汪挺

皇明書錄 韓昂

書學捷要 朱履真

書學緒聞 魏錫曾

竹懶畫賡 李日華

竹懶畫賡續 李日華

竹懶墨君題語 李日華

醉鷗墨君題語 李會嘉

紫桃軒雜綴擇錄 李日華

六研齋筆記擇錄 李日華

漁洋書畫筆記 王貽上

好古堂家藏名畫記 姚際恒

明畫錄 徐沁

名公扇譜 張白雲

皇明畫譜 韓昂

欣賞繪妙 吳康伯

臥庵藏書畫目 朱之赤

董華亭書畫錄 青浮山人輯

西廬畫跋 王時敏

清暉畫跋 王翬

南田題畫 惲格

墨井畫跋 吳歷

扁舟圖題詠 王原祁

畫羅漢頌 廖燕

紫雲出浴圖題詠

畫梅題記 朱方霽

圖繪要略 朱凱

繪事指蒙 鄒德中

畫說 莫是龍

繪妙 茅一相

傳神必要 翁昂

傳神必要 翁昂

印辨 高積厚

印述 高積厚

印箋說 徐堅

古今印制 孫光祖

篆印發微 孫光祖

古印考略 夏一駒

印說 印言 陳鍊

論印絕句 沈心等

印文考略 鞠履厚

七家印跋 秦祖永

紫泥法 汪錫京

磁銅玉石類

陶說 朱琰

刀劍錄 陶弘景

鼎錄 虞勃

名劍記 李承勛

劍記 郭子章

古鏡記 王度

宣爐歌註 冒襄

宣德鼎彝譜 呂震

傳古別錄 陳介祺

宣和石譜 常懋

太湖石誌 范成大

石譜 杜綰

怪石錄 沈心

雲林石譜 杜綰

選石記 成性

水坑石記 錢朝鼎

水坑石記 錢朝鼎

Fig. 3-4 'List of book titles to be published in the Second Series of the Meishu congshu', MC, 2.1(1913).



Fig. 3-5 Rubbing of
'Haozhong qin 號鐘
琴', SG, 19 (1911).

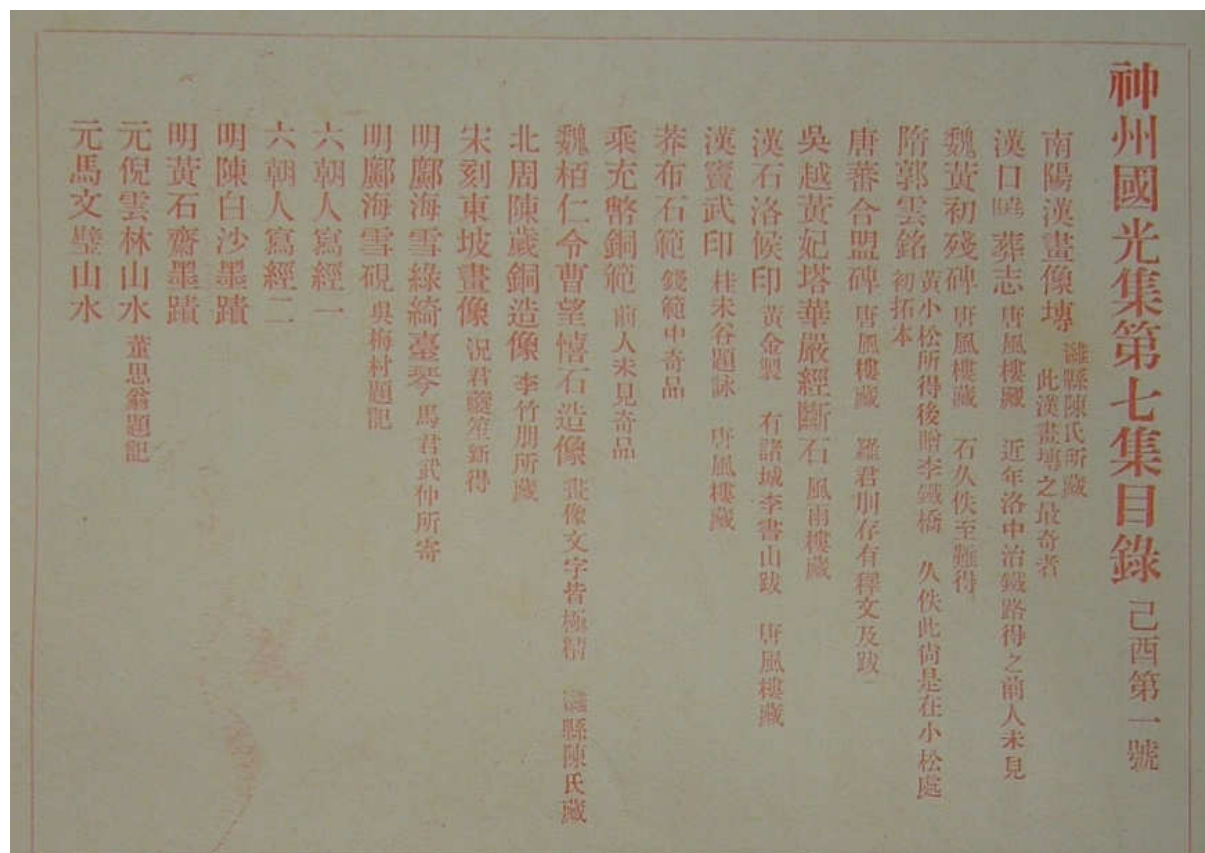


Fig. 3-6 Comments in the 'Table of Contents', SG, 7 (1909)

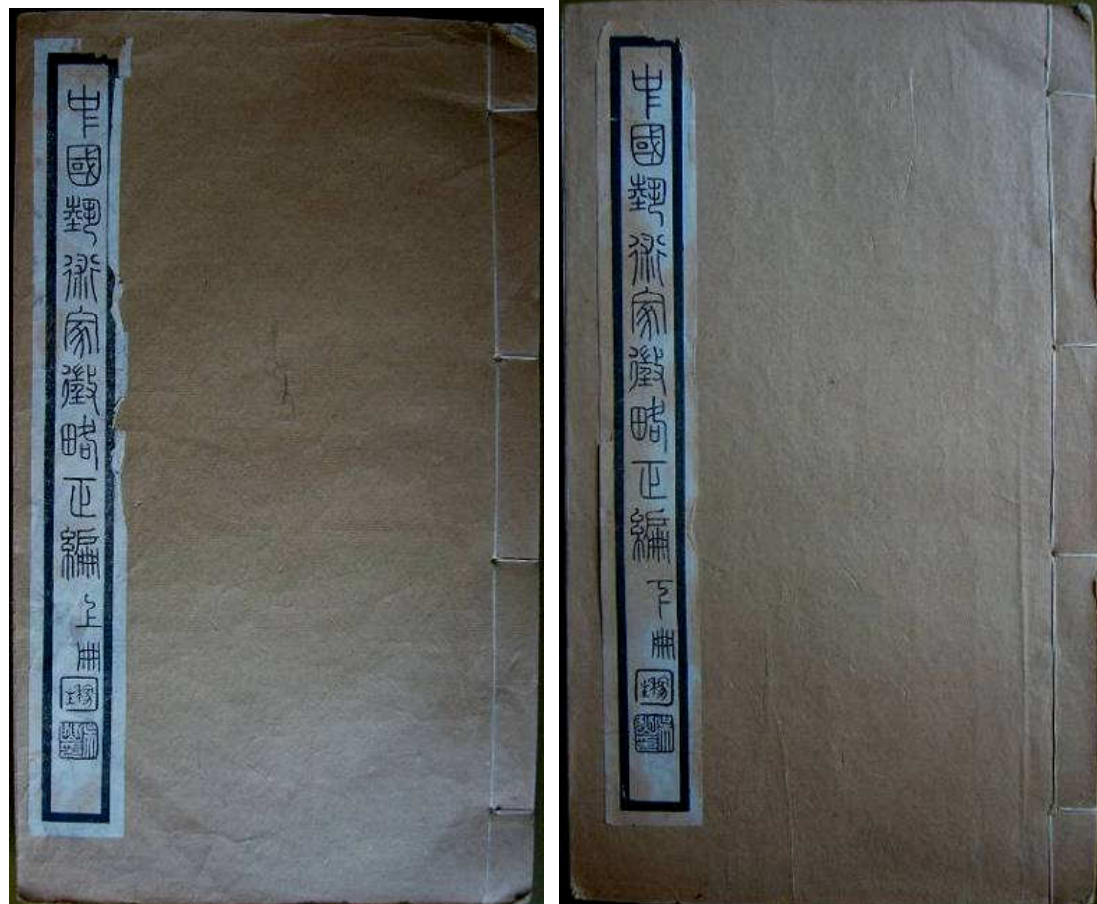


Fig. 4-1 The cover of Zhenglüe, vol. 1 (left) and vol. 2 (right)



Fig. 4-2 The photographic portrait of the author Li Fang

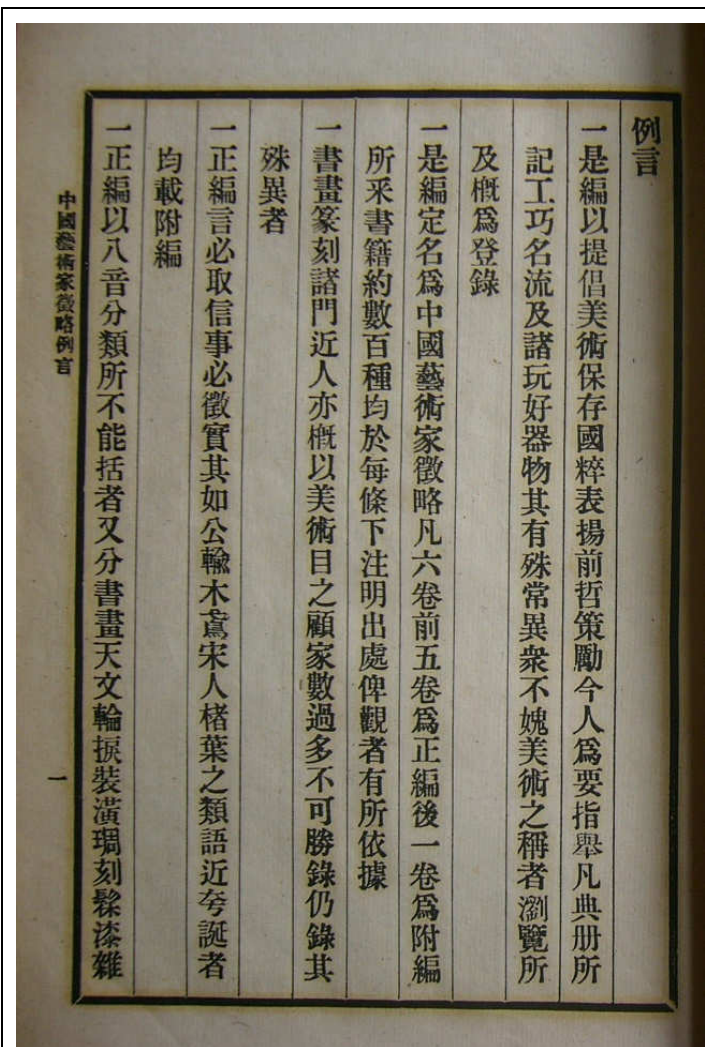


Fig. 4-6 'General Remarks'

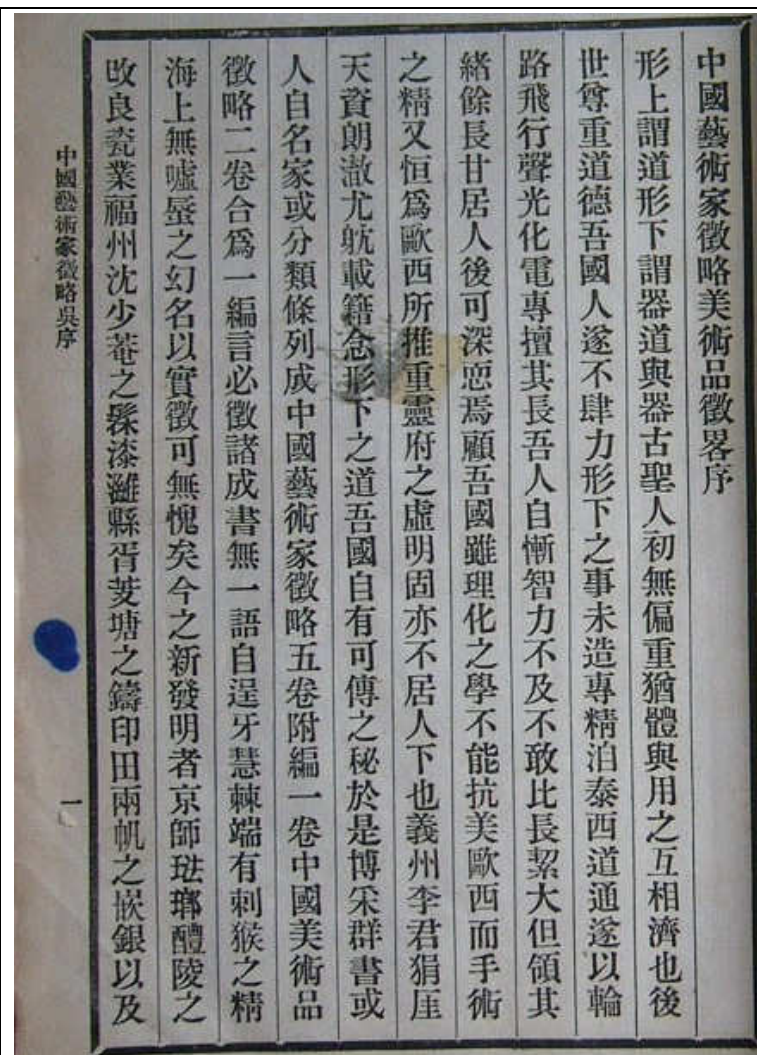


Fig. 4-7 Wu Chongxi's preface

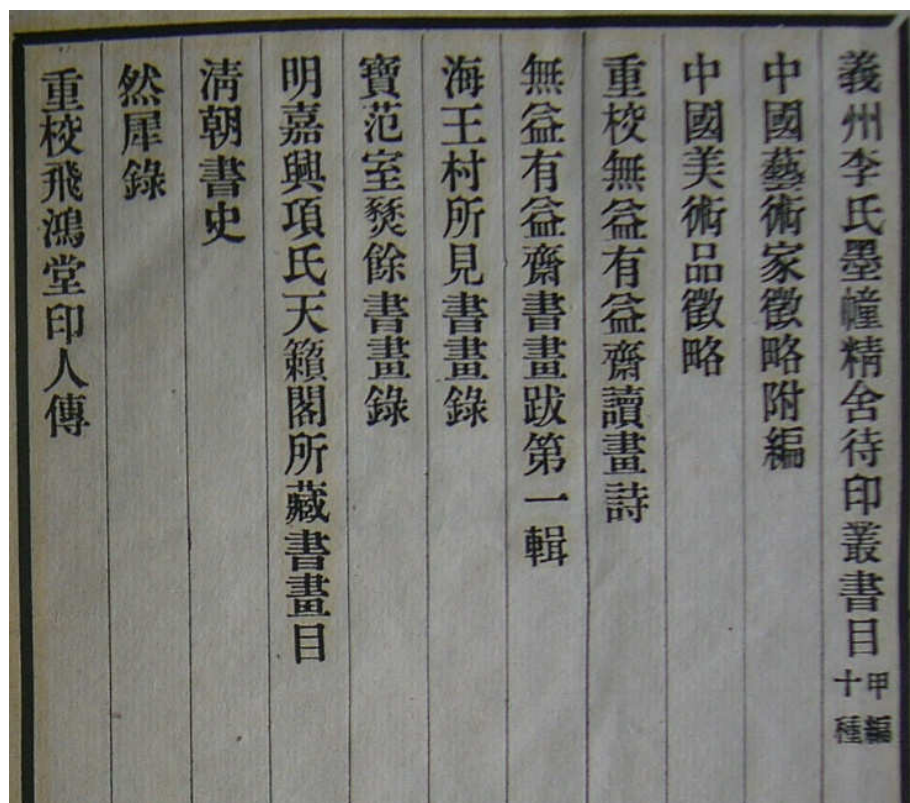


Fig. 4-8 Advertisement attached to the 1915 edition of *Zhenglüe* (Shanghai Library).



Fig. 4-9 Carved olive-stone boat of the story of Red Cliff, made by Chen Zuzhang 陳祖章 in 1737, collection in National Palace Museum, Taiwan



Fig. 4-10 Anonymous, Bodhisattva Guanyin, Ming dynasty, collection of National Palace Museum, Taiwan.

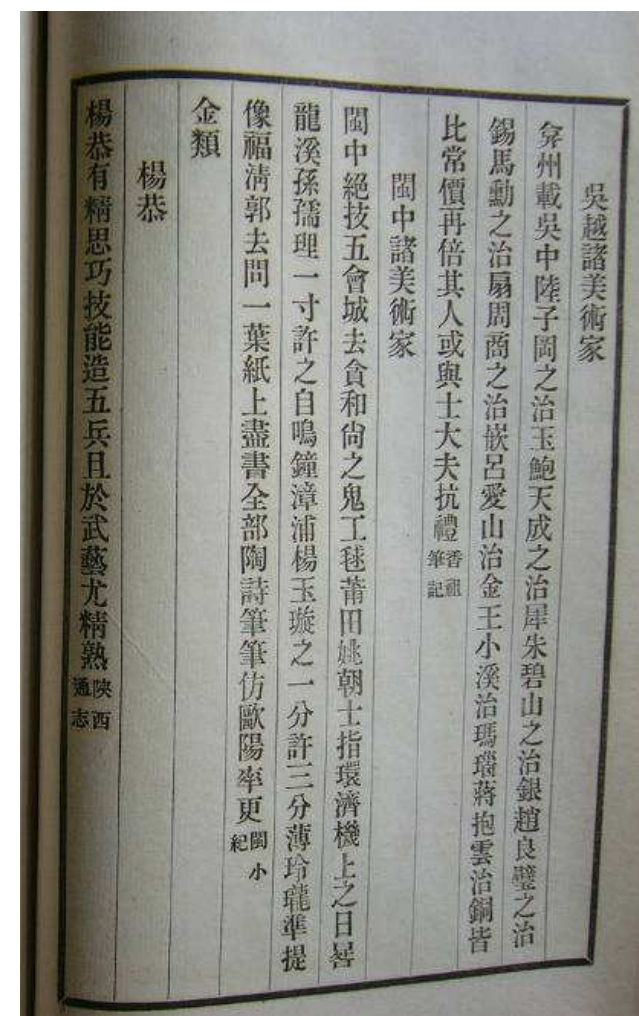


Fig. 4-12 Sample page: *Zhenglüe*, juan1, p. 2

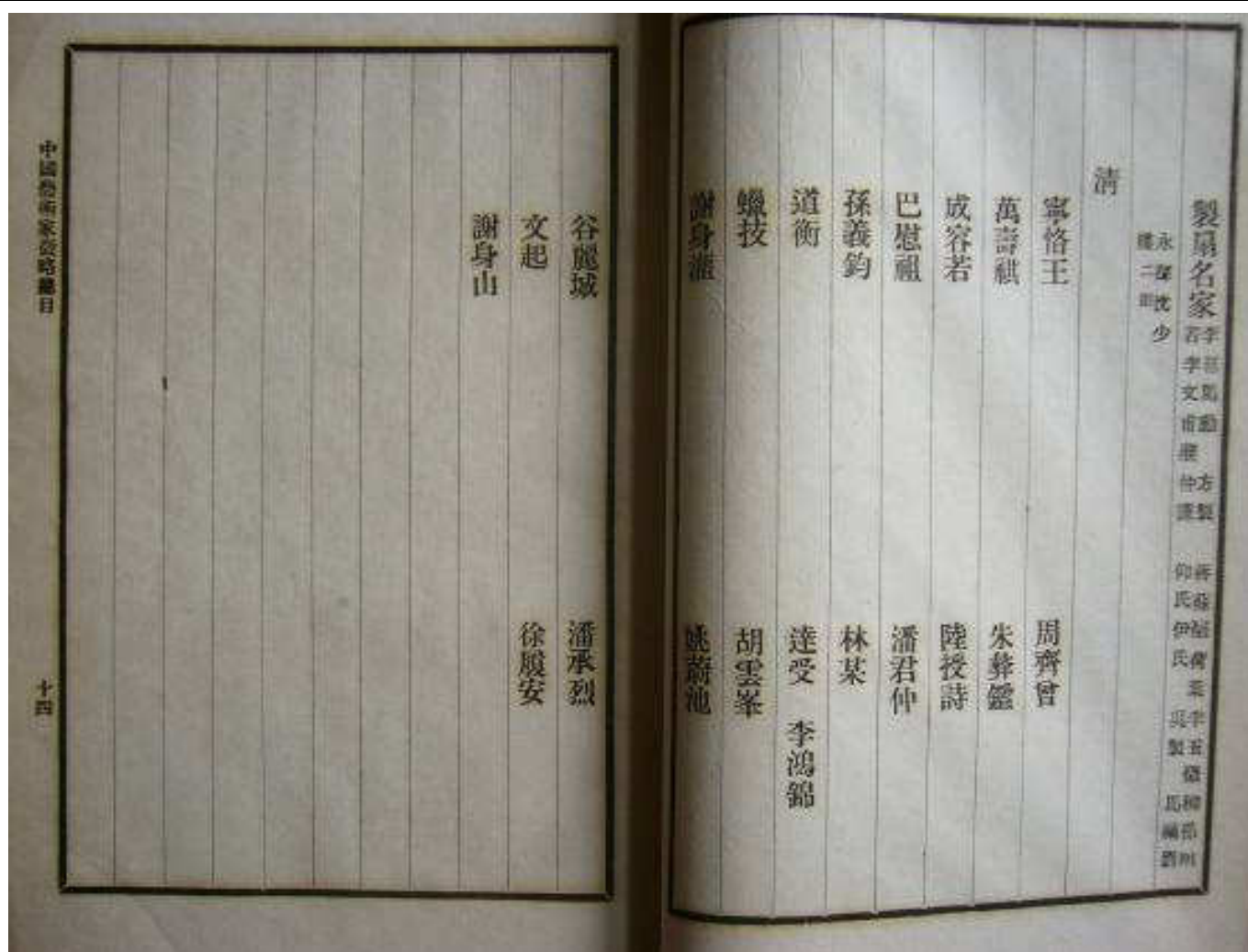


Fig. 4-11 The last page of the 'Complete Contents'



Fig. 4-13 The embroidered portrait of Elena of Montenegro, Queen of Italy, by Shen Shou. Image published in *Shibao*, 3 October 1910.

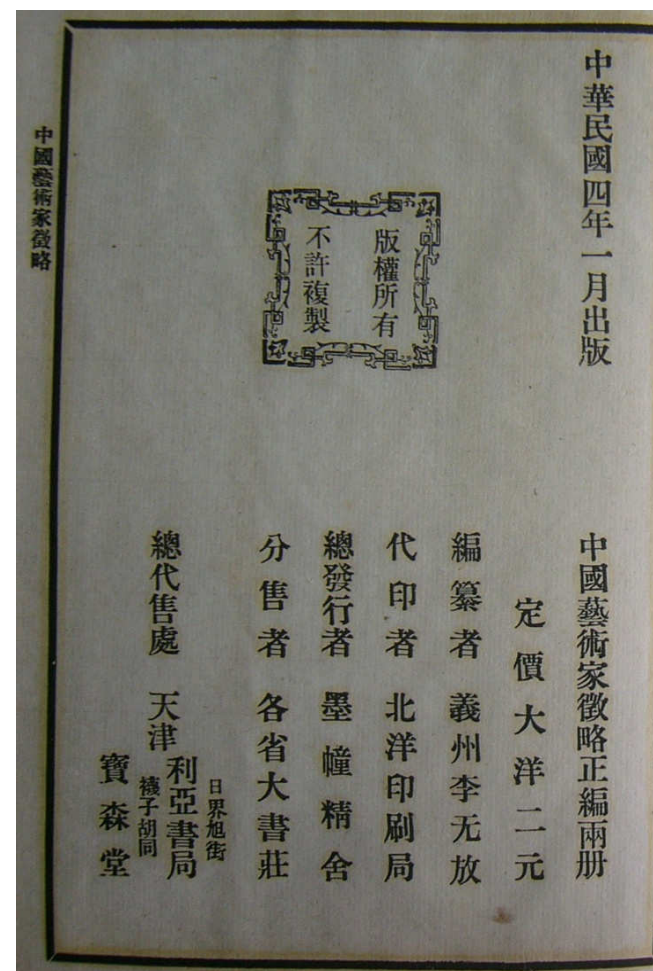


Fig. 4-14 The back 'imprint page' of the 1915 edition (Shanghai Library).

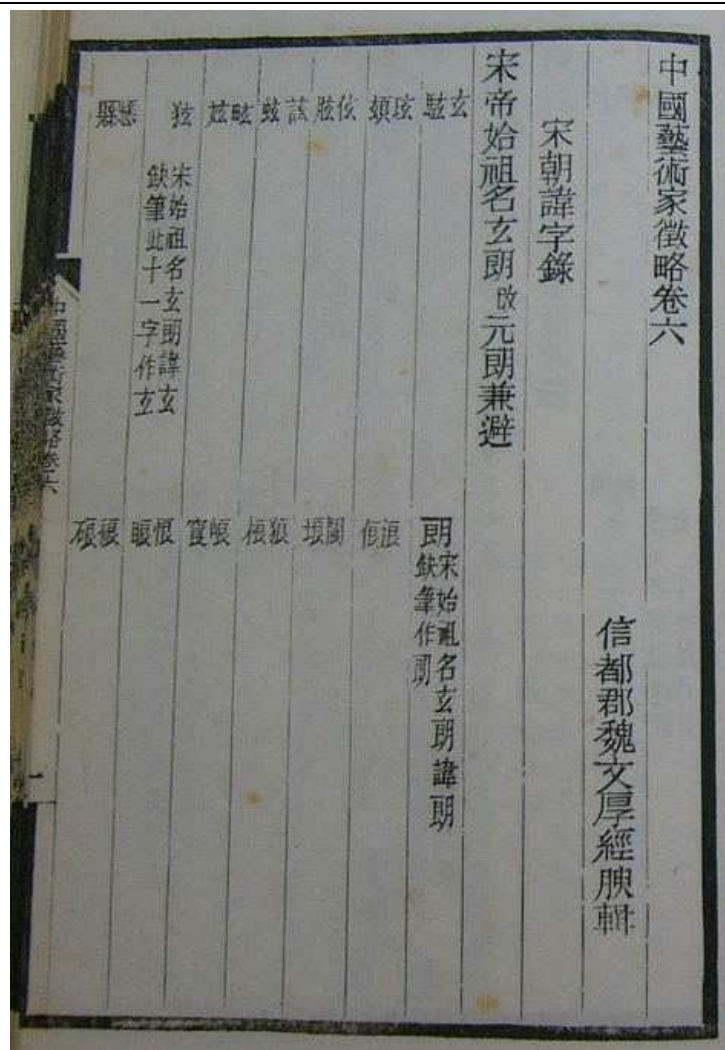


Fig. 4-15 First page of *juan* 6, in 'Wenyoutang B' (SOAS).

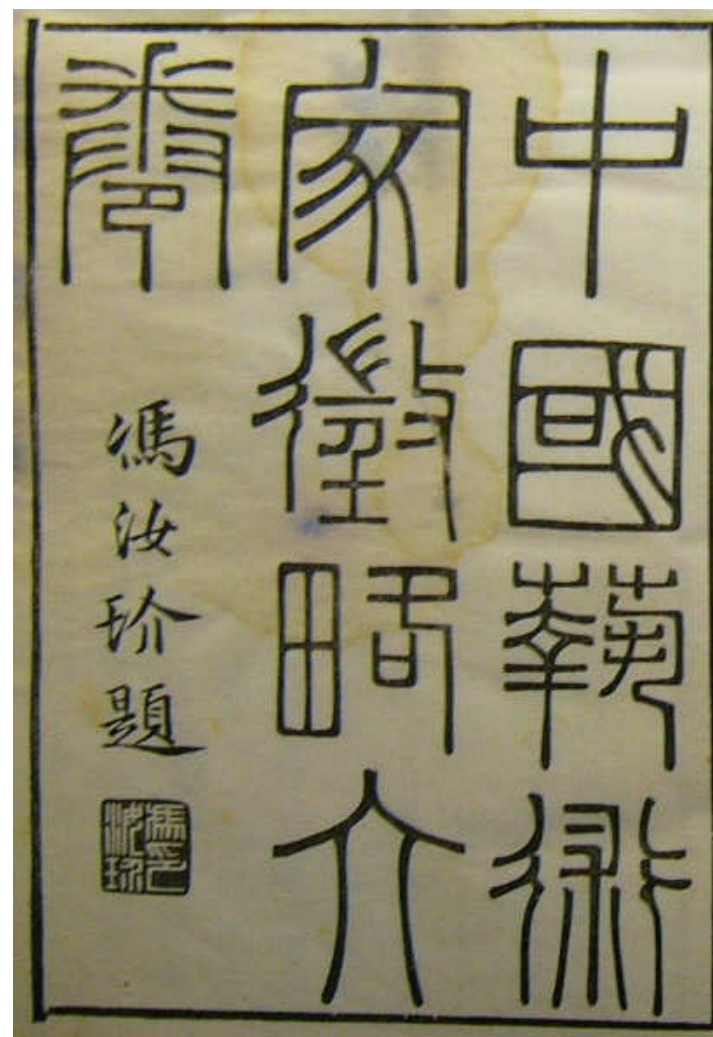


Fig. 4-16 Title page in 'Wenyoutang B' (SOAS)

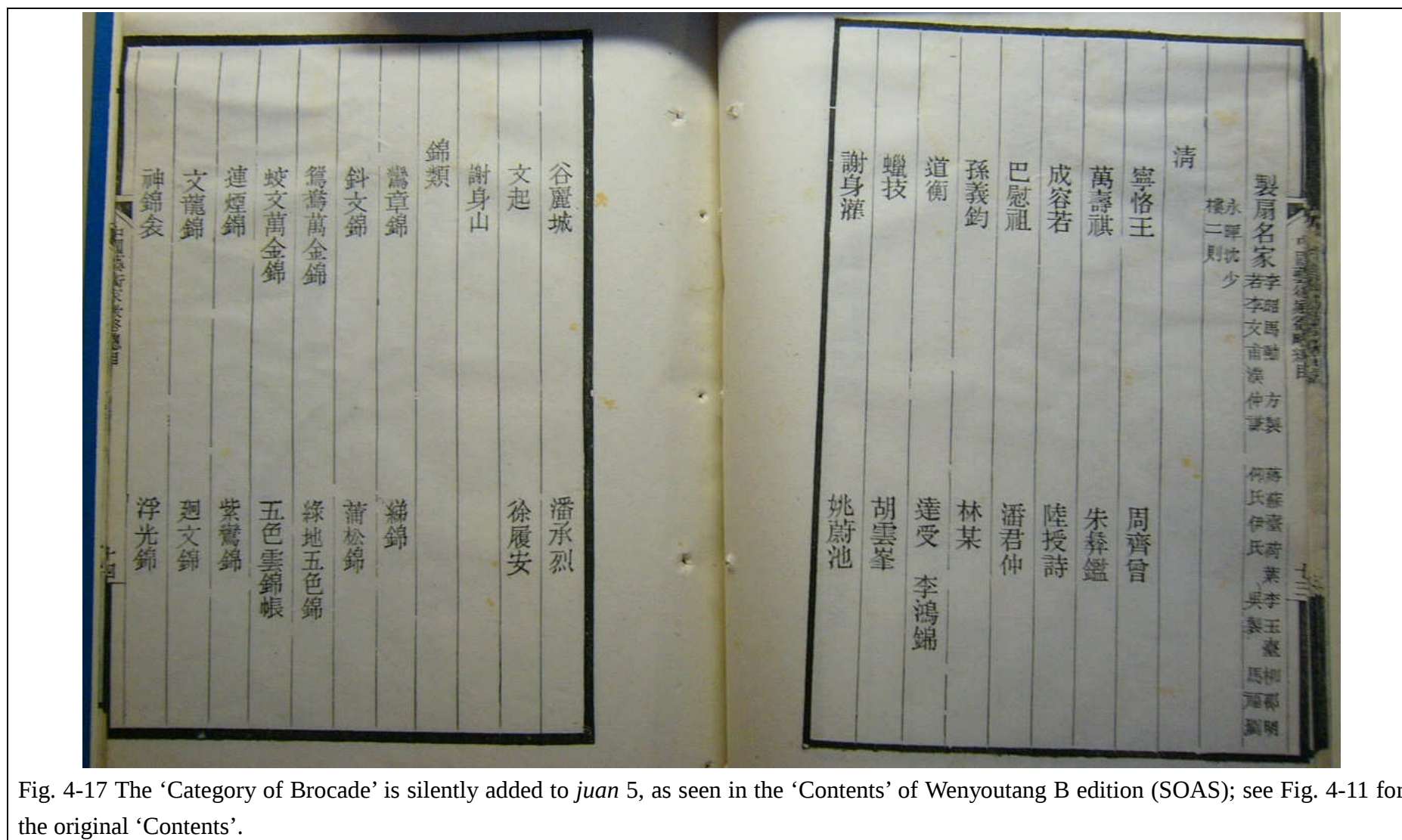


Fig. 4-17 The 'Category of Brocade' is silently added to *juan* 5, as seen in the 'Contents' of Wenyou Tang B edition (SOAS); see Fig. 4-11 for the original 'Contents'.

目錄終	目録終	永樂大典	善畫人	印	李贄傳	逆璫魏忠賢東林黨人榜	宋避字錄	卷六	明霞錦	魚油錦	神絲續	永垂錦	武則天	二黨傳	孽窠裝潢	上林圖	匿字
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Fig. 4-18 ‘Contents’ of *juan* 6, following the remaining contents of the addition to *juan* 5 of ‘Category of Brocade’ (Fig. 4-17), in ‘Wenyoutang B edition’ (SOAS)

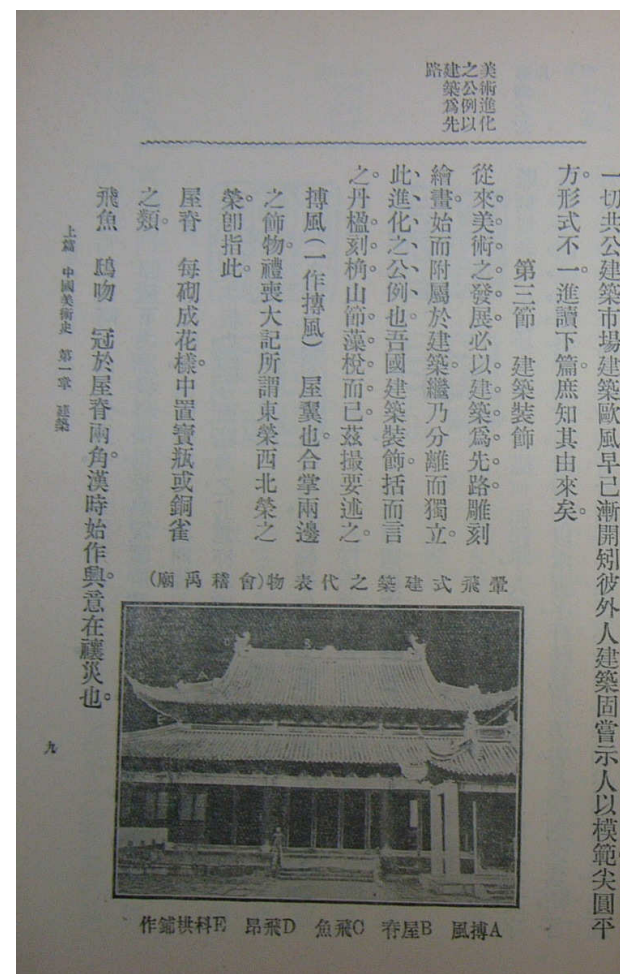


Fig. 4-20 Sample page of Jiang Danshu, *Text Book of Art History for Normal Schools*, first published in 1917 (1923 edition)

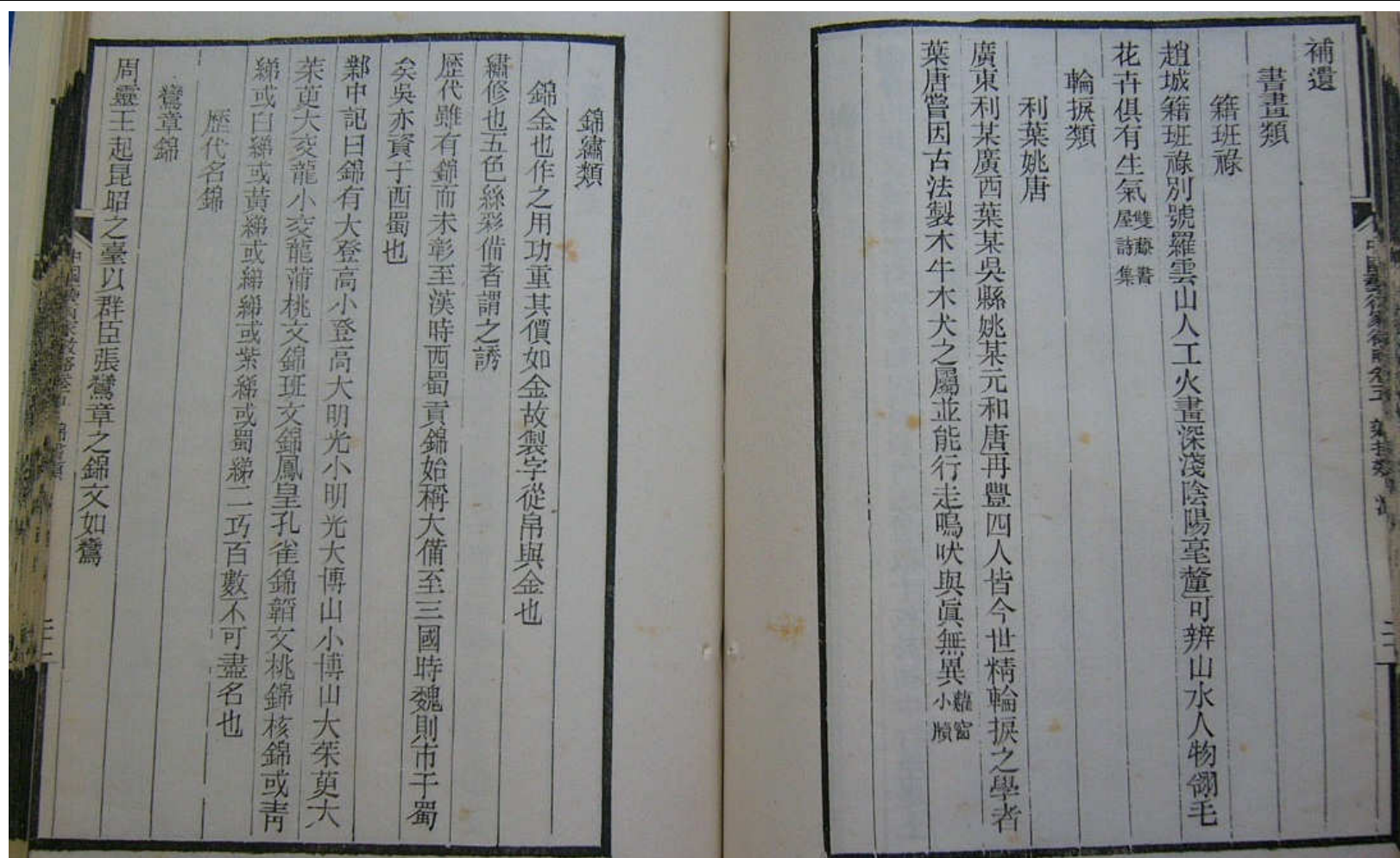


Fig. 4-19 The 'Category of Brocade and Embroidery' is placed right after the original 'Addition of omission', in Wenyou tang B (SOAS)

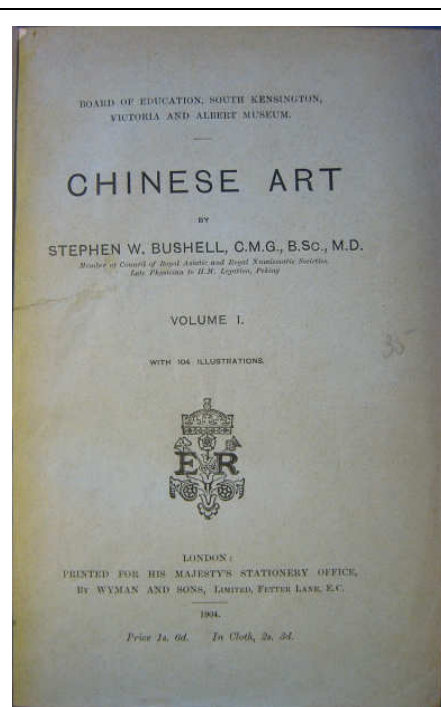


Fig. 5-1 Title page of Stephen Bushell, *Chinese Art*, first edition (1904)

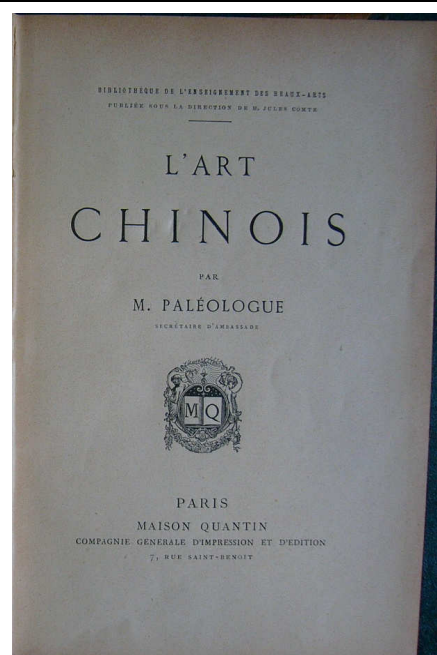


Fig. 5-2 Title page of M. Paléologue, *L'Art Chinois*



Fig. 5-3 (Left) Bushell, vol. 1, fig. 44; (right) Paléologue, p. 122

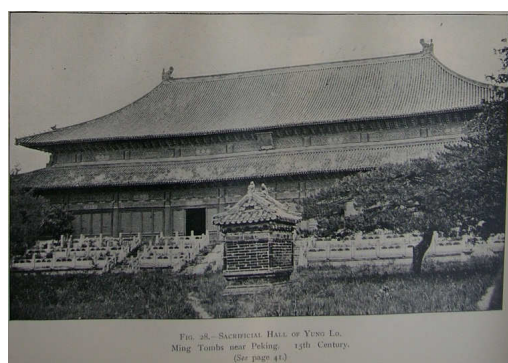
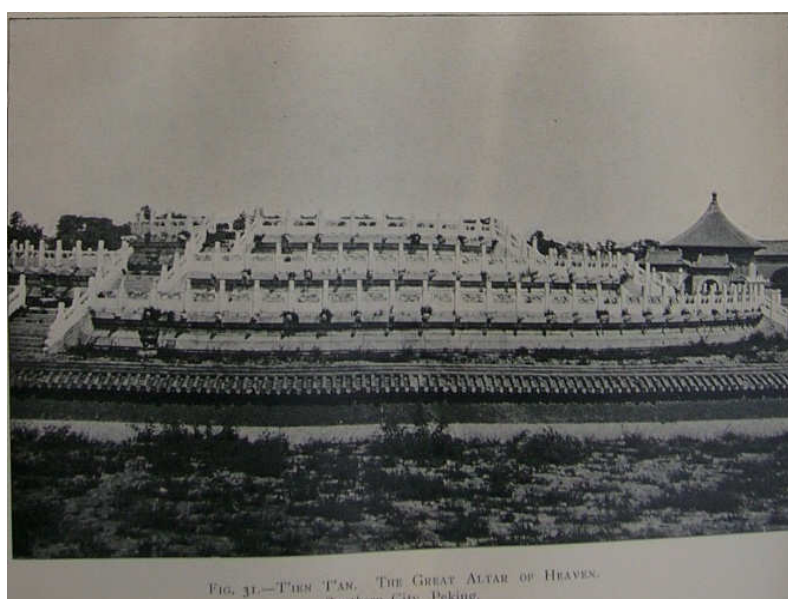


Fig. 5-4 (Left) Bushell, vol.1, fig. 28; (right) Paléologue, p. 91



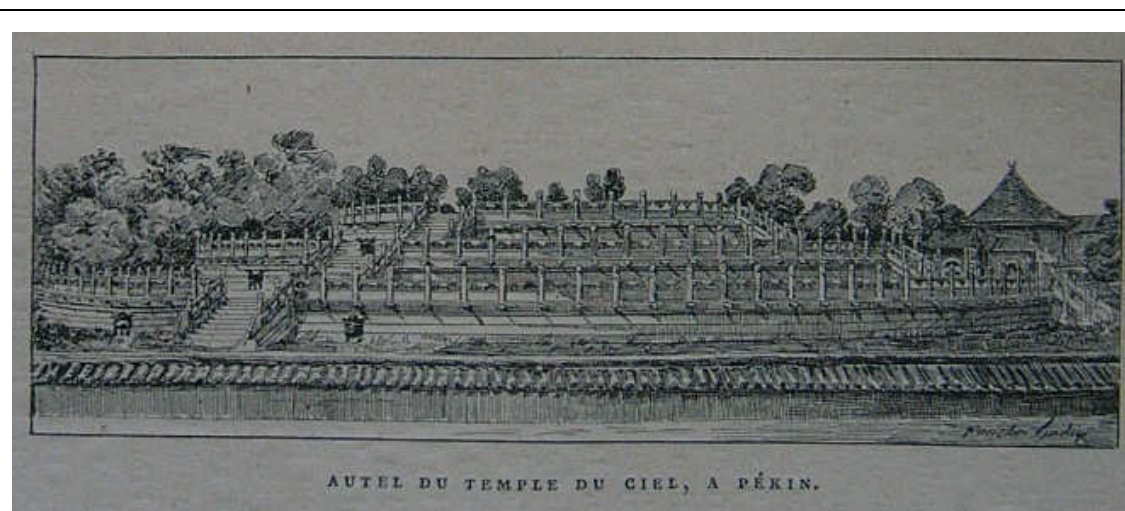


Fig. 5-5 (Above) Bushell, vol., fig. 31; (below) Paléologue, p. 111

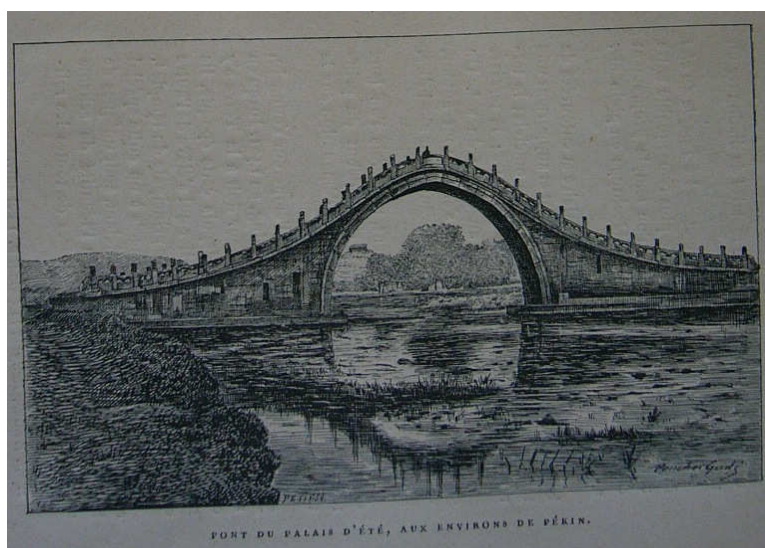
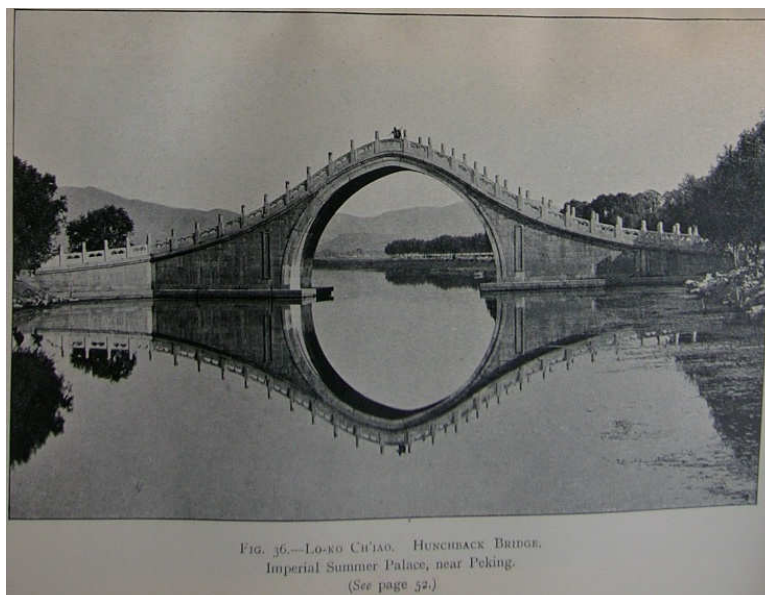


Fig. 5-6 (Above) Bushell, vol.1, fig. 36; (below) Paléologue, p. 109



Fig. 5-7 (Left) Bushell, vol. 1, fig. 38; (right) Paléologue, p. 117



Fig. 5-8 (Left) Bushell, vol. 1, fig. 19; (right) Paléologue, p. 143



Fig. 5-9 (Left) Bushell, vol. 1, fig. 102; (right) Paléologue, p. 173



Fig. 5-10 English title of the *Beijing daxue rikan* (Peking University Daily)



Fig. 5-11 Comparison of the illustration of the *Admonition Scroll* in a. Giles's *Introduction to Chinese Pictorial Art* (1905), b. Bushell's *Chinese Art* (1906), and c. the journal *Guocui xuebao* (1908).



a.



b.

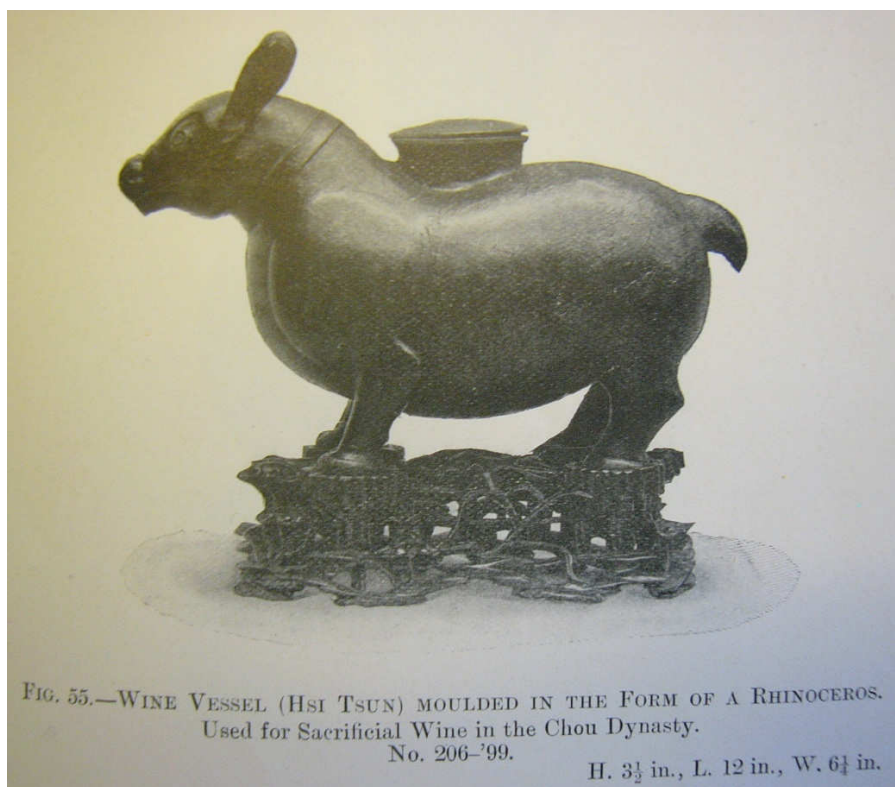


c.

Fig. 5-12 Comparison of the illustration of the *Landscape Scroll* attributed to Zhao Mengfu in a. Giles's *Introduction to Chinese Pictorial Art* (1905), b. Bushell's *Chinese Art* (1906), and c. the journal *Guocui xuebao* (1908).



a.



b.

Fig. 5-13 Illustration of the bronze vessel in the shape of a rhinoceros (App. 5-1, # 5) in a. *Guocui xuebao*, 4.1 (1908) and b. Bushell's *Chinese Art* (vol. 1, fig. 55)

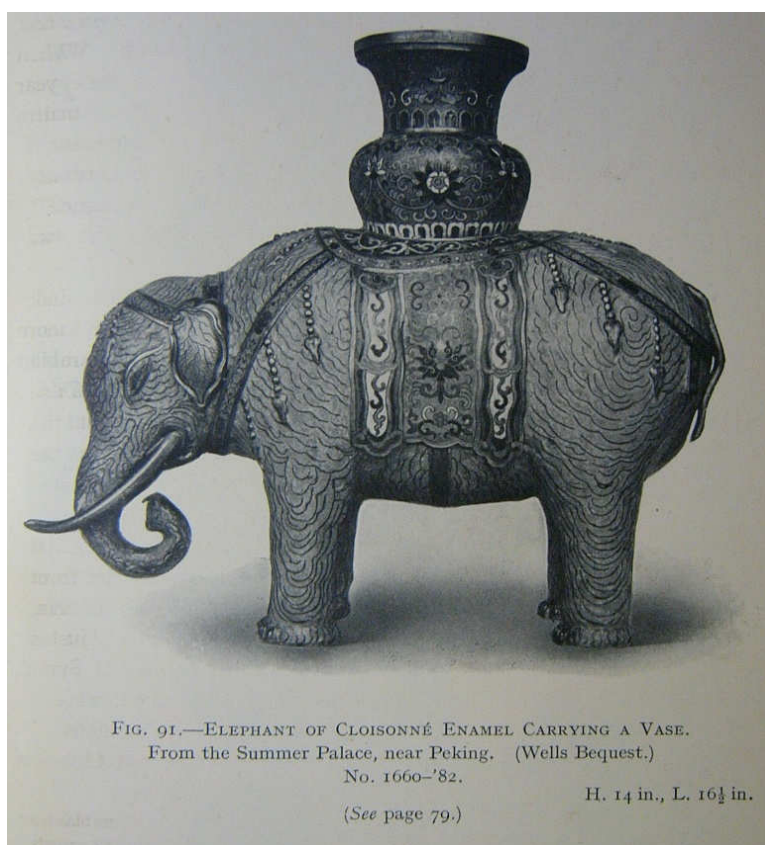


Fig. 5-14 Illustration of Elephant of Enamel (App. 5-1, # 6) in a. *Guocui xuebao*, 4.1 (1908) and b. Bushell's *Chinese Art* (vol.2, fig. 91).



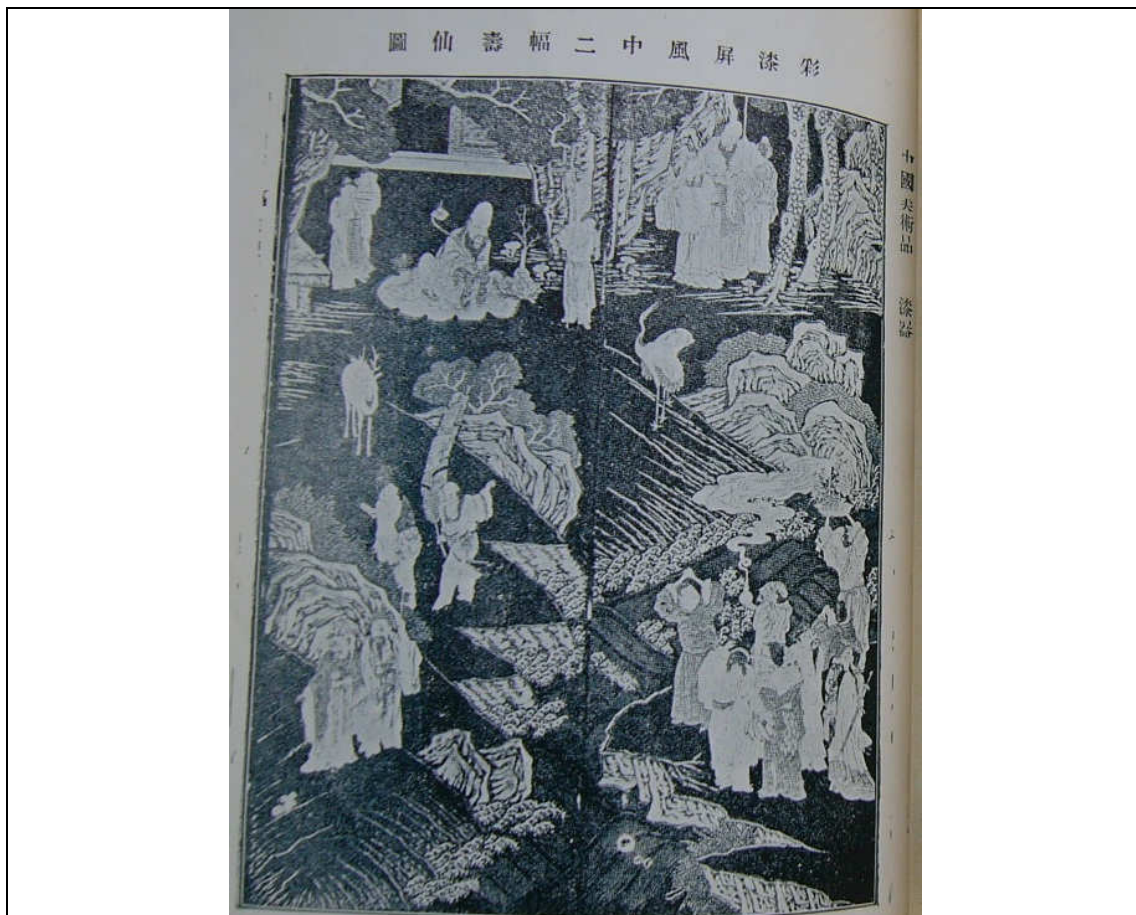


Fig. 5-18 Genie of Longevity in the two central panels of a coloured lacquer screen (App. 5-1. # 8)

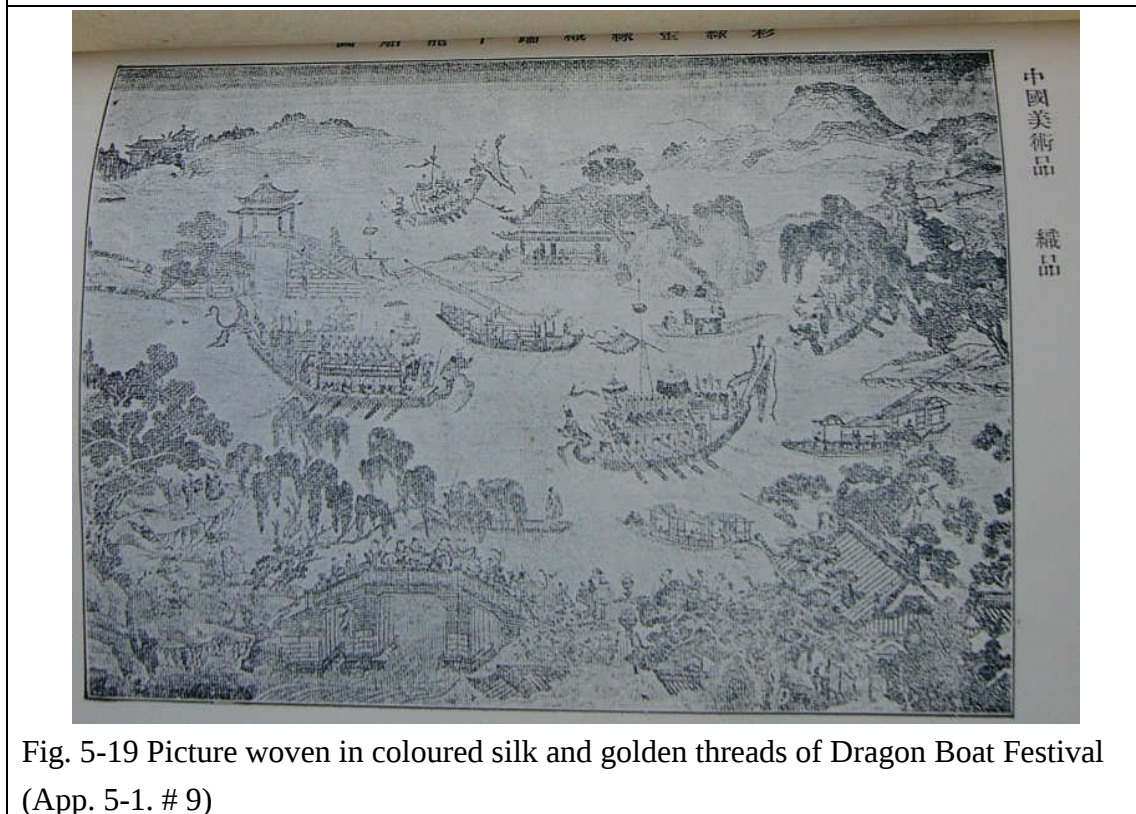


Fig. 5-19 Picture woven in coloured silk and golden threads of Dragon Boat Festival (App. 5-1. # 9)



Fig. 5-20 Illustrations of sericulture and silk weaving (App. 5-1. # 10)



Fig. 5-21 Round dish of painted enamel (App. 5-1. # 13)

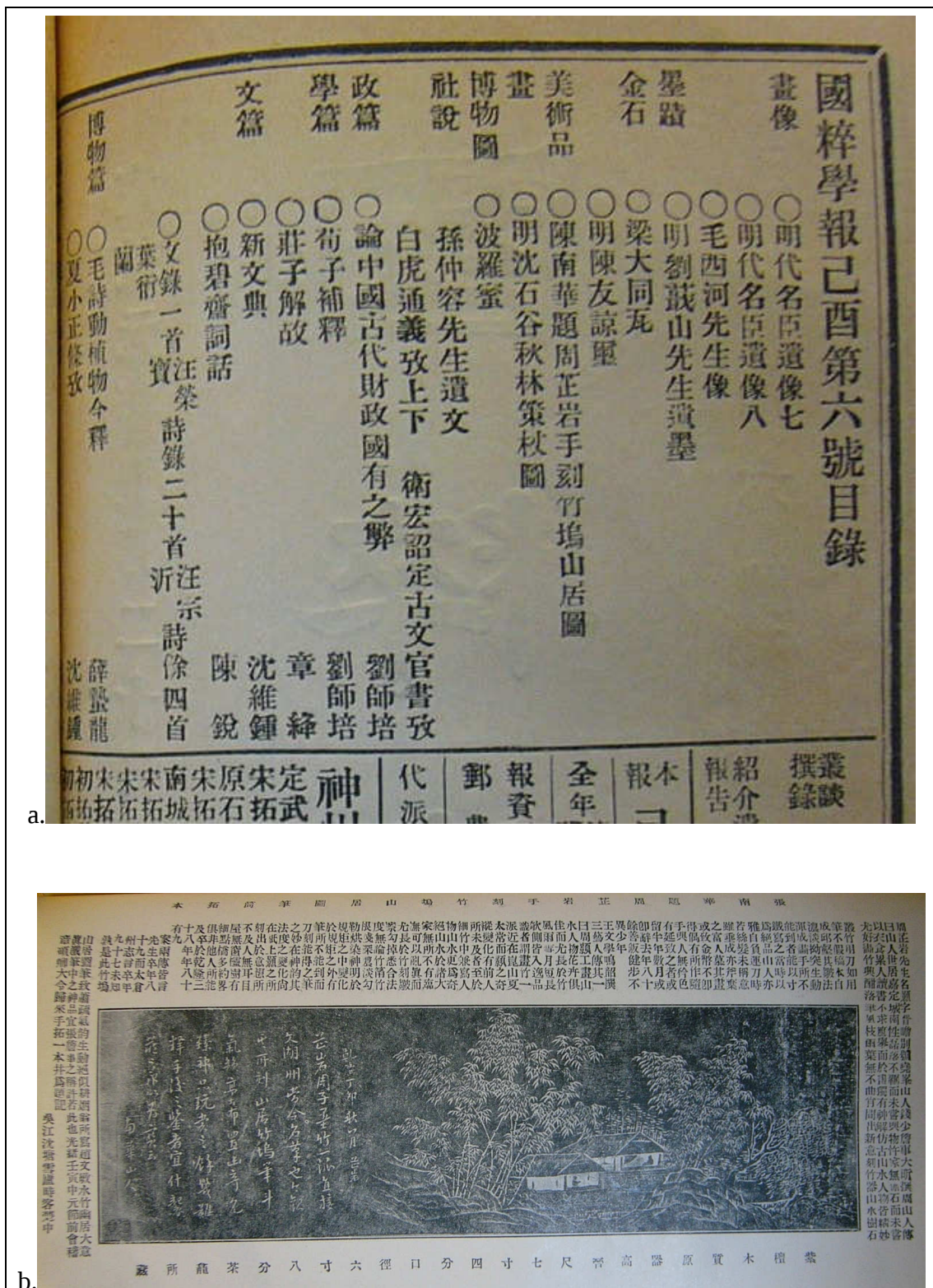


Fig. 5-22 a. 'Contents' of *Guocui xuebao*, 5.6 (1909), where, apart from 'Calligraphy', and 'Epigraphy', there is also a separate group 'Meishupin (art object)'; b. The object listed under this heading is a carving in bamboo of 'Mountain Dwelling of Bamboo Village' by famous bamboo carver Zhou Hao 周顥(1685-1763).