WANG YITING AND THE ART OF SINO-JAPANESE EXCHANGE

DISSERTATION

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By

Walter B. Davis, M.A.

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The Ohio State University
2008

Dissertation Committee:

Professor Julia F. Andrews, Advisor
Professor Andrew C. Shelton
Professor Richard Torrance

Approved by

_________________________
Advisor
History of Art Graduate Program
The Chinese painter and calligrapher Wang Yiting 王一亭 (1867-1938) was also an entrepreneur, philanthropist, and Buddhist devotee who became deeply involved with Japan. He was a central participant in a number of important efforts at Sino-Japanese economic, religious, and cultural cooperation that took place from the 1910s through the early 1930s. These projects, like Wang’s own art and biography, were largely forgotten in the years following China and Japan’s war of the later 1930s and 1940s. This dissertation seeks to contribute to the understanding of early twentieth-century East Asian art and Sino-Japanese cultural interaction by documenting and interpreting Wang’s engagement with Japan.

This dissertation will argue that Wang Yiting applied traditional Chinese painting and calligraphy to social ends and expanded the visual, discursive, and social ranges of these art forms to include Japan. Wang’s early career in international business enabled him to organize artistic, religious, and philanthropic projects that aimed at cultivating friendly ties between China and Japan while also furthering the interests that Wang held dear, such as the strengthening of China as a nation, the preservation and development of China’s traditional art, the promotion of Buddhism
as a means of universal salvation, and the relief of the unfortunate. Wang pursued these projects while privately cultivating ties with many influential Japanese, making traditional painting and calligraphy the basis of many of his exchanges with them. Wang thus combined interests in commerce, art, religion, and philanthropy, becoming an artistic entrepreneur who was not only an accomplished painter and calligrapher but also an influential organizer of commercial, charitable, religious, and artistic projects.
For Junko
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VITA

May 17, 1972……………………….Born, Dayton, Ohio

1994………………………………...B.A., with distinction and departmental honors, Classical Languages and Philosophy, The University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas

1998………………………………...M.A., History of Art, The University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas

1998-1999…………………………..Study as a K.U.-Nanjing U. direct exchange student at Nanjing University, Nanjing, P.R.C.

1999-2001…………………………..English Teacher, Time English School, Kobe, Japan

2003-2004…………………………..Graduate Teaching Assistant (Instructor of Record), The Ohio State University, Department of History of Art, Columbus, Ohio

2004-2005…………………………..Visiting Assistant Professor, School of Art, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio

2005-2006…………………………..Visiting Researcher, Institute of Comparative Culture, Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan

2006-2007…………………………..Visiting Instructor of Art History, Department of Art, Lewis and Clark College, Portland, Oregon

2007-present……………………….Assistant Professor, Art and Design and East Asian Studies, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: History of Art
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INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 1997 I had the very good fortune to participate in the The Asian Cultural Council China On-site Graduate Seminar taught in Shanghai and Hangzhou by Julia F. Andrews, Kuiyi Shen, Shan Guolin 單國霖, and Pan Gongkai 潘公凱. The subject of the seminar was the connoisseurship and history of traditionalist painting and calligraphy produced in China, especially Shanghai, during the second half of the nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth. Over the course of the seminar, I encountered works and accounts of some of China’s best-known painters of the twentieth century. I also learned of other artists whose reputations had waned during the first several decades of the People’s Republic of China (1949-present) but were newly on the rise. One such figure was Wang Yiting 王一亭 (1867-1938).

Through the seminar I developed an interest in Wang, a painter and calligrapher of the Republican period (1912-1949) whom Shan Guolin identified as a notable artist of the later Shanghai School.¹ The other participants in the class and I encountered numerous works attributed to Wang through visits to art collections in

¹ Shan Guolin (lecture delivered to the The Asian Cultural Council China 1997 On-site Graduate Seminar, Shanghai, China, July 9, 1997).
and around Shanghai. Works bearing his name tended to be examples of the figure and bird-and-flower genres, often depicting auspicious and popular subject matter. In this respect they resembled many other paintings that Shanghai’s professional artists produced for the city’s art market. At the Shanghai art dealer Duoyunxuan 朵雲軒, we viewed a variety of such works attributed to Wang, including images of myna birds, ducks, peonies, magnolias, and the mythical demon queller Zhong Kui 鍾馗. However, we also encountered Wang’s renderings of the very real Shanghai publisher Di Pingzi 狄平子 (1872-1941) and blind fortune tellers from Shanghai’s streets.

Some of the paintings were quite highly accomplished, displaying lively brushwork and depicting their subjects with admirable sensitivity. I was intrigued by the fact that the creator of these paintings was not an artist by profession but a businessman, one who had made a fortune working for Japanese companies and who was sufficiently energetic not only to make himself into a fine painter and calligrapher but also to become deeply involved in Nationalist politics, Buddhism, and philanthropy.

One feature of Wang’s career that I found particularly intriguing was a phenomenon that Professor Andrews observed in lecture: although Wang was one of the best respected artists of his day and appears genuinely to have been committed to the public good and China’s integrity as a nation, he was nonetheless judged disloyal after the establishment of the People’s Republic and was thus written out of history.
until after the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976).² Too many of his commitments and accomplishments--his employment in Japanese firms, his friendships with Japanese individuals, his status as one of Shanghai’s leading capitalists, his support for the Nationalist party, his enthusiasm for private charity, his belief in a faith deemed feudal by China’s new leaders--did not lend themselves to valorization or even acknowledgment in public discourse governed by Communist sensibilities. It was not until 1984 that he once again became a figure worthy of discussion in the P.R.C.³

In this respect Wang Yiting’s art suffered a fate similar to that of most traditionalist painting of the Republican period. In the first several years of the People’s Republic, Communist art authorities shut down China’s private art market, hampering the circulation of paintings by traditionalists like Wang and destroying the livelihoods of painters who might have worked independently of party direction.⁴ Reformers also shut down China’s private art academies, and they eliminated the teaching of traditional art in public institutions, successfully extinguishing younger generations’ collective ability to execute the established subject matter and complex

² Julia F. Andrews (lecture delivered to the The Asian Cultural Council China 1997 On-site Graduate Seminar, Shanghai, China, July 21, 1997).

³ The first P.R.C. publication to focus scholarly attention on Wang Yiting is Wang Renze, “Wang Yiting,” in Minguo renwu zhuang, eds. Zhu Xinquan and Yan Ruping (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984), 255-60.

brushwork of traditional Chinese painting. Chinese painting was to be made afresh from subjects, techniques and, in some cases, Western materials that were new to the nation’s pictorial tradition and officially deemed suitable to the needs of modern China.

During the 1997 seminar I was also struck by the nature of Wang’s reemergence as an artist of importance. It seemed that after China had reopened its doors to the outside world in the late 1970s and had relaxed many of its attitudes toward capitalism and private initiative, some of the elements that had precipitated Wang’s fall from historical grace also contributed to the revival of his name. Such appeared to be the case with one of the books that I purchased. Xu Chengwei and Wang Zhongde’s *A Collection of Wang Yiting’s Painting and Calligraphy* (*Wang Yiting shuhua ji 王一亭書畫集*) remained available in Shanghai bookstores, having been published in 1988, the fiftieth anniversary of the year of Wang Yiting’s death. A slender book that is both tall and wide, it provides a chronology of Wang Yiting’s life and reproductions of both a portrait of the artist and a laudatory biography that his teacher Wu Changshi brushed in 1925. The catalog also reproduces a number of works by Wang from the collections of his descendants and Duoyunxuan. These features are ones that a reader might readily expect to find in a retrospective publication celebrating an admired artist. Other features of the volume, however,

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suggest that it was not merely disinterested historical curiosity that brought the catalog to fruition. The cover of the book bears a title inscription by Zhao Puchu 趙樸初 (1907-2000), a Chinese calligrapher and lay Buddhist leader who in 1988 was the chairman of the Chinese Buddhist Association (Zhongguo Fojiao xiehui 中國佛教協會), an organization that he had joined when Wang Yiting was one of its leaders sixty years before.\footnote{Ibid., postscript.} In addition, it was a Japanese business, the Yôjitsu Industries APP Trading Corporation (Yôjitsu Sangyô Kabushiki Gaisha AAP Bôeki 洋実産業株式会社APP貿易), that sponsored the book’s publication, doing so to commemorate Wang Yiting’s organization of relief efforts for the victims of the 1923 Tokyo earthquake.\footnote{Ibid., postscript.} Such a purpose appears also to have motivated an inscription on a memorial stele that the catalog reproduces as part of its front matter.\footnote{Xu Chengwei and Wang Zhongde, eds., unpaginated front matter.} Written in Chinese prose by Utsunomiya Tokuma 字都宮徳馬 (1906-2000), a Japanese businessman and politician who was the president of the Japanese Association for Friendship with China (Nitchû Yûkô Kyôkai 日中友好協会), the inscription declares: “Mr. Wang Yiting, [we] will never forget our spiritual debt” (王一亭先生恩義永遠不忘記). Why might a catalog of Wang’s painting and calligraphy have been an appropriate venue for expressing such appreciation? The paintings and calligraphy by
Wang that were reproduced in the volume do not appear to express philanthropic themes, nor does Wang seem to have produced them for Japanese recipients or beneficiaries. Were there more than incidental relationships between Wang Yiting’s art, his philanthropic efforts, his profile in Japan, and the publication of the 1988 catalog? What kind of person could have inspired such feelings of gratitude? What motivated Wang to assist the victims of the 1923 disaster in Tokyo? What enabled him to organize large shipments of disaster relief? Did he ever undertake similar projects at other times? Just what was the nature and extent of his relationship with Japan?

This dissertation aims to address such questions by documenting and interpreting Wang Yiting’s engagement with China’s eastern neighbor. Through consideration of a number of modern scholars’ research, primary documentary evidence, paintings, and works of calligraphy, it will characterize Wang’s activities and relationships involving Japan, many of which are not currently recognized in art historical scholarship. This dissertation will also contribute to identifying the limits of Wang’s oeuvre, which has not been definitively established, by drawing attention to little discussed works preserved in Japan and artistic practices performed in relation to Japan. Moreover, this thesis will reveal that a number of social aims and practices shaped Wang's art to a greater extent than has been acknowledged. By focusing on Wang’s Japanese engagements, this dissertation will complicate and enrich the history of Chinese art by identifying what appears to be a new type of figure in the early
twentieth century, one who is not easily described by well-established divisions between patriots and collaborators, professional artists and amateurs, and traditionalists and modernists. This dissertation will make clear that Wang’s many activities do not easily admit of categorization and separation, and it will seek to articulate their interrelation and integration by historical forces and human actors like Wang and his associates.

To argue that Wang extensively associated with Japanese individuals and institutions is not itself an extraordinary claim, for this type of connection has long been acknowledged as fact. On the one hand, it has been recognized tacitly. It seems a fair supposition, although one difficult to prove, that memories of Japan’s wartime conduct and suspicion of Wang’s ties to Japan helped motivate the silence that expunged Wang’s name from history in the People’s Republic of China. On the other hand, nearly all publications that have sought to revive Wang’s reputation have noted his long-term employment in Japanese firms, and some have identified individual Japanese whom he knew.

What scholarship on Wang Yiting has not done is pursue in any depth the nature of Wang’s relationship with Japan. With what individuals and institutions did he associate, and why? How did Wang use art to mediate his Japanese relationships? Current scholarship on Wang does not provide particularly robust answers to such questions in large part because it relies upon artworks and primary and secondary sources preserved in China and written in Chinese. This dissertation will look to both
materials in Japanese archives and museums and also Japanese publications to characterize Wang Yiting’s multifaceted involvement with Japan, thus filling in a substantial gap in our understanding of the artist.

The outlines of Wang’s artistic biography were first established in the 1970s, and subsequent scholarship has since refined our understanding of the artist’s life and work. The first art historian to draw attention to Wang Yiting since the artist’s own day was James Cahill, who concludes his chapter on the Shanghai School in Mayching Kao’s 1974 anthology *Twentieth-Century Chinese Painting* with a brief mention of Wang and discussion of two of his paintings in Cahill’s own collection.9 Chu-tsing Li treats Wang in a similar manner in his 1979 discussion of two works in the Charles A. Drenowatz Collection.10 In addition to identifying Wang Yiting as being representative of the Shanghai School, these pioneering writings helped establish traditionalist painting of twentieth-century Shanghai as a legitimate field of art historical study, doing so at a time in which such art continued not to be researched or even valued monetarily in Mainland China. Prior to China’s economic reforms of the late 1970s and 1980s, paintings by Wang and his contemporaries did not circulate via market mechanisms within the P.R.C. In fact, it was the combination

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of their lack of worth within China and their value to foreign buyers that in the 1970s prompted Premier Zhou Enlai 周恩來 (1899-1976) to authorize the sale of traditionalist paintings of the Republican period, which were languishing unseen in storage facilities, to such foreign buyers as Harada Kanpô 原田観峰 (1911-1995), a Japanese enthusiast of calligraphy and traditional Chinese art. Harada seized the opportunity to purchase many thousands of such works, which now constitute the extraordinary collection of modern Chinese painting preserved in the Kanpô Museum (Kanpôkan 観峰館) in Shiga 滋賀.

The first Chinese-language treatments of Wang Yiting’s art and life began to appear in Taiwan in the late 1960s, and they continued to be published there into the early 1980s. These publications consisted primarily of catalogs of Wang’s painting and calligraphy and did not include much discursive analysis. The most historically informative of these publications is A Collection of Mr. Wang Yiting’s Calligraphy and Painting (Wang Yiting xiansheng shuhua ji 王一亭先生書畫集), which was

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12 Bailongshanren huace (Taipei: Taiwan zhonghua shuju, 1968); Bailongshanren hua zaqu shier tu (Taipei: Hua zheng shuju, 1977); Cai Chennan Bailongshanren Wang Zhen shuhua daguan (Taipei: Guotai meishuguan, 1982).
published in Taiwan in 1979.13 Yang Longsheng’s biography and chronology of Wang Yiting in this volume constitute the most developed artistic biography of Wang Yiting to appear prior to 2002. Yang covers the elements of Wang’s biography that are now familiar to scholars of modern Chinese art: Wang’s successful career in business, his participation in Nationalist politics, his belief in Buddhism, his philanthropic efforts (including those following the 1923 Tokyo earthquake), his emulation of the art of Ren Yi 任頤 (1840-1895) (Shanghai’s leading professional painter of the latter half of the nineteenth century), and his later artistic discipleship under and friendship with Wu Changshi 吳昌碩 (1844-1927) (a highly esteemed scholar and one-time imperial official who was probably Shanghai’s most well respected professional artist of the first half of the twentieth century).14 In his effort to establish Wang’s biography, Yang weighs the evidence offered by anecdotes from Wang’s contemporaries, and he also avails himself of the testimony of Wang Yiting’s descendants. In addition, Yang is the first Chinese scholar to recognize that a large number of works by Wang have been collected in Japan.


and three years later Wang Senran discussed the artist briefly in an entry on Wu Changshi in *Biographies of Twenty Personages of the Recent Era (Jindai ershi jia pingzhu*)an* (近代二十家評傳)*.¹⁵ These writings do not reproduce any of Wang Yiting’s paintings or calligraphy, and many of the facts about Wang that they adduce appear in Yang Longsheng’s account. However, these biographical texts mark the end of scholarly antipathy to Wang Yiting in the P.R.C. Wang Renze goes to some length, in fact, to characterize Wang in a positive light, citing his work for charities and his organization of shipments of relief supplies to Japan after the 1923 Tokyo earthquake.¹⁶ He also observes that Wang’s work for Japanese companies caused him to be persecuted during the anti-Japanese demonstrations of the May Thirtieth Movement of 1925, and he carefully notes that in 1938 Wang maintained his loyalty to China by fleeing Shanghai for Hong Kong rather than be coerced into cooperation with the Japanese puppet regime in the city where he was such an important figure.¹⁷ Wang Senran’s brief treatment of Wang also highlights Wang’s philanthropic activities, quoting but not interpreting Wang and Wu Changshi’s inscriptions on *The Homeless*, a series of paintings that they produced collaboratively in 1919 in order to


¹⁶ Wang Renze, 258.

¹⁷ Ibid.
raise funds for Chinese flood victims. The first catalog of Wang’s art to appear in Mainland China was the 1988 volume by Xu Chengwei and Wang Zhongda that I have discussed above. Xu and Wang’s two-page chronology of Wang Yiting’s life sketches a picture of the artist that is very similar to the ones outlined in Li, Cahill, Yang, Wang Renze, and Wang Senran. It does identify, however, a few unrecognized Chinese associates of Wang.

In the 1990s historians and art historians working in the United States and China continued to draw attention to Wang Yiting. Claudia Brown and Ju-hsi Chou devoted several pages to the artist in their 1992 volume *Transcending Turmoil: Painting at the Close of China’s Empire, 1796-1911*. This catalog, and the exhibition that it documented, were a major step forward in the study of late-imperial and early twentieth-century Chinese painting, which previously had garnered little scholarly attention. In addition to presenting up-to-date research on the lives of the artists included in the show, the catalog also included essays that avoided an atomistic approach to the history of nineteenth and twentieth-century traditional Chinese painting. Instead of only focusing on individual artists and limiting analysis to tracing artists’ stylistic debts to their teachers, Brown and Chou characterized the Shanghai

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18 Wang Senran, 16.


School in terms of economic conditions in Shanghai and the geographic origins of the many artists who were drawn there from other cities in the surrounding region. After the publication of Brown and Chou’s catalog, two other writers of the 1990s made Wang Yiting the exclusive subject of articles. In 1996 He Xinchang retraced Wang’s biography in his 1996 contribution to a historical journal, enhancing a slightly more detailed analysis of Wang’s career in business by discussing business and economic conditions in Shanghai. A particularly admirable feature of He’s article is that it establishes some of the details of Wang’s biography by considering the testimony of a few of Wang’s Japanese contemporaries. In this respect He’s work is nearly unique in the Chinese-language literature on Wang. Hsing-yuan Tsao’s 1998 paper also sought to revive the historiographic fortunes of Wang Yiting. In addition to offering a narrative of Wang’s life that is not unlike those available in the publications described above, Tsao makes the contribution of linking Wang’s art to his Buddhist and philanthropic activities by analyzing several of his inscriptions in an anthology of his poetry and on leaves of the album that James Cahill had presented in 1974.

The sole monograph dedicated to Wang Yiting was published in 2002 as part of a new P.R.C. series dedicated to famous Chinese traditionalists of the modern


Xiao Fenqi’s *Wang Yiting* synthesizes nearly all previous Chinese scholarship on Wang, very usefully resolving some debates over details of Wang’s biography, particularly ones having to do with his career in business in Shanghai. Like Yang Longsheng, Xiao adds information to our understanding of Wang’s biography by making use of testimony that she gathered in interviews with his descendants.

Perhaps the most outstanding contribution of the book, however, is the chapter that it devotes to Wang Yiting’s involvement with Japan. This portion of the work presents Wang’s social interaction with Japanese associates and his involvement with several Japanese artists as an outgrowth of his employment in Japanese firms in Shanghai.

The chapter is brief, however, and the Japanese sources from which it draws are limited to the several accounts by Wang’s coworkers that He Xinchang had already uncovered. Much of the information the chapter presents had already appeared in previous scholarship.

Recently Wang Yiting has drawn the attention of scholars who, though interested in adding to discussion of Wang’s art and life, have considered the artist for what he reveals about broader artistic and social phenomena of his time. Kuiyi Shen has described Wang Yiting’s activities with an eye toward articulating the social

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networks of Shanghai. Shen characterizes Wang as a figure who, like other local business, political, and even criminal leaders in Shanghai at the time, was able to maneuver through Shanghai society because of the power vacuum left by a weak central authority, using his many social connections to organize public works, religious, philanthropic, and artistic projects. Shen argues that Wang was very much of his time, a product of an upbringing founded in traditional, Confucian values but also an actor within the novel economic and social environment of Shanghai. Paul Katz has presented research that focuses upon Wang Yiting’s career as a Buddhist, locating a number of previously unknown documents in China that detail Wang’s conversion to Buddhism and life as a Buddhist layman. Like Shen, Katz produces a narrative that looks beyond the boundaries of artistic biography and offers analysis of more general relevance, generating a more nuanced picture of Buddhist organizations and activities of the Republican period.

This dissertation owes a great debt to the above research on Wang Yiting, and my thesis inevitably situates itself within the field of Wang Yiting studies that these writings have staked out. The three chapters of this dissertation, which respectively


treat of Wang’s early career in business, his artistic activities, and his religious and philanthropic activities, depend upon facts of Wang’s biography that these studies have established. In addition, by observing a very loose chronological order while discussing various types of Wang Yiting’s activities, my chapters adopt an approach that appears more than once in my predecessor’s narratives. However, this dissertation does not aim to be a monographic account of Wang Yiting’s life. It will distinguish itself from most of the above studies in a number of ways.

Like Shen and Katz’s studies, this dissertation will focus upon a single aspect of Wang’s activity, namely his involvement with Japan, while attempting to tell a story of greater relevance. Wang’s Japanese engagement is the most poorly documented component of his life and work. However, it also holds great promise as a ground for characterizing Wang afresh. Accounts of Wang’s Chinese activities easily submit themselves to the hagiographic concerns and well-worn tropes of traditional Chinese biographies of artists. Certainly Wang appears to have led an extraordinary life, rising from rags to riches, undertaking many activities on behalf of others, studying with master artists, painting effectively as an amateur, and cultivating literary and calligraphic interests. However, he also combined the production of art with its patronage. He mixed commercial practices with philanthropic and self-expressive ones. He made room for new types of beneficiaries and recipients of traditional Chinese painting. He brought new participants into its practice in China.
Although some of these accomplishments can be identified through attention to Wang’s activities in China, they shine forth most clearly in his activities oriented toward Japan.

Another important respect in which this dissertation departs from most of the above studies is through its source materials. Although it will consider a few of the paintings and works of calligraphy by Wang that have been discussed and reproduced in previous scholarship, this dissertation will draw its materials heavily from other sources. One important resource that has not been well exploited by scholars is collotype catalogs of paintings and calligraphy published by Wang and his Chinese and Japanese contemporaries in the 1920s and 1930s. A number of this dissertation’s illustrations are drawn from such books, and much of its analysis will focus on these works. In the 1920s and 1930s collotype printing was a popular means of reproducing works of art in Shanghai, and it is not insignificant that publishing houses in the city learned how to wield this technology by sending their technicians to study in Japan. In constructing my arguments I will consider works published in several catalogs produced in Shanghai by Wang and his close associates. These volumes provide access to many works that are otherwise unknown, having been destroyed or having slipped from public visibility. Many paintings that Wang produced for Japanese associates appear in these books. The fact that Wang arranged for these works’

26 Christopher A. Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1876-1937* (Vancouver: The University of British Columbia Press, 2004), 64.
photographic reproduction before transferring them to their ultimate recipients is itself interesting, and examination of the paintings allows us to expand our notions of Wang’s oeuvre. Collotype catalogs published in Japan will also play a role in this narrative, helping to identify what types of works Wang was producing at what times and suggesting a degree of continuity between the Chinese and Japanese art worlds that has not been recognized.

A second type of resource that most English and Chinese-language scholarship on Wang Yiting has not plumbed consists of primary sources written in Japanese. These include documents in Japanese archives and publications by individuals and institutions with which Wang had contact. These texts provide a wealth of data that has been lost in China or that was never recorded there, and they preserve the perspectives of Japanese participants in Wang’s activities. I have discovered a considerable number of informative memos, telegrams, pamphlets, and other texts in the Diplomatic Archives of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which sponsored Japanese participation in many of the Sino-Japanese projects that Wang helped organize. Other Japanese archives, like the National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo, have preserved publications not only by Wang’s Japanese contemporaries, such as catalogs of the Sino-Japanese exhibitions to which he contributed, but also publications of the Sino-Japanese art organizations in which Wang Yiting was a leader. Although Japanese scholars, most notably Tsuruta
Takeyoshi and Matsumura Shigeki, have examined some of these materials, many of them have not been given any scholarly consideration at all and are unknown in the field of Chinese art history.

A third resource for this dissertation that has made little impact on much of the previous scholarship on Wang Yiting is the research of contemporary Japanese historians, art historians, and museum-based scholars. In recent years language barriers that once divided scholars in the West, China, and Japan have begun to fall, and Chinese and Western scholars working in the field of Chinese art history have begun to converse with Japanese scholars and to read and cite Japanese scholarship more frequently. Differences of approach and gaps in understanding have become less noticeable. This dissertation aspires to contribute to this positive development by making use of excellent research by such scholars as Tsuruta, Matsumura, and Kohama Masako.

Works of art in Japanese collections constitute a fourth source of information that distinguishes this dissertation. Catalogs published by Japanese museums have proven invaluable in the preparation of this study.\textsuperscript{27} A number of Japanese museums have

have excellent holdings of twentieth-century Chinese paintings and calligraphy, and curators at these institutions have very graciously allowed me to view works in their collections. Many of the paintings and works of calligraphy by Wang and his contemporaries that I consider in this dissertation are preserved not only in these large museums but also in smaller Japanese archives and memorial halls, such as the Shibusawa Memorial Museum (Shibusawa Shiryôkan 浦沢史料館) and the Asakura Sculpture Hall (Asakura Chôsôkan 朝倉彫塑館) in Tokyo. Few of these works have informed previous scholarship on Wang outside of the publications of the museums that hold the works. Careful attention not only to the visual and discursive content of these works but also to such features as their attendant documentation helps to enrich our understanding of the functions that Wang’s works played and of the people into whose lives he interjected his paintings and calligraphy.

In addition to relating itself to accounts of Wang Yiting and his art, this dissertation will also draw upon and situate itself in relation to several broader fields of study. First among them is the field of Shanghai art historical studies, which emerged in the 1970s through the work of scholars like James Cahill and Chu-tsing Li and has since benefitted from the efforts of a number of academic and museum-based

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28 Such museums include the Shôtô Museum in Tokyo (Shibuya Kuritsu Shôtô Bijutsukan 渋谷区立松濤美術館), the Kanpôkan in Shiga, the Kubosô Memorial Museum of Arts in Izumi (Izumi-shi Kubosô Kinen Bijutsukan 和泉市久保惣記念美術), and the Fukuyama Museum of Calligraphy in Fukuyama (Fukuyama Shodô Bijutsukan ふくやま書道美術館).
art historians.\textsuperscript{29} Exhibitions and attending catalogs produced by such scholars as Shan Guolin, Claudia Brown, Ju-hsi Chou, Julia F. Andrews, and Kuiyi Shen have helped bring painting and calligraphy produced in and for the market of Shanghai in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to the fore of modern Chinese art historical studies, identifying formal features of Shanghai School painting, its major artists, and important economic and social developments in the Shanghai art world.\textsuperscript{30}

Conferences devoted to nineteenth and twentieth-century traditionalist art in China and to Shanghai School painting in particular have produced important volumes of research.\textsuperscript{31} Series of monographs, like the one in which Xiao Fenqi published her volume on Wang Yiting, have also raised the profiles of many twentieth-century


artists active in Shanghai. In addition to studying the lives and works of individual painters and calligraphers, scholars have provided broad overviews of Shanghai School art. They have observed the emergence of new classes of patrons and new forms of patronage and distribution that emerged in the city, and they have described the phenomenon of modern artistic societies, through which Shanghai’s traditionalist artists socialized and negotiated the complexities of Shanghai’s art market, purveying traditional art by modern means. Scholars have also explored some of the intricate relationships that developed between Shanghai’s artists and its


publishing industry, through which distinctions between painters, designers, advertisers, and publishers became blurred.\textsuperscript{35} Other phenomena in Shanghai, such as the application of painting to charity, the practice of portraiture, and the circulation and appropriation of Japanese art objects and aesthetic approaches, have also received attention.\textsuperscript{36} This dissertation will draw from and aims to add to this diverse body of scholarship by considering such issues as Wang Yiting’s use of traditional art for philanthropy, his portraits of Japanese Sinophiles, and his promotion of contemporary artists and China’s traditional art through Sino-Japanese art organizations, exhibitions, and publications.


This dissertation also finds a place for itself within the roughly two-decades-old field of Sino-Japanese studies, which was pioneered by historians like Joshua Fogel.\textsuperscript{37} It has long been recognized that Sinophile artists and scholars in Edo (1615-1868) Japan created a form of art alternatively called \textit{nanga} 南画 (literally “southern painting”) and \textit{bunjinga} 文人画 (scholarly painting), which they imaginatively derived from Chinese paintings, printed illustrations, and historical and literary texts.\textsuperscript{38} Recent research on the art of modern Shanghai and of nineteenth and early twentieth-century China more broadly has begun to reveal remarkable points of contact, appropriation, and mutual development that occurred between the Chinese and Japanese art worlds. Stella Lee has shown that Japanese patrons were a major force in the Shanghai art market.\textsuperscript{39} Lai Yu-chih has traced the circulation of Japanese objects in Shanghai and their appropriation by artists like Ren Yi.\textsuperscript{40} Julia Andrews, Kuiyi Shen, and Aida Wong have have shown that Chinese artists who studied in

\textsuperscript{37} For an introductory bibliography of notable studies in this field, see Joshua Fogel, ed., \textit{Crossing the Yellow Sea: Sino-Japanese Cultural Contacts, 1600-1950} (Norwalk, Connecticut: EastBridge, 2007), 149.


\textsuperscript{39} Lee, “The Art Patronage of Shanghai in the Nineteenth Century.”

\textsuperscript{40} Lai, “Surreptitious Appropriation.”
Japan made use of Japanese texts to write the first modern Chinese histories of their nation’s art. Tsuruta Takeyoshi and Aida Wong have documented the formation of Sino-Japanese artistic societies and the organization of a number of joint exhibitions of Chinese and Japanese art in the 1920s and 1930s. Although Wang Yiting has appeared in passing in several of these studies, his importance as an agent of many private and public artistic exchanges between the Chinese and Japanese art worlds in the 1920s and 1930s has not been recognized. This dissertation aims to contribute to our burgeoning understanding of modern Sino-Japanese cultural relations by identifying through Wang numerous channels of exchange and characterizing many of the participants and activities that made up this interaction.

Wang Yiting was a complex figure who integrated his own painting and calligraphy and his patronage of traditional Chinese art with a number of activities that are not necessarily seen as being related to art--business, philanthropy, the promotion of Buddhism. This dissertation will thus attend to phenomena that are most frequently investigated not by art historians but by scholars in other fields, such as

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history and religious studies. For example, it will draw from the research of historians studying the activities of Chinese entrepreneurs and civic leaders and the development of modern Chinese philanthropy, and it will make use of studies written by scholars of modern Chinese Buddhism. Parts of this dissertation will thus not incorporate the same amount of stylistic analysis and qualitative judgement of works of art that a reader of much art historical scholarship might expect. The purpose of this approach is not to avoid discussing art, as if art history had exhausted itself and could only find new vigor through the appropriation of other disciplines’ methodologies, but rather to recognize the degree to which Wang Yiting and other figures of his time seamlessly melded disparate practices and aspirations. Modern disciplinary boundaries and prerogatives ought not to partition and thus obscure our perception of related historical phenomena. I also hope for this dissertation to be of use to not only to art historians but also to historians, scholars of religious studies, and researchers in related fields.

The progression of this dissertation’s argument will be as follows. Chapter one will consider Wang Yiting’s early career in politics and business, detailing his early education, training, and commercial projects and focusing upon his social and artistic

relations with Japanese colleagues. It will identify a number of figures who came to play important roles in Wang’s cultivation of friendly relations with Japan, helping to demonstrate that Wang’s later successes as a cultural institution of sorts in Shanghai and as an artistic organizer depended partly upon the connections he developed as a businessman. By examining works that he produced for his colleagues, chapter one will also begin to articulate some of the manners in which Wang applied his art socially and in which he expanded the scope of traditional Chinese painting and calligraphy to include Japan.

Chapter two will focus upon Wang Yiting’s interaction with the Japanese art world, arguing that Wang sought to buttress traditional Chinese painting and calligraphy through the assistance of Japanese scholars and artists. Wang’s willingness to engage such individuals and Japanese institutions will be seen as being similar in kind to his engagement with the Japanese business and political interests discussed in chapter one. Wang’s early business and political projects and his later efforts in the world of art may thus be reconciled as expressions of kindred desires for improvement of China and results of Wang’s early training in the cosmopolitan economic environment of Shanghai, where the social and monetary risks of involvement with Japan promised the compensation of substantial benefits to China, its culture, and its people. Chapter two will also document how Wang promoted traditional Chinese art not only through his own traditionalist works but also through Sino-Japanese artistic organizations and their projects.
Chapter three will examine Wang Yiting’s Buddhism and philanthropy. It will describe how Wang articulated his views on these subjects in his art and how he applied his art to causes that were not themselves purely artistic. This chapter will demonstrate how Wang extended his philanthropic practices and concerns to Japan, making use of his connections from social and political contexts to serve religious and charitable purposes. Wang’s contributions to the revival of Chinese Buddhism in the early twentieth century will be found to be analogous to his contributions to the revival of traditionalist art, with some of the same Chinese and Japanese associates assisting in both revivals.
EARLY CAREER AND RELATIONS WITH BUSINESS ASSOCIATES

Early Career in Business and Politics

Education and Training

In 1880 Wang Yiting embarked on a career in business that would position him to work with foreigners and make him one of Shanghai’s leading capitalists. After eight years of study in the private academy of a retired Circuit Intendant (daotai 道台), the fourteen-year-old Wang became an apprentice at a well-known mounting shop in Shanghai, the Delighting in Spring Hall (Yichuntang 怡春堂).\(^{44}\) He worked there only briefly, however, for in 1881 a scion of the Li 李 family of Ningbo 宁波 bankers recommended him for employment at one of the clan’s traditional Chinese banks, or *qianzhuang* 錢莊.\(^{45}\) *Qianzhuang* were commercial banks that enabled local

\(^{44}\) Wang was fourteen years of age (*sui* 歲) by Chinese reckoning, in which a person is counted one year old at birth. Xiao, *Wang Yiting*, 29-30.

\(^{45}\) Wang Renze, Xu Chengwei, and Wang Zhongde have identified Wang’s benefactor as Li Pingshu 李平書 (1854-1927), a Shanghai businessman with whom Wang later had business ties, helped foment the 1911 revolution in Shanghai, and formed artistic societies. However, He Xinchang has argued that that this attribution is erroneous, proposing but not proving that the figure must have been Li Yunshu 李雲書 (1867-?). Chen Dingshan, the Works of Mr. Wang Yiting Editorial Committee (Wang Yiting xiansheng yizuo bianji weiyuanhui), Xiao Fenqi, and Kuiyi Shen have argued that the
and foreign merchants to conduct transactions with each other. Training first at the Shenyu qianzhuang and then three years later at the Hengtai qianzhuang, Wang learned his profession well, and by 1886 he had been made the market shroff (paojie) of the Li family’s Tianyuhao bank, thus being charged with gathering market intelligence for the institution. Soon the Li family entrusted its shipping interests to Wang. In this manner the young businessman gained his earliest professional experience within Chinese financial institutions that depended upon and benefited from their connections with foreign interests, and he forged close ties with one of the most prominent families in the Ningbo clique of financiers, which dominated banking in Shanghai in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

The figure was Li Weizhuang. Both Li Yunshu and Li Weizhuang descended from Li Yeting, who moved from Ningbo to Shanghai in 1822 and founded several qianzhuang. Wang Renze, 255; Chen Dingshan, 24; Xu Chengwei and Wang Zhongde, “Wang Yiting nianpu jianbiao”; He Xinchang, 55; Wang Yiting xiansheng yizuo bianji weiyuanhui, 103; Shen, “Wang Yiting in the Social Network of 1910s – 1930s Shanghai,” 47; Xiao Fenqi, 30.

Qianzhuang received capital from foreign firms via local intermediaries called compradors and then made loans to Chinese merchants, who paid foreign firms with promissory notes issued by the qianzhuang. For characterization of qianzhuang in Shanghai, see Andrea Lee McElderry, Shanghai Old-Style Banks (Ch’ien-chuang), 1800-1935: A Traditional Institution in a Changing Society (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, The University of Michigan, 1976), ch. 1.

Xiao, Wang Yiting, 30.

Ibid.

While Wang learned his profession in qianzhuang by day, he spent his evenings studying at Shanghai’s School for the Diffusion of Languages (Guang fangyan guan 廣方言館). One of the earliest modern educational institutions established by the Chinese government, it had been founded in 1863 by the high official Li Hongzhang 李鴻章 (1823-1901), who sought to modernize China by developing its modern infrastructure. The school was designed to offer exceptional young students both a classical education and training in foreign languages so that they might fill important positions in the government. In 1870 the school was combined with the school of the translation department of the Jiangnan Arsenal (Jiangnan zhizao ju 江南製造局), and by 1881 it consisted of departments of English, French, and Mathematics. Scholars have disagreed over what language Wang studied at the school, some suggesting English and others, Japanese. English seems the more likely possibility, as Japanese does not appear to have been part of the

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50 Wang Senran, 255, 259 n.1; He Xinchang, 55; Xiao, Wang Yiting, 30 n. 1.


52 Biggerstaff, 154-60.

53 Biggerstaff, 166-67, 176.

54 Wang Senran, 255, 259 n.1; He Xinchang, 55; Xiao, Wang Yiting, 30 n. 1.
In either case, by studying a foreign language at the school, Wang faced the enmity of his compatriots. According to one graduate of the Guang fangyan guan—Lu Zhengxiang 陸徵祥 (1871-1949), who served as China’s Minister to Holland and to Russia, China’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the chief Chinese delegate to the 1919 Paris Peace Conference—as late as the early 1880s students of the school continued to be viewed as traitors who used foreign languages to betray their country to foreigners.\textsuperscript{56}

\textbf{Work as Comprador and Capitalist}

Wang was not deterred by prejudices against working with foreigners, as soon he opted for what would be a lengthy career in the employ of foreign companies. In 1902 he took a position as a comprador (\textit{maiban} 買辦) for the Osaka Shipping Corporation (Osaka Shôsen Kabushiki Gaisha 大阪商船株式会社).\textsuperscript{57} Compradors were the Chinese middlemen upon whom foreign firms depended to manage Chinese employees, make sense of local weights, measures, and currencies, evaluate local institutions and merchants, cultivate relations with prospective clients, scout out new opportunities for investment, and execute financial transactions.\textsuperscript{58} Over the course of

\textsuperscript{55} Biggerstaff, 176.

\textsuperscript{56} Biggerstaff, 150, 183, 196.

\textsuperscript{57} He Xinchang 56-57; Xiao, \textit{Wang Yiting}, 64.

his career, Wang also worked as a comprador for the Nisshin Steamship Corporation (Nisshin Kisen Kabushiki Gaisha 日清汽船株式会社) and the Osaka Postal Shipping Corporation (Osaka Yûsen Kabushiki Gaisha 大阪郵船株式会社), and he was both the comprador and president of the Shanghai Spun Silk Corporation (Shanhai Seizô Kenshi Kabushiki Gaisha 上海製造絹糸株式会社), which was a division of the Tokyo textile manufacturer Kanebô (Kanebô Kabushiki Gaisha 鐘紡株式会社) and thus a component of the Mitsui combine (Mitsui Zaibatsu 三井財閥). Although China’s political relations with Japan worsened over the course of the 1920s, Wang did not stop working for his Japanese employers. As a result, he was harshly criticized after the May Thirtieth Incident of 1925, in which the vandalism of striking workers at a Japanese mill in Shanghai and the violent responses of foreign guards and police sparked nationwide demonstrations against foreign economic power and imperialism. Wang ended his career as a comprador only after the Mukden Incident of 1931, when fighting broke out between Chinese and Japanese military forces in Manchuria.

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Wang Yiting’s work as a comprador enabled him to become one of Shanghai’s most influential businessmen. His income from Japanese firms was considerable, and he applied it to a number of domestic business ventures.\(^{62}\) Between 1907 and 1920 he founded two flour mills and three traditional and modern banks, collaborating with such investors as the local gentry leader Li Pingshu and the banker Shen Manyun 沈織云 (1869-1915).\(^{63}\) Wang built upon his entrepreneurial success by assuming leadership positions in the Shanghai business world. Over the course of his career he served on the boards of several banks, and he was a director of the Jiangsu Railway.\(^{64}\) He also rose to prominence in a number of business groups and chambers of commerce. In 1904 he was elected a board member of Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce (Shanghai shangwu zonghui 上海商務總會), and in 1908 he organized

\(^{62}\) Wang Renze estimates that it may have exceeded 100,000 yuan 元 per year. Wang Renze, 256.

\(^{63}\) Wang founded the Lida 立大 and Shenda 申大 flourmills in 1907 and 1910. In 1908 he joined with friends to open the Tongtai qianzhuang (同泰錢莊), and in 1920 he established the Dafeng Commercial Savings Bank (Dafeng shangye chuxu yinhang 大豐商業儲蓄銀行) and the Huada Commercial Savings Bank (Huada shangye chuxu yinhang 華大商業儲蓄銀行). Xiao, *Wang Yiting*, 31-32, 200, 204.

\(^{64}\) Wang served on the boards of the Bank of Jiangnan (Jiangnan yinhang 江南銀行), the China Bank (Zhonghua yinhang 中華銀行), and the New City Bank (Xincheng yinhang 新城銀行). Xiao, *Wang Yiting*, 32; Goodman, *Native Place, City, and Nation*, 214.
the Southern Shanghai Chamber of Commerce Federation (Shanghai nanshi shangtuan gonghui 上海南市商團公會). He also became general secretary of the Shanghai Industry Association (Shanghai chupinsuo 上海出品所) (1909), chairman of the board of the Shanghai Flour Exchange (Shanghai mianfen jiaoyisuo 上海麵粉交易所) (1920), chairman of the Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce (Shanghai zongshanghui 上海總商會) (1923), and co-chairman of the Shanghai Chamber of Commercial Federation 上海商業聯合會 (1927).

Politics

Like many other Shanghai entrepreneurs of his generation, Wang Yiting became involved in civic administration and in national politics. As early as 1905, Wang Yiting joined a municipal organization that was developing into a form of local government—the General Bureau of Engineering for Shanghai City (Shanghai chengxiang neiwai zong gongcheng ju 上海城厢内外總工程局). Founded by Li Pingshu, the organization allowed local gentry and business leaders to develop the city’s infrastructure. When the imperial government first recognized cities as locally

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65 Ibid.

66 Ibid.

administrated governmental units in 1909, Wang became a member of the newly instituted Shanghai City Office of Local Autonomy (Shanghai chengxiang neiwai zizhi gongsuo 上海城厢内外自治公所), helping organize its merchant militia. In this atmosphere of new political possibilities, Wang supported the imperial government’s 1906 call for a new constitution and became a board member of the Constitution Preparation Committee (Yubei lixian gonghui 預備立憲公會) in Shanghai; however, when efforts at constitutional reform failed in 1910, Wang turned his support to the Revolutionary Alliance (Tongmeng hui 同盟會) of Sun Yat-sen (Sun Zhongshan 孫中山, 1866-1925), helping overthrow the officers of the imperial government in Shanghai in 1911, becoming the head of the Commerce Department of the city’s new autonomous government, and becoming the director of the Shanghai branch of the newly established Nationalist party (KMT, Guomindang 國民黨) in 1912.

The China Industrial Development Company

In 1913 Wang Yiting’s entrepreneurship, nationalist political commitment, and willingness to work with Japanese individuals and institutions coalesced as he helped found a Sino-Japanese business venture, the China Industrial Development Company (Jp. Chûgoku Kôgyô Kabushiki Gaisha, Ch. Zhongguo xingye zhushi huishe 中国興

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68 Shen, ibid.; Elvin, ibid.

69 Shen, ibid., 49-51.
In February of 1913 Sun Yat-sen traveled to Japan in his new capacity as China’s Director of Railways, having recently ceded the presidency of the Republic of China to the military leader Yuan Shikai (袁世凱 1859-1916). In Tokyo Sun met with Shibusawa Eiichi 浦沢栄一 (1840-1931), the Meiji industrialist who founded Japan’s first modern bank and who helped establish the Tokyo Stock Exchange and the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce. The two leaders planned a new company that they hoped would improve economic ties between their two nations and provide investment for important Chinese industries. Shibusawa had long sought to expand Japanese business interests on the continent, and Sun was convinced that China’s industrial infrastructure could only be modernized and expanded with the


backing of foreign capital.\textsuperscript{73} Not all Chinese shared Sun’s view. During his brief tenure as provisional president (January 1, 1912 - February 13, 1912), he had gone so far as to seek credits of three million yen for his struggling government and nine million yen for the strategically important Hanyeping arsenal, ironworks, and coal mines; in exchange, he offered Japan managerial control of the complex and guaranteed deliveries of iron.\textsuperscript{74} Popular Chinese opposition to this gesture caused a crisis in Sun’s government and hastened his resignation. Even so, as Director of Railways Sun continued to press for Japanese investment. Negotiations to establish the company that he and Shibusawa envisioned began in Tokyo, and they concluded in Shanghai on the eighteenth day of April. One of the primary participants in the process in Shanghai was Wang Yiting--a political supporter of Sun Yat-sen, a Shanghai banker for the Guomindang, and upon completion of the negotiations, an owner of 200 shares in the China Industrial Development Company and a member of its board of directors.\textsuperscript{75}

Wang was not the only Chinese entrepreneur with a political agenda who supported the formation of the China Industrial Company. The official history of the


\textsuperscript{74} Bergère, \textit{Sun Yat-sen}, 216-18.

company lists eleven Chinese who invested in it at its outset. Among these men were Sun Yat-sen, Wang Yiting, and and several members of the Guomindang who had supported the 1911 revolution in Shanghai: Li Pingshu, Shen Manyun, and Zhu Baosan 朱葆三 (1848-1926). One longtime backer of Sun who also invested in the company but was not recorded as part of its Chinese side was a Chinese entrepreneur who had emigrated to Japan--Wu Jintang 吳錦堂 (1855-1926). Originally from Ningbo, Wu had moved to Japan in 1885, and around 1890 he had founded the Iseikô 怡生号 trading company in Kobe 神戸, subsequently making a fortune exporting coal from mines in northern Kyûshû 九州 and importing inexpensive cotton from China. His shrewd analysis of the Chinese cotton supply saved the faltering Kansai 関西 textile manufacturer Kanebô and enabled Wu to become one of Kanebô’s main shareholders and a highly influential figure in the Mitsui combine. Wu Jintang also became a leader in Kobe’s Chinese community. He supported the revolutionary

76 Noguchi, 34.

77 For Wu Jintang’s biography and involvement in the China Industrial Development Company, see Nakamura Tetsuo, especially 24-51; Zaidan Hôjin Son Chûzan Kinenkai, ed., Son Bun Kinenkan (Ijôkaku) gaiyô (Kobe: Zaidan Hôjin Son Chûzan Kinenkai, 2001), 55-59.

78 Nakamura Tetsuo, 44-46.


80 Zaidan Hôjin Son Chûzan Kinenkai, ed., 55-56.
efforts of Sun Yat-sen, transporting firearms to Sun’s failed Huizhou uprising of 1900,\textsuperscript{81} and he served as chairperson of the Guomindang’s Kobe branch. When Sun stopped in Kobe in March of 1913 to seek support for his economic project, Wu Jintang organized a dinner for the Chinese statesman at his Pine and Sea Villa (Shôkai Bessô 松海別荘), inviting like-minded members of Kobe’s Chinese community and financial world.\textsuperscript{82} When the China Industrial Development Company came to fruition, Wu invested his own funds in the venture through a representative.\textsuperscript{83}

Wang Yiting’s role in the formation of the China Industrial Development Company brought him to the attention of the Japanese consular staff in Shanghai and thus into the view of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Japanese government was eager to promote Japanese business interests in China, especially Japanese control over Chinese resources like the Hanyeping industrial works, and it supported Shibusawa Eiichi and Sun Yat-sen’s venture. Ariyoshi Akira 有吉明 (1876-1937), the Japanese Consul General in Shanghai, was responsible for vetting the company’s Chinese backers, and in a report to the Minister of Foreign Affairs dating to the ninth of August, 1913, he detailed the background and credibility of all the Chinese investors, including Wang Yiting.\textsuperscript{84} Wang thus established his bona fides

\textsuperscript{81} Nakamura Tetsuo, 45-46.

\textsuperscript{82} Zaidan Hôjin Son Chûzan Kinenkai, ed., 55.

\textsuperscript{83} Nakamura Tetsuo, 30-31.

\textsuperscript{84} Consul General Ariyoshi Akira, Shanghai, to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count
in the eyes of Japan’s official representatives in Shanghai, and it would not be long before Ariyoshi would introduce Wang and Wu Changshi to visiting dignitaries like the former Prime Minister Saionji Kinmochi 西園寺公望 (1849-1940), who stopped in Shanghai while making his way to France in January of 1919.\textsuperscript{85} The extent to which Wang would become well known within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is suggested by a ministry document from 1926. It identifies all of the Chinese participants in a 1926 Sino-Japanese joint art exhibition in Osaka, specifying the name, alternative name, and institutional affiliation of each artist who contributed to the show.\textsuperscript{86} Brief biographies are included for more prominent artists, particularly those who helped organize the exhibition. At the end of the report, which bears the seal of the head of the Asian Cultural Affairs Department, Okabe Nagakage 岡部長景 (1884-1970), a single sentence notes that Wu Changshi and Wang Yiting have been omitted from the list because they need no introduction.

\textsuperscript{85} Saionji’s encounter with Wang and Wu is narrated by Ikeda Tôsen, a Japanese journalist who worked for the Shanghai branch of the \textit{Yomiuri Shinbun} 読売新聞, in Ikeda Tôsen, “Tôan Kô to Go ô,” in \textit{Shanhai hyakuwa (zoku)} (Shanghai: Nihondô, 1922), 17-26.

\textsuperscript{86} “Chûka bijutsuka meibo oyobi ryakuden” 中華美術家名簿及略伝, \textit{Bunkatsu} 3 分割 3 , reference code B05016017300, Diplomatic Records Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo, Japan.
Withdrawal from Politics and Public View

Wang Yiting’s participation in the China Industrial Development Company lasted less than a year. In March of 1913 Yuan Shikai attempted to crush opposition to his authoritarian rule by assassinating Song Jiaoren 宋教仁 (1882-1913), the rising Guomindang politician who was poised to become Prime Minister and who was seeking to curtail Yuan’s powers. Sun Yat-sen quickly returned to China and began organizing a Second Revolution to overthrow Yuan. Through the assistance of his Japanese friend Mori Kaku 森恪 (1882-1932), who was a leader in the Mitsui combine and an executive in the China Industrial Development Company, Sun sought diplomatic and military support from Japan.87 By the end of July the Second Revolution had failed, Yuan Shikai had issued arrest warrants for leaders of the Guomindang, and Sun Yat-sen, Li Pingshu, Shen Manyun, and Wang Yiting had been expelled from Shanghai’s foreign settlement.88 Some, such as Sun Yat-sen and Li Pingshu, fled to Japan, where the latter revolutionary found refuge in the home of Wu Jintang.89 Wang Yiting chose to remain in Shanghai, but shaken by recent events—he was standing next to Song Jiaoren when Song was murdered—Wang openly withdrew.

87 Bergère, Sun Yat-sen, 242.
89 Nakamura Tetsuo, 32.
from his public engagements.90 Citing his need to attend to his aged mother, he stated in a newspaper announcement that he would not oppose Yuan Shikai and that he would withdraw from the Guomindang.91 He also resigned from the Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce, which had opposed violence between Yuan Shikai’s northern faction and Sun’s southern revolutionaries.92 In a letter dated the fourteenth of August, 1913, Shiraiwa Ryûhei 白岩龍平 (n.d), who was Wang’s colleague at the Nisshin Steamship Corporation and an executive of the China Industrial Development Company, reported to Shibusawa Eiichi that Wang Yiting was also seeking to withdraw from the Sino-Japanese venture.93 Explaining that Wang was in considerable danger, Shiraiwa supported the request. Thus, like Sun Yat-sen and his other supporters, Wang ended his involvement in the China Industrial Development Company.94

After Wang curtailed his political activities and withdrew from public view, he turned his energies to his art, to his work in business, and to Buddhist and

90 Xiao, Wang Yiting, 34.
91 Wang Renze, 257; Matsumura Shigeki, “Ô Ittei ni totte no Go Shôseki,” 305.
92 Wang Renze, ibid.; Bergère, Sun Yat-sen, 244.
94 Noguchi, 59-62.
philanthropic endeavors. However, he did not wholly eschew Nationalist politicians or causes. After the death of Sun Yat-sen in March of 1925, Wang was one of four consultants invited by the Guomindang to select the design for Sun’s mausoleum in Nanjing. Wang Yiting also maintained ties with Sun’s successor in the Nationalist party, Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi 將介石, 1887-1975), whom Wang had known since the young military man had studied in Japan with Wang’s son Wang Mengnan 王孟南. Wang Yiting may have financed the youthful Chiang’s education in Japan, and Wang continued to support him economically during his years as the head of the Nanjing government, using his clout in Shanghai banking and his leadership of the Shanghai Commerce Federation to help secure Shanghai business’s backing for Chiang after his May 1927 crackdown on a worker’s uprising. Wang Mengnan and Chiang Kai-shek also helped ensure the success of the 1911 revolution in Shanghai by rescuing Chen Qimei from Qing imperial forces in Shanghai during the 1911 revolution. Shen, “Wang Yiting in the Social Network of 1910s – 1930s Shanghai,” 50 and 231 n. 19.

The other consultants were a German architect whose name was rendered as “Bushi” 补士 in Chinese; Ling Hongxun 凌鴻勳 (1894-?), a railway engineer and president of Nanyang University 南洋大學 (now Shanghai jiaotong daxue 上海交通大学); and Li Jinfa 李金发 (1898-1974), a poet and sculptor who had studied in France from 1919 to 1924. For the process of selecting the design of the mausoleum, which took place in September of 1925, see Liu Xiong, “Lü Yanzhi,” CPST.Net, http://www.cpst.net.cn/kxj/zgkxjszj/CX/gxb/pe(tm18002000.htm.

Wang Mengnan and Chiang Kai-shek also helped ensure the success of the 1911 revolution in Shanghai by rescuing Chen Qimei from Qing imperial forces in Shanghai during the 1911 revolution. Shen, “Wang Yiting in the Social Network of 1910s – 1930s Shanghai,” 50 and 231 n. 19.

Ibid.

Shen, “Wang Yiting in the Social Network of 1910s – 1930s Shanghai,” 49; Joseph
also served on Chiang Kai-shek’s National Committee for Refugee Relief (Quanguo nanmin jiuji weiyuanhui 国民政府全国难民救济委员会), and he appears to have painted works of art for Chiang as well. Two of the artist’s paintings from 1929-- *Mother Meng Stops the Loom to Teach her Son* and *Mother Liu Makes a Pill to Teach her Son* (figs. 1 and 2)--state that Wang “painted [them] for brother Jieshi” (*Jieshe laoxiong zhuhua 介石老兄屬畫*).  

**Social Relations with Japanese Business Associates**

Just as Wang Yiting maintained ties to Nationalist political figures and causes after his withdrawal from politics, so too did he maintain relations with Japanese business associates after his withdrawal from the China Industrial Development Company. Through his employment in Japanese firms in Shanghai, Wang Yiting became familiar with Japanese businessmen who sojourned in Shanghai while working for Chinese branches of Japanese companies. Wang established cordial relations with these colleagues, who remembered him fondly years after his death. Murata Shôzô 村田省蔵 (1878-1957), who worked with Wang at Osaka Shipping,


101 These works are published in a collotype catalog of Wang Yiting’s era, which does not provide information about the paintings’ mountings, materials, or locations. When this information is available, this dissertation will provide it in the List of Figures.
recalls in a 1959 memoir that Wang was one of two Chinese who impressed him particularly deeply during his Shanghai sojourn.\textsuperscript{102} Murata characterizes Wang as a scholar skilled at painting and calligraphy, a self-made man of culture (\textit{bunkajin} 文化人), an earnest Buddhist, and a lifelong vegetarian--not the sort of person who as a comprador would sell out to foreigners.\textsuperscript{103} It is perhaps noteworthy that the other man who impressed Murata was Yu Xiaqing 虞洽卿 (1867-1945), whom Murata describes as a comprador for the Mitsui Bussan trading company (Mitsui Bussan Kabushiki Gaisha 三井物産株式会社) and the Japan Postal Shipping Corporation (Nihon Yūsen Kabushiki Gaisha 日本郵船株式会社) who became tremendously powerful in Shanghai’s financial world. Wang Yiting and Yu Xiaqing were both highly successful compradors and leaders in Shanghai business and politics. That Murata dwells upon cultural activities and achievements when discussing Wang Yiting and not when describing Yu Xiaqing is an indication of the degree to which Wang made cultural activities a substantial part of his interaction with his Japanese colleagues.

Wang Yiting’s colleagues developed such impressions of the artist firsthand, joining him at his home and at various gatherings of artists and Sinophiles in Shanghai and Japan. Okada Eitarô 岡田永太郎 (n.d.), who worked with Wang at the Nisshin Steamship Corporation, frequently visited the artist’s home and would grind


\textsuperscript{103} Ibid.
ink for him while Wang painted and the two chatted in Mandarin.104 Okada (fig. 3), Murata Shôzô (fig. 4), and Hori Keijirô 堀啓次郎 (1867-1944) (fig. 5), who worked with Wang at Osaka Shipping, appear to have joined Wang Yiting, Wu Changshi, and several Japanese visitors for a gathering at the Rokusanen 六三園 restaurant and garden (fig. 6).105 The Rokusanen was a popular Japanese establishment in Shanghai, and it was the site of many meetings between Chinese and Japanese. Sun Yat-sen and Chinese and Japanese members of the Tongmeng hui, for example, met at the restaurant in 1912 (fig. 7). Wang Yiting and Wu Changshi were frequent patrons in the 1910s and 1920s, with Wang often taking Wu there to drink and listen to the zither.106 When suitably inspired they would use the painting and calligraphy materials that the proprietor, Shiraishi Rokusaburô 白石六三郎 (1868-1934), kept specially on hand for them.107

104 Xiao, Wang Yiting, 65.

105 The figure at the far left of the back row may be Okada. The third and fourth figures from left in the same row look like Murata and Hori. Wang Yiting is seated third from the left in the front row. Wu Changshi occupies the fourth place from the left in the second row. The photograph is not dated.

106 Wu was particularly fond of the playing of a young woman named Kanô 甘. For Wang and Wu’s relationship with the Rokusanen and its proprietor, see Matsumura Shigeki, “Go Shôseki to Shiraishi Rokusaburô—kindai Nitchû bunka kôryû no ichisokumen,” Ôtsuma Joshi Daigaku kiyô: bunkei 29 (1997): 127-137.

107 As Matsumura Shigeki has explained, Shiraishi operated multiple businesses in Shanghai. One was the Rokusantei 六三亭, which functioned as a guesthouse, restaurant, and garden. Another was a Japanese restaurant and garden called the Rokusan Kaen 六三花園. Wu Changshi and most Chinese sources use the name
Wang’s business colleagues also joined him at receptions for the artist in Japan. Shiraiwa Ryûhei (fig. 8), who expressed his concern for Wang’s safety to Shibusawa Eiichi in 1913, joined one such gathering that was hosted by Tôyama Mitsuru (1855-1944)(fig. 9).108 People present included Wang Yiting’s wife; Tokonami Takejirô (1867-1935), who served as Japan’s Minister of Railroads in the cabinet of Prime Minister Inukai Tsuyoshi (1855-1932); Mizuno Baigyô (1877-1949), who promoted Buddhism in China and Japan; and Inukai Ken (1896-1960), who was the son of Inukai Tsuyoshi.109

At the time when the photograph was taken, Shiraiwa would no doubt have been familiar with Wang Yiting’s art, an example of which appears to hang in the decorative alcove (tokonoma 床の間) behind the group. Although the scroll is difficult to make out in the photograph, its figure--the Bodhisattva Guanyin (Jp. Kannon, Skt. Avalokiteśvara)--and its inscription are reminiscent of ones in paintings that Wang produced in the 1920s and 1930s (figs. 10 and 11).

“Rokusanen” to refer to the Rokusantei. This dissertation, like Matsumura, follows the Chinese practice. Ibid., 128ff.

108 Tôyama is the bearded figure who sits at Wang Yiting’s right.

109 Wang’s wife sits at his left. Tokonami is seated at Tôyama’s right. Mizuno kneels immediately behind Tôyama. Inukai Ken kneels immediately behind Wang Yiting’s wife. The figure wearing glasses at Shiraiwa’s left is Wang’s translator, Wang Tingjue.
Art for Business Associates

Records and extant works reveal that Wang Yiting offered calligraphy and painting to his business associates. Some of the works they received were by Wang’s teacher, Wu Changshi, and others were by Wang himself. In the cases of extant paintings and calligraphy for Wang’s colleagues, some of the works are dedicated to their recipients explicitly through inscriptions on the works’ primary surfaces, whereas others identify their recipients via inscriptions on attending materials like storage boxes. Perhaps a number of other works by Wang that bear no dedication and that are accompanied no longer by external forms of documentation were also works that Wang offered to his colleagues. The precise circumstances of the extant works’ creation and exchange do not appear to be documented. We do not know whether the works were gifts or purchases, whether their recipients requested them or Wang Yiting alone decided to create them for his colleagues.

Despite this relative lack of information, the works themselves reveal a number of interesting facts about Wang Yiting’s relationships with his Japanese colleagues and about the type of art that he gave them. Some of the works document that Wang’s relations with his colleagues extended over a number of years and extended beyond Shanghai to span the East China Sea. In addition, Wang tailored his calligraphy and painting to the works’ recipients, at times acknowledging their circumstances and accomplishments. Some of the content of the works may have taken into account the social circumstances of their creation, and some of the works
appear to have offered their recipients not only material objects of high market value but also ones that embodied cultural prestige. Moreover, some of the works were of substantial quality and complexity.

For Hori Keijirō

According to a 1945 memoir by Hayashi Yasushige 林安繁 (n.d.), who worked with Wang at Osaka Shipping and at the Nisshin Steamship Corporation, Wang Yiting owed his career as a comprador and thus his wealth to Hori Keijirō, the manager who hired him at the Shanghai branch of Osaka Shipping.110 Hayashi reports that Wang Yiting was one of two Chinese whom the wealthy Shanghai merchant Yuan Zizhuang 袁子莊 recommended to Hori for employment. Hori chose Wang on the ground that he seemed to be a good man, viewing the other young candidate, Yu Xiaqing, as arrogant and of an overly Western demeanor. If the Chinese cap and long robe that Wang Yiting wears in a company photograph from 1904 are any indication, Wang did present himself as being of traditional habits (fig. 12).111 Hayashi writes that Wang repaid Hori for his decision by filling the Japanese employer’s home in

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111 The photograph documents a farewell celebration for Murata Shôzo. Wang Yiting is at the far left. Murata Shôzô, 311.
For Wu Jintang

Another business colleague who hung works supplied by Wang Yiting in his home was Wu Jintang. It is not clear when he and Wang first came to know each other, but it is possible that they did so when they both contributed to the founding of the China Industrial Development Company. Other activities and associations might also have brought them into contact: both men hailed from Zhejiang province and had ties to the Ningbo financial clique; both were involved in China’s shipping industry, Kanebō, and the Mitsui combine; and both were supporters of Sun Yat-sen and members of the Guomindang. There can be no doubt that Wang and Wu were in contact by 1920, for that was the year in which Wang began dedicating works of calligraphy to Wu Jintang. Three pieces by Wang Yiting are preserved in the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall (Son Bun Kinenkan 孫文記念館) near Kobe: Soaring Pavilion Flowing Scarlet (1920), First on Penglai (1920), and Tower Rising through the Firmament (1921) (figs. 13-15). All three works identify the “master of the Spirit Moving Pavilion” (移情閣主人) as their recipient. “Spirit Moving Pavilion” (Ch. 112 Hayashi Yasushige, ibid.

The Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall is located at Maiko 舞子, in Hyôgo 兵庫 Prefecture.

Soaring Pavilion Flowing Scarlet is inscribed: “Written in the second month of winter of gengshen (1920) for the refined perusal of the master of the Spirit Moving Pavilion” (113)
Yiqingge, Jp. Ijôkaku (移情閣) refers to the museum’s octagonal, three-story tower, which Wu Jintang built in 1915 as an addition to his Pine and Sea Villa. He constructed the pavilion in order to celebrate his sixtieth year and his retirement from business, and he chose its name as an expression of his thoughts for his ancestral home, China.

Wang Yiting’s four-character expressions, brushed boldly in running script and mounted in rectangular frames, are examples of a type of calligraphy whose circumstances of production are often social and that can serve a number of functions. These include expressing gratitude to a host, registering friendship and solidarity, and honoring a home and its owner. Two examples of this type of calligraphy that have been donated to the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall were written by Sun Yat-sen. All under Heaven for the Public Good (Tianxia wei gong 天下為公) (fig. 16) dates to the thirteenth of March, 1913, one day before Sun attended the dinner that Wu Jintang organized at his Pine and Sea Villa. At a meeting of the Guomindang in Kobê, in Pavilion. Bailongshanren Wang Zhen.” (庚申冬仲書為移情閣主人雅饗白龍山人王震). First on Penglai is inscribed: “For the delectation of the master of the Spirit Moving Pavilion. Winter of gengshen (1920). Wang Zhen of Wuxing” (移情閣主人雅饗庚申冬吳興王震). And Tower Rising through the Firmament is inscribed: “At the direction of the master of the Spirit Moving Pavillion, the second month of spring, xinyou (1921). Bailongshanren Wang Zhen” (移情閣主人屬辛酉春仲白龍山人王震).

115 The villa is no longer extant. For the history and renovation of the tower and the other structures at the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall, see Zaidan Hôjin Son Chûzan Kinenkai, 70 -75.
response to a request from the branch’s deputy chairman Yang Shoupeng 楊壽彭 (n.d.), Sun wrote out in bold, carefully composed strokes one of his political slogans.\textsuperscript{116} Over five months later, his Second Revolution recently defeated, Sun inscribed the more attenuated, less confident characters of \textit{Brotherly Love} (\textit{Bo ai} 博爱) (fig. 17), which he then sent as an expression of gratitude to a Japanese lute master and martial artist named Shibata Zenbei 柴田善兵衛 (n.d.), who at the request of the Hyōgo Prefectural Police had protected Sun in August of 1913 while the Chinese leader was in exile in Japan.\textsuperscript{117} Even today calligraphy like Sun Yat-sen’s appears high on the walls of formal rooms of more traditional Japanese residences. Two of Wang’s works for Wu Jintang (figs. 13 & 15) hang close to the ceiling of his pavilion’s first floor, where they are accompanied by similar pieces written by other Chinese calligraphers of Wu’s era.\textsuperscript{118} Works of this type also hang in the second story of the pavilion. Among the writers whose auspicious four-character expressions grace Wu’s pavilion are Li Ruiqing 李瑞清 (1867-1920), Zhang Jian 張謇 (1853-1926), He Weipu 何維璞 (1842-1922), Gao Zhenxiao 高振霄 (1876-1950), and Hu Ying 胡瑛 (1884-1933).

\textsuperscript{116} Zaidan Hōjin Son Chûzan Kinenkai, 22.

\textsuperscript{117} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{118} Reproductions, transliterations, and commentary on the works in the museum’s collection are published in Zaidan Hōjin Son Chûzan Kinenkai, 61-65.
Just as Sun’s dictum for Yang Shoupeng aspires to universality and his words for Shibata Zenbei invoke a sentiment that might transcend national differences, Wang Yiting’s calligraphy in the Spirit Moving Pavilion invokes commonly held values and elides differences of citizenship between writer and recipient. Like many of the other artists who offered their works to Wu Jintang, Wang produced inscriptions that dignify Wu’s home and his personal accomplishments through literary diction and flattering references to classical literature. *Soaring Pavilion Flowing Scarlet*（Fei ge liu dan 飛閣流丹）quotes a line from the famed “Preface to the ‘Pavilion of Prince Teng’”（滕王閣序）by Wang Bo (ca. 650-ca.675), a text that the early Tang dynasty (618-907) prose stylist composed at a dinner party hosted by the prince of the work’s title.119 Because the preface praises Prince Teng’s famous mansion in glittering language, Wang Yiting’s quotation suitably elevates Wu Jintang’s modern construction, likening it to the storied edifice and Wu to the ancient aristocrat. Wang Yiting was not the first writer to make this association, for calligraphy that Li Ruiqing and He Weipu wrote in 1916 and an undated work by a certain Shao Shun also quote Wang Bo’s literary text, each modern work

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reproducing a different passage from the medieval text.\textsuperscript{120} Perhaps Wang Bo’s canonical preface came easily to mind for each of the modern calligraphers as he took up his brush, or perhaps it was a glance at works already on display that prompted Wang Yiting to select another passage from Wang Bo’s classic. In either case, Wang Yiting’s literary training served him well, enabling him to recall Wang Bo’s preface and to apply it to the task of praising the owner of the Spirit Moving Pavilion. One can imagine a social gathering at Wu Jintang’s home in which such a reference to Wang Bo would have been highly appropriate; such an affair would have given Wang Yiting occasion to prove his literary mettle by recognizing the allusions of previous visitors and adding one of his own. At the same time, one can envision that Wang’s offering of such a work implied that Wu Jintang had the ability to comprehend Wang’s allusion. *Soaring Pavilion Flowing Scarlet* thus dignifies both the artist and its recipient by positioning them as men of traditional Chinese literary culture. Prior to the overthrow of China’s last imperial dynasty in 1911, scholars who spent their formative years learning the classical literary canon and their adult lives using it while serving as bureaucrats could take such effects and positions for granted. However, for Wang Yiting and Wu Jintang, who had opted for careers in international commerce, articulation and acceptance of an ancient literary sentiment amounted to statements of allegiance to traditional Chinese culture.

\textsuperscript{120} The works are reproduced in Zaidan Hôjin Son Chûzan Kinenkai, 63, 65.
At the same time that Wang’s calligraphy for Wu Jintang positioned the two men within a continuing tradition of Chinese letters, the calligraphy also expands the scope of that tradition to include Japan, acknowledging Wu’s accomplishments across the East China Sea. First on Penglai (Penglai di yi 蓬萊第一)—invokes the name of a mythical mountain traditionally understood to be an island home of immortals located in the ocean east of China. The inscription implies that Japan is Penglai and praises Wu Jintang as the nation’s foremost inhabitant. Wang Yiting’s calligraphy of the following year, Tower Rising Through the Firmament (Lou ling xiao han 樓凌霄漢), may also call attention to the locality of Wu Jintang’s pavilion by noting its vertical reach: the structure was the tallest building in the surrounding area at the time, and it may have given the Chinese businessman an advantage over his local competitors by affording him a better view of his trading company’s ships as they approached Kobe.

For Hayashi Yasushige

Whereas Wang Yiting repaid Hori Keijirô by supplying him with paintings and calligraphy of high cultural and market value and applauded Wu Jintang by brushing erudite inscriptions that acknowledged him individually, Wang could also

121 Hanyu da cidian bianji weiyuanhui 漢語大詞典編輯委員會, Hanyu da cidian 漢語大詞典, Suoyinben 縮印本, 3 vols., s.v. Penglai 蓬萊.

122 I would like to thank Mr. Sase Shôichi 佐瀨祥一 of the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall, for this suggestion. Sase Shôichi, personal communication, February 21, 2006.
dignify his Japanese colleagues in other ways as well, producing relatively accessible works that nonetheless rewarded their recipients with paintings of unusually fine execution and high visual complexity. Two works that reveal such an approach are now preserved in the Fukuyama Museum of Calligraphy (figs. 18 and 19). Wang’s inscriptions on the diptych do not mention a recipient by name, and were it not for the box in which the paintings are kept we might never know the person for whom they were originally intended. An inscription in Wang Yiting’s hand on the box’s lid states that the paintings are for Hayashi Yasushige, providing his name and the date that appears on the paintings, the ninth month of autumn in the jisi 己巳 year (1929).

The two works depict the eccentric Buddhist figures Hanshan 寒山 and Shide 拾得, who are staple icons of Chan 祖 (Jp. Zen) Buddhist painting and appear frequently in Zen contexts in Japan.123 Traditionally understood to have lived in the late eighth or early ninth centuries, they are described as reincarnations of the Bodhisattvas Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra. Hanshan is said to have been a poor but learned recluse who lived in the Tiantai 天台 mountains in Zhejiang province and frequented the Guoqing Temple (Guoqingsi 國清寺), where Shide was an eccentric groundskeeper. Hanshan is also said to have been a poet, and poems attributed to him appear in several pre-modern anthologies, such as the Collection of the Poetry of

123 For the iconography of Hanshan and Shide, see Helmut Brinker, Hiroshi Kanazawa, and Andreas Leisinger, "Zen Masters of Meditation in Images and Writings," Artibus Asiae, Supplementum, 40 (1996): 141-42.
Master Hanshan (Hanshanzi shiji 寒山子詩集), which was compiled in the Song dynasty by a certain Mr. Zhou 周 of Jiande 建德 and reprinted in Shanghai in 1929, and The Complete Tang Poetry (Quan Tang shi 全唐詩), which was imperially commissioned and published in 1707.\textsuperscript{124} Wang’s inscriptions on the two works quote poems attributed to Hanshan and Shide in the latter collection.\textsuperscript{125}

It is unlikely that an educated Japanese viewer of Hayashi Yasushige’s day would have found the figures or the canonical poems of Wang’s two paintings surprising, and in this respect the works are quite accessible. Nor would Hayashi, if he were familiar with Wang’s art, have found the subject matter unusual for his colleague. After Wang became a devotee of Buddhism in the years immediately following his shocking experiences of 1913, he frequently painted Buddhist figures and themes. Different versions of Hanshan and Shide appear in most scholars’ publications of Wang Yiting’s art, and renderings of the two figures also appear in catalogs of Wang’s paintings that were published in his day. In Ink Marvels of the White Dragon Mountain Man (Bailongshanren mo miao 白龍山人墨妙)--a two-volume catalog of Wang’s painting and calligraphy published in 1925 by his friends


\textsuperscript{125} Quan Tangshi box 12, vol. 1, juan 806 and 807.
in the Xiling Seal Society (Xiling yinshe 西泠印社)--no less than five of the forty-six works reproduced depict Hanshan and Shide.126

Wang’s paintings for Hayashi Yasushige distinguish themselves within the artist’s oeuvre through the complexity of their format and compositions. Most of Wang’s renderings of the iconic Tang eccentrics are of two compositional types. In the first, the artist depicts Hanshan and Shide as a pair of large figures on a blank ground in a single pictorial space (fig. 20). In this formulation, Hanshan and Shide appear as two auspicious figures from popular religion known as the Gods of Harmony and Concord (Hehe shen 和合神) or the Two Immortals of Harmony and Concord (Hehe er xian 和合二仙). Wang usually renders these figures with swift brushstrokes and a few washes of pale pigments, modeling the two men’s faces with more carefully applied, multiple layers of pigment. In paintings of the second variety, Wang makes Hanshan and Shide the subjects of more pictorially complicated works, situating smaller figures in separate landscape settings. The two young men usually frolic in a grove of trees or converse on a rocky terrace in wooded mountains (figs. 21 & 22). Wang’s paintings for Hayashi are of this second variety. They differ, however, in that the artist breaks the composition into two separate paintings, placing each figure in his own pictorial space. This effectively doubled the market value of Wang’s standard Hanshan and Shide composition, for in Shanghai’s art market

126 Wu Xiong, *Bailongshanren mo miao* (Shanghai: Xiling yinshe, 1925).
paintings were frequently priced by the size of their paper. Artists often set prices for their works through price lists.\textsuperscript{127} Wang Yiting’s 1922 price list, which was composed by Wu Changshi, quotes varying prices for different lengths and widths of paper.\textsuperscript{128} In addition, although Hanshan (Jp. Kanzan) and Shide (Jp. Jittoku) commonly appear in diptychs in Japan, Wang does not appear to have adopted this format for works other than the ones for Hayashi. The fact that the composition of his works for Hayashi was relatively rare may have heightened the paintings’ value further.

Market value was not the only manner in which Wang’s \textit{Hanshan} and \textit{Shide} benefited Hayashi Yasushige. The paintings are also more visually rewarding than Wang’s standard treatments of the figures. When viewed together, with the painting of Hanshan on the left and that of Shide on the right, the two works generate interesting thematic and visual juxtapositions.\textsuperscript{129} The figures walk in opposite directions at different heights relative to the viewer. One composition presents a sheer rock face in the foreground that occupies most of the surface of the painting, whereas the other offers a gentler recession into deeper distance. In the painting of Hanshan, a steep cliff wall and rushing waters separate the figure from the rest of the world and from Shide, heightening one’s sense of his reclusion, whereas in the painting of Shide, the

\textsuperscript{127} For price lists in Shanghai and Wu Changshi’s 1920 price list, see Shen, “Wu Changshi and the Shanghai Art World in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries,” 105-09.

\textsuperscript{128} Wang’s price list is reproduced in Xiao, \textit{Wang Yiting}, 52-53.

\textsuperscript{129} In Japan Hanshan is traditionally hung on the left, and Shide, on the right.
sweeper strolls close to a temple, presumably the Guoqingsi, where he is traditionally said to have been raised by a kindly old monk named Fenggan 豐干 (Jp. Bukan).

**Conclusion**

Wang Yiting produced his works for Hayashi Yasushige over two decades after the two men became colleagues at the Osaka Shipping Company. These paintings, along with Wang’s calligraphy for Wu Jintang and the works by Wu Changshi that Wang supplied to Hori Keijirô, reveal that Wang maintained lengthy relationships with his Japanese colleagues, providing them with sophisticated and valuable works of art. This exchange of Wang’s creations occurred in addition to social exchanges that took place in venues like the Rokusanen, where Wang’s business associates had the opportunity to mingle not only with respected Chinese artists and cultural figures like Wu Changshi but also with Japanese artists and men of culture who visited Shanghai. The following chapters of this dissertation will show that some of the Japanese business associates with whom Wang mingled socially and for whom he produced art also contributed to religious, philanthropic, and artistic projects that the artist undertook. To the extent that Wang’s early career in business and politics introduced him to such colleagues, it played an important role in the shaping of his career as an artist and organizer of art-related activities.
CHAPTER 2

ART THROUGH FRIENDSHIP, FRIENDSHIP THROUGH ART

Introduction

The failure of Sun Yat-sen’s Second Revolution in 1913 forced Wang Yiting to refashion himself. Wanted by Yuan Shikai and expelled from the safety of Shanghai’s foreign concession, Wang withdrew from his political engagements and redirected many of his considerable energies and resources to artistic pursuits. He became Wu Changshi’s disciple and spent a great deal of time discussing art and literature with the scholar and professional artist. He learned to write calligraphy in Wu Changshi’s style, and he incorporated salient features of Wu Changshi’s painting into his own, infusing the approach he had learned from Ren Yi with the swift, calligraphic brushwork of Wu Changshi. As Matsumura Shigeki has argued, Wang’s turn toward art publicly confirmed his withdrawal from politics and demonstrated to his political enemies that he would henceforth be involved only in cultural pursuits.\textsuperscript{130}

In the early decades of the twentieth century, traditionalists like Wang Yiting feared that China’s political weakness, the economic and cultural aggression of\textsuperscript{130} Matsumura, “Ô Ittei,” passim; Matsumura, “Ô Ittei ni totte no Go Shôseki,” passim.
Western powers, and the appeal of Western art might result in the loss of China’s native artistic culture. Traditionalists thus sought to preserve artistic manifestations of China’s “national essence” (guocui 國粹). Concern for this national character had begun to develop in the final decades of the Qing dynasty (1644-1912), when a new Chinese intelligentsia, frustrated by the Chinese government’s inability to maintain China’s territorial and economic integrity, began to view Chinese culture as something separable from the existing political order and took it upon itself to defend the nation’s cultural identity.\footnote{Laurence A. Schneider, “National Essence and the New Intelligentsia,” in \textit{The Limits of Change: Essays on Conservative Alternatives in Republican China}, ed. Charlotte Furth (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press), 57-89.} Looking to Japan, where in the late 1880s and 1890s the Society for Political Education (Seikyôsha 政教社) had reacted against widespread Westernization of Japanese society by calling for “preservation of the national essence” (kokusui hozon 国粹保存), Chinese intellectuals argued that their nation, too, must preserve its national essence.\footnote{The Japanese national essence movement of the 1880s and 1890s is discussed in Kenneth B. Pyle, \textit{The New Generation in Meiji Japan: Problems of Cultural Identity, 1885-1895} (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969), ch. 3.} They began to organize literary organizations for this purpose, founding the Society for the Preservation of National Learning (Guoxue baocun hui 國學保存會) in Shanghai in 1905. Although the literary vanguard of the national essence movement became socially marginalized in
the 1920s on account of its close identification with elite forms of expression, artists were able to maintain the movement’s momentum in the field of the visual arts into the 1940s.

Artists took up the charge of protecting China’s cultural identity by forming artistic groups. In 1908 Wang Yiting and other painters and calligraphers in Shanghai founded the Yu Garden Calligraphy and Painting Charitable Association (Yuyuan shuhua shanhui 豫園書畫善會), which, by encouraging artists to apply their skills to philanthropic effect, aimed to preserve the national essence. The following year Wang Yiting and other members of the association helped Li Pingshu establish the Shanghai Calligraphy and Painting Research Society (Shanghai shuhua yanjiuhui 上海書畫研究會), which aspired to preserve the national essence by strengthening modern artists and collectors’ relationships with art of their nation’s past. Other national essence artistic groups in which Wang played a role were the Shanghai Calligraphy and Painting Society (Shanghai shuhuahui 上海書畫會) (founded in 1922), the Shanghai Chinese Calligraphy and Painting Preservation Society (Shanghai Zhongguo shuhua baocunhui 上海中國書畫保存會) (founded in 1929),


134 Andrews, ibid., 582; Xu, ibid., 13-16.

135 Xu, ibid., 17-20.
the Bee Painting Society (Mifeng huashe 蜜蜂畫社) (founded in 1929), and the Chinese Painting Society (Zhongguo huahui 中國畫會) (founded in 1931).136 These groups served a practical purpose, helping their members negotiate the novel economic realities of Shanghai by establishing price lists and connecting artists with buyers. However, these and other national essence artistic societies also held exhibitions of their members’ work, and they published criticism and art historical research that aimed to improve understanding of China’s traditional art. By the end of the 1920s, the constituencies of groups like the Bee Painting Society and the Lake Society (Hu she 湖社) (founded 1927) had grown across the country, and the Chinese Painting Society, which followed them, was effectively a national painting society. Due in no small part to the varied efforts of these organizations, traditional painting and calligraphy experienced a resurgence.137 Traditional art flourished on the market


in Beijing and Shanghai, and by 1929, when the Ministry of Education organized China’s first national art exhibition, works by traditionalist artists appeared along with ones in Western media and styles and ones by Japanese artists.¹³⁸

Wang Yiting not only led the national essence movement in the Chinese art world but also engaged the assistance of Japan for the movement. Wang was an idealist who believed that just as traditional Chinese art could be the basis of friendship and understanding between its Chinese practitioners and admirers, so too could it serve as a ground for harmonious relations between China and Japan. In the 1910s and 1920s he met with many Japanese visitors to China—especially dignitaries, Sinophile scholars, and artists. Welcoming them to Shanghai, Wang cultivated bonds of friendship that were based on shared literary and artistic abilities and on the production and exchange of art. Working with Japanese Sinophiles and traditionalists, Wang Yiting organized exhibitions and contributed to art publications that furthered not only his own career as a traditionalist painter and calligrapher but also those of his fellow Chinese artists. In addition to promoting his Chinese colleagues to a Japanese audience, Wang also worked to nurture Japanese interest in the art of China’s past. Wang Yiting thus made crucial contributions to the efforts at Sino-Japanese cooperation and artistic exchange that took place in the 1920s and early 1930s.

¹³⁸ A selection of the works that were shown is published in the catalog of the exhibition, Jiaoyu bu, *Meizhan tekan* ([Shanghai]: 1929).
Social and Artistic Aspects of Wang’s Reception of Japanese Visitors

Recalling a Friend of Japan

In July of 1942, only a few years after Wang Yiting’s death, at a time when war raged in the Pacific but had not yet devastated Japanese hopes for commanding the Asian continent, a Japanese businessman named Tsuchiya Keizô 土屋計左右 (1888-1973) published an article in the Japanese art monthly Kokuga 国画. The president of two hotels and occasionally a contractor for the Japanese Foreign Ministry, Tsuchiya had worked for a number of years in China as the manager of the Shanghai branch of the Mitsui Bank (Mitsui Ginkô 三井銀行), and he had authored several books and reports on the Chinese monetary and commercial systems. In the journal devoted to Japan’s national painting, however, his subject was Wang Yiting, a man whom he had known in business and society and whom he remembered with great fondness. Tsuchiya recalls in his encomium to his friend that Wang worked hard to improve relations between China and Japan, welcoming virtually every important Japanese dignitary who came to Shanghai as well as countless artists famous and obscure. Among these visitors were the statesmen Saionji Kinmochi and Inukai Tsuyoshi, the Imperial Prince Takamatsu no Miya 高松宮 (1905-1987), and such artists as Yokoyama Taikan 横山大観 (1868-1958), Hayami Gyoshû 速水御舟


140 For example, Tsuchiya Keizô, Baiben seido (Tokyo: Shina Keizai Kenkyûjo, 1940); Tsuchiya Keizô, Chûka Minkoku no kokusai taishaku (Tokyo: Tsuchiya Keizô, 1932); Tsuchiya Keizô, “Gin sôba” no hanashi (n.p.: Tsuchiya Keizô, 1930).
(1894-1935), Hirafuku Hyakusui 平福百穂 (1877-1933), Matsuoka Eikyū 松岡映丘
(1881-1938), Fukuda Heihachirō 福田平八郎 (1892-1974), Araki Jippo 荒木十畝
(1872-1944), and Kosugi Hōan 小杉放庵 (1881-1964). Noting that he helped
organize many of Wang’s receptions, Tsuchiya observes that Wang’s hospitality was
such that, “like a Buddha giving out food,” the artist would use his own chopsticks to
offer his guests morsels of vegetarian fare. In addition, he would frequently paint or
write calligraphy for them, in the cases of some poorer artists doing so to pay for their
travel expenses. Tsuchiya writes that Wang was able to harmonize the interests of his
various guests and that the atmosphere at his gatherings was quite genial, even during
the height of the anti-Japanese demonstrations of 1930, leaving Japanese guests with
the impression that Wang was a true friend of their country.

Wang Yiting had established a reputation for friendship with Japan well before
Tsuchiya wrote his encomium. Evidence of Japanese approval of the Chinese artist
and of how he went about generating it can be found in publications like An Account
of Impressions of People of Shanghai, which was published in 1930 by Sawamura
Yukio 沢村幸夫, a reporter for the Osaka Mainichi Shinbun 大阪毎日新聞
newspaper.141 The author begins an essay entitled “Wang Yiting” by stating that “few
Japanese who live in Shanghai do not know the face of Mr. Wang Yiting.” From the
time that Sawamura attended a gathering of Chinese and Japanese artists and art

Kenkyûkai, 1930), 18-22.
connoisseurs and joined them in forming a society of artistic fellowship (geijutsu dōshikai 芸術同志会), he writes, he had many opportunities to meet Wang.

Sawamura states that the most memorable one took place during the rainy season of the year before when Wang received the journalist at his well-appointed home and garden. The writer narrates his visit in detail, observing, for example, that he had just begun to think that a piece of calligraphy hanging in Wang’s reception hall—three shimmering characters written by Zheng Xiaoxu (1860-1938)—was in poor, Chinese taste, when his eyes lit upon a large scroll flanked by two smaller ones—works by Wu Changshi that were of a quality he had never seen in Japan. The writer appraises Wang Yiting, too, determining that the man said to have different demeanors for discussing money and talking about art was in fact a literatus (bunjin 文人). Sawamura recalls further that a Western-style room filled with several tens of pictures of Wang with national figures from Japan confirmed for him the reports he had heard of Wang not being afraid of having connections to Japan during China’s anti-Japanese demonstrations. This convinced Sawamura that the Chinese artist was a true friend of Japan. Sawamura concludes his essay by recounting with pleasure that

142 For Wu’s fame in Japan, see Wong, Parting the Mists, ch. 5. An accomplished calligrapher, Zheng had served as a Chinese diplomat in Japan in the 1880s and later served as Prime Minister of the Japanese puppet state in Manchuria from 1931 to 1935.
Wang, having asked him to wait a while in the garden, reappeared shortly and handed him a piece of calligraphy entitled *Longevity of a Crane*, its ink still wet. The work read:

黃帝與廣成子談道，有玄鶴待其傍，所謂鶴千六百年而成玄，其壽之不知其紀也。

[When] the Yellow Emperor and Guang Chengzi discussed The Way, a black crane waited beside [them]. The said crane [lived] one thousand six hundred years before turning black. What is not known with regard to its longevity is its age.

Sawamura Yukio was not the only Japanese to whom the art of Wu Changshi and Wang Yiting appealed and for whom an encounter with such Chinese artists was an opportunity not to be missed. In the 1910s and 1920s a number of Japanese dignitaries, Sinophiles, and artists met with Wang Yiting and his teacher during visits to China. Some were stopping in Shanghai while traveling to other destinations. Others came to China in search of objects of scholarly study or of subjects for artistic expression. Wang Yiting welcomed them at at least four venues in Shanghai. In addition to meeting them at the Rokusanen and his home, Wang also met Japanese visitors at the Japanese Club (Nihonjin Kurabu 日本人倶楽部) and at the Bodhi Grove (Juelin 覺林).[^143] The latter was a vegetarian restaurant that Wang ran as a social project, serving inexpensive but delicious food.[^144] Tsuchiya reports that the

[^143]: Tsuchiya, 31-32.

[^144]: Ibid.
vegetarian food Wang served was excellent and very popular.\textsuperscript{145} Wang’s residence was sufficiently suitable for hosting visitors that when Albert Einstein (1879-1955) and his wife stopped in Shanghai on their way to Japan in November of 1922, it was in Wang’s home that a banquet was held in the physicist’s honor.\textsuperscript{146} Wang’s residence is reported to have been chosen for the occasion because it represented a typical Chinese home and because the guests could enjoy viewing a number of works of art, which Einstein and the Chinese, German, and Japanese guests inspected before taking their seats.\textsuperscript{147}

**Visiting Dignitaries**

The earliest well-documented personal encounter between Wang Yiting and a Japanese visitor occurred in 1919, when he and Wu Changshi were introduced to the former Japanese Prime Minister Saionji Kinmochi.\textsuperscript{148} This meeting, which was

\textsuperscript{145} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{147} In his remarks at the occasion Einstein noted his particular appreciation for the paintings by Wang Yiting. Ibid., 72.

\textsuperscript{148} If an anecdote by the Shanghai essayist Zheng Yimei 鄭逸梅 (1895-1992) is to be believed, Wang Yiting and Wu Changshi met with Saionji’s mentor, the Japanese Prime Minister Itô Hirobumi 伊藤博文 (1841-1909), at least a decade before meeting Saionji. However, as Aida Wong has noted, because Itô was assassinated several years before Wang became Wu’s student in 1913, the account is not particularly credible. Zheng Yimei, *Yilin shigu* (Hangzhou: Zhejiang wenyi chubanshe, 1990), 81-82; Aida Wong, *Parting the Mists*, 87.
reported in detail to the Japanese reading public, marked the beginning of a relationship that would burnish Wang Yiting’s reputation in Japan.\textsuperscript{149} It also illustrates how the cultural appeal of Wang’s teacher and the businessman’s own Japanese connections in Shanghai combined to bring Wu, Wang, and Japanese luminaries together for social and artistic exchanges.

Six years after the founding of the China Industrial Development Company, for which the Ariyoshi Akira verified the credibility of Wang Yiting and the other Chinese investors, the Consul General introduced Wang Yiting and his teacher to Saionji Kinmochi, the Japanese aristocrat and politician who was traveling to France to serve as the Japanese plenipotentiary at the Paris Peace Conference.\textsuperscript{150} A Japanese journalist reports that Ariyoshi Akira accompanied Saionji, his daughter, his son-in-law, and his doctor to the Rokusanen restaurant and garden, where Ariyoshi presented the proprietor, Shiraishi Rokusaburô, as the most successful Japanese in Shanghai.\textsuperscript{151} As Shiraishi was showing Saionji a piece of calligraphy by the Chinese scholar-artist Shen Zhou (1427-1509), Wang Yiting and Wu Changshi arrived by horse-drawn

\textsuperscript{149} The meeting is recalled in Ikeda Tôsen, “Tôan kô to Go ô,” in \textit{Shanghai hyakuwa (zoku)} (Shanghai: Nihondô, 1922), 17ff.


\textsuperscript{151} Except where otherwise noted, the events described in the remainder of this paragraph are drawn from Ikeda, 17ff.
carriage, wearing Chinese-style clothing. Saionji and Wu immediately took to each other, comparing their ages, discussing their ailments, and lamenting the difficulty of traveling in old age. The guests then enjoyed a banquet in a large room. The Japanese sat before the main decorative alcove, in which a scroll by the Chinese literatus Dong Qichang 董其昌 (1555-1636) had been placed, and Wu Changshi and Wang Yiting sat obliquely before a secondary alcove, in which willow branches and an image of the Bodhisattva Guanyin were in view. This Japanese architectural environment, with its conspicuous display of works by Chinese old masters and an iconic Buddhist figure popular in China and Japan alike, must have helped put all participants at ease. Upon completion of the banquet, Wang Yiting and Wu Changshi treated Saionji to a demonstration of their artistic skills by collaborating on a work. Wang painted a portrait of Saionji, and Wu inscribed it with four characters in seal script—“Wuliangshoufo” 無量壽佛, or “Buddha of Limitless Life” (Jp. Amida, Skt., Amitabha). Probably as a result of the occasion, Wu also carved at least two seals for
Saionji, one of which also reads “Wuliangshoufo.” Wu’s likening of Saionji to the Buddha of Limitless Life on the painting and the seal probably constituted a humorous and auspicious wish for the Japanese man’s longevity.

Visiting Sinophiles

In the 1910s and 1920s a number of Japanese Sinophile artists and scholars visited China in search of Chinese literati art and its modern producers. Some were drawn to Wu Changshi. Before Wu became acquainted with Wang, which appears to have been by 1910, a few Japanese calligraphers who were interested in epigraphic studies had sought Wu out in Suzhou, notably Kusakabe Meikaku 日下部鳴鶴 (1838-1922) and Kawai Senro 河井荃嵒 (1871-1945). In 1910 Wang used his Japanese connections to introduce a Japanese admirer of Wu Changshi, the epigrapher

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154 Kuiyi Shen, “Wu Changshi and the Shanghai Art World in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries,” 114-15.
and calligrapher Mizuno Sobai 水野疏梅 (1864-1921), to the Chinese scholar.\textsuperscript{155} However, it was in 1914, one year after Wang had declared himself Wu’s disciple and had begun taking him to such places as the Rokusanen, that Wu Changshi succeeded in garnering wider Japanese interest in his work. In 1914 Shiraishi Rokusaburō organized Wu’s first solo art exhibition at the Rokusanen.\textsuperscript{156} After this debut, many more Japanese Sinophiles sought out his seal carving, calligraphy, and seals. Shiraishi helped Japanese scholars and artists like Tomioka Tessai 富岡鉄斎 (1836-1924) and Nakamura Fusetsu 中村不折 (1866-1943) purchase Wu’s paintings and calligraphy.\textsuperscript{157} The Rokusanen, which Shiraishi also ran as a Japanese-style inn, became the site of numerous encounters between visiting Japanese Sinophiles on the one hand and Wu Changshi and Wang Yiting on the other.

Some aficionados of Wu Changshi’s art visited China multiple times in their search of works by the master. For example, between 1921 and 1928 a now little-known seal carver, calligrapher, and poet named Kitagawa Fukutei 北川蝠亭 (1884-1937) made five trips to China, seeking the seal carving and calligraphy of Wu Changshi, Wang Yiting, and others, and he met with Wu Changshi and Wang Yiting on

\textsuperscript{155} Xiao, \textit{Wang Yiting}, 37.

\textsuperscript{156} Matsumura Shigeki, “Go Shôseki to Shiraishi Rokusaburô,” 128-29.

\textsuperscript{157} Shen, “Wu Changshi and the Shanghai Art World in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries,” 115.
at least four occasions.\textsuperscript{158} In 1928 Wang Yiting commemorated Wu Changshi, who had died the year before, by giving Kitagawa a scroll of impressions of seals carved by Wu Changshi, his son Wu Ziru 吳子茹 (1876-1927), and Xu Xingzhou 徐星洲 (1853-1925).\textsuperscript{159}

It was not uncommon for Japanese Sinophiles who met with Wu Changshi and Wang Yiting to form long-term relationships with them and to represent them positively in Japan. One such person was Hashimoto Kansetsu 橋本陸雪 (1883-1945), who was among the Japanese guests present for the undated photograph taken at the Rokusanen mentioned above (fig. 6). Kansetsu made his first trip to Shanghai in 1913, and he subsequently traveled there almost every year, meeting with Wang Yiting and Wu Changshi on numerous occasions.\textsuperscript{160} He desired to explore China because he was steeped in Chinese literary and artistic culture as it had been received in Japan: as the son of the Confucian scholar for the Akashi 明石 domain near Kobe, from an early age he had been trained in the classical Chinese literary tradition.\textsuperscript{161} Today he is remembered primarily for his paintings in the style of the


\textsuperscript{159} Taizan Shodōin, ed., 19.


\textsuperscript{161} Ibid., 224.
Japanese Maruyama-Shijô school artists in whose ateliers he studied. His teacher Takeuchi Seihô 竹内栖鳳 (1864-1942), for example, helped pioneer Japanese-style painting, or *nihonga* 日本画, in Kyoto by combining traditional Japanese materials and the Maruyama-Shijô school’s interest in sketching from life (*shasei* 写生) with techniques and subject matter drawn from Western art, and Kansetsu too is generally considered a painter of *nihonga*. However, Kansetsu was also deeply interested in Chinese literati painting, known in Japanese as *nanga* and *bunjinga*, and it preoccupied him throughout the 1920s. On his yearly trips to China, Kansetsu met with artists like Wu Changshi and Wang Yiting, who practiced the scholarly arts of Chinese literary composition, seal carving, calligraphy, and painting, and then he the presented those artists to Japan as literati. In his 1924 primer *The Way to Literati Painting* (*Nanga e no dôtei* 南画への道程), he describes Wu Changshi and Wang Yiting’s work and ranks them among the finest contemporary Chinese practitioners of literati painting.

When meeting with Japanese visitors to Shanghai, Wang Yiting often demonstrated his artistic and literary skills by painting and composing poetry on the

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162 Morioka and Berry, 224-25; Conant, 322-23.

163 Morioka and Berry, 225.

spot, collaborating with Wu Changshi on many occasions. When Japanese guests were suitably equipped, they responded in kind with artistic and literary efforts of their own. In the 1920s and 1930s it was not uncommon for educated Japanese men to be able to participate in this kind of social and literary exchange, even if they were unable to speak Chinese. For over a millennium written Chinese had served as a lingua franca in encounters between educated Chinese and Japanese. A Japanese visitor to China might not be able to speak Chinese, but he could communicate through brush talking (bitan 筆談): he could hold a conversation by brushing his thoughts on paper in literary Chinese. This mode of communication continued to be possible as late as the final decades of the nineteenth century, when Chinese diplomats attached to the first Chinese embassy in Japan and local officials used brush talking to hold conversations of extremely high discursive complexity and literary sophistication.\(^\text{165}\) Prior to the Meiji Restoration of 1868, Chinese writing in Japan had for centuries been associated with Confucian values and government administration. Educated men who came of age in the Meiji era (1868-1912), particularly those who became Japan’s captains of state and industry, continued to

value Chinese letters, spending a substantial part of their formative years studying
*kanbun* 漢文 (Chinese prose) and *kanshi* 漢詩 (Chinese poetry) in preparation for
their future careers.\(^{166}\)

One of Wang Yiting’s Japanese guests who had this type of background was
was Tanabe Hekidô 田辺碧堂 (Tanabe Tamesaburô 田辺為三郎 1864-1931), who
had worked as an auditor for the Nisshin Steamship Corporation from 1907 to 1922
and who was a supporter of the arts in Japan.\(^{167}\) He was a skillful writer of Chinese
poetry, publishing volumes of his poems in both China and Japan, and he was also an
accomplished painter of *nanga*.\(^{168}\) In 1921 Wang Yiting and Wu Changshi invited him

\(^{166}\) *Kanbun* and *kanshi* were taught throughout the Meiji period as veritable
prerequisites of success in the Japanese civil service and university entrance exams.
Numerous schools existed to train students in these fields of study and literary
expression. Cheng Ching-mao, “Nagai Kafû and Chinese Tradition” (PhD diss.,

\(^{167}\) Asai, 328.

Ayao (Nagoya: Kobayashi Daijirô, 1932); Tanabe Hekidô, *Kaisaku Hekidô zekku*
(Tokyo: Bunshôin, 1920); Tanabe Tamesaburô, *Tanabe zekku* (Tokyo: Tanaka
Fukusaburô, 1914), reprinted in *Shishû Nihon Kanshi*, ed. Fujikawa Hideo,
Matsushita Tadashi, and Sano Masami, vol. 20, 309-333 (Tokyo: Kyûko Shoin,
1990).
to join them for drinks, and on that occasion Tanabe added poetic inscriptions to works that Wang and Wu produced.\textsuperscript{169} Three years later he commemorated the exchange by publishing his inscriptions in a collection of his Chinese poetry.\textsuperscript{170} In 1925, Wang Yiting, Wu Changshi, and Tanabe met again, and the two Chinese artists celebrated their Japanese friend by painting and inscribing a portrait of him, \textit{Mr. Verdant Cottage} (fig. 23). The work depicts Tanabe as a relaxed and amiable figure surrounded by the kinds of writing accouterments employed by both Chinese and Japanese men of letters, and the inscriptions laud Tanabe’s abilities at both poetry and painting.

The best documented example of this type of interaction between Wang and a Japanese friend took place when the Chinese artist welcomed the politician Inukai Tsuyoshi and his longtime friend Tôyama Mitsuru to Shanghai in 1929. The two Japanese men were traveling in China to attend the burial ceremonies for Sun Yat-sen, whose revolutionary efforts they had supported many years before.\textsuperscript{171} Readers of the Japanese newspaper \textit{Shôwa Nichinichi Shinbun} 昭和日日新聞 learned of Wang’s

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\textsuperscript{169} The venue for this literary and artistic exchange may have been the Rokusanen, for one of the poems immediately following the two that Tanabe wrote on Wang and Wu’s works is about a reception at the Japanese restaurant. Tanabe, \textit{Ryôsô shû}, preface and fascicle 2, 23-24.

\textsuperscript{170} Tanabe, \textit{Ryôsô shû}, ibid.

\textsuperscript{171} Inukai’s trip to China is recounted in Bokudô Sensei Denki Kankôkai and Washio Yoshinao, eds., \textit{Inukai Bokudô den} (Tokyo: Tôyô Keizai Shinpôsha, 1939; Hara Shobô, 1968), 742-764.
\end{flushright}
hospitality toward Inukai through the narrative of a journalist named Shimizu Ginzō. He writes that at midday on June sixth Inukai visited Wang’s home, where the Chinese artist showed him a number of famous works of art. That evening Inukai attended an “inkstone party” (suzuri no kai 観の会) that Tsuchiya Keizō had helped arrange at the Rokusanen. Like many men of his generation, he was capable of composing literary Chinese and inscribing it in a fine calligraphic hand. In the autumn of 1926, for example, when he climbed Kintakusan in Kanazawa prefecture, Inukai composed four lines of Chinese poetry to describe the view (fig. 24). The theme of the affair at the Rokusanen suited Inukai particularly well, however, for he was not only an accomplished calligrapher but also a connoisseur of the art, having published a book on its materials and its Chinese and Japanese traditions in 1916. Guests at the party included Wang’s friend Di Pingzi— the publisher of the Shanghai newspaper Shibao 時報—and several other artists, and together they viewed over a hundred works of art. These included one from the time of the 1911 revolution, famous pieces by Wu Changshi, and numerous antiquities. The next day Inukai, Tōyama, the Japanese Ambassador Yoshizawa Kenkichi 芳澤謙吉 (1874-1965), a

172 Ibid., 742-764.

173 Inukai Tsuyoshi, Bokudô kanboku dan, with a Foreword by Nagao Kô (Osaka: Hakubundô Gôshi Gaisha, 1916).

174 For Di and his newspaper, see Joan Judge, Print and Politics: “Shibao” and the Culture of Reform in Late Qing China (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).
number of Japanese who lived in Shanghai, and several Chinese gathered at Wang’s home to view several tens of works in Wang’s collection, including ones attributed to the Song and Yuan masters Xia Gui 夏圭 (active early 13th c.) and Qian Xuan 錢選 (ca. 1235-before 1307). According to Shimizu, the display of so many fine works inspired Inukai to write calligraphy whenever anybody asked, and many of the other guests also wrote calligraphy and painted on fans and other objects.\(^{175}\) Wang Yiting appears to have written at least one piece of calligraphy for Inukai on the occasion, *Grasping Hanshan’s Poetry* (fig. 25), in which he rendered several lines of verse attributed to the Tang dynasty poet.\(^{176}\) Wang also painted Inukai’s portrait. Its location and appearance are now unknown, but it probably resembled one that Wang produced for Tsuchiya the next day, *Mr. Wooden Cottage Appraises Inkstones* (fig. 26). Wang records the circumstances of this work’s production in his inscription, writing that Tsuchiya invited him to drink at the Rokusanen and asked him to paint Mr. Wooden Cottage (Bokudō 木堂) appraising inkstones.\(^{177}\) The next day, Wang writes, he made

\(^{175}\) Bokudō Sensei Denki Kankōkai and Washio Yoshinao, eds., 749-50.

\(^{176}\) The work was included in a group of art objects that were once owned by Inukai and that his son, Inukai Ken, sold to finance his own political campaigns. The calligraphy is reproduced in an undated auction catalog. Ishikawa Yûki 石川由希, Curator at the Inukai Bokudō Kinenkan 尾崎木堂記念館, personal communication, February 23, 2006; Shibunkaku, *Inukai Bokudō Nihon, Chūgoku shoga korekushon tenji sokubai* (Tokyo and Kyoto: Shibunkaku, n.d.), 15.

\(^{177}\) Inukai’s byname was “Wooden Cottage.”
another version of the painting as a gift for Mr. Tsuchiya. Inukai gestured his
thanks to Tsuchiya by adding an inscription of his own to the image, writing in
Chinese about his love of inkstones. This no doubt heightened the value of Wang’s
gift to the younger Japanese man.

**Sino-Japanese Artistic Projects**

Wang Yiting knew men like Inukai Tsuyoshi and Tanabe Hekidō through his
engagement with the Japanese art world. Over the course of the 1920s, Wang worked
with a number of Japanese artists and organizers to establish and strengthen ties
between Chinese and Japanese artists. When Japanese sinophiles, artists, and art
educators visited China, Wang worked with them to form Sino-Japanese artistic
societies and to develop institutions that would enable Chinese and Japanese artists to
mingle and to exhibit their art together. The participants in these groups sought to
construct Sino-Japanese art centers in China and to mount exhibitions of Chinese and
Japanese art in Japan. Some of these shows were solo exhibitions by Chinese artists,
and others were group exhibitions in which both Chinese and Japanese artists took
part. Members of these groups successfully mounted joint exhibitions at venues in
both nations, and they published journals that presented Chinese art to both Chinese
and Japanese readers. Wang made substantial contributions to all of these activities,

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178 Presumably Wang offered the original portrait of Inukai to the sitter himself, but it
is unclear whether the work ever entered his collection. No such painting is included
among the works that Inukai Ken auctioned off. Shibunkaku, *Inukai Bokudō Nihon, Chūgoku shoga korekushon tenji sokubai*.
and in the process he produced paintings and calligraphy for his Japanese colleagues, much as he did for visitors from Japan.

**Nagao Uzan and Solo Exhibitions at the Takashimaya Kimono Shop**

One Japanese Sinophile who was adept at composition in literary Chinese and who spent time with Wu Changshi and Wang Yiting in Shanghai was Nagao Uzan 長尾雨山 (1868-1941). An editor for the Commercial Press in Shanghai from 1903 to 1914, he was one of Japan’s foremost experts on traditional Chinese literature and history.\(^{179}\) While sojourning in Shanghai, he befriended a number of Chinese scholars and artists, including Wu Changshi and other members of the Xiling Seal Society, and he also became a pioneering Japanese member of that group.\(^{180}\) Like Hashimoto Kansetsu, Nagao repaid the hospitality of Wu Changshi and Wang Yiting by promoting them to a Japanese audience.

Nagao was an admirer of Wu’s art, and when Wu held his first solo art exhibition in Japan at the Shinsaibashi 心斎橋 branch of the Takashimaya Kimono Shop (Takashimaya Gofukuten 高島屋呉服店) in Osaka in February of 1922, Nagao wrote a laudatory preface for the catalog of the exhibit.\(^{181}\) He also wrote a similar

\(^{179}\) Wong, *Parting the Mists*, 86-87.


\(^{181}\) The exhibition and catalog were respectively entitled *New Calligraphy and
preface for the catalog that accompanied Wang’s first solo exhibition in Japan—*Recent Painting by Yiting (Ittei kinga 一亭近画)*.182 Wang’s show took place at the Edobori 江戸堀 branch of the Takashimaya Kimono Shop in Osaka perhaps a month after Wu Changshi’s exhibition.183 These two shows were the first of several that the artists would mount at Takashimaya venues in the 1920s. Wu had a second show in 1926, with Nagao again inscribing the catalog, and Wang Yiting followed in October of the following year with a solo exhibition at Takashimaya’s Osaka Nagaboribashi 長堀橋 branch.184 Wu’s works were also displayed twice in 1928, the year after Wu’s death, for commemorative exhibitions were put on at Takashimaya branches in both Osaka and Tokyo.185

Records in the archives of the Takashimaya department store do not detail the manner in which Wu Changshi and Wang Yiting’s exhibitions were planned or


183 The month of the exhibition is not recorded, but the catalog for it was published in March. Ibid.; Takashimaya Bijutsu Gojûnen Shi Hensan Iinkai, ed., 117.


185 Takashimaya Bijutsu Hachijûnen Shi Hensan Iinkai, ed., 271.
executed. However, Nagao Uzan’s prefaces exemplify one manner in which a Japanese authority on Chinese culture helped promote the Chinese artists in Japan.

Nagao’s contributions to the exhibition catalogs characterized the two Chinese painters for patrons of what had become an important private venue for the exhibition of works by contemporary Japanese artists. Today one of Japan’s largest department store chains, Takashimaya was founded in 1831 as a retailer of used clothing and cotton cloth. In 1909 the store began showing contemporary art in a fine art department (bijutsu 美術部). Wu Changshi and Wang Yiting appear to have been the first Chinese artists whose works were exhibited in the store’s various branches. The Japanese artists who usually exhibited there were traditionalist painters. According to an official history of the Takashimaya Fine Art Department, its first display--Exhibition of One Hundred Scrolls by Famous Modern Artists (Gendai meika hyappuku gakai 現代名家百幅画会)--contained works by leading nihonga

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186 Matsubara Makoto 松原誠, Assistant Director of the Takashimaya Historical Archives, personal communication, June 28, 2006.


188 Takashimaya Bijutsu Hachijūnen Shi Hensan Iinkai, ed., 34.

189 No other Chinese painters are listed in the table of exhibitions published in the official eightieth anniversary history of the department store. Ibid., 269-70.
and *nanga* painters from both eastern and western Japan, including Tomioka Tessai, Yokoyama Taikan, Takeuchi Seihô, Kawai Gyokudô (1873-1957), and Hishida Shunsô (1874-1911).  

Although *nihonga* and *nanga* are often understood through contradistinction, the former being associated with Western modes of rendering atmosphere and the brighter palette and diffuse washes of traditional Japanese painting, and the latter being tied to Chinese painting’s complex brushwork, Chinese-language inscriptions, and traditional East Asian perspective, the two types of painting were not in reality so easily separated: during the early decades of the twentieth century, many *nihonga* and *nanga* painters exhibited together, and some artists practiced both types of art, particularly in the 1920s. A catalog of an exhibition held at the Shinsaibashi branch of Takashimaya in 1914 reproduces a range of works that may be considered *nanga* and *nihonga*. Some examples of the former, like Nakamura Fusetsu’s *Hanshan and Shide* (fig. 27) contained not only Chinese inscriptions but also subject matter, compositions, and brushwork that were associated with Chinese art that had been imported from China along with Chan (Jp. Zen) Buddhism from the the twelfth

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190 Ibid.


through the sixteenth centuries. Other examples of *nanga*, like works by Komuro Suiun 小室翠雲 (1874-1945) and Tomioka Tessai (figs. 28 & 29), drew their stylistic approaches from later phases in the Japanese reception of Chinese painting: Suiun’s painting found its brushwork and composition in the efforts of eighteenth and nineteenth-century painters like Ike Taiga 池大雅 (1723-1770) and Okada Beisanjin 岡田米山人 (1744-1820), and Tessai’s work appears to have made use of the subject matter and expressive (*xiyi* 寫意) brushwork of artists in China’s eighteenth and nineteenth-century artistic centers, Yangzhou and Shanghai. *Nihonga* painters like Yokoyama Taikan and Takeuchi Seihō are also represented in the catalog. One of Taikan’s paintings is executed in the *môrôtai* 朦朧体 (hazy) manner that he formulated in Tokyo (fig. 30.), and a work by Seihō illustrates the approach that he derived from the Maruyama-Shijō school (fig. 31). Wu Changshi and Wang Yiting’s paintings and calligraphy, though they were probably the first works by Chinese artists to be shown in the galleries of Takashimaya, were thus not the only ones there to appear Chinese to the Japanese audience--that is, to employ visual and discursive elements that Japanese viewers associated with China--and to the extent that Wu and Wang’s works made use of traditional subject matter, materials, and mountings, they maintained an affinity with the galleries’ *nihonga* as well.

When Nagao Uzan provided the introductory prefaces for Wu Changshi and Wang Yiting’s catalogs, writing in literary Chinese and in an accomplished hand, he
was performing a practice that had wider currency in Japanese traditionalist art circles. In 1918 Nagao had written a calligraphic preface for a catalog of paintings by the *nanga* artist Ikeda Keisen 池田桂仙 (1863-1931). Just as this preface followed a frontispiece of calligraphy by Tomioka Tessai, so too did Nagao’s inscription in the catalog for Wu Changshi’s 1922 exhibition follow calligraphy by Tessai. On several occasions Nagao wrote out frontispieces like Tessai’s, too, adding inscriptions to such publications as a volume of Chinese poetry by the businessman, poet, and artist Tanabe Hekidô and a catalog of *nanga* compiled by the collector Harada Gorô 原田悟郎. Other Japanese Sinophiles also lent the luster of their calligraphy to publications of art and poetry. The politician Inukai Tsuyoshi, for instance, wrote an inscription for catalog of Tanabe Hekidô’s landscape painting.

Another manner in which Nagao Uzan promoted Wang Yiting on the occasion of his first Takashimaya exhibition was by vouching for the artist’s paintings individually. Two works that Wang Yiting exhibited in the 1922 show—*Su Wu Herding Goats* (fig. 32) and *Willows and a Flock of Swallows* (fig. 33)—are now part of the Hashimoto 橋本 collection of the Shôtô Museum in Tokyo. The museum has

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195 The paintings are published in Shibuya Kuritsu Shôtô Bijutsukan, 48, 135.
preserved what appear to be the original boxes for the two scrolls. Each box bears two inscriptions by Nagao Uzan. On the outer surface of each lid Nagao inscribed Wang Yiting’s name and the Chinese title of the work, and on the inside he wrote in Chinese “Uzan Nagao Kô wrote the label” (雨山長尾甲署検) and added his seal (figs. 34 & 35). Although box inscriptions for Chinese paintings of the Republican period have not been studied in publication, Japanese practices of the early twentieth century have been described.\(^\text{196}\) One type of box inscription was written by an artist after his or her work had been mounted and fitted with an appropriate box. The inscription might include the title of the work, the artist’s signature and seals, a date, and explanatory comments about the work and its circumstances of production. Wang Yiting’s inscription on the box containing his paintings for Hayashi Yasushige is of this type. Not all box inscriptions were written by the artist, however. Blood relatives, students, friends, and connoisseurs might also write inscriptions on box lids as a form of authentication after the artist’s death. Sometimes they did so for a fee. In addition, the senior colleague of an artist might write the title of a work on its box, signing his or her own name in the process. Biographical information and criticism could also be written on a separate piece of paper and slipped inside the box along with the scroll. An example of this type of separate inscription, written by Nagao Uzan in 1921,

accompanies a handscroll by Yun Shouping 淑平 (1633-1690) in the Mactaggart Art Collection at the University of Alberta. Nagao’s inscriptions on the boxes of Wang Yiting’s paintings for the 1922 exhibition appear to have functioned in the manner that a senior colleague’s inscription might, bestowing the authentication and approval of a trusted witness upon the works. For potential buyers of Wang’s paintings in the Takashimaya exhibition, the endorsement of one of Japan’s most learned Sinologists would have guaranteed the quality and importance of the newly introduced Chinese painter’s offerings.

Ômura Seigai and the West Lake Exhibition

Sinophiles like Kitagawa Fukutei, Hashimoto Kansetsu, Tanabe Hekidô, and Nagao Uzan made the study of traditional Chinese art and literature an important part of their lives. However, they did not undertake their studies within the context of an academic institution. One scholar who did was Ômura Seigai 大村西崖 (1868-1927), a professor of East Asian art history at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkô 東京美術学校). Like Kansetsu and Nagao, he helped establish Wang Yiting’s reputation in Japan by presenting Wang and other Chinese artists to the Japanese public through publications. However, perhaps because he worked within a modern educational institution and appreciated the value of institutional support for the study

and production of art, he worked closely with Wang Yiting on forging several Sino-Japanese institutions that aimed to bridge the distance between the Chinese and Japanese art worlds and generate friendship between Chinese and Japanese artists.

In October of 1921 Ômura traveled China to photograph and collect Chinese art, and when he stopped in Shanghai, he met with Wang Yiting.¹⁹⁸ Wang gave Ômura at least three paintings by his own brush: *Bamboo, Brook, and Perched Crows* (fig. 36), *Grasping Su’s Poetry* (fig. 37), and *Meditation* (fig. 38). The first two are quite similar in style and subject matter to a painting and a piece of calligraphy that Wang exhibited in his 1922 Takashimaya exhibition (figs. 39 & 40), suggesting that the artist made use of well-practiced compositions and brushwork to produce the works quickly, perhaps even on the spot for his guest. The third work is similarly formulaic. It is probably not incidental that its composition and mode of characterizing the figure resembles those in Wang’s portraits of Inukai Tsuyoshi and Tanabe Hekidô, for comparison of *Meditation* to a published photograph of Ômura (fig. 41) suggests that, in addition to being dedicated to Ômura, the work is also a portrait of him. All three works share a single compositional approach, seating the figure in a three-quarters pose on a simple mat against a blank ground. Each work characterizes the sitter by surrounding him with items typical of his tastes and practices: writing accouterments for Tanabe, traditionally bound books and antiquities

for Inukai, and books and a Buddhist rosary for Ômura (who published several substantial volumes on the history of Buddhist art). The strokes that articulate each figure’s robe are confidently brushed, and in some passages they are remarkably alike. In fact, the overall composition of these paintings and the schema of brushstrokes that Wang used to delineate the figures are ones that he rehearsed on a number of occasions. Wang employed them in his portraits of Chinese men, such as his 1922 work Portrait of Chan Master Tieshan of 1922 (fig. 42), and he also applied them in his renderings of Buddhist icons, such as his Ingata, the Thirteenth Luohan of 1920 (fig. 43) and his Buddha of Limitless Life of 1925 (fig. 44). By adapting an established composition and schema to his portraits of his visitors, Wang was probably able deftly to render their likenesses, impressing his guests with his skill and creating a memento for their keeping.

Ômura took his portrait and the other two works with him when he returned to Japan. There he exhibited his photographs and the sixty or seventy works by modern Chinese painters that he had gathered, and he published the best of the latter in a traditionally bound volume entitled Contemporary Painting from the Land of Yu (Uiki kinga roku 禹域今画録). This catalog introduces thirty-nine traditionalist artists through brief biographies written in literary Chinese and through reproductions of the artists’ works. It includes a biography of Wang Yiting and photographs of the three scrolls that he had given Ômura.

Yoshida, 19; Ômura Seigai, Uiki kin ga roku (Tokyo: Yûgen Gasha, 1922).
Ômura returned to China four times. When he did so in 1923, Wang Yiting and Wu Changshi went to greet him at the port in Shanghai.\textsuperscript{200} They also collaborated on a painting for him, \textit{Summer Repose in the Cool of a Pine} (fig. 45). Wang painted the portrait of the Japanese scholar, fitting him with a Chinese scholar’s loose-fitting robe, placing a fan in his hand, and standing him next to a pine tree. Wu Changshi added a poetic inscription. In 1924 Ômura visited China twice more, and he made his final journey to China in 1926. During these visits he and Wang Yiting planned but were unable to bring to fruition an Art Research Institute (Meishu yanjiusuo 美術研究所).\textsuperscript{201} In this period Ômura also published on the history of Chinese art, introducing Wang Yiting and other modern Chinese artists to the Japanese public. His 1925 \textit{History of East Asian Art} (Tôyô bijutsushi 東洋美術史) canonized Wang Yiting and Wu Changshi as two of the five most important artists of the Republican period.\textsuperscript{202}

Yoshida Chizuko’s pioneering research on Ômura Seigai has revealed that the Japanese scholar was keenly interested in building institutions that would provide a long-term foundation for cooperation and friendship between Chinese and Japanese artists. With the help of artists in Shanghai, notably Wang Yiting, Ômura was able to

\textsuperscript{200} Yoshida, 19.

\textsuperscript{201} Yoshida, 24; Takashimaya Bijutsubu Gojûnen Shi Hensan Iinkai, ed., \textit{Takashimaya Bijutsu gojûnen shi} (Osaka: Takashimaya Honsha, 1960), 118-19.

\textsuperscript{202} Ômura Seigai, \textit{Tôyô bijutsushi} (Osaka: Sanshôdo, 1925), 445.
realize this ambition. During his visit in 1923, over ten artists, including Wang Yiting, Wu Changshi, and Tang Jisheng 唐吉生 (1892-?)--a younger member of Wu and Wang’s circle who had studied under Ômura in Japan--held a banquet for the Japanese art historian. The participants in the reception formed an artistic association known in Chinese as the West Lake Full-of-Beauty Calligraphy and Painting Society (Xihu youmei shuhua she 西湖有美書畫社) and in Japanese as the Japan-China Art Club (Nisshi Bijutsu Kurabu 日支美術倶楽部).

This artistic association did more than celebrate the arrival of the visiting Japanese scholar. Eight of its members--Ômura Seigai, Wang Yiting, Yang Dongshan 楊東山, Lü Xuanqing 呂選青 (1885-?), Ren Jinshu 任堇叔, Ha Xiaofu 哈小夫, Yu Yushuang 俞語霜, and Tang Jisheng--organized the construction of an eponymous center. With the backing of patrons in the Tokyo area, they built the West Lake Full-of-Beauty Calligraphy and Painting Society on a bank of the famous Chinese lake in Hangzhou, using property owned by Tang Jisheng. According to a preliminary announcement in the Japanese daily Osaka Mainichi Shinbun, the three-story building was to have a kitchen, two bathrooms, guest rooms, and rooms fitted with Japanese

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204 Osaka Mainichi Shinbun 大阪毎日新聞, February 17, 1923, as quoted in Yoshida, 20.
tatami mats for the convenience of Japanese guests. Stating that the facility would provide ink, paper, and other art materials to the Japanese artists who would stay in the facility, the newspaper article also notes that the society would make an introduction for the works that the artists produced. In September of 1924, a report in a monthly publication for friends of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts announced that, although the facility was still partly incomplete, roughly thirty or forty people could stay at it for the cost of their meals, and the report urged artists to visit the center and relax.

Yoshida Chizuko has observed that a lack of documentary materials and the turmoil of the war between China and Japan in the 1930s and 1940s make it difficult to establish the use and fate of the center after its completion. However, an exhibition of painting and calligraphy in which Ōmura Seigai and Wang Yiting took part in 1924 suggests how the West Lake Full-of-Beauty Calligraphy and Painting Society might have brought artists of the two nations together. An Exhibition of Calligraphy and Painting Related to the West Lake (Saiko ni Kansuru Shōga Tenrankai 西湖に関する書画展覧会) is recorded in the fiftieth-anniversary history of the society.

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205 Ibid.

206 The nature of this introduction is not specified in the article.

207 *Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō Kōyūkai geppō* 東京美術学校交友会月報 23, no. 4 (September 1924), as quoted in Yoshida, 20.

208 Yoshida, 20.
of the Takashimaya Fine Art Department.\textsuperscript{209} In November of 1924, nineteen Chinese artists and thirty Japanese artists showed eighty-four paintings and works of calligraphy at the Nagaboribashi branch of the Takashimaya Kimono Shop. The Takashimaya history does not make clear the origins of the exhibition. However, the theme of the show and the fact that its participants included Ômura Seigai, Wang Yiting, Wu Changshi, and Lû Xuanqing, all of whom helped found the West Lake Full-of-Beauty Calligraphy and Painting Society, suggest that the group played a role in the show’s organization. It is tempting to speculate that the exhibition was one manner in which the society fulfilled its promise of providing an introduction for works produced by artists who stayed at the society’s facility at the West Lake.

The Japanese artists who joined the exhibition all worked, at least on occasion, as traditionalists, painting \textit{nanga}, \textit{nihonga}, or both, even if they explored other types of painting during their careers. Some of them were primarily painters of \textit{nanga}. Tomioka Tessai, Tanabe Hekidô, Ikeda Keisen, and Komuro Suiun all contributed one or two works each. Nagao Uzan showed six. Tessai seems to have enjoyed pride of place in the exhibition, for in addition to hanging examples of both his painting and his calligraphy (figs. 46 & 47), he also brushed the title inscription for the catalog. By 1924 Tessai was one of the oldest and most respected painters in Japan, and from 1921 to 1925 (the year after his death), his work was exhibited in solo exhibitions at Takashimaya venues more frequently than that of any other

\textsuperscript{209} Takashimaya Bijutsubu Gojûnen Shi Hensan Iinkai, ed., 118-19.
Some of the Japanese artists, like Nakamura Fusetsu, Hashimoto Kansetsu, Dômoto Inshô (1891-1975), and Kosugi Hôan, painted nanga in addition to works in other modes and media, such as nihonga and Western oils. Nihonga painters like Tomita Keisen (1879-1936) and Takeuchi Seihô also contributed paintings (figs. 48 & 49).

Most of the exhibition's Chinese contributors were guohua painters active in Shanghai. Wu Changshi was the most highly esteemed artist in the group, and a number of the artists were his students and friends, some of whom regularly painted in variations of his style. Wang Yiting, for example, hung two works: Releasing Cranes on Mount Gu and Clear Lake, Verdant Waves (fig. 50). Nearly as highly regarded as Wu Changshi was the female painter and calligrapher Wu Shujuan (1853-1930). The mother and teacher of Tang Jisheng, she had close ties with both Wu Changshi and Wang Yiting. She was well-known for her painting, particularly topographical works that she painted after touring historical sites on foot, and her contemporaries honored her by calling her and Wu Changshi the "Two Wu of Shanghai." Wu Daiqiu 吳待秋 (1879-1949), Cheng Zhang 程璋 (1869-1938), and

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210 The eightieth-year anniversary history of the Takashimaya Fine Art Department records a total of five solo exhibitions and memorial shows for Tessai in this period. Takashimaya Bijutsubu Hachijûnen Shi Hensan Iinkai, ed., 270-71.

211 A brief biography of Wu Shujuan is available in Marsha Weidner, ed., *Views from Jade Terrace: Chinese Women Artists, 1300-1912* (Indianapolis: Indianapolis Museum of Art, 1988, and New York: Rizzoli, 1988). A biography of her written by one of her contemporaries was published in *Zhong-Ri meishu yuebao* 1, no. 1 (March
Zhao Ziyun 趙子雲 (1874-1955), who all were members of Wu Changshi and Wang Yiting’s circle, also contributed. Although most of the Chinese contributors had ties to Wu Changshi, at least one was associated with the Lingnan School. Bao Shaoyou 魚少游 (1892-1985), whose ancestral home was in Guangdong 廣東, was born in Yokohama 橫濱 and graduated from an art school in Japan. His Whole of the West Lake (fig. 51) reveals that Bao, like the better known Lingnan school painter Gao Jianfu 高劍父 (1879-1951), worked in a hybrid manner that combined Chinese materials and subject matter with Tokyo nihonga’s hazy lyricism and Western-inspired techniques for rendering perspective, volume, and light.

The theme of the West Lake exhibition, like the choice of the location for the West Lake Full-of-Beauty Calligraphy and Painting Society, does not appear to have been arbitrary. The West Lake had been a subject in Japanese painting since the Muromachi period (1336-1573), when Chinese ink painting was imported along with Chan Buddhism, and the theme became especially popular among Japanese literati painters in the eighteenth century. As a result, a nanga artist like Tomioka Tessai, who never went to China, could easily exhibit a work like Marvelous is the Rain,

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212 Yun Ruxin records that Bao graduated from the Saikyô Fine Arts University (Saikyô Bijutsu Daigaku 西京美術大学). Yun Ruxin, Minguo shuhuajia hui zhuan (Taibei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1986), 328.

213 Morioka and Berry, 118.
Fine is its Clearing (fig. 47), in which a pagoda, islands, and arched bridges are sufficient to identify the scene as the West Lake. A concerted, partly Western effort at rendering the visual likeness of the site, such as Bao Shaoyou’s Whole of the West Lake, was not required. Tessai’s 1867 painting Su’s Embankment on a Spring Morning (fig. 52) (not in the Takashimaya exhibition) reveals that the artist had been imagining the scenery of the West Lake for nearly six decades, doing so even before the Meiji Restoration of 1868 had prompted the widespread Japanese study of Western art. However, unlike Tessai, a number of the Japanese artists in the exhibition had in fact been to China. Tomita Keisen had traveled there in 1909 and had published sketches of his trip the following year. Dômoto Inshô had traveled to China yearly from 1921 to 1923, becoming interested in literati painting as a result. For such touring artists, the West Lake must have been a particularly attractive destination, for then, as now, it enjoyed a reputation as one of China’s most beautiful places. Sketches done in its environs, like Hashimoto Kansetsu’s 1923 View of West Lake (fig. 53) could provide ample material for later efforts at home. Takeuchi Seihô, who visited China in 1921 and 1922, used the sketches he made and the memories he collected during those trips to paint Chinese scenery for over a decade, producing not only his contribution to the 1924 West Lake Exhibition but also his Scenery of Southern China in 1926 and his Fragrant Breeze Outside the City Wall in 1930 (figs.

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214 Ibid., 177.

215 Ibid., 283.
The theme of the Takashimaya West Lake exhibition must thus have appealed to a wide range of Japanese painters, not only those who experienced China from afar through its literati reception in Japan but also those who sought out Chinese subject matter firsthand. The West Lake provided a point at which Chinese and Japanese artists could come together not only physically, at the institution that Ômura, Wang, and the other members of their society constructed, but also conceptually, as a uniting theme in their pictorial and calligraphic efforts.


Art historians have not discussed the Takashimaya West Lake exhibition. The show is thus a good example of the efforts at cooperation between the Chinese and Japanese art worlds that took place in the 1920s but that were later obscured by the two nations’ wartime experiences and forgotten in the countries’ narratives of their art. In fact, one of the most remarkable discoveries of recent scholarship on early twentieth-century East Asian art has been that during the 1920s many traditionalist artists in China and Japan organized artistic societies and art exhibitions that spanned the East China Sea. Tsuruta Takeyoshi has outlined the structure and primary participants of the West Lake Full-of-Beauty Calligraphy and Painting Society and several other joint-artistic organizations: these include the Sino-Japanese Art Society (Ch. Zhong-Ri meishu xiehui, Jp. Chûnichi Bijutsu Kyôkai 中日美術協会), which was founded in Shanghai in 1920; the Eastern Painting Society (Ch. Dongfang huihua xiehui, Jp. Tôhô Kaiga Kyôkai 東方繪畫協會), which was chartered in 1926; and the
Society of Sino-Japanese Artistic Fellows (Zhong-Ri yishu tongzhi hui 中國藝術同志會), which was founded in 1930. Tsuruta also describes five Sino-Japanese joint art exhibitions that the Sino-Japanese Art Society and other groups sponsored from 1921 to 1929. Aida Wong has examined this series of exhibitions within the context of Chinese and Japanese diplomacy, paying particular attention to the contributions of Chinese artists and organizers based in Beijing, and she has brought to light a sixth exhibition that took place in 1931.

The most consequential of these groups was the Sino-Japanese Art Society. Tsuruta has articulated its composition by examining a document in the Diplomatic Archives of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs entitled *Prospectus for the Construction of the Sino-Japanese Art Meeting Hall (Chūnichi Bijutsu Kaikan kensetsu shuisho 中日美術會館建設趣意書)*. Published in 1923, this booklet makes clear that the Sino-Japanese Art Society was founded in Shanghai in 1920 and


217 Ibid. In a second article, Tsuruta organizes and transcribes the catalogs of the five exhibitions. Tsuruta Takeyoshi, “Kōkan Nikka (Chūnichi) Kaiga Rengō Tenrankai shuppin mokuroku: kin hyakunen rai Chûgoku kaiga shi kenkyû 7 (zoku),” *Bijutsu kenkyû* 384 (November 2004): 104-134.

218 Wong, *Parting the Mists*, ch. 5.

that it benefited from the support of some of China and Japan’s most prominent artists and public figures. When its membership was organized in 1923, the Chinese Confucian scholar and political reformer Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858-1927) served as its president. Its two vice presidents were Liu Haisu 劉海粟 (1896-1994), the principal of the Shanghai Art Academy (Shanghai meizhuan 上海美專), and Masaki Naohiko 正木直彦 (1862-1940), the principal of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkô 東京美術学校). Four men are listed as the group’s advisors: Kuroda Seiki 黒田清輝 (1866-1924), who was one of Japan’s leading practitioners of Western-style oil painting (yōga 洋画); Ijūin Hikokichi 伊集院彦吉 (1864-1924), who was the head of the Information Department of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Zhang Ji 張繼 (Zhang Puquan 張溥泉, 1882-1947), who had studied at Waseda 早稲田 University in Japan, had participated in the 1911 Republican Revolution in China, and was a leading member of the Guomindang; and Wang Yiting. Japanese business leaders and politicians also supported the group. Among them were Shibusawa Eiichi and Inukai Tsuyoshi. Important Chinese thinkers and

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220 Tsuruta Takeyoshi, “Nikka (Chūnichi) Kaiga Rengō Tenrankai ni tsuite: kin hyakunen rai Chûgoku kaiga shi kenkyû 7,” 1; Chûnichi Bijutsu Kyôkai, ibid., 23.

221 Ibid.

222 Ibid.

223 Tsuruta, ibid.; Chûnichi Bijutsu Kyôkai, 18.
political figures, such as the influential scholar and reformer Liang Qichao (1873-1929) and Cai Yuanpei, also supported the group’s activities. The group’s membership was quite large, including 193 special members (of whom 168 were Japanese and twenty-five, Chinese) and 1322 regular and ordinary members. A substantial part of the of the group’s membership was made up of Japanese businessmen sojourning in Shanghai.

Tsuruta and Aida Wong have also described some of the aims and activities of the Sino-Japanese Art Society. The group articulated its ambition in its charter, which states:

> The goal of this association is collaboration and friendship between the artists of China and Japan, and its direct purpose is the improvement and development of both countries’ art. Thus, [this association] will attempt to inspire the two nations’ cultural union and harmony between their peoples.

To these ends the society resolved to hold yearly exhibitions, publish a journal, organize lectures on art by distinguished speakers, construct a hall for Sino-Japanese art, and support visits by members to each other's countries.

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226 Ibid., 2.

227 Ibid.
One curious feature of the *Prospectus for the Construction of the Sino-Japanese Art Meeting Hall* is that a number of Wang Yiting’s Japanese associates in Shanghai, several of his Sinophile visitors, and many of his fellow exhibitors in the Takashimaya West Lake show are also listed as participants in the organization. Among the group’s Special Members were Shiraishi Rokusaburô, who was the proprietor of the Rokusanen, and Shiraïwa Ryûhei, who was Wang’s colleague at the Nisshin Steamship Corporation and the China Industrial Development Company and who wrote to Shibusawa Eiichi to support Wang’s request to withdraw from the China Industrial Development Company.\(^{228}\) Hashimoto Kansetsu, Nagao Uzan, Ômura Seigai, Nakamura Fusetsu, Komuro Suiun, Dômoto Inshô, and Takeuchi Seihô were also Special Members.\(^ {229}\) Tanabe Hekidô and Ikeda Keisen served on committees that were to organize the construction of the Sino-Japanese Art Meeting Hall.\(^ {230}\) So too did the sculptor Asakura Fumio 朝倉文夫 (1883-1964), an admirer of Wu Changshi who traveled to China to meet the literatus and who carved a bust of him that stood at the Xiling Seal Society until it was destroyed in the Cultural Revolution.\(^ {231}\)

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\(^{228}\) Chûnichi Bijutsu Kyôkai, "Chûnichi Bijutsu Kaikan kensetsu shuisho," 30, 52.

\(^{229}\) Ibid., 26-30, 52.

\(^{230}\) Ibid., 14, 16.

\(^{231}\) For Asakura’s relationship with Wu Changshi and the portrait sculpture, see Maeda Hideo, “Go Shôseki to Asakura Fumio: Asakura seisaku Go zô sekkô genkei no hakken o tô shite,” *Shoron (Tokushû: Seirei Yinsha)* 30 (April 1998): 136-41.
Given that Wang Yiting served as one of the group’s official advisors, it is perhaps not surprising that a large number of Chinese artists in his circle also participated in the group. Some of them were participants in the West Lake Full-of-Beauty Calligraphy and Painting Society and the Takashimaya West Lake exhibition, such as Wu Changshi, Wu Shujuan, Tang Jisheng, Wu Daiqiu, and Cheng Zhang. Other artists in the Sino-Japanese Art Society who were close or even related to Wang Yiting were Ma Qizhou 马企周 (1886-1939), Qian Huafu (1884-after 1946), Wu Changshi’s sons Wu Ziru and Wu Dongmai 吴东邁 (1885-1965), Wang Yiting’s son Wang Jimei 王季眉 (1903-1976), and Wang Yiting’s translator when he went to Japan, Wang Tingjue 王廷珏 (before 1926-after 1932).

Although the Prospectus for the Construction of the Sino-Japanese Art Meeting Hall suggests that Wang Yiting had more than a passing involvement in the Sino-Japanese Art Society, it does not articulate what sort of contributions he might have made to the organization and its projects. A periodical that the association published yields a richer understanding. The journal was first published in March of 1922 as Sino-Japanese Art Monthly (Chûnichi Bijutsu Geppô 中日美術月報). Its slender inaugural issue ran to ten pages and was assembled in the manner of a

233 Ibid., 23, 24, 49, 54.
234 Chûnichi bijutsu geppô 1.1 (March 1922).
newspaper. A copy of the issue is preserved in the National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo.

Before considering Wang Yiting’s appearance in the issue, it is worth noting that some of the articles in the inaugural issue of the journal call attention the extent to which it reflected a broad interest in improving Chinese and Japanese cultural relations. Watanabe Tenyô’s 渡辺天洋 (n.d.) “Celebratory Remarks for the Start of the Sino-Japanese Art Monthly,” for instance, observed that the journal and the joint art exhibition that the Sino-Japanese Art Society had organized the year before were in keeping with a trend toward China and Japan’s mutual development of East Asian culture.²³⁵ Expressing his hope that the group’s projects might enhance the Chinese and Japanese peoples’ friendship, Watanabe noted that as a result of the Washington Conference the time was right for the society to transform its projects from *ad hoc* efforts into expansive joint projects.²³⁶ Watanabe may have been invited to write this opinion because he had himself been engaged in such an effort. As the president of the company that published *The Shanghai Review (Shanghai Kôron 上海公論)*, he had sought the Japanese Foreign Ministry’s support in expanding his publication’s


²³⁶ The Washington Conference, which was held in 1921 and 1922, produced the Five Power Treaty, which sought to prevent the possibility of another war by, among other things, limiting the naval arms race between the United States, Great Britain, and Japan.
The Shanghai Review aspired to become a joint organization promoting Chinese and Japanese culture, and it proclaimed itself an alternative to English and American publications like the *Far Eastern Review* and *Millard’s Review*. Watanabe claimed that Western engagement with Chinese society and culture was not essential, whereas Japanese engagement with its neighbor was crucial to the two countries’ survival. His publication thus hoped to provide a forum for Chinese and Japanese people working in each other’s countries to voice their opinions, and it aimed to cover political, military, economic, and social issues in China for the purpose of improving mutual understanding.

Wang Yiting’s contribution to the first issue of the *Sino-Japanese Art Monthly* would appear to consist of a single painting (fig. 56). It is not the only work to be photographed and published in the journal—a total of twenty-one paintings appear in the issue. Nor is Wang Yiting the painter whose oeuvre is best represented; that honor was reserved for his friend Wu Shujuan, fifteen of whose paintings are reproduced. However, when viewed within the context of the journal, Wang’s painting does suggest how the artist contributed to the overall project of the Sino-Japanese Art Society and, at the same time, to the careers of his peers.

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237 Materials related to Watanabe’s 1921 request are preserved in the file *Shanghai Kōron*, Reference code B03040625100, Diplomatic Records Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo, Japan.

According to its caption, the painting is a work that Wang produced with four other artists. As such it is not best approached as the heroic expression of the thoughts and feelings of a single great artist on a lofty subject. Collaborative production of paintings was relatively common in Shanghai in the early twentieth century. Multiple artists might add pictorial and discursive touches to a single work. In 1916, for example, Wang Yiting, Wu Changshi, and Cheng Zhang jointly produced a collaborative hanging scroll, *Roosting Fowl* (fig. 57). In this work, which was collected by Asakura Fumio, Wang appears to have contributed the rocks and flowers, Cheng, the birds, and Wu, the inscription.239 This kind of collaborative production took place within the modern phenomenon of Shanghai’s painting societies. Wang Yiting, Wu Changshi, and Cheng Zhang were all participants in the Yu Garden Calligraphy and Painting Charitable Association, which Wang helped found in 1909.240 Like other artistic associations of the first two decades of the twentieth century, it enabled its members to socialize while helping them to negotiate the novel

239 The work is preserved in the collection of the Asakura Sculpture Hall (Asakura Chōsōkan 朝倉彫塑館), a municipal museum in Tokyo that was once the home and studio of Asakura Fumio. Unfortunately, the sculptor did not keep records of how he acquired this and several other paintings by Wang Yiting. I wish to thank the curator of the museum, Murayama Mansuke 村山万介, for this information. Murayama Mansuke, personal communication, May 27, 2006.

economic realities of Shanghai’s cosmopolitan society and art market. Established members of such societies offered newer members advice on how best to market paintings, and they introduced their colleagues to potential patrons. Respected members also wrote price lists for their younger colleagues, as Wu Changshi did for Wang Yiting in 1922. These artistic societies were not intended solely for social and marketing purposes, however. The Yu Garden Calligraphy and Painting Charitable Association aimed to preserve China’s national essence and relieve the people’s suffering by donating half of the proceeds from its members’ collaborative works to charity. Consideration of the paintings in the first issue of *Sino-Japanese Art Monthly* reveals that Wang Yiting’s contribution to the journal was similar in kind.

Wang’s collaborative painting appears within the context of a handful of articles that take living Chinese artists or the traditional art of China’s past as their subjects. Among the artists that the articles introduce to the journal’s Japanese readers are Gao Qipei 高其佩 (1660-1734), Liu Haisu, Wu Changshi, and Wu Shujuan. The latter two receive the most extensive treatment, with the coverage of the female painter extending over four pages. On page six a lengthy biography of Wu Shujuan

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241 For the phenomenon of Shanghai modern artistic societies, see Andrews, ibid., passim.


244 Ibid., 5-8.
appears, and a caption accompanying four collaborative paintings by various artists states that they were created in celebration of her seventieth birthday. Wang Yiting’s collaborative scroll is one of the four. Wu Changshi and Yu Yushuang produced another. These paintings served a social function, wishing Wu Shujuan a happy birthday. Many Shanghai school paintings in the bird-and-flower genre served such an end. Wang’s paintings of cranes, for example, were well suited to birthdays, effectively wishing recipients many more. However, his painting that is reproduced in the journal also serves as kind of marketing device for Wu Shujuan. On subsequent pages fifteen of her works appear along with an announcement that, for the purpose of celebrating the first issue of the journal, Wu has agreed to sell readers a limited number of her paintings at half their market value. By celebrating Wu Shujuan’s birthday in art, Wang Yiting, Wu Changshi, and the other artists who wielded their brushes recognized the female painter as a worthy cultural figure, thus heightening the value of the paintings that she offered to readers of the journal. In this respect, Wang, Wu Changshi, and Wu Shujuan’s works are alike, for they all benefited a party other than the painter or the recipient of the work: Wang and Wu Changshi’s offerings aided Wu Shujuan, and her works aided the artists who had formed the Sino-Japanese Art Society. Collectively their paintings supported a broader project--the improvement of relations between China and Japan--by introducing Japanese readers to Chinese art and artists, by demonstrating how those artist interact in a refined

\[245\] Ibid., 7-8.
manner, and by offering potential Japanese buyers the opportunity to take home part of the Chinese culture they have witnessed.

Within four months of first issuing its journal, the Sino-Japanese Art Society transformed the publication. Its July and August numbers, copies of which are preserved the National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo, bore a new title—*Sino-Japanese Art* (*Chûnichi Bijutsu*中日美術), and their combined pages numbered over 450. These pages were professionally bound within illustrated covers made of heavy paper stock. The cover design of the July issue neatly aligns the journal with the artistic society that Ōmura Seigai and Wang Yiting founded and with the Takashimaya exhibition in which they took part, for the cover superimposes a circular image of a famous site at the West Lake—the Pavilion of the Arriving Phoenix (*Laifeng ting*來鳳亭)—on a bird’s eye view of what are presumably the low hills that encircle the famed body of water (fig. 58). Interior pages of the later issues of *Sino-Japanese Art*, like the tables of contents, also benefitted from the addition of design elements. Like the journal’s inaugural number, the July and August issues contain articles written in Chinese and Japanese by nationals of both countries. However, Japanese art and poetry make a greater, though still limited, appearance in the later issues. Watanabe Tenyō must have been pleased to see such a dramatic expansion and professionalization of the journal.

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246 *Chûnichi bijutsu* 1.3 (July 1922); *Chûnichi bijutsu* 1.4 (August 1922).
Wang Yiting’s presence in the journal also increased with the publication of the July issue. Its twenty-second page presents photographs of “the three founders of the Sino-Japanese Art Club” (Ch. Zhong-Ri meishu julebu, Jp. Chûnichi Bijutsu Kurabu 中日美術倶楽部): Yamauchi Tamon 山内多門 (1878-1932), Liu Haisu, and Wang Yiting. The journal does not explain, however, what this group might have been. On the same page Wang Yiting is also listed as one of the Sino-Japanese Art Society’s Chinese jurors (pingyi 評議), along with Liu Haisu, Gao Jianfu, Wu Changshi, Zheng Xiaoju, Wu Shujuan, Yang Dongshan, Cheng Zhang, Wang Tingjue, and others.

The most striking manner in which Wang appears in the later issues of the journal is through numerous reproductions of pre-modern paintings from his personal collection and works of painting and calligraphy by his hand. For example, a total of nineteen paintings and pieces of calligraphy are reproduced on the first eighteen pages of the July 1922 issue. Eight of the works are identified as being in Wang’s collection. These include paintings attributed to Gao Qipei, Xu Fang 徐枋 (1622-1694), Zheng Xie 鄭燮 (1693-1766), and Zeng Yandong 曾衍東 (1750-1830). The work in this section that Wang produced himself is a piece of calligraphy entitled Discussing Painting (fig. 59). It considers, among other things, the Six Laws of Xie He’s 謝赫 (active sixth century) Classified Record of Ancient Painting (Guhua pinlu 畫譜) 247 Chûnichi Bijutsu 1, no. 7 (July 1922): 21.
古畑文錄), a fundamental and widely known critical text from the sixth century.

Elsewhere in the July and August issues various examples of Wang’s painting and calligraphy appear. Most are by Wang alone, such as his depiction of a scholar with a crane (fig. 60) and his example of a *bogu tu* 博古圖, in which the artist adds flowers and calligraphy to a rubbing of an ancient bronze (fig. 61). One of the works, however, is a collaborative production upon which Wang and Yamauchi Tamon combined (fig. 62), thus extending the Shanghai practice of collaborative production to the interaction of Chinese and Japanese members of the Sino-Japanese Art Society.

The reproduction of the work by Gao Qipei in Wang’s collection appears on page one of the July issue, directly opposite a Japanese-language advertisement for the services of the Sino-Japanese Art Society’s Sales Department. These services are listed as:

--Sales of art works with distinctively Chinese characteristics
--Introduction to famous Chinese artists’ works executed with the brush
--Sales of reference materials for calligraphy
--Authentication of contemporary and ancient Chinese calligraphy and paintings
--Sales of general art materials
--Printing of post cards of Chinese scenery and customs
--Mediation of requests for seal engraving

The paintings and calligraphy owned and produced by Wang and the other artists in the journal, when considered in conjunction with the advertisement, may be read as

248 *Chûnichi Bijutsu* 1, no. 7 (July 1922): non-paginated prefatory material.
examples of (or advertisements for) the types of products and services that the society offered, which included traditional and traditionalist painting and calligraphy and the authentication of works by the society’s jurors. Wang Yiting’s *Discussing Painting*, a finely brushed discussion of a classic statement of Chinese aesthetics, demonstrated the capabilities of the society’s jurors.

One other manner in which Wang contributed to the publications of the Sino-Japanese Art Society was by writing calligraphy that discursively articulated the group’s ideals. Many of the calligraphic inscriptions that appear on the pages of the journal were composed specifically as epigrams for the periodical or as celebrations of the Sino-Japanese Art Society’s other projects. Some laud the group’s accomplishments, like Yamauchi Tamon’s inscription, “celebrating the publication of the anniversary volume” (祝記念號發刊) (fig. 63). Others express the idealistic imperatives of the Sino-Japanese Art Society. Liu Haisu’s “Benefit the world through art” (以美利天下) (fig. 64) reads like a political slogan and is thus reminiscent of the phrase that Sun Yat-sen brushed for a fellow member of the Guomindang in Kobe (fig 16.). Liu Haisu was not a professional politician, but his exhortation did keep company with the dicta of such men. Inukai Tsuyoshi penned a phrase that may be read both as a directive and as a statement of East Asian pride: “Peoples of the two nations dismiss the selfish heart” (兩國人民去私心) (fig. 65). A collaborative inscription by Wang Yachen 汪亞塵 (1894-1983) and Wang Jiyuan 王濟遠 (1893-1975), who were professors at the Shanghai Art Academy (Shanghai meishu
xuexiao 上海美术学校), demonstrates a similarly proud view of China and Japan’s artistic potential (fig. 66). It reads:

中日兩邦巍峙亞東，化行藝術創造大同。敬祝中日聯合美術展覽會。汪亞塵，王濟遠。

China and Japan are two countries that tower like mountains in East Asia. Bringing civilization to art, they establish the Great Unity. Respectfully in celebration of the Sino-Japanese Art Exhibition, Wang Yachen and Wang Jiyuan.249

“Great Unity” (datong 大同) makes reference to the social, political, and ethical golden age of benevolent administration and societal harmony that many pre-modern Confucian thinkers aspired to rebuild, believing that their own times were degenerate.250 By invoking this ancient concept, the two Wang’s celebratory claim addressed the present through an ancient intellectual tradition that China and Japan had shared in varying degrees since Japan’s importation of Confucian governing philosophies in the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries.

A calligraphic inscription that Wang Yiting wrote for the July issue of Sino-Japanese Art posits a similar sharing of the past and specifies the materials out of which Chinese and Japanese artists might construct a harmonious present (fig. 67). Wang’s writing observes: “Poetic language, painting silk, a common culture for a thousand ages” (詩言繪素千古同文). The phrase tongwen 同文, or “common

249 Ibid., 41.

culture,” may also be rendered as “shared writing,” “shared language,” and “shared civilization.”

251 This range of meanings extends from the basic meaning of the character wen 文, “patterns.” As D.R. Howland has observed, these patterns may take form on such disparate substrates as a piece of incised jade, earthly terrain, and the stars in the heavens. 252 In the late nineteenth century, Chinese scholars who traveled to Japan believed that China and Japan shared a cultural identity due to the two countries’ use of a single written code--the writing system that made brush talking a serviceable mode of communication. 253 After the 1890s, as China’s Confucian scholars became more fully aware of Meiji Japan’s project of modernization through westernization and the Japanese government’s rejection of Confucian tradition, they stopped considering their eastern neighbor as a cultural extension of China. 254 Wang Yiting, however, was not part of that older, disillusioned generation. He had witnessed the collapse of the old Confucian order in China, and he was one of the new generation of leaders who took it upon themselves to preserve Chinese culture in spite of his nation’s failed imperial system. Wang and his fellow Chinese traditionalists had found allies in Japanese traditionalists who harbored an interest in China, and through statements like the one in his inscription he asserted that the

251 Howland, 43, 54.

252 Ibid., 54.

253 Ibid.

254 Ibid., 246-47.
media and literary language of traditional Chinese and Japanese art were in fact the common ground upon which artists of both nations had created, and presumably could continue to construct, a shared civilization.

In addition to articulating and demonstrating its ideals through a journal, the Sino-Japanese Art Society followed through on the ambitions it proclaimed in its charter by mounting a series of joint exhibitions in China and Japan. As Tsuruta Takeyoshi and Aida Wong have discovered, artists who would become prominent members of the group--notably the nihonga painters Watanabe Shinpo 渡辺晨斎 (1867-1938) and Araki Jippo 荒木十斎 (1872-1944) and the Chinese southerner and guohua painter who worked in Beijing as legal expert Jin Cheng 金城 (1878-1926)--sought to organize a Sino-Japanese exhibition in 1919, but the anti-Japanese demonstrations that broke out in China in May of that year, when the results of the Paris Peace Conference became known, delayed the realization of a joint exhibition until 1921. In that year a show of works by contemporary Chinese and Japanese artists was held in Beijing and Tianjin. Tsuruta and Wong have noted that the Sino-Japanese Art Society held a second joint exhibition in Tokyo the following year.

However, the 1923 Tokyo earthquake and the anti-Japanese demonstrations following the May Thirtieth Incident of 1925 twice interrupted the Sino-Japanese Art Society’s

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255 For the history of the Sino-Japanese Art Society’s exhibitions, see Tsuruta, “Nikka (Chûnichi) Kaiga Rengô Tenrankai ni tsuite: kin hyakunen rai Chûgoku kaiga shi kenkyû 7,” 6-21; Wong, Parting the Mists, 106-104.
proposed yearly sequence of exhibitions, and a rift between northern and southern factions within the society that opened after the death of Jin Cheng in 1926 brought an end to the groups’ efforts. As a result, the society mounted only two more Sino-Japanese exhibitions—one in Beijing and Shanghai in 1924 and one in Tokyo and Osaka in 1926.

Wang Yiting appears to have contributed to the organization of the Sino-Japanese Art Society’s joint exhibitions. A 1923 report in the archives of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs records that Wang was one of eight Chinese artists whom the group listed as originators of the first exhibition in 1921, along with Wu Changshi, Jin Cheng, Zhou Zhaoxiang 周肇祥 (1880-1954), Chen Hengke 陳衡恪 (1876-1923), Yan Shiqing 顏世清 (1873－1929), Tao Rong 陶瑢 (1872-1927), and Tang Di 湯澱 (1878-1948). The report also identifies seven Japanese founders: Masaki Naohiko, Kobori Tomoto 小堀雄音 (1864-1934), Kawai Gyokudō, Takeuchi Seihō, Yamamoto Shunkyo 山本春拳 (1871-1933), Komuro Suiun, and Araki Jippo. For the Japanese side the report also lists a number of supporters of the exhibition, including aristocrats, politicians, business leaders, military leaders, former Buddhist clergymen, academics, and museum directors. Two supporters of particular note were Shibusawa Eiichi and Inukai Tsuyoshi. Wang Yiting also played a role in the society’s

1922 efforts. Tsuruta and Wong have documented that the group mounted an exhibition in Tokyo in May of 1922. However, the society also put on a Sino-Japanese exhibition in Shanghai one month earlier. When Takeuchi Seihō and Komuro Suiun visited China in 1921 for the first exhibition, they met with Wang Yiting and Wu Changshi and discussed the possibility of a show in Shanghai the following year. Other Japanese artists who visited Shanghai in 1921, including Dōmoto Inshō, agreed to support the project. Ishino Chōsen 石野聰泉 (n.d.) was the primary organizer of the exhibit, which took place at the Japanese Club. One author of an article in *Sino-Japanese Art Monthly* reports that Ishino received the assistance of Wang Yiting and Liu Haisu. Ishino Chōsen himself reports that Wang helped with the preparation of the 1922 Shanghai exhibition by sending ten pretty girls and over ten male and female art school students to the venue where the exhibition was to take place. Wang also appears to have played some role in the 1924 exhibition in Shanghai. On May seventeenth, Wang Yiting, Jin Cheng, and Wu Changshi are

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259 Ishino Tetsuhiro, ibid.

recorded as hosting Japanese participants at the Shanghai Gongdelin restaurant, a Buddhist restaurant whose Shanghai branch Wang helped found. The following day Lu Wanqing, Wang’s colleague in the West Lake Full-of-Beauty Calligraphy and Painting Society, gave Japanese participants a tour of the society’s facility in Hangzhou. Before leaving Shanghai on May 21, the Japanese organizers called upon Wang Yiting and Wu Changshi one last time before departing for Japan on the twentieth. Wang and Wu remained figures of some importance for the last of the Sino-Japanese Art Society’s exhibitions, because a prospectus for the 1926 exhibition in Tokyo and Osaka identifies four Chinese originators of the show: Jin Cheng, Zhou Zhaoxiang, Wu Changshi, and Wang Yiting.

In addition to helping organize the society’s exhibitions, Wang also displayed his paintings in them. Wang Yiting exhibited two works in the 1921 show. One was a picture of the Song dynasty statesman, poet, and painter Su Shi (1036-1101),...
and the other was a painting of the Chan patriarch Bodhidharma (fig. 68).\textsuperscript{263} Wang’s painting in the 1922 exhibition in Tokyo was a rendering of the Buddha Amitabha.\textsuperscript{264} In 1924 Wang Yiting does not appear to have exhibited in Beijing, but he did display six works in the Shanghai venue: two landscapes, one Buddha, one painting of the Eight Immortals, and two \emph{bogu tu}.\textsuperscript{265} Wang sent a larger number of works to Japan for the 1926 exhibition. Seven of his paintings were hung in Tokyo, including four works in the bird-and-flower genre and three landscapes.\textsuperscript{266} Three of these works appeared among the eight that Wang displayed in Osaka, which consisted of four landscapes, two figural works, and two bird-and-flower paintings.\textsuperscript{267}

The range of subjects that Wang Yiting displayed in the Sino-Japanese Art Society’s joint exhibitions was roughly comparable to that of Wang’s 1922 solo exhibition at the Takashimaya Kimono Shop. The catalog for that show reproduces six pieces of calligraphy, most of which present canonical poems, especially ones by Su Shi. The catalog also reproduces thirty-eight paintings, three of which are

\textsuperscript{263} Tsuruta, “Kôkan Nikka (Chûnichi) kaiga rengô tenrankai shuppin mokuroku: kin hyakunen rai Chûgoku kaiga shi kenkyû 7 (zoku),” 106.

\textsuperscript{264} Ibid., 108.

\textsuperscript{265} Ibid., 110-15.

\textsuperscript{266} Ibid., 117-18.

\textsuperscript{267} Ibid.
landscapes. Ten are paintings of human figures against a blank ground. Four of the figural works render Buddhist subjects, such as Bodhidharma (fig. 69), Budai, and an oxherd. Other figural works depict the Confucian exemplar Su Wu, the Daoist Immortal Liu Hai 劉海, and scholars. The twenty-five remaining paintings are of the bird-and-flower genre. This preponderance of bird-and-flower paintings and figural compositions in both the 1922 Takashimaya exhibition and the four exhibitions of the Sino-Japanese Art Society suggests that Wang was not hesitant to paint for a Japanese audience the types of paintings that did well Shanghai, where figural compositions and bird-and-flower subjects dominated the art market.268

Wang Yiting’s contributions to the publications and exhibitions of the Sino-Japanese Art Society were primarily directed toward public audiences in China and Japan. However, Wang also created paintings and calligraphy for individual members and supporters of the group. These works embrace the traditional values that Wang and other members of the society articulated in their epigrams for Sino-Japanese Art, and they acknowledge Japanese interest in China’s traditional art by bidding the paintings’ recipients to imagine themselves as part of that tradition. Some of these works have already appeared in this chapter. Ômura Seigai, Tanabe Hekidô, and Inukai Tsuyoshi had all been members of the Sino-Japanese Art Society when Wang

268 For characterization of the prevailing tastes at work in the Shanghai art market, see Shan Guolin, “Paintings of China’s New Metropolis: The Shanghai School, 1850-1900.”
Yiting painted their portraits. Wang painted portraits for other members and supporters of the society as well, such as Shibusawa Eiichi and Okabe Nagakage.

In 1925 Wang Yiting traveled to Japan to participate in a Buddhist conference in Tokyo.\textsuperscript{269} In addition to meeting many Buddhists, he also met with social and political luminaries and members of the Japanese art world. For instance, Wang Yiting and his son spent half a day at the Imperial Palace, where they attended a reception, painted, and met the Japanese emperor.\textsuperscript{270} They also met with Saionji Kinmochi, whom Wang had encountered in Shanghai six years before.\textsuperscript{271} Among the members of the Sino-Japanese Art Society who attended gatherings held in Wang Yiting’s honor were Inukai Tsuyoshi and Masaki Naohiko.\textsuperscript{272} Wang also had lunch

\textsuperscript{269} Wang’s participation in the conference will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

\textsuperscript{270} Xiao, \textit{Wang Yiting}, 206.

\textsuperscript{271} “Fu Ri Fojiao tuan yi hui Hu 赴日佛教團已回滬,” \textit{Zhonghua xinbao} 中華新報, November 21, 1925.

with Shibusawa Eiichi at the Japanese businessman’s estate in Tokyo. The work
appears to have traveled to Japan and entered Shibusawa’s collection, for posthumous
inventories of Shibusawa’s possessions list three paintings by Wang Yiting: *Buddha
of Limitless Life* (a hanging scroll with an inscription by Wu Changshi, no date
given), *Shakyamuni Beneath a Tree* (a hanging scroll, no date given), and *Picture of
Mr: Blue Profundity* (no information given). “Blue Profundity” (Ch. Qingyuan, Jp.
Seien 青淵) was Shibusawa’s byname.

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273 This may have been the two entrepreneurs’ first encounter. Shiraiwa Ryûhei’s
correspondence with Shibusawa regarding Wang’s withdrawal from the China
Industrial Development Company confirms that the Japanese industrialist knew of
Wang Yiting in 1913. It is conceivable, though unlikely, that the two met in May of
1914, when Shibusawa toured some of China’s famous sites and inspected the
industries that the China Industrial Development Company would finance. While in
Shanghai Shibusawa met with Chinese government officials, members of the
Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce, and Chinese investors in the company.
However, due to the failure of Sun Yat-sen’s Second Revolution, Wang had already
withdrawn from the General Chamber of Commerce and the China Industrial
Development Company by the end of the month prior to Shibusawa’s arrival.
Noguchi, 58-62, 86-99; Shibusawa Seien Kinen Zaidan Ryûmonsha, ed., *Shibusawa
Eiichi denki shiryô, bekkan dai ni, nikki (2) hoka* (Tokyo: Shibusawa Seien Kinen
Zaidan Ryûmonsha, 1966), 656.

274 Wang Yiting met Shibusawa Eiichi on November sixth. His inscription on the
painting dates it to the start of the first lunar month of winter, which began on
November sixteenth. Wang left Japan for Shanghai on the twenty-first of November.
Wu Changshi added his inscription to the work on the tenth day of the tenth lunar
month, or November twenty-fifth.

275 “Danisonsô fuzokuhin mokuroku,” Shibusawa Memorial Museum, Tokyo;
“Tsunamachi tei zôhin mokuroku,” May 1934, bound within “Dôgurui mokuroku,”
Shibusawa Memorial Museum, Tokyo.
Wang’s portrait of Shibusawa is an example of a second type of portrait that the artist painted for friends and associates both Chinese and Japanese. In this kind of image a figure who is dressed as a Chinese gentleman stands or strolls beneath a tall pine tree. In 1923 Wang Yiting painted two such works for Japanese recipients: *A Small Image of Mr. Tongû Masatoshi in his Sixty-fourth Year* (fig. 71) and *Summer Repose in the Cool of a Pine* (fig. 45). Two years later, Wang Yiting and Wu Changshi produced not only the portrait of Shibusawa but also a second portrait of Saionji Kinmochi, *Mr. Clay Cottage Possesses Morality* (fig. 72). The former Prime Minister appears to have received his portrait too, for a published photograph of Saionji reveals him posing before the painting in his study (fig. 73).

In all of these portraits, Wang Yiting visually portrays the Japanese man as a gentleman at ease in nature. The artist uses a long-established pictorial simile in which figures are likened to the pine trees next to which they stand or walk. The motif of a man beneath a tree is both ancient and fundamental within the Chinese painting tradition, providing a basic unit from which landscape painting historically emerged. The constancy of pines, which do not change their colors with the seasons, was observed in the *Analects* of Confucius, and pines have long functioned

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as metaphors for scholarly talent and character. A twelfth-century fan on which a gentleman carrying a staff emerges from a grove of pines and bamboo attests to the antiquity of associating pine trees with men of principle in pictorial imagery (fig. 74). Wang Yiting carried on this tradition in such works as Drawing Water from a Well to Brew Tea (fig. 75), in which an unidentified scholar is a center of attention in a landscape vista, and in Lofty Scholar (fig. 76), in which another anonymous gentleman is the focal point of a more closely observed scene. Wang’s portraits of Ômura, Tongû, Shibusawa, and Saionji cast the Chinese painter’s Japanese associates in the same type of traditional role. In this respect, Wang’s portraits of his Japanese acquaintances differ little from ones that he painted of close friends and associates who were Chinese, such as a 1922 portrait of Wu Changshi (fig. 77) and a 1923 depiction of Wang Tingjue (fig. 78).

Wang Yiting’s portrait of Tongû Masatoshi is unique among this group of images, for the chrysanthemums that the figure holds identify him not only as a scholarly gentleman but also as the ancient Chinese poet Tao Yuanming (365-427). As Susan Nelson has described in her treatment of Tao as a subject in Chinese painting, representations of the poet walking with a staff amidst pines were produced as early as the thirteenth century, when Liang Kai executed his Scholar of

\[\text{277 Alfreda Murck, } \textit{Poetry and Painting in Song China: The Subtle Art of Dissent} \text{ (Cambridge: Harvard-Yanching Institute, 2000), 163-64 and 333 n. 26.}\]

\[\text{278 Ibid., 165.}\]
A number of well known artists, including Chen Hongshou 陳洪綬 (1598-1652) and Luo Ping 羅聘 (1733-1799), have made explicit references Tao in portraits, depicting their sitters holding chrysanthemums, which Tao appreciated aesthetically and consumed for their medicinal properties. Wang Yiting’s picture of Tongû presents the Japanese man much as Liang Kai does the Chinese poet, framing the figure with an arching pine and making the man walk on a path beside flowing water. Because chrysanthemums were valued for keeping old age at bay and were associated with vigor late in life, their inclusion in the portrait of Tongû suited what was probably the primary function of the painting--expressing birthday wishes for Tongû.

Portraits of the more general type that Wang produced for Shibusawa depicted their Japanese recipients as generalized but recognizably Chinese figures, much like the ones in Wang’s other paintings of scholars and even the figures that appeared in the work of his followers, such as the painting of Tao Yuanming that Lu Bolong 陸伯龍 (1897-1989) exhibited in the 1926 joint exhibition (fig. 80). Wu Changshi’s likening of Saionji to a Buddha in 1919 suggests that it was not uncommon or unexpected for the creators and recipients of these works to liken the men portrayed

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280 Ibid., 444.

281 Ibid., 444.
to other figures from Chinese tradition and from the art of Wang and his circle.

Wang’s images thus appear to bid their Japanese recipients to imagine themselves within China’s traditional painting and alongside generic scholars of yore, historical figures like Tao Yuanming, and modern Chinese artists like Wu Changshi and Wang Tingjue.

The discursive components of Wang’s portraits of Shibusawa and Wang’s other Japanese associates also characterize the figures in Chinese terms, drawing attention to activities and values that Wang shared with the people portrayed. Tanabe’s composition of poetry and Inukai’s connoisseurship of writing materials were in alignment with Wang’s own proclivities and thus were possible in the gatherings in which the Chinese and Japanese men participated. Wang’s portrait of Shibusawa provides another good example of how the painting draws out commonalities between the painter and the portrayed.

Wang Yiting had much in common with Shibusawa. Both were successful capitalists and business leaders, and both had ties to the Nisshin Steamship Corporation, on whose board of directors Shibusawa served from 1907 to 1910. In addition, both men contributed to one of the most notable efforts at Sino-Japanese business collaboration of the early twentieth century, the China Industrial Development Company. The two also shared philosophical and literary interests. The classical Chinese literary tradition was important to Shibusawa, particularly its

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\(^{282}\) Asai, 327.
Confucian texts. After his trip to China in 1914, he wrote in the October fourteenth issue of *Japan Magazine*:

> In religion I am a Confucianist…. I have always venerated Confucius and love to read his Analects and the Chinese classics. The principles that govern my conduct in dealing with men and things both at home and abroad, always serving my own country, are based upon the Analects of Confucius. My conception of Loyalty and Filial Piety alone is due to the teachings of my own country, but my principles of social intercourse are derived from the Analects of the great Teacher.  

Shibusawa’s article proceeds to explain his support for Sun Yat-sen and the China Industrial Development Company, his views on Japan’s relationship with China, and his conviction that China needs to develop its national wealth in Confucian terms.  

Shibusawa’s love of China’s Confucian classics manifested itself in various publications, such as an edition of the *Analects* that he published in 1926 and in a 1928 volume he wrote on the application of Confucianism to business—*The Analects and the Abacus* (*Rongo to soroban* 論語と算盤).  

Like Shibusawa, Wang Yiting harbored a long-standing interest in Confucian teachings. As a child he is reported to have enjoyed his maternal grandmother’s tellings of stories from the *Classic of Filial Piety* (*Xiao jing* 孝經) and repeatedly to have copied illustrations from *Twenty-four*  

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283 Shibusawa Seien Kinen Zaidan Ryûmonsha, ed., vol. 32, 574.

284 Ibid. 574-78.

Later in life he treated Confucian themes in his painting on multiple occasions. His 1929 work for Chiang Kai-shek *Mother Meng Stops the Loom to Teach her Son* (fig. 1), for example, illustrates an edifying episode in the life of the Confucian philosopher Mencius (Mengzi 孟子, 372-289 B.C.E.) that is recorded in *Biographies of Heroic Women* (*Lienü zhuan 列女傳*), a Confucian text from the first century B.C.E. that was used throughout China’s pre-modern history as a standard textbook for the education of women. In 1932 Wang revisited the Confucian texts of his youth by painting and then publishing in collotype reproduction an album of paintings entitled *Twenty-four Pictures of Filial Piety*. In addition to both men’s Confucian tendencies, Wang Yiting and Shibusawa Eiichi shared an interest in philanthropy. Shibusawa was a major philanthropist in Japan, organizing disaster relief efforts after the 1923 Tokyo earthquake. Wang too was one of China’s most prolific benefactors, and he earned a great deal of his fame in Japan for organizing Chinese shipments of relief supplies for the victims of the 1923 disaster.

Wu Changshi and Wang Yiting’s poetic inscriptions on the 1925 portrait of Shibusawa pay homage to the Japanese man’s commitment to conducting business

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287 Wang Yiting, *Yiting jushi hua ershisi xiao tu* (Shanghai: Youzheng shuju, 1932).

according to his Confucian values, and they cast the Japanese industrialist in a
scholarly light. Wu writes:

以義為利，如風遇琴，見書之道，得天之心。
青淵先生正之。乙丑十月十日吳昌碩年八十有二。

Profiting through righteousness, as the wind strikes upon a
zither, he sees the Way of writing and achieves the heart of
Heaven.
For Mr. Blue Profundity's correction.
Tenth day, tenth month of yichou [1925], Wu Changshi, 82
[years old]

Wu’s statement that Shibusawa easily turned righteousness (yi 義) into profit (li 利)
praises the Japanese businessman by asserting that he has successfully addressed a
moral dilemma. Perhaps Wu Changshi was aware, through Wang Yiting, that
Shibusawa had contemplated this problem in his own writings. Earlier in 1925
Shibusawa had twice written out a Chinese poem of his own composition on this
theme (fig. 81).289 Both works read:

義利何時能兩全。每逢佳節思悠然。回頭愧我少成事。流水開花九十年。
己巳元旦書感。青淵逸人。

Righteousness and profit: when can one realize both?
Every time I come across a festival I ponder this leisurely.
Looking back I am ashamed of my few accomplishments.

289 Two calligraphic versions of Shibusawa’s inscription have been published. See
Tsuchiya Takao, 4; Fukaya Kyōdo Ibokushū Kankōkai, ed., Seien Shibusawa Eiichi
Waters have flowed and flowers have bloomed for ninety years.
I write my feelings at dawn on New Year's day of jisi (1925).
The recluse Blue Profundity.

Politely following Wu Changshi’s lead, Wang Yiting bears witness to his teacher’s claim that Shibusawa’s literary erudition has generated his moral success, and he exhorts viewers of the painting to take seriously the Confucian text that was so important to Shibusawa:

摶謂朱門見道真。聖賢實學不時親。漫云魯論蒙童事。趙普原來有義人。
青淵先生看道。乙丑孟冬之初白龍山人王震並題。

Having an audience with a wealthy man, I see the essence of morality. This sage, a genuine scholar, never stops being friendly. Do not say that the Analects of Lu is something for naïve children. Zhao Pu was a righteous man.\(^{290}\) Mr. Blue Profundity possesses Morality.
At the beginning of winter in yichou (1925)
Man of the White Dragon Mountains, Wang Zhen, also inscribes [this].

Although Wang Yiting’s portrait offered Shibusawa an image of himself that must have appealed to his literary and philosophical tastes, the work did not wholly subsume the industrialist’s Japanese identity. The painting’s well-observed and carefully brushed rendering of Shibusawa’s face presents a convincing likeness of the man and thus acknowledges his individuality. Other features of the depiction pay

\(^{290}\) Zhao Pu 趙普 (922-992) was an official famed for relying on the Analects of Confucius to help the founding emperor of the Song dynasty establish and administer his state. Zhao’s story is the source of the Chinese expression, “half the Analects to administer the realm” (banbu Lunyu zhi tianxia 半部論語治天下). Wang Jianyin, ed., Zhongguo chengyu da cidian (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 1987), 40.
similar credit to Shibusawa’s idiosyncrasies. Several published photographs of Shibusawa present him roaming the grounds of his estate in Tokyo while wearing a traditional Japanese summer robe (yukata 浴衣) and Japanese wooden clogs (geta 下駄) (fig. 82). Wang’s portrait converts Shibusawa’s walking attire into a more generic garment that resembles the habits of the other scholars in Chinese paintings; however, the figure continues to sport Shibusawa’s wooden clogs, unlike the figures in Drawing Water from a Well to Brew Tea and Lofty Scholar. One wonders whether Wang painted Mr. Blue Profundity from first-hand, visual memory of Shibusawa at his Tokyo estate or availed himself of a photograph. In either case, Wang presented his Japanese friend in such a manner as to liken him to a Chinese scholar of yore while acknowledging the particular manner in which Shibusawa chose to present himself for cameras.

One other portrait of a Japanese associate by Wang Yiting also deserves mention. The fourth joint exhibition sponsored by the Sino-Japanese Art Society took place in Tokyo and Osaka in June and July of 1926.291 One of the Japanese dignitaries who attended the event was Okabe Nagakage, the head of the Asian Cultural Affairs Department of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.292 His section was in charge of the ministry’s support of the exhibition. Shortly after the conclusion of the


292 Wong, Parting the Mists, 111.
show, in the late autumn of the Chinese lunar calendar, Wang painted a portrait of Okabe Nagakage (fig. 83), perhaps to thank the official for his efforts. Like Wang Yiting’s portraits of Shibusawa, Saionji, Inukai, Tanabe, and Ômura, the work depicts its figure as a Chinese gentleman. However, unlike the other paintings, the one for Okabe presents him seated on a rock slightly behind a stand of bamboo. The face is rendered more naturalistically than the faces in Wang’s other portraits of Chinese and Japanese friends and associates. In this respect the work is similar to a self-portrait that Wang produced in 1936 (fig. 84). Wang painted the body of the figure in that work, and he wrote the inscription. However, a portrait specialist who lived in Wang’s house is reported to have rendered Wang’s visage. The inscription on the portrait of Okabe is certainly by Wang. It reads:

貌取清癯説放翁。雍容丰格是儒宗。為看君子德如竹。文化風行見大同。岡部先生有道。丙寅晚秋王震寫。

An appearance pure and slender bespeaks the liberated man. His stately form, handsome and regular, is of the Confucian school. He is seen as a [Confucian] gentleman, his morality like the bamboo. Cultural florescence manifests the Great Unity. Mr. Okabe possesses morality.

Written by Wang Zhen in the late autumn of bingyin [1926].

Here Wang addresses his subject in Confucian terms, stating that he is viewed as a gentleman (junzi 君子), an idealized figure in Confucian philosophy. Wang then suggests that a flourishing of culture--presumably the recent joint exhibition--brings

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into being the Great Unity (*datong*) of Confucianism. Wang thus characterizes a Sino-Japanese exhibition in the same manner that Wang Yachen and Wang Jiyuan did in their calligraphy published in *Sino-Japanese Art*. Within the context of the portrait, however, Wang implies that the Japanese recipient of the portrait is due credit for the effort.

**Later Exhibitions and Encounters**

Two efforts at Sino-Japanese artistic cooperation in which Wang Yiting played crucial roles illustrate how by the end of the 1920s Wang had become the central figure in exchanges between the Shanghai and Japanese art worlds. Moreover, they reveal how the artist easily combined social interaction with Japanese associates, the production of art for and with them, and the organization of large-scale collaborative projects. The first of these efforts was the 1928 Sino-Japanese art exhibition in Tokyo, and the second was a new Sino-Japanese artistic society that Wang coordinated in 1930.

During the 1926 joint exhibition in Tokyo and Osaka, the show’s Chinese and Japanese organizers chartered a new organization whose purpose was to establish a permanent Sino-Japanese partnership in art, the Eastern Painting Society (Ch. *Dongfang huihua xiehui*, Jp. *Tôhô Kaiga Kyôkai* 東方絵畫協会).²⁹⁴ This organization soon fell victim to bitterness that erupted between factions of the Sino-

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Japanese Art Society after the untimely death of Jin Cheng. In 1927 Masaki Naohiko, Watanabe Shinpo, Tanabe Hekidô, and other Japanese members of the Sino-Japanese Art Society traveled to China to try to establish a compromise between the two factions, which were led by Zhou Zhaoxiang and Jin Cheng’s son, Jin Qianan 金潜庵 (Jin Kaifan 金開藩, 1895-1946). The Japanese delegation’s aim was to enable another joint exhibition to proceed. The mission failed, however, and as a result, with the backing of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Japanese organizers sided with Jin Qianan in the Chinese dispute. A group that Jin founded in memory of his father, the Lake Society, took the lead in organizing the Chinese side of the next exhibition, which took place in Tokyo in November of 1928. Unlike previous shows, which presented contemporary art, the 1928 show exhibited pre-modern art from Chinese and Japanese collections.

Aida Wong has documented that Wang Yiting played a crucial role in the success of the show, which was entitled Exhibition of Masterpieces of Tang, Song, Yuan, and Ming Dynasty Painting. Because of a wave of anti-Japanese sentiment that swept China after Japanese troops massacred Chinese civilians in the spring of 1928, Chinese officials blocked the loan of artworks from the Palace Museum.

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295 Tsuruta, ibid., 5.

296 Wong, Parting the Mists, 115.

297 Ibid.
collection. Wang Yiting appealed to the head of the Nanjing Government, Chiang Kai-shek, on behalf of the exhibition’s Japanese organizers and secured the Chinese leader’s support, thus enabling the exhibition to proceed.

Catalogs of the exhibition reveal that Wang assisted in other ways as well. Because of the difficulty in exhibiting works from the Palace Museum, the organizers of the show sought works from private collections in China. Wang Yiting lent the exhibition at least seven paintings from his own collection, which he had built using his earnings as a comprador and capitalist in Shanghai.298 His works were attributed to artists as ancient as Shi Ke 石恪 (active mid-tenth c.), Ma Hezhi 馬和之 (active mid-twelfth c.), and Qian Xuan 錢選 (ca. 1235-before 1307) (fig. 85).299 Other artists in Wang Yiting’s circle in Shanghai, such as Wang Jimei and Di Pingzi, also contributed works.300 Di was one of the most generous Chinese lenders to the exhibition, showing at least nine paintings from his family collection.


299 The work in Wang’s collection that was attributed to Qian Xuan is similar to a painting that is now in the Freer Gallery of Art in Washington D.C. However, several figures differ in the two paintings. Hoshino Tatsuo, ed., 20, 30; Tō Sō Gen Min Meiga Tenrankai, ed., 2 vols., 45; Tō Sō Gen Min Meiga Tenrankai, ed., 4 vols., table of contents.

In addition to contributing works from his personal collection, Wang Yiting also helped organize the contribution of works by other collectors in Shanghai. In July of 1928, Banzai Rihachirô 坂西利八郎 (1870-1950), who was a general, military advisor to Yuan Shikai, China expert, and patron of the arts, and Watanabe Shinpo traveled to Shanghai to negotiate the loan of works from the region. A diary of their trip preserved in the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reveals the extent of Wang Yiting’s involvement.301 Banzai and Watanabe arrived in Shanghai on July 19. The day after their arrival, they attended a reception banquet at the Rokusanen 组织 by an official at the Japanese Consulate. The primary Chinese guests were Wang Yiting, Wang Jimei, Tsuchiya Keizô, Li Zeyi 李爕一 (n.d.), and Ye Gongchuo 葉恭縖 (1881-1968). Banzai and Watanabe record that during the event they discussed with Wang and Ye how to organize the exhibition of ancient paintings and agreed to meet again. The following day Banzai and Watanabe called upon Ye, and they were visited by Wang. On July 22 the Japanese visitors contacted several Chinese, including Wang Jiyuan and Liu Haisu, before being picked up by a car sent by Wang Yiting. At his residence they met with Ye Gongchuo, the artist Zhao Shigang 趙時桐 (1874-1945), and several other Chinese, viewing antique paintings in Wang’s

301 The following details of Banzai and Watanabe’s trip are drawn from Banzai Rihachirô and Watanabe Shinpo, Tō Sō Gen Min Meiga Tenrankai ni kansuru ken: Shanhai ni okeru nisshi, in Tō, Sō, Gen, Min, Meiga Tenrankai Shôwa sannen jûgatsu bekkan ichi, reference code B05016016400, Diplomatic Records Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo, Japan, n.p.
collection and discussing how to implement the exhibition. When Banzai and Watanabe suggested that a joint-exhibition take place the following year in Shanghai and Dalian 大連, Wang enthusiastically promised to speak with his peers and make the exhibition come to fruition. Over the course of the remaining six days that Banzai and Watanabe spent in Shanghai, they met with other members of the Shanghai art world. Several of them, such as Tang Jisheng, Wang Tingjue, and Wu Zhongxiong 吳仲熊 (1889-?), had been participants in the West Lake Full-of-Beauty Calligraphy and Painting Society and the Sino-Japanese Art Society. Banzai and Watanabe continued to see Wang Yiting as well, meeting with him every day. On July 26, they attended a banquet organized by Wang, Wu Zhongxiong, and Zhou Xiangyun 周湘雲, during which they looked at bronzes and porcelain in Zhou’s collection. The following day Wang Yiting, Liu Haisu, Wang Jiuyuan, and others hosted a banquet for the Japanese visitors at the Gongdelin restaurant, and on July 28 Banzai, Watanabe, Wang, Ye, Tsuchiya, and others attended a banquet organized by one of the consular staff. During these two affairs, Wang promised Banzai and Watanabe that he would be in charge of asking two famous Shanghai collectors, Gu Heyi 顧鶴逸 (Gu Linshi 顧麟士, 1865-1930) and Pang Yuanji 龐元濟 (Pang Laichen 龐萊臣, 1864-1949), to loan artifacts in their collections to the Tokyo exhibition. Wang appears to have kept his word, for at least three of their works were eventually hung in the show.302

July 29 Banzai and Watanabe attended two banquets at which Wang was a guest: at a luncheon organized by Tsuchiya at the Rokusanen they viewed many paintings by famous painters, and at a dinner banquet at Wang Yiting’s restaurant hosted by Wang and Ye Gongchuo they viewed paintings from Di Pingzi’s collection. Wang Yiting was also a part of the group of Chinese residents of Shanghai and Japanese consular staff that saw Banzai and Watanabe off at the harbor on the morning of July 31.

The 1928 exhibition opened in Tokyo on November 24 to great fanfare from the press. Newspaper reports in Japan announced the exhibition and noted that Wang Yiting would be leading a delegation of Chinese artists to Tokyo.\(^{303}\) The press described Wang Yiting as representing southern China and observed that he and seventeen other Chinese artists and collectors accompanied the works from southern collections on the ship that brought them to Kobe harbor on November 19.\(^{304}\) Among the members of Wang’s group were Di Pingzi, Wang Jimei, Wang Tingjue, and Pang Yuanji. The Chinese attendees to the exhibition were welcomed by Japanese patrons of the exhibition. Inukai Tsuyoshi, for example, hosted Wang and his group at the

\(^{303}\) "Shina meigaten iin raichô 支那名画展委員来朝," *Osaka Mainichi Shinbun*, November 18, 1928.

\(^{304}\) “Shina meiga o tazusaete raichô su: meigaten no nanpô daihyô Ô shi raichô 支那名画を携えて来朝す：名画展の南方代表王氏来朝,” *Hôchi Shinbun* 報知新聞, November 20, 1928; “Dongfang wenming zhi biaozheng: Tang, Song, Yuan, Ming mingjia zuopin zhanlanhui--shi yi yue ershiwu ri qi zai Dongjing Shangye juxing 東方文明之表徵：唐宋元明名家作品展覽會--十月二十五日起在東京上野舉行,” *Ri-Hua xinbao* 日華新報, November 25, 1928.
Kusatsutei 草津亭 restaurant in Tokyo. Over seventy Chinese and Japanese guests stood together for a photograph commemorating the event (fig. 86). Inukai was only one of the Japanese backers of the show with whom Wang had pre-existing ties. Among the nobles, business leaders, art collectors, and other dignitaries who supported the exhibition were Nakamura Fusetsu, Shiraishi Ryûhei, and Tanabe Hekidô.305

Wang’s trip to Japan appears to have provided occasions for him to produce paintings for his Japanese friends and associates. The Shibusawa Memorial Museum in Tokyo has preserved a work that Wang Yiting painted for Shibusawa Eiichi in the autumn of 1928 (fig. 87). The work has never been mounted, and it is attended by its original carrying tube and Wang’s business card (fig. 88). On the large image of a crane, pine, and rock, Wang’s inscription compares Shibusawa to a pine tree, a Buddha, and an immortal, wishing him a long life:

梅香五福鶴壽千年。青松巃々似佛似僧行先生長壽。
戊辰秋吳興王震敬祝。

The Plum’s Fragrance, the Five Fortunes, the Crane's Longevity, and a Thousand Years. The green pine is impressively strong, like a Buddha, like an immortal.

305 Tô Sô Gen Min Meiga Tenrankai sanjoin 唐宋元明名画展覧会贊助員, in Tô, Sô, Gen, Min, Meiga Tenrankai Shôwa san nen jûgatsu bunkatsu 2, 唐、宋、元、明、名画展覧会 昭和三年十月 分割 2, reference code B05016016500, Diplomatic Record Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Tokyo, Japan.
Longevity for Mr. Blue Profundity. In the autumn of *wuchén* (1928) Wang Zhen of Wuxing respectfully expresses his best wishes.

Another work that Wang painted at roughly the same time is a landscape that is now in the collection of the Fukuyama Calligraphy Museum (fig. 89). Unusually colorful for Wang Yiting, whose landscape palette consists mainly of grey, green, brown, buff, and blue hues, this painting includes bright reds and yellows. These colors suit the subject of the work, the mountains of Arashiyama 嵐山. Arashiyama is a scenic spot in the western suburbs of Kyoto famed for the colors of its maple trees in autumn. This depiction of Japanese topography appears to be unique within Wang’s oeuvre. Also interesting about the painting is the fact that it is accompanied by a small strip of paper impressed with three seals, one of which reads “Wooden Cottage” (“Bokudô,” Inukai Tsuyoshi’s byname). The box in which the painting is stored, however, bears an inscription stating that the work was painted for a Yamamoto Seizaburô 山本清三郎. Perhaps while Wang was in Japan for the 1928 exhibition, Inukai requested that he paint the work for Yamamoto.

Less than two years after he orchestrated Shanghai’s contribution to the 1928 Sino-Japanese exhibition, Wang Yiting brought numerous members of Shanghai’s art world together again to form a new artistic association, the Society of Sino-Japanese Artistic Fellows (Zhong-Ri yishu tongzhi hui 中國藝術同志會). In February of 1930,

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306 Wang’s inscription on the painting states that he painted it at the beginning of winter in 1928.
when he welcomed to Shanghai several Japanese artists who had been members of the Sino-Japanese Art Society, Wang invited over one hundred Chinese guests to attend a banquet at his restaurant in honor of Yokoyama Taikan, Ōchi Shōkan, Hayami Gyoshû, and other prominent Japanese painters who were traveling to Italy for an exhibition of nihonga.\textsuperscript{307} Chinese dignitaries who were present included many of the figures with whom Wang had worked to help organize the 1928 joint exhibition, such as Wang Jiyuan, Ye Gongchuo, and Di Pingzi. They and the other guests at the banquet took advantage of the occasion to form a new artistic association, the Society of Sino-Japanese Artistic Fellows.

As was his practice at such receptions, Wang Yiting painted for his guests. For Yokoyama Taikan he brushed a picture of a heron and a conventional wish for a safe journey ("yilu pingan" 一路平安) on opposing leaves of the nihonga painter’s sketchbook (fig. 90).\textsuperscript{308} On the following leaves Wang wrote an inscription testifying to the formation of the Society of Sino-Japanese Artistic Fellows, and then he and


other participants who were living in Shanghai signed their names (fig. 91). Taikan later returned this hospitality by painting a work for Wang Yiting and one for Tsuchiya while onboard his ship for Italy.309

Yokoyama Taikan and his fellow travelers were not the only nihonga artists whom Wang welcomed to Shanghai in 1930. In March he greeted Hirafuku Hyakusui and Matsuoka Eikyû at the Japanese Club, and on another occasion he entertained Fukuda Heihachirô, Yamaguchi Kayô 山口華楊, Nakagawa Kigen 中川紀元, Inohara Taika 猪原大華, and others at the Catalpa Garden.310 On these occasions, too, Wang appears to have painted for his guests, and in at least one instance Wang and a nihonga painter collaborated on a work. Tsuchiya reports that when he told Wang that Fukuda Heihachirô was good at painting carp, Wang took out a piece of paper, painted a black cat on a rock, and then invited Fukuda to add to the work. The Japanese artist painted blue waves and red carp. The two artists appear to have given the work to Tsuchiya, for he reproduces it in his 1942 article along with several other works by Wang in his collection (fig. 92).

The Society of Sino-Japanese Artistic Fellows continued to function for roughly a year after Yokoyama Taikan departed for Italy. In April of 1930 Tsuchiya Keizô sought funding for the society from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign


310 Ibid.
Affairs. Tsuchiya directed his application to Shidehara Kijûrô (1872-1971), the Foreign Minister who through conciliatory rhetoric and a willingness to accommodate Chinese interests sought diplomatic rapprochement between China and Japan over the course of the 1920s. It is unclear whether Tsuchiya’s request was successful. In the autumn of 1930, members of the Society of Sino-Japanese Artistic Fellows gathered at Wang’s home to bid farewell to Tsuchiya Keizô, who was returning to Japan. A photograph of the attendees was taken to document the occasion, and Tsuchiya left for home in possession of an extraordinary album to which Wang and fifty-five other members of the society had contributed paintings. Wang Yiting’s painting for Tsuchiya, perhaps not surprisingly, presents a scholarly figure walking with a staff (fig. 93). Not unlike the lengthy list of signatures that members of the society added to Yokoyama Taikan’s sketchbook, the numerous leaves of the album index the size of the farewell party for Tsuchiya, while their inscriptions and high quality express the participants’ best wishes for their departing.

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311 Tsuchiya Keizô, Shanghai, to Shidehara Kijûrô, Minister of Foreign Affairs, 中日芸術同志会へ補助金下附方票請ノ件, 1 April, 1930. Reference code B05016020400. Diplomatic Records Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo, Japan.


friend. The society is recorded as meeting one more time, for Masaki Naohiko writes in his journal that in January of 1931 the group reconvened at Wang’s house to welcome him to Shanghai. Masaki notes that the Japanese Ambassador, the Japanese Consul General, and several other people in important positions joined the midday affair, at which a photograph was taken.

**Conclusion**

Wang Yiting and other members of the Chinese art world continued open engagement with Japanese art world through Sino-Japanese artistic associations and exhibitions for only a brief period. In late April and early May of 1931, for example, Wang Yiting again led a group of Chinese artists to Japan in order to attend an exhibition of pre-modern Chinese art. Wang Yiting appears to have met with Inukai Tsuyoshi and Tôyama Mitsuru during the trip, for one of Wang’s paintings of Amitabha is dated to the spring of 1931 and is mounted with two poems written by the Japanese friends (fig. 94). Both Japanese calligraphers note in their inscriptions that they write in their seventy-seventh years. The two were the same age, and

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314 Masaki, 816.
316 The painting and pieces of calligraphy are now preserved in the the Asakura Sculpture Hall.
traditionally in China and Japan one’s seventy-seventh birthday was considered auspicious. Wang’s image of the Buddha of Limitless Life thus appears to have served as a felicitous way of wishing his two friends longevity.

The political environment in which Chinese and Japanese friends might gather socially and through this type of artistic collaboration register their goodwill would soon take a dramatic turn for the worse. September of 1931 brought the Mukden Incident, in which fighting broke out between Chinese and Japanese military forces in Manchuria. By January of 1932 Chinese and Japanese military units were battling on the streets of Shanghai. Japanese politicians like Inukai Tsuyoshi found it increasingly difficult to constrain the actions of Japan’s militarists, and for his relatively conciliatory stance toward China, Inukai was assassinated on May 15. Wang Yiting dramatically reduced his interaction with Japan. Chapter three will document that Wang supported Japanese philanthropic causes as late as 1934 and that he met privately with Japanese Buddhists who visited Shanghai as late as 1936. However, after 1931 Wang Yiting appears to have ceased his practice of meeting with members of the Japanese art world. Chinese participation in large, cooperative

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317 In one’s seventy-seventh year, the Chinese character for “happiness” (喜) is written as a visual compound whose component parts are the character “seven” (七).

318 For the decline in political relations between China and Japan in the late 1920s and early 1930s and for the Shanghai Incident of 1932, which lasted from the end of January to the beginning of March, see Jordan, Chinese Boycotts and Japanese Bombs; Donald A. Jordan, China’s Trial by Fire: The Shanghai War of 1932 (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2001).
projects like those of the 1920s would not be repeated. The promise of fellowship that Wang Yiting and his Japanese associates had invoked with their brushes at gatherings in China and Japan and in the pages of the Sino-Japanese Art Society’s journal could not withstand the political maneuvering and public animosity that would carry the two nations to war.

Despite the Chinese art world’s disengagement from collaborative projects with Japan, Wang Yiting does not appear to have repudiated his Japanese friends. One telling indicator of his attitude toward them is the manner in which Wang published some of the portraits he painted of his Japanese associates. Wang Yiting also appears to have been proud of these works, for he allowed a number of them to be reproduced in collotype catalogs of his art. In 1925 the Xiling Seal Society, a conservative Chinese art organization dedicated to promoting epigraphic studies, seal carving, and calligraphy, published Ink Marvels of the White Dragon Mountain Man.\(^{319}\) This traditionally bound publication presents the types of works for which Wang is now well known--bird-and-flower paintings, figure paintings, and paintings of figures in landscape settings, but it also reproduces Wang Yiting’s portraits of Shibusawa Eiichi, Saionji Kinnochi, and Tanabe Hekidô. In 1927 the society issued a third volume of the catalog, which reproduced Wang’s portrait of Okabe Nagakage.\(^{320}\) Slightly over a decade after the publication of Ink Marvels of the White Dragon Mountain Man,

\(^{319}\) Wu Xiong, Bailongshanren mo miao, two vols. (Shanghai: Xiling yinshe, 1925).

\(^{320}\) Wu Xiong, Bailongshanren mo miao, vol. 3 (Shanghai: Xiling yinshe, 1927).
Wang’s portraits of Saionji Kinmochi and Okabe Nagakage appeared again in the 1936 volume *Pictorial Catalog of Masterpieces by Mr. Yiting (Yiting xiansheng jingpin huaji 一亭先生精品畫集)*. This catalog also reproduces the portraits of Wu Changshi, Wang Tingjue, Ômura Seigai, and Tongû Masatoshi discussed earlier in this chapter along with portraits depicting seventeen other Chinese individuals (including Wang Yiting himself) and three other Japanese men. That twenty-seven of the thirty-eight paintings in *Pictorial Catalog of Masterpieces by Mr. Yiting* are portraits is remarkable, for Wang Yiting is not now remembered as a portraitist. That six of the portraits depict Japanese men is perhaps even more striking, for it suggests that as late as 1936, roughly five years after the Mukden Incident had

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321 *Yiting xiansheng jingpin huaji* ([Shanghai?]: n.p., 1936).

promoted Wang Yiting to resign his position at the Nisshin Shipping Corporation,\textsuperscript{323} he continued to view his pictures of Japanese friends as an integral and noteworthy part of his oeuvre.\textsuperscript{324}

\textsuperscript{323} Xiao, \textit{Wang Yiting}, 200.

\textsuperscript{324} It is probably safe to presume that both \textit{Ink Marvels of the White Dragon Mountain Man} and \textit{Pictorial Catalog of Masterpieces by Mr. Yiting} reflect the taste of the artist. The 1925 catalog was compiled and inscribed by his close friends and seems unlikely to have been assembled without his assistance. Some of the works that it includes had only recently been completed and were not in general circulation. The portraits of Shibusawa and Saionji, for example, must have been photographed before Wang sent them to their eventual recipients. The portrait of Shibusawa does appear to have entered his collection, for a work entitled \textit{Picture of Mr. Blue Profundity} (\textit{Qingyuan xiansheng tu} 青淵先生圖) is listed in a posthumous catalog of Shibusawa’s possessions. \textit{Pictorial Catalog of Masterpieces by Mr. Yiting} also appears at the very least to have been published with Wang’s approval, if it was not compiled by him, for it includes a calligraphic preface by Wang. \textit{Yiting xiansheng jingpin huaji}, preface; “Tsunamachi tei zōhin mokuroku,” May 1934, bound within “Dōgurui mokuroku,” Shibusawa Memorial Museum, Tokyo.
CHAPTER 3

BUDDHISM, PHILANTHROPY, AND JAPAN

Introduction

After the failure of Sun Yat-sen’s Second Revolution in 1913, Wang Yiting redirected his political energies not only toward art but also toward religious and charitable pursuits.\(^{325}\) Yang Longsheng, whose 1979 account of Wang in a Taiwanese publication was one of the first biographies of the artist published since the 1940s, briefly notes that Wang participated in a number of important Chinese Buddhist associations.\(^{326}\) Studies that appeared in the 1990s as part of the revival of interest in


\(^{326}\) Wang Yiting Xiansheng Yizuo Bianji Weiyuanhui, ed., 122-23.
Wang have also mentioned his commitment to Buddhism and pointed out that Wang worked as a philanthropist.\textsuperscript{327} Recently researchers have begun to examine Wang’s Buddhist and philanthropic commitments at greater length.\textsuperscript{328}

This chapter will consider Wang Yiting’s Buddhist and philanthropic activities involving Japan, arguing that they were an extension of his practices in China. As he did for Chinese charitable causes, Wang created works of art to assist Japanese beneficiaries. These works were grounded in Wang’s Buddhist beliefs, which he articulated in some of the works he produced for beneficiaries in China. Wang’s charitable works transformed elements of traditional Chinese art, applying them to ends that were of his time. Wang’s production of art for Japanese charity is remarkable not only for the fact that it took place but also for the fact that Wang continued to produce works for beneficiaries in Japan well after he has been said to have cut his ties with Japan. In addition, through his Buddhist and philanthropic engagement with Japan, Wang developed a reputation for charity and Buddhist devotion that led Japanese Buddhists to seek him out when they traveled to China. Wang produced works of art for these visitors and tried to impress upon them the need for the types of Buddhist activities and charities to which he was committed. His relations with these visitors lasted nearly until the time of Wang’s death, revealing

\textsuperscript{327} He Xinchang, 59; Tsao, 95, 104.

that Wang’s commitment to social compassion and Buddhist values proved stronger than the Chinese public’s outrage toward Japan, just as his enthusiasm for bettering his community and improving China’s economic and social condition outlasted his setbacks of 1913 and his retreat from public view.

**Wang Yiting’s Buddhism and Philanthropy in China**

**Buddhism**

The early decades of the twentieth century were a period of Buddhist revival in China. Members of the monastic establishment sought to rejuvenate Buddhism while warding off attempts to seize monastic lands and wealth, and members of the laity rushed to their defense.\(^\text{329}\) Many lay Buddhists led lives of intense devotion, accepting lay ordination, making pilgrimages, and performing meritorious practices.\(^\text{330}\) They also sought to spread the Buddhist Law by supporting public lectures and the printing and distribution of Buddhist literature.\(^\text{331}\) Some even delivered lectures themselves, expounding on sutras to other believers. Societies of lay Buddhists proliferated.\(^\text{332}\) In Shanghai adherents to the faith were particularly active, making the city a locus of revival for the entire country.

\(^{329}\) For the resurgence of Buddhism in early twentieth-century China, see Welch, *The Buddhist Revival in China*, chapters 1-3; Pittman, ch. 1.

\(^{330}\) Ibid., 357-82.

\(^{331}\) Ibid., 375-76.

Wang Yiting became interested in Buddhism at about the same time that Yuan Shikai sought to crush Sun Yat-sen and his supporters, and Wang credited his chanting of the name of the Bodhisattva Guanyin with saving him from the dangers that he faced. Wang Yiting became a vegetarian and spent every morning praying and painting Buddhas. When visitors gave him money to encourage him to paint for them, Wang would place the cash in a bag and later offer it to people in dire straits who requested assistance. Wang believed that these donations served as atonement for instances of sacrilege in which buyers of his paintings, having proudly placed them centrally in their great halls, inadvertently worshiped the images when they honored their ancestors. Wang also participated in organized groups of Buddhists, such as the Mountain Cottage of Universal Charity (Pushan shanzhuang 普善山庄), the Devotees Club (Jushi lin 居士林), and the World Buddhist Devotees Club (Shijie Fojiao jushi lin 世界佛教居士林). These associations distributed relief supplies to

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335 Ibid., 135-138.

336 Ibid.

areas hit by disasters, provided coffins and funeral services for the destitute, and built schools and hospitals for refugees. In addition to supporting Buddhist philanthropy, Wang also worked to promote belief in Buddhism. He raised money for the construction of new temples, and he helped establish such organizations as the Buddhist Studies Press (Foxue shuju 佛學書局) and the Bodhi Society (Jueshe 觉社), which published Buddhist compilations and monographs and sponsored lectures and sessions of Buddhist practice. One of the publishing projects to which Wang contributed drew heavily upon the efforts of Japanese Buddhist scholars: in 1923 Wang and other lay Buddhist intellectuals, including the scholar and reformer Liang Qichao, worked with Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培 (1868-1940), who was then the president of Peking University, to republish in China the roughly 1,750 commentaries and sub-commentaries of the Supplement to the Tripitaka (Xu zangjing 續藏經), which had first been published in Kyoto from 1905 to 1912.

Wang Yiting worked not only with leading laymen but also with with one of twentieth-century China’s most important Buddhist monks, Taixu. Like Wang

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338 You Youwei, 64, 86, 112.

339 Wing-tsit Chan, Religious Trends in Modern China (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953), 60; Lü Cheng, Fodian fanlun (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1925), 31-33.

340 Holmes Welch and Don Pittman have described Taixu’s life and works in detail. See Welch, The Buddhist Revival in China, ch. 4; Pittman, Toward a Modern Chinese Buddhism, passim.
Yiting, Taixu hailed from Zhejiang province. After a period of sealed confinement and intense study of the Buddhist canon lasting from 1914 to 1917, Taixu emerged to promote an expansive vision of Mahâyâna Buddhism, emphasizing that there was no fundamental division of Buddhism into vehicles like Śrâvakayâna (the vehicle of the listeners) and Bodhisattvayâna (the vehicle of the Bodhisattvas) and arguing that the various schools of Buddhism were only expedient expressions of one Buddhist way.341 Believing that Buddhism must change to meet the new realities of life in modern China, Taixu aimed to reform the religion’s monastic and lay communities. As Buddhism faced the threat of new governmental regulations of the monastic establishment, Taixu worked to improve the education of monks, and to this end he enlisted the support of lay Buddhists through organizations like the Bodhi Society.342 He urged both monks and lay devotees to become more engaged with modern society, advocating social service as means to enlightenment.343 Wang Yiting became a friend of Taixu 1915,344 and he went on to become one of the monastic reformer’s most

341 From 1923 on, however, Taixu did distinguish between different doctrines and schools in order to present the Buddha’s teachings in a more organized manner. Pittman, 87.

342 Pittman, 90-104.

343 Pittman, 102-104.

344 Welch, The Buddhist Revival in China, 43.
important lay supporters. Their friendship and collaboration lasted until 1929, when an internal dispute split the Chinese Buddhist Society (Zhongguo Fojiao hui 中國佛教會), of which they were both leading members.345

Philanthropy

After withdrawing from politics in 1913, Wang Yiting became one of Shanghai’s leading philanthropists, working extensively not only with Buddhist charitable organizations but also with such benevolent societies as the Chinese Red Cross, the International Relief Association, and the Shanghai Benevolent Cemetery.346 Of 119 late-Qing and Republican period charities in Shanghai surveyed by Kohama Masako, Wang Yiting served as a director of no less than twenty.347 A contemporary of Wang reported that his reputation as a benefactor was such that if his name did not appear on the trustees list of a charity, the group would have difficulty

345 This association was founded in 1929 in response to a proposal from a national conference on education that the property of Chinese monasteries be confiscated and the income be dedicated to education. Shen, “Wang Yiting in the Social Network of 1910s – 1930s Shanghai,” 56; Welch, The Buddhist Revival in China, 41.

346 Percy Finch, Shanghai and Beyond (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1953), 324; Paul R. Katz, “‘It is Difficult to be Indifferent to One’s Roots’: Taizhou Sojourners and Flood Relief during the 1920s,” Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo jikan 54 (December 2006): 28.

raising funds.\textsuperscript{348} It is important to note, however, that Wang’s interest in philanthropy predated his 1913 retreat from the political arena. As Roberta Wue has demonstrated, as early as the 1870s it was common for artists in Shanghai to sell their paintings and calligraphy to raise money for disaster relief, advertising their services in the Shanghai newspaper \textit{Shenbao} \textsuperscript{349} Acting in groups, they formed societies specifically for the purpose of fundraising. Such leading artists as Ren Yi participated in these efforts, as did their students, like the twenty-year old Wang Yiting, who announced his services in \textit{Shenbao} in 1882 and 1883.\textsuperscript{350} He carried this tradition into the twentieth century when he and other Shanghai painters and calligraphers founded the Yu Garden Calligraphy and Painting Charitable Association in 1909.\textsuperscript{351}

Wang continued to paint for charity after 1913. Wu Changshi, whose participation in the Yu Garden Calligraphy and Painting Charitable Association Wang solicited,\textsuperscript{352} wrote in his 1925 biographical essay on Wang Yiting (the one published in Xu Chengwei and Wang Zhongde’s 1988 catalog):

\textsuperscript{348} Tsao, 97-98.


\textsuperscript{350} Ibid., 201.


\textsuperscript{352} Shen, “Wang Yiting in the Social Network of 1910s – 1930s Shanghai,” 60.
Whenever he sees the inhumane circumstances of people who are homeless and wandering in an era vouchsafed by Heaven, he takes it upon himself to paint pictures for charity. Asking for money and wringing his hands day and night, agitated, he does not let up, working himself to exhaustion. As a result, the refugees of widespread disasters who are able to keep on living are numberless.\textsuperscript{353}

Wu was in a good position to observe Wang Yiting’s activity, for in addition to being the younger man’s teacher and close friend, he also collaborated with Wang on works for charity. An example of their efforts is a series of paintings entitled \textit{The Homeless} that Wang and Wu produced in 1919 in response to terrible floods in Henan 河南, Hubei 湖北, Anhui 安徽, Jiangsu 江蘇, and Zhejiang 浙江 provinces (figs. 95-98).\textsuperscript{354} Wang painted images of disaster victims in bleak, watery landscapes, and Wu added poetic inscriptions. After completing the series, the artists distributed images of the works in free booklets in the hope that pictures of the victims’ suffering would rouse the compassion of benefactors and inspire them to supply much needed food and clothing.

\textbf{Articulation of Philanthropic and Buddhist Themes}

On his own and with the assistance of Wu Changshi, Wang Yiting produced paintings that urged charitable giving and Buddhist benevolence. Five years before

\textsuperscript{353} Wu Changshi, \textit{Bailongshanren xiaozhuan} ([Shanghai?): publisher unknown, 1925), n.p.

\textsuperscript{354} The series’ inscriptions and several of its paintings have been reproduced in publication. For the Chinese text of the inscriptions, see Wang Senran, 16. For four of the paintings in the series, see Pan Shenliang, \textit{Haishang mingjia huihua} (Shanghai: Shanghai kexue jishu chubanshe, 1999), catalog no. 161; Xiao, \textit{Wang Yiting}, 170-73.
the two friends collaborated on *The Homeless* in 1919, Wang painted *Karma Illuminated*, an album of twelve leaves that visually and discursively articulates a Buddhist view of suffering and the need to address it through charitable activities. Wang’s inscription at the end of the album records that he did not produce it for public distribution, keeping it to himself for seventeen years.³⁵⁵ However, like *The Homeless*, the 1914 album takes the remarkable step of frankly depicting the homeless and the destitute in five of its leaves. Such subject matter was virtually unprecedented in the long history of Chinese painting.³⁵⁶

Two leaves from the album, *Releasing Life* (fig. 99) and *Beggar and Dog* (fig. 100) illustrate Wang Yiting’s Buddhist understanding of suffering and charity. Posed much as one might see them on the street, the figures in both paintings are roughly sketched with broken lines and quick washes of color. This technique lends the figures a brusque immediacy appropriate to street-dwellers leading lives of contingency and thrift. In *Releasing Life* an ill-clad man with disheveled hair holds up a snake that twists around his arms. Another snake emerges from a large bag at the poor man’s feet. A walking staff and basket of belongings complete the picture and signify the man’s itinerant status. The beggar and his belongings occupy a space roughly comparable to that of the inscription, suggesting that both are significant. The

³⁵⁵ Tsao, 109 n. 29.

beggar’s arm and snake’s tongue point to the first characters of the poem, which reads:

茂林豐草時盤旋。呼出颱風騰深淵。利牙吮血眠草顚。路人驚見心思懸。丐兒得之不以憐。赤蛇夭矯滿身纏。數蛇獲屈布囊穿。沿街叫喚結善緣。相傳為命乞青錢。善緣放生深山大澤前。可期子孫富貴萬萬年。

When the forest is lush and the grass rich, it slithers in circles. Hissing hurricanes, it springs from deep caverns. Asleep on the grass are sharp teeth that draw blood. The passerby sees it with fright, and his mind is hung’ in suspense. The beggar, however, picks it up, showing it no mercy. A red snake, young and strong, coils itself around, whereas several others are humble a moment, looping themselves like inchworms—they are stuffed in a bag of cloth. Set up on the street, the beggar hawks good rewards. Tradition says for the sake of fate to donate a darkened coin. And the good effect of releasing life in front of temple ponds? One can expect descendants, wealth, and status for thousands upon thousands of years.

Releasing life, or fang sheng 放生, is a Buddhist practice in which believers purchase small animals, convert them to Buddhism, and set them free, usually in the ponds of temples. It is doctrinally grounded in two principles that are basic precepts of lay Buddhist belief—non-killing and release of life. In the late Ming,


organized societies for releasing life proliferated in the province of Zhejiang under
the leadership of the monk Zhuhong 菩宏 (1535-1615), who promoted releasing life
as a method of moral cultivation and associated tangible benefits with the procedure,
arguing that it enables one to live long, rise high in an official career, have many
children, enjoy a prosperous household, and accrue many other rewards. Wang
Yiting’s *Releasing Life* promotes the practice on many of the same grounds, and it
illustrates a complex of associated beliefs and values. Releasing life is based on the
understanding that living beings exist in a cycle of death and rebirth the direction of
which can he changed through good deeds. Charity and releasing life are important to
the Buddhist believer, because his or her own fate can itself take a turn for the worse.
This is probably the situation of the beggar in the painting, who has been reduced to
selling snakes that he snatches from countryside. Although some might despise so
desperate a person, Wang Yiting depicts him with dignity: compared to passers-by,
who see snakes and are petrified, he is active and vital, picking up the snakes and
showing them no mercy. He is certainly more fortunate than the once free and

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359 Yu, 76, 80; Smith, “Liberating Animals in Ming-Qing China: Buddhist Inspiration
and Elite Imagination,” 57-59

360 Chinese beggars sold a variety of goods and services to make ends meet. Early
twentieth-century reports from Beijing record that they caught snakes and sold them
to women at Buddhist festivals. Once the buyers released the reptiles, the beggars
recaptured them and then repeated the process. Other practices were less benign.
Beggars sometimes threw snakes around the necks of stingy passers-by or threatened
to let them loose in the shops of uncooperative merchants. David Schack, *A Chinese
Beggar’s Den: Poverty and Mobility in an Underclass Community* (Pittsburg:
University of Pittsburg Press, 1988), 49-64.
fearsome reptiles, who now are at the mercy of their captor. In this respect the serpents' sad plight is parallel to that of the beggar, who depends upon the kindness of strangers for his survival. The painting thus hints at an equivalence of living creatures and their interrelation via the ties of cause and effect. Elements of the paintings’ composition—the snake and beggar’s intertwining, the similar size and balanced placement of the begging-basket and sack of snakes, and the intersection of the walking-staff with the line formed by the beggar’s body and the serpents—visually reinforce the karmic connection of reptile and human.

_Beggar and Dog_ also describes a particular scene through the interaction of verbal and pictorial elements. A man with tattered clothes and legs covered with grime and a sore carries a small basket and makes his way with a walking stick. His mouth is open, and his head is raised, as though he sings to the rhythm of the clapper in his right hand. A small dog opposes him, barking in response. The inscription reads:

逆旅乾坤不自由。手携竹杖走街頭。飯籃滴露歌殘月。鼓板臨風唱暮秋。兩腳踏平舊世路。一肩擔儘古今愁。此生不受嗟來食。村犬無須吠不休。

The world that meets the traveler is not free. His staff in hand, he walks the streets. His food basket dripping dew, he sings of thewaning moon. Holding clappers, he faces the wind and sings of the late autumn. His two feet tramp the old world’s path. One shoulder bears the utmost of sorrows both old and new. This living creature does not accept meals given out of pity. The village dog need not bark without a rest!
The scene is immediate and poignant. A verbal atmosphere of dripping dew, the waning moon, and songs of the late autumn infuses the picture with pathos. The beggar is dignified, for although burdened by the past, he presses on, earning his meals by singing. A touch of humor in the closing line lightens the scene’s melancholy tone but also punctuates the poor man’s plight. Wang’s gritty rendition of the beggar reminds the viewer that poverty is no mere conceit.

As does Releasing Life, Beggar and Dog illustrates Buddhist notions of fate, cause, and effect. According to the inscription in the latter leaf, the world of Wang’s beggar is not free. “Qiánkùn” 乾坤, or “world,” literally denotes “Heaven and Earth”—two of the Eight Trigrams of the Book of Changes (Yìjìng 易經). Richard Smith has explained that the Yìjìng’s diagrams were traditionally understood to duplicate “the inexhaustible processes of cosmic change” that “naturally alter the context in which everything becomes defined and positioned,” thus allowing humans “to understand their place in the present structure of the universe as well as to determine their future position.”³⁶¹ Wang’s use of “qiánkùn” thus situates the beggar within the broad contexts of time and space, making his plight a cosmic one. By characterizing the poor man as one who tramps “the old world’s path,” bearing “sorrows both old and new,” Wang implies that the beggar’s present actions and suffering relate not only to recent difficulties but also to the transgressions of prior

existences. His present situation is conditioned by *karma*. In addition, the artist refers to the beggar as “this living creature,” or “*ci sheng*”此生, thereby placing him on an existential level with the barking dog. The two figures visually relate to one another across the space of a triangular composition, their heads raised similarly, their mouths open to sing and to bark. The two figures' parallelism suggests their fundamental equivalence as living creatures locked in the cycle of death and rebirth, bound together in space and time by the ties of cause and effect.

When Wang Yiting and Wu Changshi depicted the destitute in *The Homeless*, they revisited a number of the notions that Wang had previously expressed in *Karma Illuminated*. Wu’s prefatory inscription for the 1919 series states its purpose and introduces its primary themes:

聚財如石季倫，娶妻如陰麗華，似曾相識陽翟家。出入張蓋駕與駕，色空財盡走無路；海上何期畫中晤，米終難乞錢難募。人心鐵鑄面泥塗：自言有錢時，積德悔不早，人乞我不與，乞人鳥足道。橫流洪水天覆孟，鄉曲或沼屋泛虛。浙皖吳鄂民其魚，畫中有詩哀流民。勸人移粟輸金銀，切勿視錢如命如此君，豐衣足食天所厚，祖宗培德兒孫受，風雨飄飄請回首。

Accumulating wealth like Shi Jilun, marrying like Yin Lihua, he seems like the man from Yangdi with whom I was once acquainted. Though he came and went, elegantly canopied and with dappled horses, now his women are gone, his wealth has run out, and he has no place to go. What does Shanghai expect to find in paintings when the rice is exhausted, begging is hard, and money, difficult to raise? People’s hearts are like iron, but on the outside they are as pliant as mud:
He says of the time when he had money, “I regret not striving to do good deeds earlier. People begged, and I did not give: beggars were simply not worth the mention.”

With turbulently flowing floodwaters, Heaven overfills the basins. Remote country areas and lakeside homes are afloat and unoccupied. The people of Zhejiang, Anhui, Wu, and Hebei have now become fish. These paintings contain poetry sympathizing with the homeless. May people bring grain, contribute gold and silver, and by no means think of their money as if it were their fate to be like this gentleman.

When one dresses and eats well, Heaven has been generous. Ancestors shore up morality, and descendants receive it.

Wind and rain, floating and drifting, bid a change of heart.  

Here Wu constructs a cautionary tale, first likening a hypothetical figure to Shi Jilun 石季倫 and Yin Lihua 陰麗華—historical personages famous respectively for their commercial wealth and success in marriage.  

Wu then compares the figure to “the man from Yangdi.” One famous native of Yangdi 陽翟 was Lü Buwei 呂不韋 (291?-235 B.C.E.), whom Sima Qian 司馬遷 (ca. 145-86 B.C.E.) describes at length in The Grand Scribe’s Records (Shiji 史記). According to the historian, Lü “came and went, buying cheap and selling dear, and his household accumulated thousands of

362 Translations of Wang Yiting and Wu Changshi’s inscriptions on The Homeless are my own. Their Chinese text is printed in Wang Senran, 16.

363 Shi Jilun was an official who parlayed passenger navigation into wealth, and Yin Lihua was an empress of Guang Wudi in the Eastern Han. Zhongwen da cidian (Taipei: Zhonghua xueshu yuan, 1991), s.v. "Yin Lihua," and s.v. "Shi Chong."

"Through cunning and intrigue he rose to become a minister to the First August Emperor of Qin 秦, but he fell from power spectacularly, losing his family’s fortune as well as his head. For Shanghai’s commercial elite, with whom Wang socialized and from whom he sought support for the many charities he helped direct, Wu Changshi’s allusion to the ill-fated merchant must have been ominous. To drive home the point of his comparison, Wu verbalizes the regret of the figure whose fortunes have turned for the worse, implying that he might not have ended up so wretchedly had he only performed good deeds when he had the money.

Wang Yiting’s own preface leaves poetic and metaphysical subtlety to Wu Changshi and expresses in more concrete terms the concern of a social and civic leader who sees the need for public works projects. Wang writes:

此特急則治標之方耳，若推原南北各省連年患潦之原因，雖天災流行，亦人事之未盡也。蓋各省之不研究水利也久矣，欲塞其流，先治其源，可以弭百世之憂者，其惟水利乎。

This is extremely urgent and thus only a temporary solution for the area. If one considers the sources of the northern and southern provinces’ yearly calamities and heavy rains, one finds that although natural disasters may be forthcoming, people have not yet exhausted their means of addressing these problems. For a long time no province has researched water projects. If we desire to stop the floods, first controlling their sources, then that which can end the anxiety of a hundred generations can only be water projects!

By the early part of the twentieth century, matters of Shanghai’s public policy like taxation and water projects were the responsibility of local charitable societies, gentry
organizations, trade guilds, and the Shanghai City Council, of which Wang was a member before it was dissolved in 1914. During the Republican period, it was often through such non-governmental, social-welfare organizations that Shanghai’s elites addressed the social problems that stemmed from the city’s rapid development and growing population. Although Wang Yiting had abandoned outright political activity in 1913, when he wrote his preface for *The Homeless*, he was continuing to work for the public good.

Wang Yiting and Wu Changshi continue their collaborative plea on subsequent scrolls in the series by using elements of traditional painting and poetry to draw special attention to the destitution of the disaster victims. Using only grey and black ink, Wang presents the figures within bleak landscape settings (figs 95-98). He situates many of the figures on islands of turf beyond which flood waters flow. Some of the figures stand or sit in close proximity to humble shelters and a few trees that jut upwards in pictorial space. Through this color scheme and arrangement of motifs, Wang reinvents a compositional and thematic approach made famous by Ni Zan 倪瓚 (1301-1374). In works like his *Rongxi Studio* (fig. 101) and in the efforts of so many of Ni’s emulators, the isolated group of trees and the humble shelters of the foreground may be taken as symbols of the cultivated gentleman. They are a conceit of the highly educated and affluent men who found in them abodes for their lofty

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365 Elvin, 240-46.

366 Kohama, “Minkokuki Shanhai no toshi shakai to jizen jigyō,” 163-64.
thoughts. Wang Yiting, in contrast, fills his grey, watery landscapes with broken, uninhabitable structures and populates them with figures who have been ravaged by the natural forces around them. Their world is certainly not one in which a viewer would want to visualize himself, and the figures doubtlessly have more pressing concerns on their minds than communion with lofty scholars of the past or viewers of the painting. Wang Yiting thus converts to a novel purpose a familiar mode of painting long valorized by China’s lettered elite, challenging viewers’ expectations in a bid to highlight the plight of people whose condition might not otherwise garner contemplation.

Wu Changhsi performs a similar rhetorical maneuver in his inscriptions on Wang’s paintings, likening the figures to ones in classical poetry. Writing on the painting reproduced in figure 95, Wu states:

大風拔木禾難起，雷電從之六合中，短句吟成淚霑臆，同思大厦社陵翁。

Great winds uproot trees, and the grain hardly grows. The wind’s lightning and thunder strike the whole world. Brief passages recited turn to tears that soak one’s feelings. I agree with the old gentleman Du Ling and his great buildings.³⁶⁷

Wu refers to a poem by Du Ling 社陵, or Du Fu 杜甫 (712-770)—one of China’s most important poets—in which the speaker wishes for great buildings in which to

³⁶⁷ Wang Senran, 16.
shelter poor scholars. On another work in the series (fig. 96), Wu recalls the same poem, writing:

茅卷三重四壁虚，人非上古奈巢居，天能富我能穷我，寄语金银漫厚储。

Three layers of thatch are blown off. [My] four walls are exposed. People ought not to endure living in trees as in prehistoric times. Heaven can enrich me, or it can make me poor. Send word that overflowing generosity saves gold and silver.

Wu aligns his own poem’s speaker with the one in Du Fu’s work, in which the speaker laments his lot after the An Lushan Rebellion (755-763) by describing how the three layers of thatch have blown off of his roof and have scattered in different directions. Wu Changshi transfers the sympathy a reader might hold for Du Fu’s lofty scholar to the disaster victims depicted in Wang’s paintings, thus enacting an enlargement of compassion that he hopes viewers of the works might repeat.

In another inscription Wu begins to specify a Buddhist ground for charity, identifying a relationship between private, moral cultivation and public charity; it

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368 Du Fu, “Maowu we qiufeng suo po ge,” in Zhongguo shehui kexue yuan wenxue yanjiu suo, Tang shi xuan (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chuban she, 1995), 283-84.

369 Wang Senran, 16.

370 Du Fu, ibid.
exists, he implies, within the context of Buddhist doctrine and is executed by the Bodhisattva Guanyin. He writes:

The one who guides the boat of salvation was originally not a woman. One sees her transformed in the women’s quarters with a woman’s body. According to tradition she has seventy-two transformations, and she excels at using the rewards of kindness to exhort the people of the world. Spirit Vulture Peak is near her heart. The pure vase appears and sprinkles clean a spring willow branch. Cleansing the heart and changing one’s outside strengthens the power of Buddhist doctrine. The Pure Land contains no delusion.371

Here Wu intimates that moral sentiment along with ethical behavior can activate the promises of Buddhist salvation. In another inscription he states this even more explicitly, adding an assurance of material prosperity as a further incentive for moral thought and charitable action. He writes:

What in the world is truly real? Merely utter the Buddha’s name, and the Buddhist Law comes first. People do not expect this Buddha. Descending steadily, he carries with him fearlessness and calm. Nevertheless, one ought to refrain from

371 Wang Senran, 16.
killing and should release living things. Even more, benevolence secures better rebirths. Greed, anger, foolishness, theft, force, and killings are swept away. Repent, approach the shore, and emerge from the sea of suffering. Not willing to say the word, waiting a while, one procrastinates. A day passed is one less day. Let it slip by and the human body again encounters difficulty. This life is quickly repaired, and good fortune is unrestrained. One can know that there is self-benefit in serving others. Traveling this path diligently is like the state of bliss (paramita). Swiftly passing beyond the Three Worlds one leaves rebirth behind. Only then is the great matter of the cycle of cause and effect ended.”

Wu’s position, probably stated on behalf of Wang Yiting, is now clear: charity and releasing life, along with calling upon the Buddha for salvation, are means of spiritual cultivation and solutions to the ills of life. They simultaneously ensure material prosperity and resolve the predicament of all sentient beings.

Because of their Buddhist purposes and rhetoric, *Karma Illuminated* and *The Homeless* should be understood alongside the iconic Buddhist figures for which Wang Yiting is best known. Many of Wang’s paintings of this latter type--renderings of Hanshan and Shide, images of the Bodhisattva Guanyin, pictures of the Chan patriarch Bodhidharma--have been reproduced in art historical publications and catalogs published since the late 1970s.⁷³ Publications from Wang Yiting’s lifetime confirm that such Buddhist icons formed a substantial part of Wang’s oeuvre. In the 1925 catalog *Ink Marvels of the White Dragon Mountain Man*, fifteen works out of a

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⁷² Wang Senran, 16.

⁷³ See, for example, Xiao, *Wang Yiting*, passim; Xu Chengwei and Wang Zhongde, passim; Wang Yiting xiansheng yizuo bianji weiyuanhui, passim.
total of thirty-one present Buddhist subjects. In addition to including five renderings of Hanshan and Shide, the catalog also reproduces one image of the Buddha Amitabha (painted in 1923) (fig. 102), two pictures of Guanyin (painted in 1923 and 1925), four versions of Bodhidharma (one painted in 1923, three in 1925) (figs. 103 & 104), and one image of a figure seated in meditation (painted in 1925).\(^{374}\) The catalog also includes other types of Buddhist figures as well, as in its rendering of a boy riding an ox (painted in 1925).\(^{375}\) The figures and themes of these paintings had more lengthy histories in Buddhist painting in China and Japan than did the subjects of *Karma Illuminated* and *The Homeless*. However, other examples of Wang’s explicitly Buddhist subject matter presented figures with less well-known histories. Wang’s depiction of Sire Ji (painted in 1926) (fig. 105) is an example. Soon after Wang became interested in Buddhism, he began to worship Sire Ji (Jigong 濟公) (?-1209).\(^{376}\) Also known as “Crazy Ji” (Jidian 濟頓), Sire Ji was originally a wandering holy man renowned for his eccentric behavior, especially his flouting of

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\(^{374}\) Wu Xiong, n.p.


\(^{376}\) Yu Lingbo, 347.
such monastic rules as the prohibition against drinking alcohol. Venerated by the laity of his day as a miracle working healer, Sire Ji had become by the twentieth century a figure of devotion and the subject of a large body of popular literature. In Shanghai the worship of Sire Ji motivated the activities of the China Relief Society (Zhongguo jisheng hui 中國濟生會), which was popular among the city’s political and economic elites and which distributed medicines and alms and provided disaster relief. Declaring himself a believer in Sire Ji and taking the Buddhist name Jueqi (Instrument of Enlightenment), Wang Yiting joined this group and became its president. Presumably Wang’s renderings of Sire Ji reflect his belief and commitment to working in the charitable movement centered on the eccentric figure. What is noteworthy about the subjects of Wang’s depictions of Sire Ji, the homeless, disaster victims, and some of the other Buddhist icons that Wang frequently painted, such as Bodhidharma, Hanshan, and Shide, is that these figures represent divergences from Chinese social ideals and expectations. Hanshan and Shide were remembered for their bizarre behavior, and this eccentricity contributed to their value as symbols of the possibility of even the most unusual beings becoming enlightened. The

377 For the history of Jigong, his cult, and the literary tradition dedicated to him, see Meir Shahar, Crazy Ji: Chinese Religion and Popular Literature (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 1998).

378 Yu Lingbo, 347.

379 Ibid., 347-48.
patriarch Bodhidharma, who was given credit for bringing Chan Buddhism to China, was traditionally depicted as grizzled and swarthy Indian whose appearance was quite different from that of most Chinese paragons of physical beauty. Sire Ji, like the Mahasiddhas of Tantric Buddhism, explicitly represented the possibility of enlightenment through contravention of Buddhist and societal norms.\textsuperscript{380} Wang Yiting’s beggars and homeless people in \textit{Karma Illuminated} and \textit{The Homeless} violate Chinese painting’s time honored conventions of propriety of subject matter and invert viewers’ expectations with regard to Ni Zan’s lofty manner; yet it is these features of the figures and their presentation that enable the works so successfully to articulate their messages of universal compassion and charity.

\textbf{Buddhist and Philanthropic Engagement with Japan}

\textbf{Responses to the 1923 Tokyo Earthquake}

It is fitting, given his belief in the universality of the Buddhist Law, that Wang Yiting did not limit his compassion to people within China’s borders. A number of instances of Wang directing his charity and Buddhist works to Japan have been recorded. Wang Yiting’s Buddhist beliefs and his commitment to performing acts of charity led him to extend his religious and philanthropic efforts to Japan in 1923, when on the twenty-first of September a massive earthquake devastated Tokyo, Yokohama, and other cities of the Kantō region, killing over 100,000 people.\textsuperscript{380} Meir Shahar has observed that Mahasiddhas involved with Tantric Buddhism in China may have been a prototype of the Sire Ji figure of later Chinese Buddhism. Shahar, 32-33.
people and displacing several million more. Within days of the disaster, having learned of the event from a son who was in Tokyo on business, Wang began to solicit support for a relief effort from Shanghai businessmen and elites, helping found the Chinese Voluntary Relief Association for Japanese Disasters (Zhongguo xieji rizai yizhen hui 中國協濟日災義賑會).  

Zhu Baosan, Wang’s colleague in business and revolutionary politics, served as the group’s chairman, and Wang Yiting, its vice-chairman. The association quickly raised funds sufficient for the dispatch of three shiploads of emergency goods.  

In addition to providing material sustenance for survivors of the disaster, Wang Yiting also helped organize spiritual support for the victims. Along with such important Chinese monks as Taixu, Yinguang 印光 (1861-1940), and Dixian 讚閑 (1858-1932) and such lay Buddhists as Di Pingzi, Fan Gunong 范古農 (1881-1951), and Gao Henian 高鶴年 (1872-1962), Wang Yiting cofounded the Buddhist Society  

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382 They send the relief supplies to Tokyo via Kobe on September seventh and October twenty-third and twenty-fifth. Among the supplies the ships carried were rice, wheat flower, coal, potato, dried fish, dried radish, pickle, dairy products. Tokyo-shi Yakusho, ibid.  

for Relieving Japanese Disasters (Fojiao puji rizai hui 佛教普濟日災會). This group organized forty-nine days of Buddhist rituals for the earthquake victims at temples on China’s four sacred Buddhist mountains (Mount Emei 峨眉, Mount Jiuhua 九華, Mount Wutai 五台, and Mount Putuo 普陀), at the Zhaoxian Temple (Zhaoxiansi 招賢寺) by the West Lake in Hangzhou, and at the Yufo Temple (Yufosi 玉佛寺) in Shanghai. Forty-nine days was the period of time that Chinese Buddhists believed it took for the recently deceased to be assigned to a new life in one of the six Buddhist realms. It was common for relatives of the dead to engage Buddhist priests to perform rituals that would transfer merit to the deceased and thus help them have a better rebirth. Sponsorship of such rituals was as much an act of Confucian filial piety as it was one of Buddhist devotion. The longer the service and the greater the number of monks performing it, many believed, the greater the amount

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384 Fan Gunong was the chief editor of the Shanghai Buddhist Studies Press (Shanghai Foxue shuju 上海佛學書局). Gao Henian was a scholar of Buddhism who was active in many Chinese disaster relief efforts, in many cases alongside Wang Yiting. Tokyo-shi Yakusho, ibid.; Yu Lingbo, 26-35, 397-409, and 491-98.

385 Tokyo-shi Yakusho, n.p. For the historical development of the notion of China’s four Buddhist marchmounts, see James M. Hargett, Stairway to Heaven: a Journey to the Summit of Mount Emei (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 157-60.


387 Tokyo-shi Yakusho, n.p.; ibid.
of merit transferred to the deceased. The Buddhist Society for Relieving Japanese Disasters spared no expense, for at the four sacred mountains it sponsored the Buddhist Rite for Deliverance of Creatures of Water and Land (*shuilu fahui* 水陸法會), which was the most elaborate and costly of all Buddhist funerary rituals and perhaps the most spectacular liturgy in all of Chinese Buddhism. ³⁸⁸ Although the rite can be directed toward the living as a technology of compassion and conversion, it is frequently performed in mortuary contexts for the benefit of all the dead, be they on land or on sea. ³⁸⁹

Scholars have also noted that Wang donated a bronze “Buddhist bell” (*fanzhong* 梵鐘) as a means of consoling the souls of the deceased victims of the Tokyo earthquake, and they have reported that that the bell was delivered to Japan in 1925 and that an earthquake memorial hall was constructed for it in 1931. ³⁹⁰ Today, the bell hangs in its own bell tower at the southeast corner of the Tokyo Memorial Hall (Tokyo-to Ireidô 東京都慰霊堂) (figs 106 and 107). Although the memorial currently honors victims of several disasters that have hit the city, an undated pamphlet about the bell published by the Tokyo City Government states that the


³⁸⁹ Stevenson, 32.

memorial was in fact established in 1930 as the Earthquake Memorial Hall (Shinsai Kinendô 震災記念堂) in response to the donation of the bell. According to the pamphlet, the Zhaoxian Temple and the Yufo Temple came up with the idea of casting the bell and sending it to Japan to ease the pain of the disaster victims. On November seventh of 1923 they wrote to the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Japan Buddhist Association (Nihon Bukkyô Rengôkai 日本仏教連合会) to propose the donation of a bell and the construction of a temple. The Tokyo City Government decided to accept the bell and began planning an event surrounding its installation, and a group called the Tokyo Earthquake Memorial Project Association (Zaidan Hôjin Tokyo Shinsai Kinen Jigyô Kyôkai 財団法人東京震災記念事業協会) took charge of constructing a memorial. The Buddhist Society for Relieving Japanese Disasters delivered the bell from Hangzhou, where it was cast, to Yokohama in 1925. The Tokyo-shi kôhô 東京市公報 newspaper reports that a ceremony for the initial tolling of the bell was held on October 1, 1930, after construction of the bell tower had been completed.

A lengthy inscription encircles the bell in two horizontal registers (figs. 108 and 109). Four lines in each register are specially articulated with vertical borders and thus divide the two registers into sections. In the upper register these lines present a


392 “Shinsai Kinendô bonshô shidôshiki 震災記念堂梵鐘始撞式,” Tokyo-shi kôhô 東京市公報, October 7, 1930.
passage from the *Flower Garland Sutra* (*Dafangguangfo huayan jing* 大方廣佛華嚴經, Skt. *Avatamsaka Sutra*) that premises enlightenment, in the form of a temporally unbounded knowledge of all Buddhas, upon appreciation of a universal truth:

> 若人欲了知三世一切佛，應觀法界性，一切唯心造。  
> If people want to really know  
> All Buddhas of all times,  
> They should contemplate the nature of the cosmos;  
> All is but mental construction.  

The counterparts to these lines in the lower register name the four major continents of the Buddhist world system, orienting the bell’s message to all directions. Within the sections articulated by these eight lines, the bell’s inscription presents the names of seven Buddhas, six Bodhisattvas, and the *Flower Garland Sutra*. It also offers liturgical passages that express wishes for the sound of the bell to help those suffering in hell and for it to bring beings to enlightenment. The final section of the inscription identifies by name twenty-one members of the Buddhist Society for

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Relieving Japanese Disasters. The last person in the list is Wang Yiting. The inscription dates the bell’s casting to the winter of 1923 and records that Wang Yiting was the calligrapher who wrote out the text.

Rubbings preserved in the museum of the Tokyo Memorial Hall provide a clear view of the hand in which Wang wrote the inscription (fig. 110). He writes his characters primarily in regular script, spacing them evenly, aligning them neatly in straight rows, and articulating them with distinct, rounded strokes that are rarely joined by ligatures. Such stylistic restraint is uncharacteristic for Wang Yiting, whose calligraphy on the less formal works that he more frequently wrote is considerably quicker, frequently mixing script types (regular, running, and cursive), and often joining distinct strokes and characters together through ligatures. There can be little doubt that Wang Yiting intended the formality of his writing on the bell to suit its solemn purpose.

Buddhist and Artistic Exchanges at the 1925 East Asian Buddhist Conference

The Buddhist bell at the Tokyo Memorial Hall was delivered to Japan in 1925 in conjunction with one of the most noteworthy efforts at cultural cooperation between China and Japan to take place in the 1920s, the East Asian Buddhist Conference (Tô-A Bukkyô Taikai 東亜仏教大会). This international gathering was the largest and last of several meetings that centrally involved Taixu and that aspired

395 For accounts of the conference, see The Buddhist Revival in China, 166-67; Pittman, 109-14; Bukkyô Rengôkai, Tô-A Bukkyô Taikai kiyô (Tokyo: Bukkyô Rengôkai, 1926).
to organize Chinese and Japanese Buddhists into a force for modernizing Buddhism and enabling it to counter the force of Western cultural traditions and religions. After a Japanese scholar and Consul happened to attend informal meetings conducted by Taixu on Mount Lu in July and August of 1923, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs sponsored Japanese participation in a formal conference at the same site one year later.396 This meeting aimed to unite Buddhists across China with those of the other countries of East Asia and to work toward transmitting East Asian Buddhism to Europe and the United States.397 With the backing of their government, the three Japanese participants offered to host another conference in Japan the following year, and plans for the successor conference were drawn up.398 The East Asian Buddhist Conference took place in Tokyo from November first through the third, with participants coming primarily from Japan and China but also Korea and Taiwan. The Chinese delegation, which numbered twenty, was led by Taixu and his teacher, the monk Daojie 道階 (1866-1934). Wang Yiting was one of the nine lay members of the Chinese contingent, and in a commemorative photograph taken at the opening ceremony of the conference, he stands at the center of the fourth row of the assembled participants (fig. 111). Also visible in the photograph, eighth from the right in the first


397 Pittman, 107.

row, is Wang Yiting’s son Wang Jimei, who was not officially listed among the twenty members of the Chinese group but whose presence is recorded in the official record of the gathering.\textsuperscript{399}

The conference was sponsored by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In a speech to the delegates, Okabe Nagakage, reported that his unit was supporting the conference in the interest of enhancing East Asian culture.\textsuperscript{400} The Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ Cultural Projects Division, of which he was the chief, he observed, was run on funds supplied by the Boxer Indemnity, and its main purpose was to preserve and enhance Chinese culture and facilitate scholarly exchanges. These objectives, he noted, could not be achieved without support from China, and he asked the participants in the conference for their support.

Not all of the Chinese attendees may have taken Okabe at his word. From nearly the beginning of the Meiji period, Japan had sought to expand its Buddhist presence and influence in China. As early as 1871 Japanese political leaders were considering using Buddhist missionaries as spies in order to prepare for military conflict on the Asian mainland.\textsuperscript{401} At roughly the same time, the Higashi Hongan-ji 東本願寺 chapter of Jōdo Shinshū 新一生真宗, Japan’s largest Pure Land Buddhist sect, began sending missionaries to China, ostensibly to help defend Chinese

\textsuperscript{399} Bukkyô Rengôkai, 24-25.

\textsuperscript{400} Ibid., 661.

\textsuperscript{401} Welch, \textit{The Buddhist Revival in China}, 161-62.
Buddhists against the anti-Buddhist movement and to work toward an ecumenical revival of Buddhism.\textsuperscript{402} Even so, monks of the sect were not above helping the Japanese military fabricate a pretense for initiating Japan’s abortive attempt at occupying Amoy.\textsuperscript{403} In 1904 and 1905 the Japanese priest Mizuno Baigyô convinced a number of Chinese temples in treaty ports to resist Chinese governmental efforts at confiscating monastic property by affiliating with the Higashi Hongan-ji. The Chinese temples benefited from the protection of Japanese extraterritorial rights, but they also became visible signs of Japanese political expansion in China.\textsuperscript{404} After Japan’s victory in the Sino-Japanese War in 1895, the Higashi Hongan-ji continued to establish numerous schools and monasteries in China. Comments that the Chinese delegates made at the conference suggest that they were not unaware that the gathering served the interests of this kind of Japanese expansionism in China; however, as Holmes Welch has observed, most of the Chinese attendees probably viewed their participation in the affair as a means of raising the status of Buddhism within China itself.\textsuperscript{405}

Awareness of various Japanese motives and Chinese suspicions may have informed the speeches of Taixu, who was the conference’s most prominent speaker. |

\textsuperscript{402} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{403} Ibid., 164.

\textsuperscript{404} Ibid., 10-11, 164-65.

\textsuperscript{405} Ibid., 167-68.
He called for ecumenical cooperation in East Asia, with Buddhists from the different
countries contributing according to their national strengths, and he urged participants
not to allow nationalism or government co-option to divide them.\textsuperscript{406} In order to
modernize the Buddhist tradition and to enable it to address the ills of the world,
which he believed stemmed from the avarice, hate, and lust of the West, Taixu
proposed, among other things, the creation of an international Buddhist university and
the organization of social services for the public, including famine and disaster
relief.\textsuperscript{407}

Wang Yiting served as the chair of the conference’s Social Work committee.\textsuperscript{408}
One of its reports explains that Wang was recommended for the position because he
was a pious Buddhist who resembled one of Japan’s own great philanthropists,
Shibusawa Eiichi.\textsuperscript{409} While running the committee, Wang reported on Buddhist social
work in China.\textsuperscript{410} He began with the observation that the Buddhist foundation for
social work was compassion (\textit{cibei} 慈悲). Interpreting this concept as giving other
people pleasure (\textit{ci} 慈, literally “benevolence”) and alleviating their pain (\textit{bei} 悲, literally “pity”), he argued that the Buddhist idea was equivalent to the Confucian

\textsuperscript{406} Pittman, 110-12.

\textsuperscript{407} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{408} Bukkyô Rengôkai, 475.

\textsuperscript{409} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{410} Ibid., 613-16.
notion that one should take pleasure in other people’s pleasure. Wang then proceeded to describe the various types of social welfare projects that he and other Chinese Buddhists were undertaking across China, including running orphanages, releasing fish in ponds, responding to natural disasters like the Tokyo earthquake, organizing schools and hospitals, caring for the elderly, repairing bridges and roads, providing medications, burying the impoverished dead, burning letters that have been dropped as litter, and performing prayer rituals for the deceased and for wandering ghosts.

The East Asian Buddhist Conference proper lasted for three days, but at its conclusion the Chinese participants were treated to a tour of Japan that lasted until November 21. During the course of their stay in Japan, they visited parks, famous sites, and many Buddhist temples. They also met with various groups that took an interest in China. On the evening of November first, for instance, the Chinese visitors were treated to a banquet by five cultural and business groups: the East Asian Common Culture Association (Tô-A Dôbunkai 東亜同文会), the Japan-China Study Association (Nikka Gakkai 日華学会), the Oriental Society (Tôyô Kyôkai 東洋協会), the Universal Benevolence Society (Dôjinkai 同仁会), and the Japan-China Industrial Society (Nikka Jitsugyô Kyôkai 日華実業協会). As has been mentioned in chapter two, Wang and the Chinese delegates also met with many notable figures in

411 Ibid., 655-56.
Japanese politics and society, such as Shibusawa Eiichi, Saionji Kinmochi, Inukai Tsuyoshi, and the emperor.\textsuperscript{412}

In addition to meeting with such dignitaries, the Chinese visitors took in a number of art exhibitions. On the morning of November fifth, for example, the Chinese guests were treated to an art historical lecture and a viewing of Indian Buddhist sculpture at the Imperial University Buddhist Youth Hall (Teidai Bukkyô Seinen Kaikan 帝大仏教青年会館), and in the afternoon, after chanting sutras before the Bodhisattva Kannon (Ch. Guanyin) in Asakusa 浅草, they stood for a commemorative photograph before the Buddhist bell that the Chinese Buddhist Society for Relieving Japanese Disasters had recently transported to Tôkyô (fig. 112).\textsuperscript{413} They then chanted sutras in the Chinese manner for the dead. In the evening they attended a banquet hosted by the Tokyo City Government, at which the mayor of the city thanked them for China’s generosity following the earthquake.\textsuperscript{414}

In addition to viewing the display of Indian art, the Chinese delegation also attended three other exhibitions of Buddhist art and texts that were mounted specifically for the conference. While at the Imperial University Buddhist Youth Hall, the Chinese delegation inspected important Buddhist texts assembled by the Taishô

\textsuperscript{412} “Fu Ri Fojiao tuan yi hui Hu”; "Fojiao tuan daibiao you Ri hui Hu 佛教團代表由日回滬," \textit{Shangbao} 商報 Nov. 22, 1925.

\textsuperscript{413} Bukkyô Rengôkai, 663.

\textsuperscript{414} Ibid., 663, 659.
Issaikyô Kankôkai 大正一切経刊行会, the association responsible for publishing the Taishô Tripitaka (Taishô shinshû Daizôkyô 大正新修大藏経), the modern Japanese edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon.\textsuperscript{415} Also that morning the director of the Imperial Household Museum (Teishitsu Hakubutsukan 帝室博物館), the forerunner of the current Tokyo National Museum, organized a tea ceremony for the Chinese contingent and invited the visitors to view a special exhibition of national treasures at his institution.\textsuperscript{416} Later, while in Nara 奈良, the Chinese delegation viewed a special exhibition of art and texts at the Nara Imperial Household Museum (Nara Teishitsu Hakubutsukan 奈良帝室博物館).\textsuperscript{417}

Catalogs of the works displayed in these three special exhibitions are published in the final report of the East Asian Buddhist Conference.\textsuperscript{418} The catalog of the exhibition mounted by the Imperial Household Museum is the most elaborate, with annotations for many of the entries. It lists a total of thirty-three works, some of which are comprised of multiple parts. Twenty of the works were Japanese paintings from the eighth through fourteenth centuries, and thirteen were Chinese paintings from the seventh through fourteenth centuries. The works were drawn almost entirely

\textsuperscript{415} Takakusu Junjirô and Watanabe Kaigyoku, eds., Taishô shinshû Daizôkyô (Tokyo: Taishô Issaikyô Kankôkai, 1924-1932).

\textsuperscript{416} Bukkyô Rengôkai, 657.

\textsuperscript{417} Ibid., 712.

\textsuperscript{418} Ibid., 666-79, 712.
from the collections of important Japanese temples, which had owned them for
centuries. Many of the pieces remain part of the canons of Japanese and Chinese
Buddhist art to this day. The exhibition included portraits of eminent Chinese and
Japanese Buddhists and monks, such as the Tôfuku Temple’s (Tofuku-ji 東福寺) Song dynasty portrait of the Chan Master Wuzhun 無準 and the Yakushi Temple’s (Yakushi-ji 薬師寺) eleventh-century Japanese portrait of the Chinese Patriarch Ci’en 慈恩. Also on display were Mahayana, Chan, Pure Land, and Tantric icons, like the
Imperial Household Museum’s Fugen Bosatsu (Skt. Samantabhadra) (now in the
Tokyo National Museum), the Daitoku Temple’s (Daitoku-ji 大德寺) Guanyin,
Gibbons, and Crane by Mu Qi 牧溪, and the Zenrin Temple’s (Zenrin-ji 禪林寺) Amida Coming over the Mountain. Chinese viewers were also exposed to
masterworks of Japanese narrative handscroll painting via the Founding History of
Mount Shigi, from the collection of the Chôgosonshi Temple (Chôgosonshi-ji 朝護孫子寺), and Patriarchs of the Kegon Sect, from the Kôzan Temple (Kôzan-ji 高山寺).
For good measure the museum included several Song and Yuan dynasty landscapes
and bird-and-flower paintings. The exhibition at the Nara Imperial Household
Museum included thirty-five works of art and texts, of which eleven were classified
as national treasures.

These presentations of Chinese and Japanese masterworks side by side not only asserted the contiguity of the Chinese and Japanese Buddhist traditions but also
made an argument for their equality. Painted icons revealed that Buddhists in the two nations shared the same objects of reverence and devotion. The Chinese and Japanese works were roughly of the same antiquity, implying that the traditions that produced them were similarly venerable. Portraits of Chinese patriarchs documented the transmission of the Buddha’s authentic teachings from China to Japan. The Japanese temples that contributed the works demonstrated by the fact of their ownership that they were inheritors and preservers of China’s ancient Buddhist tradition.

The Japanese organizers of the conference and the exhibitions probably intended such interpretations of the exhibits, for the conference report explicitly states that the contents of the Taishô Issaikyô Kankôkai’s exhibition of ancient texts, some of which were originally published in China, “are sufficient to demonstrate the cultural position of Japanese Buddhism.” The Japanese organizers also appear to have believe that they achieved some success in this respect, for their conference report notes that Xu Hongbao 徐鴻寶, who was the director of the Chinese National Library (Zhonghua guoli tushuguan 中華國立圖書館), and Wang Yiting thanked the director of the Imperial Household Museum for his exhibition, stating that they had gotten to know the true value of Japan’s Buddhist art for the first time.

The exhibitions associated with the conference were not the only occasions on which texts and works of art served as tokens of goodwill and national pride. Chinese

419 Ibid., 672.
420 Ibid., 657.
and Japanese participants in the East Asian Buddhist Conference individually and in groups presented numerous gifts. The majority of the offerings were textual--Buddhist sutras, histories, tracts, maps--but a few were works of art. The donations appear to have reflected the tastes and ambitions of the donors. The Japanese Buddhist Association (Bukkyô Rengôkai 仏教連合会), for example, offered a carved wooden statue of the historical Buddha, a commemorative photograph of the conference, clothes for sleeping, and two books--Research on the History of Chinese Buddhism in Recent Times (Shina Bukkyô kinsei shi 支那仏教近世史) and Outline of Japanese Buddhism (Nihon Bukkyô yôran 日本仏教要覧). The Chinese monk Hongsan 弘傘 donated Chinese snacks, calligraphy, medicine, and a Buddhist ritual musical instrument called an yinqing 引磬. Wang Yiting’s offerings consisted of a box of incense, a calligraphic couplet, and paintings of Shoulaoren 壽老人 (Jp. Jurôjin)--a Daoist god of longevity--and the Queen Mother of the West (Xiwangmu 西王母)--a mythical Chinese goddess of longevity who in antiquity was the subject of a Daoist cult.

Japanese Buddhist Visitors to China

Wang Yiting’s participation in the East Asian Buddhist Conference brought him to the attention of many Buddhists in Japan and led to over a decade of

421 The official conference includes an itemized record of all the gifts presented by the Chinese and Japanese sides. Ibid., 736-46.

422 Ibid., 739.
encounters with Japanese Buddhists who traveled to China. Wang helped organize some of these visits. Through these encounters he was able to promote Buddhist and philanthropic causes that were dear to him, and by painting and writing calligraphy on Buddhist themes for many of his guests he was able to earn the admiration of his guests and promote Chinese Buddhism to a Japanese audience.

In 1927 a Japanese Buddhist named Kasagi Yoshiaki 竹木良明 traveled to Beijing and Shanghai. While in the latter city he stayed at its branch of the Higashi Hongan-ji, where he met with Taixu. He also visited the man whom he had heard called “the Shibusawa of Shanghai,” making a brief visit with a few other Japanese guests to Wang Yiting’s home. Wang painted and wrote calligraphy for the Japanese men, writing out a phrase from the Diamond Sutra (Jingang jing 金剛經) for Kasagi. Afterwards Wang accompanied the guests to a facility for disabled people and then to the Shanghai World Buddhist Devotees Club. Kasagi published an account of these events in the journal Eastern Buddhism (Tōhō Bukkyō 東方仏教), which emerged after the East Asian Buddhist Conference, running from June of 1926 to December of 1927. Kasagi thus publicized in Japan Wang’s hospitality, his pet projects, and his penchant for making art for his guests.

By the middle of the 1930s, Japanese Buddhist visitors were making Wang Yiting a part of their Chinese itineraries. At least one sought his assistance in organizing a Sino-Japanese Buddhist group. In March of 1935 Yoshimura Haruki 好村春基, who was the director of the All-Japan League of Buddhist Young Men’s Associations (Zen Nihon Bukkyô Seinenkai Renmei 全日本仏教青年会連盟) visited Shanghai while on a trip whose itinerary included Hangzhou, Ningbo, Mount Putuo, and Suzhou 蘇州. He met with a number of Buddhists for the purpose of establishing a Sino-Japanese Buddhist Studies Association (Zhong-Ri Fojiao xuehui 中日佛教學會), and he received the support of such notable Buddhists as Wang Yiting, Taixu, Yinguang, Xu Shiying 許世英 (1873-1964), Duan Qirui 段祺瑞 (1864-1936), and Zhang Taiyuan 章太炎 (1869-1936).

Wang Yiting’s reputation among Japanese Buddhists became such that in 1936, when the Japan-China Buddhist Research Society (Nikka Bukkyô Kenkyûkai 日華仏敎研究会) published its first annual report--a special edition dedicated to research on modern Chinese Buddhism--not only did the Chinese monk Fafang 法舫 (1904-1951) mention Wang in his survey of the current state of Chinese Buddhism,

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424 Ishii Itarô 石射織太郎, Consul General Ishii Itarô to Minister of Foreign Affairs Hirota Kôki 広田弘毅, from Tokyo, April 15, 1935, correspondence, in Ômura Keigan, Zen Nihon Bukkyô Seinenkai Renmei riji Yoshimura Haruki Shôwa jûnen nigatsu nanoka, reference code B05015674600, Diplomatic Records Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo, Japan.
but a Japanese Buddhist named Shigahara Ryōsai also contributed a brief article dedicated solely to Wang. Shigahara writes in his piece that because Wang is well known for his piety in Japan, it is almost customary for Japanese Buddhists to meet him on their trips to China. Shigahara describes Wang as a businessman, a Buddhist leader, and an artist whose works hang in many of China’s Buddhist and Daoist temples. He also reports that in June of 1936 he and other members of the Japan-China Buddhist Research Society were welcomed at Wang Yiting’s well-appointed home and garden, where paintings and calligraphy completely covered the walls of the ten rooms of Wang’s house. Shigahara praises Wang’s diligent vegetarianism and the activities of the lay Buddhist organizations of which Wang was a part. Noting that Wang wielded his brush for the members of the Japan-China Buddhist Research Association, Shigahara proudly reproduces a photograph of the three Buddhist inscriptions that the artist wrote specifically for him (fig. 113). One, a framed, horizontal work, offers a general statement of Mahayana ambition: “For the benefit of all living beings” (liyi zhongsheng). The other


426 Ibid., 316.
two works form a couplet that suggests a path to salvation that a layman might cultivate, one involving the accumulation of merit through Buddhist acts. The couplet reads: “Every reaction an offering [to the Three Jewels], make these the causes [in the Chain of Cause and Effect]” (jieying gongyang, yi shi yinyuan 皆應供養，以是因緣). In Shigahara’s photographic reproduction of the works, the calligraphy frames a Buddha figure of a sort that Wang produced on a number of occasions (fig. 114). The hanging scroll in Shigahara’s photograph differs, however, in that its figure is articulated in lines of white against a dark ground, as if the picture were a rubbing of an intaglio design on a stele. Shigahara does not specify the nature of the work, and thus it is impossible to determine whether the picture is in fact a rubbing or a highly unusual painting. The work’s inscription, however, is legible. It reads: “Buddha of Limitless Life” (Wuliangshoufo 無量壽佛).

Another publication by a Japanese Buddhist visitor also reveals ways in which Wang Yiting sought to welcome Japanese Buddhists and promote his projects. In 1936 a Japanese layman led a group of Japanese Buddhists to Mount Tiantai (Jp. Tendai) via Shanghai and then published a booklet describing and illustrating the trip. That layman was Watanabe Tenyô, the publisher of the Shanghai Review and

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the author of the article in *Sino-Japanese Art Monthly* who had urged the Sino-Japanese Art Society to expand its efforts. The 1936 booklet that he wrote, which is entitled *Mount Tendai*, describes how his group explored the temples, texts, images, and natural scenery of Mount Tiantai, thus learning about the more than one thousand years of Eastern culture, especially Buddhist culture, that Japan and China shared.\(^{428}\)

It goes on to recount the history of the mountain and its sacred sites and to recount the cultural exchange that occurred historically when the teachings of the Tiantai (Jp. Tendai) school of Buddhism were taken to Japan. The booklet also speaks to the relationship between Mount Tiantai and Chinese Buddhism as a whole, and it identifies the mountain’s beautiful sites and local specialty products.\(^{429}\)

The publication purports to be part of a series, for it bears the supplementary title *Survey of East Asian Holy Sites and Famous Mountains: First Compilation* (*Tô-A seiseki meizan taikan: dai yisshû* 東亞聖跡名山大覧・第一輯); however, it is effectively a tourist brochure designed to encourage Japanese Buddhists to consider joining future tours sponsored by the organization of which Watanabe was the manager--the Japan-China Holy Sites Inspection Group (Nikka Seiseki Shisatsudan 日華聖蹟視察團), which was a part of the East Asian Holy Studies Garden (*Tô-A Seigakuen* 東亞聖学苑). Based in Tokyo and Shanghai, the group sought the

\(^{428}\) Watanabe, *Tendaisan*, preface.

\(^{429}\) Ibid., 1-6.
guidance of the notable Japanese and Chinese Buddhists Tokiwa Daijô 常盤大定 (1870-1945), Mizuno Baigyô, and Wang Yiting, and it aimed to build upon recent exchanges between Buddhists in China and Japan, revive East Asian Buddhism, and develop China and Japan’s common, Eastern culture.\(^{430}\)

Wang Yiting’s guidance of the East Asian Holy Studies Garden’s inspection group manifested itself in several ways. Wang may have helped shape the itinerary of the group. On the fourth day of the tour the group visited the Shanghai Buddhist Devotees Club, the Buddhist Studies Press, and the Gongdelin restaurant. Wang also contributed to the publication of the group’s booklet through his paintings and calligraphy. Photographs of Mount Tiantai’s scenery, temple buildings, and Buddhist sculptures precede the booklet’s textual component, as do reproductions of three examples of Wang’s calligraphy and painting: *Take in the Scenery at Tiantai* (1936) (fig. 115), *My Buddha Comes Thusly* (undated) (fig. 116), and *Bodhidharma* (1935) (fig. 116). The placement of these works, the second of which is dedicated to Watanabe, between photographs of the religious establishment and natural scenery of Mount Tiantai, implies that Wang Yiting’s art is a natural, if modern, element of the mountain and the experience of it that the booklet purports to record. Another photograph in the booklet’s front matter demonstrates that, as Shigahara Ryôsai mentioned, Wang’s works did hang in the halls of Chinese Buddhist temples, in this

\(^{430}\) Ibid., 23.
case one on Mount Tiantai (fig. 117). In the picture Watanabe and a Chinese monk stand like attendant Bodhisattvas at the sides of one of Wang Yiting’s renderings of Bodhidharma.

**Paintings for Japanese Charitable Causes**

In addition to painting for and working with Japanese Buddhists after he rose to their attention in 1925, Wang also continued to undertake charitable work for Japanese beneficiaries. He did so primarily by producing paintings for victims of Japanese disasters. Four such paintings hang in the museum of the Tokyo Memorial Hall as part of a display dedicated to the memory of Wang Yiting (fig. 118). In the exhibit a glass case presents rubbings of the inscription on the Buddhist bell, and a brief biography accompanies a photograph of the artist. Hanging above the case are four paintings that, according to an explanatory label, Wang donated in 1931 to celebrate the completion of the new memorial (figs. 119-122).

Unusual in their ground and mounting, these works are well suited to serving a commemoratory function at the memorial. Unlike Wang Yiting’s other paintings, nearly all of which are executed on paper and mounted as hanging scrolls, handscrolls, albums, and fans, the pictures at the Memorial Hall are executed on silk. Paper was a medium better suited to Wang’s usual styles of writing and painting, which involved quick brushstrokes and the expressionistic (*xiéyì*) application of ink and color for rocks and plants. Traditionally in China silk was better suited to formal works in the meticulous (*gōngbì*) style and was the preferred ground for many large,
decorative, and commemorative works hung in temples and palaces. Wang’s paintings 
at the Memorial Hall are also framed for permanent display, like the calligraphy hung 
in Wu Jintang’s Spirit Moving Pavilion. As installed in the museum they hang 
together in a single, monumental display.

Like the Buddhist Bell, which prompted the construction of the memorial, 
Wang’s paintings also appear to serve the Buddhist function of expressing the donor’s 
wish to benefit the victims who are honored at the site. The most concrete statement 
of this function appears in the paintings’ seals. Each of the four works bears 
impressions of three of Wang Yiting’s seals. One identifies the painter, supplying 
Wang’s byname “White Dragon Mountain Man” (Bailongshanren 白龍山人); a 
second expresses the painter’s religious affiliation, reading “My Buddha” (Wo fo 我 
佛); and a third presents the artist’s name and the phrase “great benefit” (Wang Zhen 
dali 王震大利), probably indicating Wang’s desire that his act of donating the works 
and their continuing display at the memorial result in a positive karmic outcome.

Given that the memorial is dedicated to victims of Tokyo’s disasters, it would seem 
reasonable to presume that they must be the recipients to whom Wang directed his 
offering.

The pictorial content of Wang’s works lends itself to such a function. The four 
pictures depict Hanshan (fig. 119), Shide (fig. 120), Liu Hai (fig. 121), and Li Tieguai 李鐵拐 (fig. 122). Although the former two are Buddhist eccentrics, and the latter
two, Daoist immortals, formal properties of the paintings suggest they serve a common purpose. Liu Hai was traditionally understood to be an auspicious figure symbolic of money-making whose magical, three-legged toad frequently escaped into wells and had to be recaptured through the lure of a string of coins.\textsuperscript{431} In this painting, the toad has hopped across some rocks in a flowing river. Li Tieguai passes by a similar passage of water in his scene, carrying the items by which he is usually identified--a pilgrim’s gourd and an iron walking stick.\textsuperscript{432} An immortal whose spirit could leave his body at will, Li was traditionally depicted as a crippled beggar: he was thought to have been forced to inhabit a beggar’s corpse after a disciple, thinking that Li’s temporarily uninhabited body was dead, burned it. Like Liu Hai, Li Tieguai was an auspicious figure whom Wang frequently portrayed. \textit{Ink Marvels of the White Mountain Man} includes three versions of Liu Hai (fig. 123) and one of Li Tieguai (fig. 124).\textsuperscript{433} However, the figures in the 1925 catalog appear against a blank ground, unlike the ones in the paintings at the disaster memorial. There the figures stand and move laterally in spaces articulated by paths, flowing waters, trees, and rocks. These


\textsuperscript{432} Ibid., 166.

\textsuperscript{433} Wu Xiong, n.p.
landscape motifs are limited in number but recursive. By varying their arrangement in each picture, Wang Yiting introduces compositional variety while suggesting a unified environment across the four works and, perhaps, a common purpose.

It probably did not bother Wang Yiting that only two of the figures are properly Buddhist, the others being part of popular Daoism and expressing its promises of immortality and wealth. Wang probably accepted the sentiment expressed by Wu Changshi on *The Homeless* that Buddhist cultivation and generosity were tied not only to salvation from this world but also material prosperity within it. If Daoist figures expressed and invited wishes for the dead that were coextensive with Buddhist ones, then they only heightened the effectiveness of the work. Moreover, Wang Yiting had a history of applying unconventional figures--Buddhist eccentrics, foreign patriarchs, the homeless--to Buddhist ends. That Li Tieguai is an infirm beggar and that the other figures Wang depicts at the memorial also appear to be itinerant gives them a kinship with the victims of the Tokyo earthquake, who also were displaced.

Wang Yiting produced art for charity in Japan as late as 1934, when he sold works to benefit victims of the Muroto Typhoon. Documents preserved in the archives of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs not only record this forgotten act of charity but also reveal how the artist used his connections in Japanese business, government, and society to transform his paintings and calligraphy into a means of assisting disaster victims. On October 21 of 1934 a powerful typhoon swept northeast from the island of Shikoku to devastate the Kyoto-Osaka-Kobe region of
Honshū 本州, killing over 2000 people and injuring nearly 15,000. Within two days of the disaster Wang had donated fifty works of his own painting and calligraphy and two of his son’s to the Japanese consulate in Shanghai so that they might be sold in Japan and the proceeds sent to the disaster area.434 Ishii Itarô 石射猪太郎

(1887-1954), the Consul General in Shanghai, sent the paintings to Japan, and he wrote to the East Asian Bureau (Tô-A Kyoku 東亜局) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to suggest that the ministry discuss the matter with famous and important people in Japan familiar with Wang Yiting. Ishii mentions in particular that Yonesato Monkichi 米里紋吉田 (????-1936), a managing director of the Nisshin Steamship Corporation, is in Japan and familiar with the matter.435 Officers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs met at the ministry’s Cultural Projects Division to consult with Yonesatô, Tsuchiya Keizô, and representatives of the Japan-China Club, the East Asian Common Culture Association, the Japan-China Industrial Society, the Universal Benevolence Society, the Japan-China Study Association.436 The last four

434 Consul General Ishii Itarô 石射猪太郎 to East Asian Bureau Director Kuwajima 桑島, from Shanghai, October 23, 1934, correspondence, in Ishii Itarô and Hirota Kôki, Ō Ittei kizô shoga uriagekin Keihan suigai kyûsai e giken no ken, reference code B05016154900, Diplomatic Records Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo, Japan.

435 Ibid.

436 Foreign Minister Hirota Kôki 広田弘毅 to Consul General Ishii Itarô, from Tokyo, December 7, 1934, correspondence, in Ishii Itarô and Hirota Kôki, Ō Ittei kizô shoga uriagekin Keihan suigai kyûsai e giken no ken, reference code B05016154900, Diplomatic Records Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo, Japan.
of these organizations had welcomed Wang Yiting and other members of the Chinese delegation to the East Asian Buddhist Conference nine years before. By November 29 the paintings had been sold and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had engaged the Ministry of Home Affairs to send the money to the disaster area. On December seventh the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hirota Kôki 広田弘毅 (1878-1948), wrote to Consul General Ishii to inform him of the successful transfer of the funds and requested that Ishii thank Wang Yiting and forward to him a list of the names of the buyers of his works. The list includes the names of forty-two captains of industry and state. Naitô Hisahiro 内藤久寛 (1859-1945), for example, was the president of the Japan Oil Corporation (Nippon Sekiyu 日本石油). Several of the buyers were executives in businesses with which Wang had had ties as a comprador. Fukushima Kisaji 福島喜三次 (1881-1946) and Kaneko Kenjirô 金子堅次郎 (1887-1974) were executives in the Mitsui Trading Company (Mitsui Bussan Kogaisha 三井物産子会社).

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437 Ibid.; Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Shigemitsu Mamoru 重光葵 to Vice Minister of Home Affairs Tanba 丹羽, from Tokyo, November 29, 1934, correspondence, in Ishii Itarô and Hirota Kôki, Ô Ittei kizô shoga uriagekin Keihan suigai kyûsai e giken no ken, reference code B05016154900, Diplomatic Records Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo, Japan.

438 Foreign Minister Hirota Kôki to Consul General Ishii Itarô, correspondence.

439 “Ô Ittei shi shoga hikiukesha shimei” 王一亭氏書画引受者氏名, in Ishii Itarô and Hirota Kôki, Ô Ittei kizô shoga uriagekin Keihan suigai kyûsai e giken no ken, reference code B05016154900, Diplomatic Records Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo, Japan.
Fukao Ryutaro 深尾隆太郎 (1877-1948) had been an executive at Osaka Shipping and the Nisshin Steamship Corporation. Bureaucrats from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and political leaders also purchased Wang’s paintings. Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Shigemitsu Mamoru 重光葵 (1881-1957), who had served in the Japanese Consulate in Shanghai and would later serve as Minister of Foreign Affairs (1943-1945, 1954-1956), not only forwarded the funds from the sale of the paintings to the Home Ministry but also made a purchase himself. So too did the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal Makino Nobuaki 牧野伸顕 (1861-1949), who as an ally of Saionji Kinmochi had traveled to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 and had served as Foreign Minister. Others who purchased Wang’s works for charity included Banzai Rihachirô, the Marquis Hosokawa Moritatsu 細川護立 (1883-1970) (also a prominent patron of the arts), and Prince Konoe Fumimaro 近衛文麿 (1891-1945) (a protegé of Saionji Kinmochi who would later serve as Prime Minister three times between 1937 and 1941). Given the prominence of these men, it is not surprising that Wang Yiting’s paintings raised the very substantial sum of 1,580 yen.  

CONCLUSION

It is difficult to imagine another Chinese artist who could so swiftly set in motion the actions within the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs that led to the sale of Wang’s works for victims of the Muroto Typhoon. Had Wang not made himself one of Shanghai’s leading businessmen, not worked for Nisshin and helped found the China Industrial Development Company, not been vetted by Ariyoshi Akira and deemed credible to the then Minister of Foreign Affairs Makino Nobuaki, not been so central in the Sino-Japanese Art Society and helped Banzai Rihachirô bring to fruition the 1928 Sino-Japanese exhibition, not worked with Tsuchiya Keizô to welcome Saionji Kinmochi and so many other Japanese visitors to Shanghai, his delivery of paintings to the Japanese consulate in Shanghai might never have received the support of so many powerful Japanese men and raised such funds for charity. Wang stood in a unique position that was decades and many social and artistic exchanges in the making.

Wang Yiting was not alone in combining so many disparate activities and interests with art. Other men of his generation, particularly ones in Shanghai like Li Pingshu and Di Pinzi, became involved in business, revolutionary politics, national
essence art circles, Sino-Japanese art organization and exhibitions, Buddhism, and philanthropy. Like Wang, some of them also followed the approach to engagement with Japan that Sun Yat-sen had pursued, seeking the assistance of Japanese backers for projects that would benefit China. Wang did not discontinue this approach when he withdrew from the China Industrial Development Company; rather, he applied his understanding of how to work as an intermediary between Chinese and Japanese interests in business to the projects that were dear to him—the betterment of the artistic careers of his Chinese friends and colleagues, the preservation of traditional Chinese art and culture, the relief of suffering disaster victims in China and Japan, and the Buddhist salvation of all sentient beings. Wang combined his artistic abilities, his personal connections, and his managerial skills to make himself something other than a merchant or literatus of the past. He was an artistic entrepreneur and friend of Japan who understood better than any of his peers the art of Sino-Japanese exchange.
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