

The 1937 Trajectory of a Miniature Pagoda: Jade, Politics of the Nation, and an  
Exposition Attempt

Thesis

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By

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## Abstract

In the 1930s, a miniature jadeite pagoda traveled to several international expositions. Commissioned by the Shanghai jade merchant Zhang Wendi 張文棣 (1886-1961 or 1964), the pagoda seemed to captivate everyone who encountered it. When a group of bankers, politicians, and businessmen in Shanghai prepared a display for the 1937 Paris Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne, this object became a critical component of their contribution. The carving, the *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda* (翡翠寶塔, created between 1923-1933, collection of the Lizzadro Museum of Lapidary Art), never traveled to France. However, the vibrant “social life” of the pagoda—to use Arjun Appadurai’s term—over the course of 1937 functions as a unique case study to investigate the role of jade culture in the waning years of the Nanjing Decade (1927-1937). By employing the jade pagoda as a case study, I analyze the socioeconomic conditions that shaped its desirability across a vast range of social groups in the late 1930s.

In the introduction of this project, I sketch the history of the 1937 Paris Exposition, the history of jade in the material culture of present-day China, and the events in 1930 that preceded the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945). In so doing, I draw together ostensibly disparate narratives through which to understand the pagoda’s social life.

Chapter 1 analyzes the interest in the pagoda from a Shanghai-based group known as the Association for China's Participation in the Paris International Exposition. Their earnest attempts to secure Chinese representation of the pagoda at the Parisian world's fair ask us to analyze the factors that primed the positive reception of the carving. In Chapter 2, we remain in Shanghai, where numerous print culture materials disseminated images of the pagoda. The localizing function of these images and articles grounded a pre-Paris exhibition of jade objects firmly within a Shanghai-specific cultural imaginary.

In chapter 3, we turn to Beiping to analyze the role of jade at the hands of a controversial political body, the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council. In so doing, we examine the role of the arts within the council's undertakings to illuminate the surprising investment of HCPC chairman Song Zheyuan 宋哲園 (1885-1940) in visual culture. The exhibition organizing efforts of the council illuminate the council's understanding of their precarious position in between the central Guomindang government and the armed forces of Japan. My conclusion reflects on the enduring popularity of the jade pagoda during and after 1937 to the many "imagined communities" through which it traveled as an object of cultural soft power at the very end of the Nanjing Decade.

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## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgments.....	iiv
Vita.....	vi
Table of Contents .....	vii
List of Figures .....	viii
Chapter 1. Introduction .....	1
Chapter 2. Jade and Pagodas as National Products: Zhang Wendi’s Carving and the Shanghai Bourgeoisie .....	23
Chapter 3. The Jade Art Preview Exhibition: How the Pagoda’s Image Localized the Paris Expo in Shanghai .....	48
Chapter 4. Between a Stone and a Hard Place: The Hebei-Chaha’er Political Council and the Exhibition of Jade .....	69
Conclusion .....	97
Bibliography .....	101
Appendix A. Figures .....	116



## List of Figures

- Figure 1. *The Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda* (翡翠寶塔) (1923-1933), jadeite, teakwood, and cloisonné. The Lizzadro Museum of Lapidary Art, Oak Brook, Illinois. .... 116
- Figure 2. Two pages from Julean Arnold's pamphlet on the jade pagoda (1933)..... 117
- Figure 3. *Centennial Exhibition, Philadelphia: Seven-Story Chinese Pagoda, Main Building* (Albumen silver print, stereograph, 1876), Centennial Photographic Co., Philadelphia, active 1870s-1880s. Image and sheet (each): 3 7/8 × 3 1/8 inches (9.8 × 7.9 cm) Mount: 4 3/16 × 6 15/16 inches (10.7 × 17.7 cm). Collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art..... 118
- Figure 4. Tushanwan pagoda models from the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition. Collection of the SFO Museum, San Francisco ..... 119
- Figure 5. “Ta ying” 塔影 [Pagoda photography], *Guohuo yuebao* (Shanghai) 國貨月報 (上海) (1935): n.p., *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006 ..... 120
- Figure 6. “Bali guoji bolanhui” 巴黎國際博覽會 [The Paris International Exposition], *Wanyou huabao* 萬有畫報 3 (1937): n.p., *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006 ..... 121
- Figure 7. “Bali guoji bolanhui” 巴黎國際博覽會 [The Paris International Exposition], *Wanyou huabao* 萬有畫報 3 (1937): n.p., *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006 ..... 122
- Figure 8. “Yu zhan” 玉展 [Jade exhibition], *Liangyou huabao* 良友畫報 (1937): 32-33, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006 ..... 123

- Figure 9. “Yu zhan” 玉展 [Jade exhibition], *Liangyou huabao* 良友畫報 (1937): 32-33, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006 ..... 124
- Figure 10. “Yuyi yuzhan” 玉藝預展 [The jade art preview exhibition]. *Liangyou huabao* 良友畫報 (1937): 55. *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006..... 125
- Figure 11. Cover of March 1937 issue of *Liangyou huabao* featuring Gao Binyi. .... 126
- Figure 12. Cover of the March 1937 issue of *Libailiu* featuring the *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda*..... 127
- Figure 13. An illustrated news feature that depicts the *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda* in the March 1937 issue of *Shibao banyuekan* 實報半月刊..... 128
- Figure 14. Wu Baoji’s photographs of the Sun exhibition of jades, published in the April 10, 1937 issue of *Xin Zhonghua* 新中華 ..... 129
- Figure 15. Cover of the May 1937 issue of *Shaonian huabao* 少年畫報 ..... 130

## Chapter 1. Introduction

In October 2018, all was not right at the Oakland Museum of California. A news segment from the NBC Bay Area outlet reported on a contentious exchange between the institution and a woman named Mae Koh, who was frustrated with the actions taken by OMCA toward an object in its collection. Or, more precisely, Koh was angered by the museum's inactions. The OMCA had rejected Koh's proposal to relocate one of its holdings to a museum in her own Las Vegas. Now, Koh told NBC, she planned to sue the institution for "lack of fiduciary responsibility" toward this object, which was to be sent to a collection in Illinois rather than Nevada after its deaccession by the OMCA.<sup>1</sup> At the center of this conflict was the *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda* (翡翠寶塔, created between 1923-1933) (fig. 1), a five-foot miniature pagoda replete with a Chinese imperial iconographic program, a three-tiered platform, and a ceremonial archway. A jadeite, teakwood, and cloisonné artwork of about one thousand pieces, the pagoda was commissioned in the 1920s in China by Koh's late father, a Shanghai-based jade merchant named Zhang Wendi 張文棣 (1886-1961 or 1964) (also Chang Wen-ti or John Wen-ti Chang). In the 1930s, Zhang's pagoda had exhibited to dazzling international

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<sup>1</sup> "Bitter Battle Over Chinese Pagoda at Oakland Museum," NBC Bay Area, October 25, 2018, video clip, 2:27, [https://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/bitter-battle-over-chinese-pagoda-at-oakland-museum\\_bay-area/168270/](https://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/bitter-battle-over-chinese-pagoda-at-oakland-museum_bay-area/168270/).

acclaim in the Chicago Century of Progress Exposition, New York's Rockefeller Center, and the Golden Gate Exposition in San Francisco. Now, the carving languished in OMCA's storage. It was a fate that neither Zhang nor Koh could have imagined for *Altar*, whose technical sophistication and enormous stature produced nothing short of spectacle—so long as people could see it.

In this study, I look back to a nearly forgotten episode in the late 1930s, when the sheer sight of Zhang's pagoda commanded an astonishing degree of power that the sculpture has never again refracted. In the first months of 1937, an unlikely cast of characters in the political, military, and business worlds of Shanghai and Beijing collaborated to transport the pagoda to yet another international cultural event.<sup>2</sup> That occasion, the Paris Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne, ran from May 25 to November 25, 1937. I demonstrate how, in the late winter and spring of that year, a diverse network of individuals labored to claim a presence for China at the Exposition. In addition to Zhang Wendi, these actors included infamous mob boss Du Yuesheng 杜月笙 (1888-1951), Shanghai Bankers Association leader Lin Kanghou 林康候 (1875-1965), 29<sup>th</sup> Army commander Song Zheyuan 宋哲園 (1885-1940), and Chu Minyi 褚民誼 (1884-1946), the former Guomindang secretary-general.

Within the context of these efforts, I argue, both the conceptual object type of the jade pagoda and *Altar* itself came to stand in for the notion that China would—or

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<sup>2</sup> The city of Beijing was known as Beiping during the Republican era. *Jing* 京 in “Beijing” denotes a national capital; the capital city at this time was not Beijing as it is today, but rather Nanjing. For historical accuracy, I thus refer to Beijing as Beiping.

should—be present in Paris, then still considered the peerless hub of the international art world. Understood in this light, the prominence of Zhang’s pagoda was far from a foregone conclusion. The jade pagoda is a fundamentally strange object. Approximately six and a half feet wide and five feet tall at its broadest points, the pagoda defies historical jade carving conventions through its sheer enormity. Even the monumental jades produced under the Qing dynasty reign of the Qianlong Emperor (r. 1736-1795)—such as *Jade Mountain with Great Yu Controlling the Waters* and *Jade Mountain with the Nine Elders of Huichang* (both in the collection of the Beijing Palace Museum), which are several feet tall—barely compete with the square footage occupied by Zhang’s commission.

As distinctive in its iconography as in its scale, the pagoda has few visual precedents in the history of Chinese material culture. One known example, the jade pagoda at the museum of the University of Oregon, towers over its viewers (including its base, this pagoda is nine feet tall). This object was commissioned by the Kangxi Emperor (1661-1722) for his grandson, Qianlong. It is possible that this miniature pagoda served a ritual function, as Kangxi and Qianlong both held Buddhist beliefs. We can ascribe no such purpose to *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda*. Because Zhang commissioned the object while a devout Christian, his interest in pagoda imagery arose from nonreligious origins. That *Altar* uniquely combines famous imperial architectural referents with a pagoda tower further proves this point. Raised by a Methodist missionary named Mary M. Tarrant after his parents’ passing, Zhang was exposed to foreigners’ impressions of

China—then still the Qing empire (1644-1911)—from a young age.<sup>3</sup> Although we do not know if this exposure directly affected Zhang’s decision to design *Altar*, it likely influenced his choice to create something that, as he told Koh, “anyone looking at it would know that it was Chinese.”<sup>4</sup> In this thesis, I engage the perspectives of the pagoda’s many viewers to evaluate when, how, and why its “Chineseness” was mobilized for both domestic and international audiences.

The structuring method of this project relies on anthropologist Arjun Appadurai’s well-known contention that “commodities, like persons, have social lives.”<sup>5</sup> Appadurai argues that to understand the flow of material exchange, we must track the “trajectories” of specific objects, for “it is only through the analysis of these trajectories that we can interpret the human transactions and calculations that enliven things.”<sup>6</sup> The proximity of any given object to the category of commodity, Appadurai writes, may be evaluated in terms of the degree to which the object is marked by its exchangeability.<sup>7</sup> Here, Appadurai refers to the exchangeability of an object for another materially valuable thing. Because world’s fairs occasion the literal economic circulation of saleable goods, this logic of exchange characterizes many exposition displays.

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<sup>3</sup> According to Mae Chang Koh, Zhang’s parents perished in a battle relating to the Boxer Rebellion or the Russo-Japanese battle for Manchuria. See Koh, *The Magnificent Chinese Jade Pagoda: China’s Greatest Lost Treasure to the World* (self-pub., Xlibris, 2017) 7.

<sup>4</sup> Koh, *The Magnificent Chinese Jade Pagoda*, 9.

<sup>5</sup> Arjun Appadurai, “Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value,” in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, edited by Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge and NY: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 3.

<sup>6</sup> Appadurai, “Introduction,” 5.

<sup>7</sup> Appadurai, “Introduction,” 13.

As a commissioned object, *Altar* also came into being through processes of commodity flow. The pagoda is not an artwork, per se, as jades have not historically belonged to the Chinese artistic canon. As a result, *Altar* sits rather uneasily between various object types. I will demonstrate that this is not a weakness, however. The combined ambiguity and distinctiveness of the pagoda allowed the object to travel through a remarkable array of social groups while maintaining dazzling appeal to each. As such, the pagoda is not only uniquely equipped to guide us through the turbulent and dynamic months of 1937, but capable of engendering an intervention in extant literature on this period by virtue of its functions as a repository for fears and hopes about China's economy, autonomy, and international regard. For this reason, I follow historian Dorothy Ko, whose recent study of Qing inkstones "mak[es] the inkstone the protagonist of [her] book" in order to "introduce alternative standards of judgement" beyond those that arise from the history of literati culture and scholarship thereof.<sup>8</sup> Although historian Robert Findlay's study of Chinese ceramics ascribes less agency to objects, Findlay similarly intervenes in historical narratives by investigating how porcelain offers a unique lens onto "changes in commerce, art, and social values" over the course of world history.<sup>9</sup> My scope is much more limited than Findlay's, but I argue that objects of handicraft (*shougongyi* 手工藝) can illuminate historical developments in a similarly international

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<sup>8</sup> Dorothy Ko, *The Social Life of Inkstones: Artisans and Scholars in Early Qing China* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2017), 6.

<sup>9</sup> Robert Findlay, "The Pilgrim Art: The Culture of Porcelain in World History," *Journal of World History* 9, no. 2 (1998): 143.

field. In approaching the jade pagoda as a living thing, I am interested in the stories that it tells in its traversal of social spheres, both domestic and abroad.

A different order of exchangeability, one not strictly commercial, accounts for the appeal of Zhang's pagoda across national boundaries, cultural contexts, and varied social and political groups in the 1930s. In these instances, the *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda* was marked not by its monetary worth—although the carving's insurance value of two million *yuan* certainly permeated its press coverage—but its social capital. Mere weeks after the pagoda's completion in April 1933, at the invitation of Julean Arnold (1905-1946), the carving traveled to Chicago for display in the Century of Progress Exposition.<sup>10</sup> A commercial attaché who founded Shanghai's American Chamber of Commerce, Arnold collaborated with Zhang to produce an English-language pamphlet in celebration of the pagoda (fig. 2).<sup>11</sup> The pamphlet's language, which exalts *Altar* as “a worthy and striking exemplification of Chinese art” understood to comprise “the finest group of green jade works of art that has ever been produced....in China,” primed its readers to perceive *Altar* as both an artwork and a spectacle. Later viewers were similarly conditioned to associate the pagoda with the exposition event type, an association evidenced in numerous news reports that describe the carving by invoking its previous Chicago exhibition, its intended display in Paris, or both events. The newspaper articles,

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<sup>10</sup> For a biographical note on Julean Arnold, see “Register of the Julean Herbert Arnold papers,” Online Archive of California, Hoover Institution Library and Archives, 1998, [https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf500003tf/entire\\_text/](https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf500003tf/entire_text/).

<sup>11</sup> Published in English by Shanghai's Mercury Press, this pamphlet offers few clues in terms of its intended audience. Given Arnold's interest in bringing the pagoda to Chicago, it is probable that the pamphlet was designed with American readers in mind.



governmental communiqués, periodical texts, and pictorial magazines of this research corpus require us to analyze the pagoda according to the circumstances under which it was shown.

By definition, these circumstances were external to China, and yet they nonetheless occasioned the mobilization of *Altar*—and jade objects more broadly—by numerous domestic actors. In other words, the preparation to participate in the Paris Exposition was a nation-building exercise, as world’s fairs so often are. As exposition scholar Robert W. Rydell writes, “world’s fairs performed a hegemonic function precisely because they propagated the ideas and values of the country’s political, financial, corporate, and intellectual leaders and offered these ideas as the proper interpretation of social and political reality.”<sup>12</sup> Rydell describes American international expositions at the turn of the twentieth century, but this characterization also applies to the context in which business and political leaders prepared for Chinese representation in France. Metropolitan press coverage of these endeavors in turn legitimated and concretized their undertaking. Here, we may also invoke Benedict Anderson’s famous notion of the nation as an “imagined political community,” which materializes in the pictorial and journalistic coverage of the Shanghai display of *Altar* and other Paris-bound works.<sup>13</sup> This display was regularly characterized as being staged for the benefit of its anticipated visitors, who were sometimes identified as “fellow countrymen” (*guoren* 國

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<sup>12</sup> Robert W. Rydell, *All the World’s a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 3.

<sup>13</sup> For Anderson’s elaboration of the “imagined community,” see Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006), 6-7.

人). What is particularly interesting about the case of China's abortive attempt to participate in the Paris Exposition, however, is that it encompasses experiences of the nation that were both imagined and gravely literal. The seriousness of these implications is evidenced north China's roles in both the Japanese Nagoya Pan-Pacific Peace Exhibition (March-May 1937) and Paris Exposition preparations, for which the northern provinces were respectively presented as Japanese colonial holdings and inalienable constituents of the Chinese nation.

This project emerged from a conversation about American artists' reactions to the Paris Exposition, where the display of Pablo Picasso's paradigm-shifting *Guernica* changed the course of American leftist painting by demonstrating the execution of an antifascist message in a modernist idiom.<sup>14</sup> Might *Guernica*, my professor queried, have had a similar impact on Chinese painters? Her apt question gestured to the reality that the Paris Exposition took place amidst a turbulent confluence of global events marked by the rise of fascism in Germany, Italy, Spain, Japan, and indeed, it has been argued, China.<sup>15</sup> It is now a well-established fact that artistic production and visual culture were not spared by this trend. The summer of 1937 saw the organization of the Degenerate Art (Entartete Kunst) and Great German art exhibitions in Munich, for which Nazi leaders seized examples of both worthwhile and unacceptable stylistic languages, as standardized by the

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<sup>14</sup> I am grateful to Jody Patterson for introducing me to this art history and for posing the questions that prompted the development of this study.

<sup>15</sup> The question of whether Chiang Kai-shek's New Life Movement constituted fascism has been a subject of debate in historical scholarship on China. For a nuanced examination of this phenomenon, see Frederic Wakeman, Jr., "A Revisionist View of the Nanjing Decade: Confucian Fascism," *The China Quarterly* (1997) no. 150, Special Issue: Reappraising Republic China, 395-432.

cultural policies of the Third Reich.<sup>16</sup> The 1937 Paris Exposition has played an enduring part in scholarship on world's fairs and their nationalizing tendencies, in large part due to its infamous spatial showdown between the swastika-clutching eagle and Soviet laborers that crowned the pavilions of Germany and Stalin's USSR, respectively.<sup>17</sup>

My professor's question required that I establish a more basic fact—had China been present at the Paris exposition? Upon first consideration, the absence of a Chinese national pavilion from the Parisian maps in official exposition tourist guides suggests that China did not participate in the event. Within Anglophone scholarship, it seems that no research has moved past this appearance of absence, and for understandable reasons; the presence of national pavilions still characterizes scholarship on the Paris exposition and has come to be synonymous with the event. The national pavilion model, which first appeared in 1867, enjoyed varying degrees of presence in subsequent world's fairs. The 1937 Paris exposition, however, saw a record-high number of national pavilions, with 38

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<sup>16</sup> For an overview of the role of art in Hitler's ideology, see David Elliott, "The Battle for Art," in *Art and Power: Europe Under the Dictators, 1930-45*, edited by Dawn Ades (London: Thames and Hudson in association with Hayward Gallery, 1995), 31-35.

<sup>17</sup> The stainless-steel statue atop the Soviet pavilion, *Industrial Worker and Collective Farm Girl*, was made by sculptor Vera Mukhina (1889-1953). As Dawn Ades notes, the figures of the woman and man are rendered in equally active and dynamic terms. See Ades, "Art as Monument," in *Art and Power: Europe Under the Dictators, 1930-45*, edited by Dawn Ades (London: Thames and Hudson in association with Hayward Gallery, 1995), 50-56. The proximity of the Soviet Union and German pavilions at the 1937 exposition is commonly interpreted in terms of the political rivalry between the two countries and their respective promotion and condemnation of communism. See, for example, Kate Kangaslahti, *Efficacité / Efficacy: How To Do Things With Words and Images?* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 192, [https://doi.org/10.1163/9789401200738\\_015](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789401200738_015).

countries contributing pavilion displays.<sup>18</sup> This mode of participation has contributed to the general consensus that the nation itself constituted the defining commodity in Paris that year. As art historian Kate Kangaslahti writes, “Where once the expositions paraded fetish-commodities and consumerism as an aesthetic event, the *Exposition internationale* in 1937 bore witness to the aestheticization of politics and the fetishization of the nation.”<sup>19</sup>

In China in 1937, conceptualizations of the nation shifted as the period of the Nanjing Decade—the ten years bookended by the military victory of the Northern Expedition and the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945)—drew to a close. When Japanese forces invaded Manchuria in 1931-1932, established the “puppet” state of Manchukuo, and bombed Shanghai in 1932, they initiated a pattern of Japanese military threats to the Chinese body that persisted for the rest of the 1930s.<sup>20</sup> Remarkably, amidst these assaults, the Chinese government continued to present in both domestic and international exhibitions. In addition to the Chicago World’s Fair, China contributed to the well-known 1935 London International Exhibition of Chinese Art, which included domestic preview and “post-view” displays in Shanghai and Nanjing, respectively.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> See Eric Hobsbawm, “Foreword” in *Art and Power: Europe Under the Dictators, 1930-45*, ed. Dawn Ades (London: Thames and Hudson in association with Hayward Gallery, 1995), 11.

<sup>19</sup> Kangaslahti, *Efficacité*, 192.

<sup>20</sup> The notion of the puppet state has been contested for the ways in which it simplistically strips “puppet” actors of their agency. For one well-known example of this argument, see John Hunter Boyle, *China and Japan at War, 1937-1945: The Politics of Collaboration* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1972).

<sup>21</sup> See Ellen Huang, “There and Back Again: Material Objects at the First International Exhibitions of Chinese Art in Shanghai, London, and Nanjing, 1935-1936,” in *Collecting*

Other international shows of Chinese art were held in Paris, Berlin, and Moscow.

Domestically, the Second National Fine Art Exhibition, organized by the Ministry of Education, took place in 1937.

Given this documented history of Chinese interest in both national and international exhibitions of the 1930s, despite the ultimate absence of a pavilion structure, we may logically ask if China's government attempted a national presence in France. Certain strands of Chinese scholarship do reflect the perception that the *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda* traveled to Paris.<sup>22</sup> (To my knowledge, no primary sources corroborate this claim.) However, contemporaneous materials disseminated by the Chinese news media and pictorial press reveals a more complicated narrative. The truth of China's relationship to the Paris Exposition, rejected by the Executive Yuan governing body (*Xingzheng yuan*) but pursued by high-ranking public figures in positions of power, lies in between the two poles of complete absence and total presence.

Although the "unofficial" attempt to represent China in France ultimately did not succeed, we may analyze its history from the vantage point of the "non-event," a term used by art historian Craig Clunas to describe China's role at a different Parisian

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*China: The World, China, and a Short History of Collecting*, ed. Vimalin Rujivacharakul (Cranbury: University of Delaware, 2011), 138-152.

<sup>22</sup> See, for example, Hu Linhua 胡丽华 and Bian Shanbin 卞善斌, eds., *Wenhua Baoshan Tengchong* 文化保山騰沖 [Cultural Baoshan and Tengchong] (Kunming: Yunnan renmin chubanshe, 2013), 132. Another example can be found in Sun Guozhi 孫國志, *Feicui* 翡翠 [Jadeite] (Beijing: Zhongguo wenlian chubanshe, 2006), 307. Both sources explicitly refer to the presence of the jadeite pagoda at the 1937 Paris Exposition, although neither elaborate on this topic and refer to the pagoda's French display only in passing.

exposition in 1925.<sup>23</sup> As in 1925, the 1937 non-event was paradoxically characterized by a flurry of activity. Unlike in 1925, these efforts were indelibly marked by the conceptual, discursive, and literal presence of jade. One cannot investigate China's relationship to the 1937 Paris exposition without encountering descriptions of jades, as this corpus of sources will demonstrate. Many other object types were similarly mobilized in anticipation of exposition participation, but the historical record suggests that no medium or category attracted as much attention. The display of the *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda* partially accounts for this popularity. When the pagoda exhibited at a preliminary display of Paris-bound works at Shanghai's Sun Department Store, however, it was also accompanied by "hundreds" of other jade objects.<sup>24</sup> Consequently, the event was frequently identified in the Chinese press as "the jade show," a moniker that emblemizes the symbolic connective tissue between the precious stone and the world's fair.

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<sup>23</sup> Clunas's study focuses on the Exposition internationale des Arts décoratifs et industriels modernes à Paris, which took place from April to October 1925. Official governmental support for Chinese artists' participation in the event was also quite limited in this instance, restricted to the attendance of two officials and completely lacking in financial respects. See Craig Clunas, "Chinese Art and Chinese Artists in France, 1924-1925," *Arts asiatiques* 44 (1989): 100-106.

<sup>24</sup> This description, as part of a relatively comprehensive review of the preliminary display, is included in a March 1937 issue of the *North-China Herald*. This review also states that works of amber, turquoise, lapis lazuli, turquoise, and crystal were included in the exhibition. See "Priceless Jade on Display: Collection Destined for Paris Exhibition," *The North-China Daily Herald*, March 10, 1937, <https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1937.03.10>. Accessed April 3, 2022.

Highly valued yet notoriously difficult to manipulate, jade has never belonged to the category of fine art over the long course of Chinese art history.<sup>25</sup> Historical perceptions of jade thus raise questions. How did this tough, expensive stone, often relegated to the realm of the decorative, come to represent the attempted Chinese presence at the Paris fair?<sup>26</sup> To answer this question, chapter 1 situates jade within the

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<sup>25</sup> This claim warrants qualification because the development of the notion of “fine art” itself is a relatively recent one in Chinese art history. As art historian Cheng-hua Wang has demonstrated, the term *meishu* 美術 embodied ambiguous, even contradictory meanings after its arrival in Chinese discourse from Japan in approximately 1900, particularly because a host of other terms (*wenwu* 文物, *guwu* 古物, *guobao* 國寶) could also be applied to objects of visual and material culture. (These terms largely applied to historical objects rather than contemporary ones, however.) See Cheng-hua Wang, “New Printing Technology and Heritage Preservation: Collotype Reproduction of Antiquities in Modern China, circa 1908-1917,” in *The Role of Japan in Modern Chinese Art*, edited by Joshua A. Fogel (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2012), 293-294.

<sup>26</sup> I am grateful to Julia Andrews for pointing out how arguably strange it was that jade became a representative category of display for an exposition, an event type usually characterized by the display of innovative and adaptable technologies. Interestingly, however, the 1930s saw important developments in scholarship on jades in non-Chinese contexts, suggesting a possible new appreciation for jade’s role in the formation of national heritage in several countries. Jade (specifically, nephrite)—now the official stone of Wyoming—was found in the state in 1936. Additionally, Japanese jadeite objects, until that point long thought to have been crafted from raw Chinese jade, were in 1939 newly traced back to a source near Niigata Prefecture. The site of Itoigawa within this prefecture has since been dubbed a “Global Geopark” by UNESCO, who refer to Itoigawa’s role in the formation of the “world’s oldest jade culture.” See “Itoigawa UNESCO Global Geopark (Japan),” UNESCO, <https://en.unesco.org/global-geoparks/itoigawa>. Jadeite from this site was linked to burial jades from as long ago as 4000 B.C.E. See Kazuya Chihara, “Jade in Japan,” in *Jade*, ed. Roger Keverne (New York: Springer Science + Business Media, 1991), 216. It seems—perhaps because of this longstanding association of Japanese jade production with Chinese materials—that jade did not figure significantly in Japanese contributions to world’s fairs in the early twentieth century. Japan’s display at the Century of Progress Exposition, for instance, offered an array of export objects that consisted of silks, cloisonné, and porcelain. This same event also featured a Manchuria pavilion as part of Japan’s contribution, a component through which, as Kari Shepherdson-Scott has shown, the Japanese government attempted to naturalize their military occupation and political subjugation of

history of the National Products Movement (國貨運動), the term given to the repeated and sustained call in the early twentieth century for Chinese people to restrict their consumption to Chinese-made goods. Although the Chinese jade industry suffered in the immediate wake of the dynasty-toppling Xinhai Revolution (1911-1912), the trade was briefly rejuvenated in the Republican period (1912-1949). With the end of the dynastic system, jade objects began to lose their imperial associations.<sup>27</sup> Additionally, the development of new technologies for manipulating jade increased the number of objects that commercial workshops were able to create.<sup>28</sup> According to one study, in the year 1930, about 6,000 artisans were employed in the jade industry.<sup>29</sup> Taken in sum, these aspects of jade's role in Republican visual culture illustrate the medium's conceptual evolution at this historical moment. Previously accessible only to the highest-ranking elites, jades in this slightly more mainstream market maintained high standards of quality, particularly as the dissolution of imperial workshops forced master craftsmen into the

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“Manchukuo.” See Shepherdson-Scott, “Conflicting Politics and Contesting Borders: Exhibiting (Japanese) Manchuria at the Chicago World’s Fair, 1933-34,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 74, no. 3 (2015): 544. Scott also notes the attention lavished upon *Altar* during its Chicago display. Taken together, these dimensions of the event indicate that the Chinese and Japanese exposition displays may have implicitly reinforced the association of jade with China, although this is a speculative claim that merits earnest investigation in a separate study.

<sup>27</sup> Yang Deli 杨德立 and Yang Mingyue 杨明月, eds., *Zhongguo gu yu he yu wenhua* 中國古玉和玉文化 [China’s archaic jades and jade culture] (Kunming: Yunnan keji chubanshe, 2017), 109.

<sup>28</sup> Charles Q. Mason, *Spinach Green and Mutton-fat White: Chinese Jades of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911)* (Gainesville, FL: Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art, University of Florida, 2006), 59.

<sup>29</sup> Yang Deli and Yang Mingyue, *Zhongguo gu yu he yu wenhua*, 110.



commercial world.<sup>30</sup> Against this backdrop, chapter 1 argues, jade accrued the requisite rhetorical pliability to be reconceptualized as a “handicraft” (*shougongyi* 手工藝) that was also distinctly “Chinese.”

Jade’s history in present-day China spans approximately seven millennia. Nephrite, a silicate of calcium and magnesium belonging to the amphibole family, is arguably the best known of the minerals encompassed by the English word “jade.”<sup>31</sup> Beginning with nephrite’s use as both decoration and tool in the Neolithic Period (ca. 5000-2100 BCE), jade evolved to emblemize wealth and cultural sophistication over the course of succeeding centuries.<sup>32</sup> The stone has also been associated with religious thought on longevity for thousands of years. For example, in discussing the role of jade in the famous Mancheng tombs of Prince Liu Sheng of Zhongshan (d. 113 BCE) and his wife, Dou Wan, art historian Wu Hung links the presence of jade in the corpses’ jade “suits” and *bi* disks to a renewed interest in stone as a building material in the second and first centuries BCE, during which time stone became more strongly associated with immortality.<sup>33</sup> No longer merely an “infinitely prolong[ed] life” but rather an emancipation from corporeality, immortality itself also took on new dimensions.<sup>34</sup> Within

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<sup>30</sup> Yang Deli and Yang Mingyue, *Zhongguo gu yu he yu wenhua*, 109.

<sup>31</sup> Oxford Art Online/Grove Art Online, s.v. “Jade,” Elisabeth West Fitzhugh, last updated November 9, 2009, <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.article.T043200>, accessed March 2, 2022.

<sup>32</sup> Mason, *Spinach Green*, 7.

<sup>33</sup> *Bi* disks are flat, circular objects that date as far back as the Neolithic period in present-day China. Thought to once symbolize the divinity of heaven, *bi* disks evolved to bear more decorative connotations over the course of centuries.

<sup>34</sup> Wu Hung, “The Prince of Jade Revisited: The Material Symbolism of Jade as Observed in Mancheng Tombs,” in *Chinese Jades: Colloquies on Art & Archaeology in*

this context, jade accrued cultural value for its scarcity, hardness, and attractiveness. Its uses in the burial procedures of Liu Sheng and Dou Wan turned the corpse into “less a body of flesh vulnerable to physical decay, but more and more like a solid statue untouchable by time or the elements.”<sup>35</sup> The prized value of jade thus became a key dimension of the process through which the body’s morality was overcome.

Additionally, nephrite has long been known to possess Confucian connotations. Jade scholar Na Zhiliang notes an early literary reference to the association of jade and virtue, commenting that the “[Account of] Jade Dressing Ornaments from the *Book of Rites (Li [Ji])* (ca. second century A.D.) states that in more ancient times it was customary for a gentleman to be adorned with... jade decorative ornaments, and, indeed, his virtues as a gentleman were measured by his jade pendants.”<sup>36</sup> This association between gentlemanly qualities and jade derived from the physical attributes of the stone, the shine, hardness, brightness, and transparency of which relate to virtues of intelligence, purity, sincerity, and moral uprightness through a Confucian lens.<sup>37</sup>

For much of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911 CE), patrons, artisans, and consumers enjoyed unprecedented access to high-quality jade, and carvers maintained a high level of technical prowess.<sup>38</sup> This era thus constitutes the zenith of Chinese jade production in the

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*Asia No. 18*, ed. Rosemary E. Scott (London: Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art, 1995), 155.

<sup>35</sup> Wu Hung, “The Prince of Jade Revisited,” 159.

<sup>36</sup> Na Zhiliang (also Na Chih-liang), “Introduction,” in *The Splendor of Jade: Four Thousand Years of the Art of Chinese Jade Carving*, ed. J.J. Schedel (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co, Inc., 1974), 12.

<sup>37</sup> See Jill Walker, “Jade: A Special Gemstone,” in *Jade*, ed. Roger Keverne (New York: Springer Science + Business Media, 1991), 32.

<sup>38</sup> Mason, *Spinach Green*, 7.

eyes of many scholars.<sup>39</sup> During this time, jadeite (*feicui* 翡翠), a second stone now encompassed by the term “jade,” came to play a more prominent role in Chinese jade culture. The use of jadeite increased during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when strained diplomatic relations between the Qing court and Central Asian states interrupted the flow of the empire’s nephrite supply.<sup>40</sup> From a sociopolitical and art-historical vantage point, it is significant that Zhang purchased jadeite as the base material for the *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda*.<sup>41</sup> During the 18<sup>th</sup>-century reign of the Qianlong Emperor, a ruler “inflicted with an obsession with jade,” Qianlong ordered the extraction of nephrite from Hetian in southwestern Xinjiang following military campaigns that imposed settler-colonial rule on the area’s Zunghar Mongolian people.<sup>42</sup> This violent incorporation of nephrite-rich regions into the Qing empire was followed by the presentation of jadeite from Myanmar as tribute to Qianlong in 1788.<sup>43</sup> After this

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<sup>39</sup> Na Zhiliang and jade scholar Yang Boda, for instance, both describe the Qing dynasty in this way. See Na, “Introduction,” 17, and Yang Boda, “The Glorious Age of Chinese Jades,” in *Jade*, ed. Roger Keverne (New York: Springer Science + Business Media, 1991), 145-184.

<sup>40</sup> Alongside jadeite, the use of such stones as rose quartz, carnelian, lapis lazuli, agate, and amethyst also increased at this time. See Mason, *Spinach Green*, 52.

<sup>41</sup> In tracing the role of jade in present-day China from its first uses in the Neolithic Period (ca. 5000-2100 BCE) through its heyday in the middle of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911 CE), Charles Q. Mason writes that nephrite “has always been the most important jade stone used in China” beginning with its rise to popularity in the Bronze and Iron Ages and through the Song, Yuan, and Ming dynasties. See Mason, *Spinach Green*, 9.

<sup>42</sup> Henrik Kloppenborg Møller recently characterized the Qianlong Emperor in this manner in reference to the fact that jade constituted the subject of over 600 of the emperor’s poems. See Møller, *Spectral Jade: Materiality, Conceptuali[z]ation, and Value in the Myanmar-China Jadeite Trade*, diss., Lund University, 2019, 118. For more information on Xinjiang and the Qing Empire, see Kwangmin Kim, Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Asian History, s.v. “Xinjiang Under the Qing,” last updated March 28, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277727.013.13>.

<sup>43</sup> Møller, *Spectral Jade*, 118-119.

introduction of the stone to Qianlong, jadeite became associated with the Qing empire. “A foreign commodity,” Henrik Kloppenborg Møller argues, “[jadeite] was locali[z]ed by incorporating it into the generic category of jade (*yu*).”<sup>44</sup> In this sense, both nephrite and jadeite underwent processes of imperial assimilation in the mid-to-late eighteenth century.

The naturalization of jadeite into the category of “jade” was further solidified by the establishment of a transportation route for the mineral from Myanmar’s Kachin region to Chinese workshops. In 1915, when Zhang Wendi purchased five pieces of jadeite, each weighing between twelve to eighteen hundred pounds, from a nine-ton jadeite boulder mined in Myanmar, the stones may have followed this route to China.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Møller, *Spectral Jade*, 118-119.

<sup>45</sup> In a 1933 article about the pagoda, Zhang attributed the discovery of the jadeite boulder in Myanmar to “mineral masters” (鑛師) Li Benren 李本仁 and Liu Baochen 劉寶臣. See Zhang Wendi, “Zhijiage bolanhui zhi Zhongguo jianzhu: jiqizhen feicui san jue zhi diao zhi jingguo: baota gong deng ji paifang,” 芝加哥博覽會之中國建築: 紀奇珍翡翠三絕之雕制經過: 寶塔宮燈及牌坊 [Chinese architecture at the Chicago exposition: the process of carving the three jadeite rarities: the pagoda tower, palace lamps, and *paifang*], *Kexue zhishi* 科學知識 3 (1933): n.p., *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006. Born into a family in poverty, Li Benren (?-1937) left home at age thirteen and went to Bhamo, Myanmar in search of work, where he eventually became familiar with the jade industry through contact with merchants before excavating Zhang’s jadeite boulder in collaboration with Liu. See Wu Mingxin 伍茗欣, *Miandian huaqiao huaren shihua* 緬甸華僑華人史話 [History of overseas Chinese in Myanmar] (Guangzhou: Guangdong jiaoyu chubanshe, 2018), 105. Both Li and Liu were born in Tengchong, a city located in western Yunnan Province. The men are described as two of Tengchong’s “jadeite kings” (翡翠大王) in a recent volume from city’s municipal committee and Social Science Association. See *Tengchong shihua* 騰沖史話 [The history of Tengchong] (Kunming: Yunnan remin chubanshe, 2017), 99.

A remarkably symmetrical and meticulously crafted object, Zhang's pagoda mesmerizes viewers with its size, complexity, and luster.<sup>46</sup> The variegated hue of its precisely crafted jadeite, described as apple-colored for the stone's yellow-toned blushes of green, also reveals modulated shades of mint and milky white that contrast with the golden-brown richness of the pagoda's teakwood-and-cloisonné platform. The curves of the pagoda's upturned eaves, eight finial chains, and bells contrast with the angularity of the platform's railings and diminutive staircases. After purchasing the jadeite from which the pagoda was carved, Zhang began researching a vision for his new acquisition, traveling throughout China to visit and observe various architectural structures before developing a design. Between 1923 and 1933, a team of 150 artisans then carried out Zhang's vision over the course of ten years of craftsmanship. The results of their labor index a remarkable fidelity to the pagoda's real-life architectural precedents. The platform nods to the Hall of Supreme Harmony (太和殿) in Beijing's Forbidden City through its three-tiered structure and ornamental open-mouthed dragon heads. A fifteen-and-a-half-inch-tall ceremonial archway (*pailou* 牌樓), comprised of 55 discrete carved pieces, derives from that of the Lake of Ten Thousand Ages on the grounds of the Beijing Yiheyuan Summer Palace. The tower itself resembles Longhua Pagoda (龍華塔) in Xuhui, Shanghai, in its octagonal floor layout and seven-story height.<sup>47</sup> By Zhang's

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<sup>46</sup> *Altar* is comprised of approximately 1,000 individual pieces. The elevation of the display case raises the pagoda above human height, requiring viewers to look up to perceive its full height.

<sup>47</sup> Although the pagoda was purportedly built by Sun Quan during the Three Kingdoms period, it is more likely to have been constructed during the tenth century based upon the dates of documented references made to the temple. On this basis, Eric Danielson argues

design and the carvers' execution, the *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda* thus synthesizes in jadeite some of the most famous architectural structures in present-day China.

In the spring of 1937, the image of this architecturally composite object appeared frequently in pictorial publications from the Shanghai press.<sup>48</sup> Chapter 2 analyzes five case studies from the pictorial press that focus on the jade pagoda's exhibition in Shanghai with little to no mention of the Paris Exposition. These examples—from *Liangyou huabao* 良友畫報 (*The Young Companion*), *Libailiu* (禮拜六) (*The Chinese Saturday Post*), *Shibao banyuekan* 實報半月刊 (*Factual News Bimonthly*), *Xin Zhonghua* 新中華 (*New China*), and *Shaonian huabao* 少年畫報 (*Youth Pictorial*)—depict the pagoda through photography, *manhua* 漫畫 illustration, or a combination of both mediums, to laud its beauty and technical sophistication. In this chapter, I argue that this mediation of the pagoda's image naturalized *Altar* as a visual and material synecdoche of the French occasion. As a result, these print culture materials reflect the localization of the Paris Exposition in Shanghai.

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that the Longhua Pagoda and temple complex are probably about nine hundred years old, likely constructed during the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1126 CE). In its modern historical life, the complex was badly damaged in the mid-nineteenth century during the Taiping Rebellion and underwent significant restoration between 1871 and 1899. In 1912, shortly after the Xinhai Revolution toppled the Qing dynasty, soldiers occupied the temple as a garrison. The subsequent damage wrought to the complex was repaired in 1920. See Eric N. Danielson, "How Old is Shanghai's Longhua Temple?" *Journal of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 43 (2003): 17-18, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23890334>.

<sup>48</sup> One of these publications, *Shibao banyuekan*, was produced in Beijing rather than in Shanghai, but this proves to be the exception to the rule.

Chapter 3 moves away from Shanghai to examine the life of the Paris Exposition in the hands of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council (冀察政務委員會, HCPC), a Beiping military and political entity. The HCPC was primarily tasked with communication with the encroaching Japanese army for approximately a year and a half before the July 7, 1937 Marco Polo Bridge Incident initiated war. I will demonstrate the HCPC also played a surprisingly involved role in the attempt to secure a presence for China in France. The council ultimately collected as many as 2,000 potential submissions for the exposition, held a preliminary exhibition of the objects in Beiping's Zhongshan Park, and organized a second preliminary display after doubts about China's exposition representation were raised.<sup>49</sup> At the first Beiping display of Paris-ready objects, one venue hall was dedicated to carvings, including jades. Newspaper reports reveal that the unrealized second display was intended to consist largely of jade objects. Interestingly, an oral history of the Beiping jade industry suggests that HCPC chairman Song Zheyuan was personally attracted to the object type of the jade pagoda. Although evidence for this claim is inconclusive, threads of Chinese scholarship of the past two decades perpetuate the association between a jade pagoda and Song. In chapter 3, I explore the unexpected instrumentality of jade as perceived by a controversial governing body in constant negotiation of its precarious position between Japan and Nanjing.

Collectively, the presence of the jade pagoda within these discursive spheres—as both a literal, physical object and an object type or idea—requires our engagement with

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<sup>49</sup> Some newspaper reports estimate that the council received 1,500 objects, others give a figure of 2,000. The reasons for this discrepancy are as yet unknown.

the pagoda's "trajectory," to use Appadurai's term. In what follows, we will trace the stories of the pagoda's social life and its perceived value therein. By employing periodical publications, pictorials, government documents, and journalism, each of the following chapters situates Zhang's pagoda within a different dimension of this historical episode. In sum, this method promotes our interpretation of the role of artistic production and visual culture on the brink of the Second Sino-Japanese War to understand why it was that so many people should have cared so deeply for this strange jade object.



## Chapter 2. Jade and Pagodas as National Products: Zhang Wendi's Carving and the Shanghai Bourgeoisie

1923-1933, the decade during which the *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda* was carved, bore witness to a complex series of events that triggered seismic changes in Chinese social life, economic trends, and political formation. The developments of this period, most famously Chiang Kai-shek's 蔣介石 (1887-1975) reestablishment of the Guomindang government, the Japanese invasion of Manchuria, and Japan's bombing of Shanghai, also included an evolution in the methods and function of anti-Japanese boycotting, the wide-ranging effects of the National Products Movement (國貨運動), and the brief assumption of national leadership by the politician Wang Jingwei 汪精衛 (1883-1944). Over the course of the 1930s, the Japanese military enacted a program of increasing violence that finally culminated in the July 1937 outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War. These years of tumult did remarkably little to obstruct China's participation in international cultural events. China appeared in the 1933-34 Chicago Century of Progress World's Fair, the 1935 London International Exhibition of Chinese Art, and the Golden Gate Exposition in 1939. What is more, beginning immediately after the 1933 completion of the pagoda, *Altar* became synonymous with the concept of a national Chinese exposition display. The exhibition of the pagoda at international venues

during this decade—Chicago, New York’s Rockefeller Center, and San Francisco—concretized and legitimated the prospect of Chinese national participation in those occasions.

Although *Altar* never indeed traveled to the 1937 Paris Internationale Exposition, the sheer articulation of the intention merits critical examination for the perhaps unlikely cast of characters it summoned. In the case of the Paris Exposition, the attempt to represent the country through the jade pagoda was undertaken despite the indifference—if not opposition—indicated by the Executive Yuan (*Xingzheng yuan*), one of the nation’s highest governing bodies.<sup>50</sup> Curiously, however, the individuals who ultimately labored for Chinese representation in Paris still amounted to some of the nation’s most powerful men. Many of them worked within municipal and national bureaucratic structures that reported to Nanjing, the seat of Guomindang power. Pan Gongzhan 潘公展 (1895-1975), one of these protagonists, served as chief of the Social Affairs Bureau. Another key Paris Exposition organizer, Chu Minyi 褚民誼 (1884-1946), had in the mid-1930s served as the Executive Yuan secretary general. Bankers, politicians, businessmen, and industrialists, these actors largely constituted some of the most high-profile representatives of the group once termed the “Shanghai capitalists.”<sup>51</sup> Over the course of their careers, they also contributed to the activities, discourse, and aims of the National

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<sup>50</sup> The Executive Yuan ultimately declined the French government’s invitation to participate in the exposition, although a different perspective will be addressed later in this chapter.

<sup>51</sup> This term is used by Parks M. Coble, Jr., in Coble’s important book, *The Shanghai Capitalists and the Nationalist Government, 1927-1937* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1986).

Products Movement, the name given to a series of early-twentieth-century trends through which Chinese consumer culture promoted the consumption of domestic goods over imported products from Japan, the United States, and other imperialist powers.

The premise undergirding this chapter maintains that because the Shanghai capitalists maintained close yet fraught relationships to Chiang's leadership in the Guomindang, this group's desire to display the pagoda must be understood alongside the broader economic motivations and political affiliations of its members. To an extent, the Exposition-oriented interests of these men may reflect the deep divisions over economic policy among high-ranking Nationalist officials during the Nanjing Decade (1927-37). One of the most fundamental of these conflicts was that between military leader Chiang and the supporters of politician Wang Jingwei, whose goals for China's economic modernization centered on the notion of a *minzu* economy.<sup>52</sup> Wang is most remembered as the leader of the infamous Reorganized National Government (RNG), a Japanese collaboration regime established in 1940. In earlier years, however, Wang's intended economic reforms offered the possibility of cooperation with the Shanghai capitalists, a potential that far surpassed Chiang's degree of willingness to engage the treaty-port bourgeoisie.<sup>53</sup> Indeed, of the group that participated in the efforts to organize a Chinese exposition display for Paris, several key individuals affiliated themselves with the Wang

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<sup>52</sup> Margherita Zanasi, *Saving the Nation: Economic Modernity in Republican China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 3. The concept of the *minzu* (literally, "nation," "nationality," or "ethnic group") economy will be elaborated later in this chapter.

<sup>53</sup> Historians Marie-Claire Bergère and Parks M. Coble, Jr. have demonstrated the damaging effects of Chiang's leadership on the world of Shanghai industrialists, bankers, and businessmen.

regime in the years following the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945).<sup>54</sup> These evolving alliances should not be taken wholesale as a break, a postwar ideological rupture, but rather a continuation of the estrangement of the Shanghai bourgeoisie from the Guomindang under Chiang.

Against this backdrop, the proximity of certain of the Shanghai capitalists to ideological fractures in the GMD speaks to the necessity of analyzing the jade pagoda within the historical motivations of its exhibition organizers. In order to examine the political mobilization of *Altar*, this chapter first introduces the Association for China's Participation in the Paris International Exposition and its activities. Next, it broadens focus for a brief look at the presence of pagoda imagery in international exhibitions and fairs in the first few decades of the twentieth century. It then surveys the Republican-era role of the jade carving industry. By next introducing the National Products Movement, I suggest that pagoda images and the jade industry were—like most other objects of material culture—conceptually pliable enough to be rebranded under the umbrella category of “national goods,” a rhetorical reconfiguration that at least partially accounts for the prominent place of both pagoda structures and jades in domestic and international Chinese exhibition representation in the early twentieth century. By considering the role of the Shanghai economic elite in both the National Products Movement and the Association for China's Participation in the Paris Exposition, I sketch the contours of the

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<sup>54</sup> In the most explicit articulation of alliance with Wang, Chu Minyi became the Foreign Minister of the RNG following his expulsion from the Guomindang in 1939.

socioeconomic conditions that primed Shanghai's leading bankers and businessmen to light upon the jade pagoda as an emblematic Chinese exposition display.

In the mid-to-late 1930s, an enigmatic chain of social connections brought jade merchant Zhang Wendi and his jadeite pagoda to the attention of an organization known as the Association for China's Participation in the Paris Exposition (*Zhongguo canjia Bali guoji bolanhui xiehui*, hereafter simply "the Association.") The Association comprised the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce, the National Federation of Chambers of Commerce, and the Shanghai Bankers Association, along with another organization identified as the Chinese World Cultural Organization (*Shijie wenhua hezuo Zhongguo xiehui*). The executive committee that presided over the Association included active participation from its chief representative, Chu Minyi, as well as Pan Gongzhan; Shanghai Chamber of Commerce leader Wang Xiaolai 王曉籟 (1886-1967); the prominent banker and Shanghai Bankers Association secretary general Lin Kanghou 林康侯 (1875-1965); and the politician Li Shizeng 李石曾 (1881-1973). "Leaders in culture, education, and industry," including Qian Xinzhi 錢新之 and Green Gang leaders Zhang Xiaolin 張嘯林 and Du Yuesheng 杜月笙 as well as Lin Kanghou and Wang Xiaolai all served as "Shanghai community leaders" who participated in the development of a plan to represent China at the Paris Exposition through the display of Zhang's jade pagoda, in addition to other numerous exhibits.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> This list of names was reported in an article in the Shanghai-based periodical *New Medicine Monthly* (*Xin yao yue bao*). See Sun Yunxiang 孫雲翔, "Chu Minyi xiansheng yin zheng pin yan ke" 褚民誼先生因徵品宴客 [Mr. Chu Minyi held a banquet for the

Over the course of its existence, the Association undertook extensive efforts to circumvent the Executive Yuan's decision to abstain from participation in the Paris Exposition. The head organizing representatives maintained an office in the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce.<sup>56</sup> The group petitioned the Ministry of Education to order universities nationwide to select "high-quality objects and exhibits" (literally, "competitions," *sai* 賽) for exhibition in the exposition in order to "bring glory to our country" (揚我國光云云).<sup>57</sup> The success of the Association in petitioning the Ministry of Education is evidenced by orders signed by Minister of Education Wang Shijie 王世傑 (1891-1981). These were circulated in such university publications as the journal of Guangzhou's Jinan University, for example, which published the order and reported on the participation of prominent educator, political official, and theorist Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培 in the Association's efforts.<sup>58</sup> In other instances, the journal of Tongji University in

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collection of exposition objects], *Xin yao yuebao* 新藥月報 (1937): n.p., *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

<sup>56</sup> Interestingly, other figures with more direct ties to the Shanghai art world, including Wang Yiting and Ye Gongchuo, were both present at this event. Seated at a table with Li Shizeng, they reportedly discussed painting techniques. See Sun, "Chu Minyi xiansheng yin zheng pin yan ke," *Xin yao yuebao* 新藥月報 (1937): n.p.

<sup>57</sup> "Zhengqiu Bali guoji bolanhui ji quanguo di er ci meizhan wupin," 征求巴黎國際博覽會及全國第二次美展物品 [Seeking art objects for the Paris International Exposition and the Second National Fine Art Exhibition], *Zhonghua zhoukan* 中華週刊 (1937): 2, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

<sup>58</sup> See Wang Shijie, "Jiaoyu bu xunling" 教育部訓令 [Order from the Ministry of Education], *Jinan xiao kan* 暨南校刊 (1937): 1, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

Shanghai and Nanjing's National Sun Yat-Sen University published the order alongside four pages of guidelines for exhibits that could be submitted to the Association for consideration for the Paris fair. Within the category of art (藝術品), acceptable objects included famous modern paintings, "excellent" (優良) sculpture, lacquerware, bronze wares, and porcelain, scenery paintings, dances, musical instruments, and "crafts with artistic qualities" (含有藝術性之工品). Reports in the French news media suggest that among these objects, however, it was Zhang's jade pagoda that garnered international fame.<sup>59</sup>

On February 20, 1937, the Association convened a meeting at the Shanghai YMCA to discuss plans to send a Chinese exhibit to the 1937 Paris International Exposition. According to one report, over a hundred businessmen and reporters attended the meeting. Lin Kanghou presided over the event and "pointed out the great influence that China's contribution will have in promoting continued and even closer cultural and economic relations between China and France."<sup>60</sup> For his part, Zhang Wendi announced a plan to charge an admission fee for the pagoda's pre-Paris preliminary display, an

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<sup>59</sup> See "Un pagoda de jade..." [A jade pagoda], *La Tribune de l'Aube*, March 18, 1937, RetroNews, <https://www.retronews.fr/journal/la-tribune-de-l-aube/18-mars-1937/1217/3037693/2>. See also "Le Coin de l'Exposition" [Exposition corner], *Le Figaro*, March 27, 1937, RetroNews, <https://www.retronews.fr/journal/le-figaro-1854-27-mars-1937/104/542987/2>.

<sup>60</sup> The Y.M.C.A. was located at 123 Boulevard de Montigny. See "China Sending Art Objects to Paris show: Nation's Participation is Discussed at Reception – Jade Pagoda is Displayed – Chinese and Frenchmen Attend Gathering at Chinese Y.M.C.A.," *The China Press (1925-1938)*, Feb 21, 1937, *ProQuest*, <http://proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/historical-newspapers/china-sending-art-objects-paris-show/docview/1371774846/se-2?accountid=9783>.

exhibition that was to open the following month. By the time of the meeting, the Association had already received a portion of the works intended for display in Paris, which included *Altar* and an additional “forty or fifty jade articles of all sizes and tremendous value.”<sup>61</sup> Just over two weeks later, Shanghai’s *Shen Bao* newspaper reported on the upcoming preliminary exhibition of Paris-bound jades and attributed the event to the joint efforts of Zhang Wendi and the Association, whose members had visited the exhibition venue—the gallery on the fourth floor of the Sun Department Store on Nanjing Road—the previous day to fix up the room in preparation.<sup>62</sup> When the preview exhibition opened in early March, Chu Minyi personally came in from Nanjing to host its opening celebration.<sup>63</sup>

Why would a group that included the former Republican state secretary general and preeminent Shanghai businessmen, bankers, and merchants—not to mention the city’s most infamous mob boss—have labored so earnestly to send art objects to the Paris exposition? The remainder of this chapter offers an overview of the sociohistorical factors at play during the latter half of the Nanjing Decade to suggest how and why

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<sup>61</sup> “Canjia Bali bolanhui zhan pin ding qi zai ni yu zhan,” 参加巴黎博览会展品定期在泥預展 [The objects participating in the Paris Exposition will be previewed in Shanghai], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, February 18, 1937, <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370218-01.1.3>.

<sup>62</sup> “Yu qi yuzhan kaishi buzhi hui chang,” 玉器預展開始佈置會場 [The venue for the jade preview exhibition has begun to be set up], *Shen Bao* 申報, March 3, 1937, <https://archive.org/details/shenbao-1937.03-53>.

<sup>63</sup> “Yu zhan de feicui baota baoxian fei gong erbai wan yuan” 玉展的翡翠寶塔保險費共二百萬元 [The jadeite pagoda in the jade exhibition is ensured for a total of two million yuan], *Xing hua* 星華 11 (1937): 12, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.



Chinese participation in the French event took on a degree of near-urgency in the eyes of Chu and his colleagues. If we take the *Shen Bao* at its word, the Association's intention was to "make those from all walks in Shanghai appreciate this country's precious jade art" by experiencing "the essence of national jade articles collected under one roof" (係集全國玉器精華於一堂).<sup>64</sup> The repeated use of "nation" (*guo*) in this reportage, however, is more than mere coincidence. Although few artistic precedents over the course of visual-cultural history unite the physical properties and iconographic program of the *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda*, the object's characteristics nonetheless coalesced to produce a highly marketable spectacle against the historical backdrop of boycotting and the National Products Movement in the early decades of the twentieth century. Over the course of the 1930s, both pagoda imagery and discussions of jade appeared in publications that promoted the consumption of Chinese-made goods. This presence, which located pagoda forms and jade objects within the ideological consciousness of consumerism-oriented discourse, may speak to the applicability of National Products rhetoric to Zhang's pagoda and thus partially account for the Association's interest in showcasing the object on the occasion of the Paris Exposition.

In a well-known study of the Republican Shanghai elite, historian Marie-Claire Bergère argues that the Shanghai bourgeois class—one which "devote[d] itself to industrial development on the basis of free enterprise and in accordance with the laws of economic rationality"—experienced an unprecedented degree of power in the years

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<sup>64</sup> "Yu qi yuzhan kaishi buzhi hui chang," *Shen Bao* 申報, March 3, 1937.

between the fall of the Qing and 1927, when Chiang's Northern Expedition military campaign resulted in the establishment of the Guomindang government in Nanjing.<sup>65</sup> During these years, industrialists, merchants, bankers, and businessmen executed many of the functions of a state government, which was quite weak during the years of the so-called warlord period. This same period saw the repeated articulation of "the bourgeois mode of nationalist activism," or boycotting, which had garnered new force during the May Fourth events of 1919 and carried into a movement with notable organized efforts in 1919-21, 1923-24, and 1925-26.<sup>66</sup> In many of those instances, these boycotts were grassroots anti-imperialist efforts, unequivocally anti-Japanese in sentiment and organized by university students. However, in the mid-1920s, the language, methods, and aims of boycotting began to undergo a process of cooption at the hands of merchants, workers' guilds, and chambers of commerce with the aim of refocusing attention on the Chinese economy to the exclusion of all foreign markets.<sup>67</sup>

Although Bergère concludes that these endeavors were ultimately unsuccessful in tangibly boosting China's economy, this critical reconceptualization of the aims of boycotting is evident in the history of the National Products Movement. The National Products Movement, which may be broadly defined as the means through which "interested parties tried to create other ways of restricting foreign access and enforcing nationalistic consumption," emerged in response to the inability of the Qing government

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<sup>65</sup> Marie-Claire Bergère, *The Golden Age of the Chinese Bourgeoisie, 1911-1937*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Cambridge: University Press, 1989), 59.

<sup>66</sup> Bergère, *The Golden Age*, 251.

<sup>67</sup> Bergère, *The Golden Age*, 254-255.

to impose tariffs on imported goods in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>68</sup> As historian Karl Gerth argues, succeeding twentieth-century discourses surrounding Chinese goods “molded a burgeoning consumer culture by applying the categories ‘national’ and ‘foreign’ to all commodities, creating, in effect, the notion of ‘treasonous’ and ‘patriotic’ products.” Gerth continues, “This nationalized consumer culture became the site where the notions of ‘nationality’ and of China as a ‘modern’ nation-state were articulated, institutionalized, and practiced.”<sup>69</sup> Through such varied channels as advertisements, magazines, museums, and women’s organizations, the National Products Movement pervaded urban consciousness in Republican China.<sup>70</sup>

While never a nationally systematized undertaking, this movement’s importance in the first decades of the twentieth century cannot be overstated for the myriad ways in which it interlinked definitions of the nation with the production, sale, and consumption of Chinese-made goods. This rhetoric drew on the same bourgeois logic of protest that shifted the politics of boycotting from anti-imperialism activism to national economic rejuvenation. What is more, exhibitions and expositions constituted a major component of this dimension of the National Products Movement, which organized innumerable displays of national products in the early decades of the twentieth century.<sup>71</sup> Rather than literally link the marketability of these products to their economic value, however, the channels through which these goods were categorized, organized, and promoted served to

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<sup>68</sup> Karl Gerth, *China Made: Consumer Culture and the Creation of the Nation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), 5-6.

<sup>69</sup> Gerth, *China Made*, 3.

<sup>70</sup> Gerth, *China Made*, 6.

<sup>71</sup> Gerth, *China Made*, 206.

“[project] onto commodities such movement aspirations as national unity against foreign imperialism and domestic division, economic strength and self-sufficiency, and, above all, the possibility of following a ‘modern’ lifestyle without surrendering to imperialist economic penetration.”<sup>72</sup> In this sense, “the movement presented a representation of... an economy that co-opted imperialism and asserted Chinese sovereignty.”<sup>73</sup>

Many of the Association’s members were directly involved in the production of this National Products Movement messaging in the 1920s and 30s. In his role as the head of the Social Affairs Bureau, for instance, Pan Gongzhan delivered a speech at the opening ceremony of the National Products Movement Week in July 1928 in Shanghai; the Bureau in fact planned to schedule the event as a yearly occurrence.<sup>74</sup> In the same year, Pan co-led the committee that organized the Shanghai National Products Exhibition. The Social Affairs Bureau also ran the Shanghai Municipal National Products Museum.<sup>75</sup> In 1935, Lin Kanghou edited the National Products Yearbook, and Du Yuesheng, an honorary chairman of the National Products Preservation Association (中華國貨維持會), secured the means for a parade to travel along the Bund and through Shanghai’s foreign concessions on New Year’s Day in 1934, the “Women’s National Products Year.”<sup>76</sup> During this period, the patriotic qualities ascribed to consumer products increasingly characterized art objects, as well. For example, the Shanghai Commercial Products

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<sup>72</sup> Gerth, *China Made*, 206.

<sup>73</sup> Gerth, *China Made*, 207.

<sup>74</sup> Gerth, *China Made*, 238.

<sup>75</sup> Gerth, *China Made*, 235.

<sup>76</sup> Gerth, *China Made*, 312.

Display Hall (上海商品陳列所), a permanent “national products” display opened by the Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce in 1921, included an exhibit of artworks in addition to objects for use in daily life.<sup>77</sup>

Art historian Kuiyi Shen illustrates that in the wake of the 1931-32 Japanese invasion of Manchuria, the pictorial publication *Modern Miscellany* (時代畫報, later 時代) began to feature “more traditional Chinese paintings, archaeological finds, activities of traditionalist art societies, and several major Chinese ink paintings that were sent abroad, all of which assumed a new culturally nationalistic slant” following Japan’s establishment of the imperialist state of Manchukuo.<sup>78</sup> In addition to Shen’s assessment of these developments in representations of painting, we may also consider the ways in which mediums historically outside the category of fine art, such as jade carving and architecture, underwent similar processes of nation-oriented reification. In the cases of both pagoda structures and jade wares, it appears that this reframing was mediated more often than not through foreign presentations of Chinese objects. The presence of both jades and architectural imagery characterized Chinese participation in world’s fairs and expositions starting in the late nineteenth century. For example, China’s contribution to Philadelphia’s 1876 Centennial Exhibition included both jade wares and a smaller-than-life seven-story pagoda (fig. 3).<sup>79</sup> When China participated in the 1904 Louisiana

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<sup>77</sup> Gerth, *China Made*, 228.

<sup>78</sup> Kuiyi Shen, “A Modern Showcase: *Shidai* (*Modern Miscellany*) in 1930s Shanghai,” *Yishu xue yanjiu* 藝術學研究 [Arts research] 12 (2013): 150-151.

<sup>79</sup> Jennifer Pitman, “China’s Presence at the Centennial Exhibition, Philadelphia, 1876,” *Studies in the Decorative Arts* 10, no. 1 (Fall-Winter 2002-2003): 52.

Purchase Exposition, Vice Commissioner General Huang Kaijia 黃開甲 (1860-1906) oversaw the installation of the Qing government's contribution—a copy of a portion of the palace of imperial heir Pu Lun.<sup>80</sup> In 1915, China sent 84 pagoda models from the Tushanwan orphanage to the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco (fig. 4).

Perhaps unwittingly, these displays reaffirmed a common Euro-American perception of the pagoda as an iconic Chinese form, an association solidified in Scottish scholar James Fergusson's late-nineteenth-century writings on Asian architecture.<sup>81</sup> Evidence from succeeding decades suggests the strength of the conceptual link. When a contest was held in 1925 for the design of Sun Yat-sen's mausoleum, two Shanghai-based, non-Chinese architects—one American, one Russian—included pagoda forms in their designs.<sup>82</sup> Zhang's jade pagoda, heralded as the “eighth wonder of the world” by viewers at the Chicago World's Fair, was identified on postcards as “the pride of China.”<sup>83</sup> At the 1935 London International Exhibition of Chinese Art, the four miniature pagodas on view all came from European collections.<sup>84</sup> Over one hundred jades,

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<sup>80</sup> Theodore Hardee, “China's Remarkable Exhibit At the World's Fair,” August 28, 1904, *The New York Times*.

<sup>81</sup> Delin Lai, “Searching for a Modern Chinese Monument: The Design of the Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum in Nanjing,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 64, no. 1 (March 2005): 27.

<sup>82</sup> Lai, “Searching for a Modern Chinese Monument,” 30.

<sup>83</sup> An example of this postcard can be found through the postcards and collectibles dealer Neplains. “A Picture of the Green Jade Pagoda in the Republic of China Building,” Neplains, last modified 2021, <https://neplains.com/1933-chicago-world-s-fair---altar-of-the-green-jade-pagoda.aspx>.

<sup>84</sup> These pagodas, made from lacquer, pottery, and porcelain, spanned the tenth to eighteenth centuries. Two came from private British collections, one from the Musée Guimet in Paris, and one from Queen Mary of England. The queen's pagoda, a lacquer

however, were contributed by the Chinese government. Many of these were loaned by the collector Zhang Naiji 張乃驥 (1899-1948), the son of a Zhejiang family whose wealth was amassed through the silk and salt trades.<sup>85</sup> When Zhang's father passed away in 1928, Zhang's inheritance funded his passion for the collection of archaic jades in addition to bronze objects and paintings.<sup>86</sup>

In the early years of the Republican era, the purchase of jades underwent changes that brought the stone to broader audiences. Referring to the possession of jade by everyday people, some scholars have introduced the term *min yu* ("people's jade") to describe the ways in which the association of the stone with imperial rank began to loosen in the first decades of the twentieth century. Although a minor number of private jade shops had existed in urban centers like Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Nanjing from the mid-Qing period onward, *min yu* truly began to flourish in the early years of the Chinese Republic.<sup>87</sup> Citing the example of Beijing, Yang Deli and Yang Mingyue discuss

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object approximately 42.5 inches tall, dated to the period of the Qianlong Emperor (r. 1735-1796). Its image was reproduced and circulated in Chinese pictorial journalism several times in the wake of the London exhibition.

<sup>85</sup> Palace Museum jade expert Na Zhiliang also played an important role in the organization of the Chinese component of the exhibition. See Zhuang Shangyan 莊尚嚴, "Fu Ying canjia Lundun Zhongguo yishu guoji zhanlan huiji" 赴英參加倫敦中國藝術國際展覽會記 [Traveling to England to participate in the London International Exhibition of Chinese Art], *Beiping gugong bowuyuan nian kan* 國立北平故宮博物院年刊 (1936): 113-136, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

<sup>86</sup> "Zhang Naiji," National Museum of Asian Art, last modified June 3, 2020, <https://asia.si.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Zhang-Naiji.pdf>.

<sup>87</sup> Yang Deli and Yang Mingyue, eds., 楊德立, 楊明月, *Zhongguo gu yu he yu wenhua* 中國古玉和玉文化 [China's archaic jades and jade culture] (Kunming: Yunnan keji chubanshe, 2017), 109.

how the city's longtime status as an imperial capital had united the efforts of jade craftsmen empire-wide in palace workshops. When the 1911-1912 Xinhai Revolution ended the Qing dynasty and initiated the Republican period, the system of palace jade workshops was subsequently abolished. As a result, jade carving artists who had been employed by the court began to establish private practices, entering into the commercial realm of *min yu* in order to continue to work.<sup>88</sup> These highly trained artisans brought their palace workshop-developed carving skills to a market populated by the few local jade craftsmen who had worked outside of the imperial system, producing new collaborative efforts in the jade carving industry.

Within China, images and text that circulated in 1930s national-goods magazines testify to the subsumption of pagodas, jade objects, and the Paris Exposition itself under the logic of the National Products Movement. This reconceptualization rebranded pagodas and jades, two longstanding pillars of material culture in the area of present-day China, as distinctly national objects. It may also partly account for the fact that when the Shanghai capitalists began to assemble their own Paris-bound display, the jade pagoda became of their exhibit's crowning objects. That the two defining characteristics of *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda*—its medium, jade, and its pagoda structure—were affected by the permeation of National Products Movement rhetoric is suggested by the circulation of visual and textual coverage of both object types in the press. Contemporary publications present both the pagoda form and the jade industry within a nation-oriented framework of consumption that called for commitment to Chinese-made objects. In 1934, for instance,

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<sup>88</sup> Yang Deli and Yang Mingyue, *Zhongguo gu yu he yu wenhua*, 109.



the experience of ascending the Longhua Pagoda constituted the topic of a poem published in the Shanghai edition of *National Goods Monthly* (*Guohuo yuebao*).<sup>89</sup> The following year, the same journal included an image of the Longhua tower and three other pagodas in a feature dedicated to “pagoda photography” (塔影) (fig. 5).<sup>90</sup> The presence of pagodas in these publications suggests a nation-oriented revitalization of the centuries-old architectural structure, which in all likelihood developed as a synthesis of the Han-period *que* watchtower and the Indian Buddhist stupa, as yet another Chinese-made domestic product.

Within this discursive formation, jade objects were similarly employed to emphasize the role of the cultural past in the National Products Movement. However, discussions of jade in these journals explicitly addressed the current state of related industries, while pagoda-related coverage did not. In one example, *Guohuo yuekan* (Changsha edition), a magazine edited by the Hunan National Products Exhibition Hall, published a 1935 survey of the jade antiques trade. Framing antiques as precious cultural and historical objects, this article notes the preference for antiques articulated by scholars, literati (人文), and celebrities. By the survey’s estimation, the archaic jade industry (古玩玉器業) had reached its most developed state in the pre-Nanjing Decade capital of

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<sup>89</sup> See Dao Yun 悼雲, “Shi xuan: xie you deng Longhua ta” 詩選:偕友登龍華塔 [Selected poems: ascending Longhua Pagoda with you], *Guohuo yuebao* (Shanghai) 國貨月報 (上海) (1934): n.p., *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

<sup>90</sup> See “Ta ying” 塔影 [Pagoda photography], *Guohuo yuebao* (Shanghai) 國貨月報 (上海) (1935): n.p., *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

Beijing (故都), which had previously seen as many as four or five hundred archaic jade businesses and a capital worth estimated at tens of millions of [taels or yuan?]. The article's author connects the state of the antique jade trade to contemporary political events by alluding to both the fall of the Qing and the reestablishment of the state government in Nanjing, sketching an almost teleological narrative history in which the post-Xinhai Revolution damage done to the antique jade industry had been repaired in the wake of Chiang Kai-shek's military unification. In recent years in Nanjing, the article writes, the number of archaic jade businesses had grown as a result of a high concentration of culturally sophisticated people and trends (人文薈萃) in the city.<sup>91</sup> In so framing the industry's recent recovery from its weak years of the 1910s and 20s, this national goods survey alludes to the importance of a strong central government in the development of light consumer industry.

Other publications located the jade pagoda, the plans for the Paris Exposition, and the preliminary jade exhibition firmly in the realm of domestic products. The jade pagoda was explicitly framed as an object of domestic interest in a March 1937 feature in the publication *National News Weekly* (*Guo wen zhou bao*), where a photograph of the

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<sup>91</sup> It should be noted here that this growth in no sense approached the heights ascribed to the pre-Xinhai Revolution state of the industry; the number of archaic jade businesses cited in the survey as evidence of growth was only 17. See "Jing guwan yuqi ye diaocha" 京古玩玉器業調查 [A Survey of the Nanjing Antique Jade Industry], *Guohuo yuekan* (*Changsha*) 國貨月刊 (長沙) (1935): 13-14, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

pagoda was included in a feature about “domestic current affairs” (國內時事).<sup>92</sup>

Presented alongside images of the Japanese ambassador and foreign minister, this spread associatively concretized the perception of the pagoda as distinctly national and Chinese. In more explicit articulations of the linkage between exposition preparation and nationalist consumption, the Association’s plans for participation in the Paris fair were reported in the journal of the National Chinese Association for the Production and Marketing of Domestic Products.<sup>93</sup> The preliminary Shanghai jade exhibition was also publicized in a February 1937 issue of *Guohuo yuekan* (*National Goods Monthly*, Guangzhou edition), which reported that the preview jade exhibition would benefit “fellow countrymen” (國人).<sup>94</sup>

In fact, the exhibition did achieve these goals, which were also tied to the future of China. Several years prior, speaking from an educator’s vantage point at the opening of the Shanghai National Products Exhibition in 1928, Cai Yuanpei had discussed the

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<sup>92</sup> “Guonei shishi” 國內時事 [Domestic current affairs], *Guo wen zhou bao* 國聞週報 (1937): n.p., *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

<sup>93</sup> “Lian ban chu xiaoxi: Faguo zhengfu ding yu jinnia wu yue yi ri, zai Bali juxing jindai wenyi jishu guoji bolanhui” 联办处消息: 法國政府定于今年五月一日,在巴黎举行近代文艺技术國際博览会 [News from the joint office: the French government is scheduled to open the International Exposition of Arts and Techniques of Modern Life on May 1 this year], *Zhonghua guohuo chanxiao xiehui mei zhou huibao* 中华國貨产销协会每周匯報 (1937): 2-3, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

<sup>94</sup> “Guohuo xinwen: Guoji bolan juxing yuzhan” 國貨新聞: 國際博覽舉行預展 [News in national products: A preview exhibition for the International Exposition], *Guohuo yuekan* (*Guangzhou*) 國貨月刊 (廣州) (1937): 54, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

ways in which exhibitions facilitate recognition of “everyday opportunities to practice patriotism,” pointing to the displays’ offerings of “visual clues to decipher China’s increasingly complex consumer culture.”<sup>95</sup> Nearly a decade later, the actualization of this rhetoric materialized in the relationship of children to the Shanghai pre-Paris preliminary jade exhibition, to which schoolchildren were taken on field trips. A reflection on the jade exhibition by a child named Cheng Qunbao, who attended a private school in Shanghai, testifies to the young boy’s growing awareness that both jadeite and calligraphy constituted the “special artworks of China.”<sup>96</sup> “Having visited this exhibition,” the child reported, “I feel the greatness of Chinese art.” The image of young students at the display repeatedly appeared in contemporary coverage in Shanghai’s pictorial presses, as well (a topic to which we will return in the following chapter). Collectively, these sources affirm Cai’s notion of the exhibition as a site for the production of young nation-oriented consumers-in-training. Through the efforts of the Association, jade was marketed to fledgling patriots as an object that bore the marker of both “domestic commodity” and “national artwork.”

Other documents belie the anxieties that fed the desire to represent China at the Paris Exposition. One letter penned by the Association relates the importance of China’s exposition contribution to “international outlook and international status” and to its

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<sup>95</sup> Gerth, *China Made*, 252.

<sup>96</sup> Cheng Qunbao 程群寶, with editing by Zhu Shousun 朱壽孫, “Jixu: Canguan yuqi zhanlan hui ji” 記敘：參觀玉器展覽會記 [Narrative: A visit to the jade exhibition], *Min zhi* 民智 (1937): 15-17, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

ability to promote foreign trade and facilitate cultural exchange.<sup>97</sup> A more explicit confession of concern identified the fear that China's abstinence from the exposition might correlate to the perception of China as an "unorganized nation" (無組織的國家).<sup>98</sup> That this concern underpinned Chu Minyi's active participation in 1930s international cultural events is indicated, perhaps surprisingly, in a text called *Physical Education and Anatomy*. In a preface to a Chinese-language translation of this book, Chu wrote that "Japan's strength as a nation was due to its *bushidō* tradition, the spirit of the 'Yamato soul,' and their recent achievements in science." As sports historian Andrew D. Morris writes, "Chu, clearly placing his hopes for China in essentialist pan-Asian regionalism, saw that these preconditions for national strength were within reach of a China sharing so many traditions with its Japanese 'friends.'"<sup>99</sup> In fact, the rise of the commodity display

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<sup>97</sup> This letter was reproduced in the communiqué of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council. See "Xunling: Ji-Cha zhengwu weiyuanhui xunling: Zheng zi di qibaliuqi hao (Zhonghua Minguo ershiliu nian er yue ershiwu ri): Ling Qin Dechun deng: Zhun Zhongguo canjia Bali guoji bolanhui xiehui daibiaotuan banshi chu han qing canjia..." 訓令: 冀察政務委員會訓令: 政字第七八六七號 (中華民國二十六年二月二十五日): 令秦德純等: 准中國參加巴黎國際博覽會協會代表團辦事處函請參加... [Order: Order of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council: Order no. 7867 (February 25, 26<sup>th</sup> year of the Republic of China): Order to Qin Dechun and others: The Association for China's Preparation in the Paris International Exposition has written to invite the council to participate...], *Ji-Cha zhengwu weiyuanhui gongbao* 冀察政務委員會公報 111 (1937): 3-4, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

<sup>98</sup> See Feng Zhizhong 馮執中, "Zhongguo canjia Bali guoji bolanhui zhi jing guo" 中國參加巴黎國際博覽會之經過 [China's experience of participating in the Paris International Exposition], *Zhong-Fa lianyi hui jikan* 中法聯誼會季刊 10 (1937): 15-17, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

<sup>99</sup> Andrew D. Morris, *Marrow of the Nation: A History of Sport and Physical Culture in Republican China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 132.

in China also emerged from Japanese models of exhibition, which began to feature in Chinese intellectual discourse on the modern nation-state as early as 1898.<sup>100</sup> Gerth demonstrates that the development of the Chinese commodity display in China was

not a rush to imitate but a selective process that turned the technologies of imperialism against itself... [and] projected onto commodities such movement aspirations as national unity against foreign imperialism and domestic division, economic strength and self-sufficiency, and, above all, the possibility of following a ‘modern’ lifestyle without surrendering to imperialist economic penetration.<sup>101</sup>

Within this context, it is significant that Chu Minyi’s participation in the 1935 London International Exhibition of Chinese Art, as well as his role as coach for the Chinese martial arts team at the 1936 Berlin Olympics, were both approved and organized under the Executive Yuan chairmanship of Wang Jingwei. As Margherita Zanasi has shown, the political environment of the Guomindang in the 1930s was critically impacted by the question of China’s economy among the priorities of top Party leaders. In contrast to Chiang Kai-shek’s focus on China’s military life, Wang Jingwei embraced the notion of the *minzu* economy to restrict Chinese economic development to ethnically Chinese industry and commerce as a way to “achieve autarky in order to resist the escalation of Japanese imperialism,” for a non-autarkic economy “would be dependent on Japan and would thus reinforce Japan’s grip on China rather than help China assert its national independence.”<sup>102</sup> Wang’s willingness to entertain China’s participation in international cultural events suggests the place of visual culture within this schematic of national self-

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<sup>100</sup> Gerth, *China Made*, 205.

<sup>101</sup> Gerth, *China Made*, 206.

<sup>102</sup> Zanasi, *Saving the Nation*, 4.

determination. In fact, one entry from the GMD communiqué indicates that the Executive Yuan entertained the possibility of participating in the Paris Exposition under Wang's chairmanship in 1935, which was also reported in the French news media.<sup>103</sup>

### Conclusion

By sketching a history of the presence of both pagoda imagery and jade in domestic and international contexts in the early twentieth century, I have argued in this chapter that concurrent historical conditions primed both Chinese and foreign audiences to positively receive the *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda* through China's previous participation in international expositions and the context of the National Products Movement. As Shanghai's banking and business worlds embraced the language of boycotting to promote domestic industries in the 1920s and 1930s, both pagoda structures and jades appeared in publications that promoted the consumption of Chinese goods. The presence of both object types in national goods magazines suggests the ideological capacity of visual-cultural materials to refract nationalist sentiment, a function cultivated and leveraged by Chu Minyi and other Association members who looked to the possibility of economic rejuvenation through cultural soft power.

Guomintang-affiliated officials did not uniformly subscribe to this rhetoric, of course. After the Association's plans for exposition participation collapsed, the *China*

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<sup>103</sup> See "Lisu: Bali guoji bolanhui zhi canjia" 禮俗:巴黎國際博覽會之參加 [Etiquette and customs: participating in the Paris International Exposition], *Zhongguo Guomindang zhidao xia zhi zhengzhi chengji tongji* 中國國民黨指導下之政治成績統計 6 (1935): 25-26, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

*Press* reported on the opinion of one Trade Promotion Department official, who felt that “the priceless jade pagoda that was exhibited at the World’s Fair at Chicago was imposing, but lacked the commercial tie-up which would make the exhibition a financial success.”<sup>104</sup> Instead, this man suggested, China needed a “mobile exhibition of Chinese products” that could travel from city to city, from fair to fair, whenever needed. And yet, we see here, too, why both pagoda architecture and jades carried such currency among GMD members with concern for China’s economy: “As many Chinese products, as yet, [cannot] compete with foreign goods in quality,” the article continues, “the chief returns will be in tourist trade and artistic goods.”

The close conceptual link between China, jade, and the 1937 Paris Exposition was again echoed in a pictorial feature in the publication *Wanyou huabao* 萬有畫報, the July 1937 issue of which reproduced photographs of miscellaneous jade objects to falsely claim that jade objects constituted a sizeable contribution to a nonexistent Chinese national pavilion at the Paris Exposition (fig. 6 and 7). It is unclear if this reportage was the product of inaccurate information or willing deception. Nevertheless, its publication indicates that the association between jade and a national world’s fair presence held strong. In chapter 3, we will return to the endeavor to represent China in France through the efforts of the Hebei-Chaha’er Political Council in Beiping. The next chapter,

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<sup>104</sup> “Advantages of Traveling Exhibit for World Fairs Seen by Trade Executive: Z. T. Kyi Thinks China Poorly Represented at Expositions: Paris Plans Fall Through: Jade Pagoda Pretty But Lacks Trade Drawing Value,” *The China Press (1925-1938)*, Jun 29, 1937. *ProQuest*, <http://proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/advantages-traveling-exhibit-world-fairs-seen/docview/1416743854/se-2?accountid=9783>.



however, homes in on the role of the pagoda's image in largely Shanghai-based print culture to investigate the messages produced by its circulation.

### Chapter 3. The Jade Art Preview Exhibition: How the Pagoda's Image Localized the Paris Expo in Shanghai

The history of the *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda* has frequently been narrated through descriptions of the tremendous labor that created it, and, significantly, the many venues to which it has traveled.<sup>105</sup> When the sculpture journeyed to the United States in 1933, for instance, it became the subject of international news that reported on its presence through descriptions of its weight and astronomical monetary value.<sup>106</sup> During its exhibition at the Chicago World's Fair in the same year, the pagoda's image was reproduced in postcards available to visitors, who encountered the sculpture's likeness through textual mediation on the postcard's verso that proclaimed, "The pagoda has been universally acclaimed as a great wonder in artistic achievement. It took 1,500,000 hours of expert craftsmanship to create this beautiful masterpiece. It is truly the pride of China."<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> After the pagoda journeyed to the United States to be exhibited at the Chinese national pavilion in the 1933-34 Century of Progress International Exposition, it was displayed at Rockefeller Center in New York City.

<sup>106</sup> The *New York Times* reported that 1.5 million hours of work were spent creating the pagoda, with 500 artists and artisans involved altogether. It should be noted that concurrent reports in the Chinese news media estimated the work force involved in the pagoda's creation to be much lower, at 150 total artisans. This figure in the *Times* thus reads as a gross exaggeration; at any rate, the description speaks to the legendary quality that the pagoda took on through this kind of textual framing. See "\$1,000,000 Carving to be Shown Here: Three Tons of Jade, Fashioned into a Chinese Pagoda, to Be at Rockefeller Center," *New York Times*, September 2, 1933.

<sup>107</sup> An example of this postcard can be found through the postcards and collectibles dealer Neplains. "A Picture of the Green Jade Pagoda in the Republic of China Building,"

These descriptions of the tremendous effort through which the sculpture was carved also characterized its 1937 coverage in the Chinese periodical press. Opening with a special ceremony on Friday, March 5, 1937 and to the public the following day, the Shanghai preliminary jade exhibition was held on the fourth floor of the Sun Department Store (大新公司) until March 15.<sup>108</sup> According to a report in the *Shenbao* 申報 newspaper (often referred to as the *Shun Pao*), the exhibition was open daily from 10am until 8pm except on Sundays, when it opened at one o'clock. In a firsthand account of the Shanghai preliminary exhibition in the March 13, 1937 issue of *Libailiu* (禮拜六), the article's author dwelled at length on the presence of the pagoda and its creation out of "uncut jade," (璞玉) a term that may have reinforced the impressiveness of its carvers' technical prowess.<sup>109</sup> Considered in the context of the four-character idiom *puyu hunjin* (璞玉渾金), literally "uncut jade and unrefined gold," this description simultaneously

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Neplains, last modified 2021, <https://neplains.com/1933-chicago-world-s-fair---altar-of-the-green-jade-pagoda.aspx>.

<sup>108</sup> An article in the *Shenbao* from March 5, 1937 mentions an opening ceremony, which was hosted by delegation chairman Chu Minyi. Chu had come in specially from Nanjing for the event. This article also features a photograph of the pagoda, which is credited to Qi Chang 啟昌 (dates unknown).

<sup>109</sup> Ying Ming 英明, "Benkan suxie: Canjia Bali guoji bolanhui: yuqi zai Shanghai juxing yuzhan" 本刊速寫: 參加巴黎國際博覽會: 玉器在上海舉行預展 [This issue's quick sketch: Participation in the Paris International Exposition: The preliminary jade exhibition held in Shanghai], *Libailiu* 禮拜六 (1937): 625, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushuguan, 2006. The publication's English title, which was included in this issue, is *The Chinese Saturday Post*. This was a Shanghai-based publication with offices on Fuzhou Road.

emphasized the natural beauty of the pagoda's medium and spoke to its unparalleled singularity as an object.

In its unrelenting praise of the sculpture, the *Libailiu* article resembled concurrent pagoda-focused pictorial journalism. Between March and May of 1937, *Libailiu* and other Chinese periodical publications disseminated images of the preview exhibition in features that relied on several key strategies. These traits included self-referential mechanisms, the courting of familiarity afforded by photography and *manhua* illustration, and a mutually reinforcing interplay of text and image. This chapter analyzes five case studies from this period to contend that the circulation of the pagoda's image in Chinese pictorial magazines constitutes a critical component of its social life. These examples—from *Liangyou huabao* 良友畫報 (*The Young Companion*), *Libailiu*, *Shibao banyuekan* 實報半月刊 (*Factual News Biweekly*), *Xin Zhonghua* 新中華 (*New China*), and *Shaonian huabao* 少年畫報 (*Youth Pictorial*)—use photographic images and *manhua* illustrations to laud the beauty and technical sophistication of the pagoda, which synecdochally stands in for the preview exhibition as a whole.

In a study of *Liangyou* and the publication *Shanghai Sketch* 上海漫畫, art historian Richard Vinograd describes pictorials' unique and pluralistic combinatory reproductions of such media as photographs, paintings, text, and advertisements, to suggest that “The pictorial as a whole might be considered a medium as well, perhaps better a meta-medium or multi-medium, with its own specific structures and modes of

functioning.”<sup>110</sup> In the print culture materials discussed in this chapter, photographs and illustrations of the pagoda and the other jade, coral, agate, and crystal art objects in the preliminary exhibition were often described in image captions as “objects to be sent to Paris” with no mention of the Paris Exposition beyond that characterization. Through this mediation, these artworks, which came to stand in for China’s participation in a foreign, international event, paradoxically became a Shanghai-centric point of interest in local and national journalism alike.

As an event that garnered international participation by approximately 45 countries and territories, the Paris Exposition as a concept inevitably came to mean many different things to various national governments, communities, and individuals across the globe. As such, in terms of processes of meaning-making, the event was not confined to the Parisian geographic boundaries of display, and its histories became particularized within various moments and places at a spatiotemporal remove from France. Through the preliminary jade exhibition, the exposition became particularized in China by way of visual and cultural signifiers as mediated through the specificity of the pictorial medium; this chapter employs the term “localization” to refer to this process of geographically specific meaning-making.

Indeed, four of the five periodicals analyzed here were produced in Shanghai, a metropolitan center whose status as a commercial hub was solidified by the localization

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<sup>110</sup> Richard Vinograd, “Multi-medium, Site, and Dream-World: Aspects of Shanghai Pictorials of the 1920s and 1930s,” *Yishuxue yanjiu* 藝術學研究 [Journal of art studies] 12 (September 2013): 181.

of developments in printing processes in the late 1800s.<sup>111</sup> Literary and cultural historian Alexander Des Forges has accordingly described such print materials as periodicals and books as “among the most important industrial products that Shanghai had to offer” in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>112</sup> Adapting philosopher Régis Debray’s notion of the mediasphere in a study of twentieth-century Shanghainese installment fiction, Des Forges describes the Shanghai mediasphere as marked by “the simultaneous and regular appearance of the wide range of cultural products that make up this field—fiction and nonfiction books, newspapers, magazines, illustrated collections.... [and] connections and references between these cultural products across boundaries between different texts, genres, and media.”<sup>113</sup> Considering the degree to which a newly emergent exhibition culture flourished in Republican-era Shanghai, we may wish to add the category of art exhibitions to Des Forges’s list of cultural articles.<sup>114</sup> Both process and product, exhibitions undergo perpetual reification through accounts of the experiences they foster, the objects they display, images of these displayed objects, and the circulation of these images. All of these dimensions of an exhibition’s life appeared simultaneously

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<sup>111</sup> See Christopher A. Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1876-1937* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2004), 10. For an overview of these developments in the context of modernist artistic developments in the 1920s and 30s, see Julia F. Andrews and Kuiyi Shen, *The Art of Modern China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2012), 89-91.

<sup>112</sup> Alexander Des Forges, *Mediasphere Shanghai: The Aesthetics of Cultural Production* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2007), 7.

<sup>113</sup> Des Forges, *Mediasphere Shanghai*, 16.

<sup>114</sup> Pedith Pui Chan has succinctly described striking developments in Republican Shanghai exhibition culture; I will elaborate these phenomena at the end of this chapter.

within the realm of print culture in Shanghai pictorial journalism in March of 1937, concurrent with the duration of the pre-Paris exhibition.

In sum, this discussion seeks to demonstrate that the structural specificity of pictorials promoted an understanding of the pre-Paris exhibition as a decidedly domestic event through the publications' attempts to naturalize the display in a Shanghai-centric cultural imaginary. Here, literary and cultural historian Leo Ou-fan Lee's conceptualization of the cultural imaginary is instructive. Lee defines this phenomenon as "a contour of collective sensibilities and significations resulting from cultural production" that requires analysis of "both the social and the institutional context of this cultural production and the forms in which such an imaginary is constructed and communicated."<sup>115</sup> Significantly, for Lee, cultural production necessarily *looks like* something; its existence registers in visual presence. Lee further suggests that these cultural forms coalesce to convey meaning to an implicit and receptive audience, ultimately contending that "we must not neglect the 'surfaces,' the images and styles that do not necessarily enter into the deepest of thought but nevertheless conjure up a collective imaginary."<sup>116</sup> In what follows, this chapter attends to the "images and styles" through which the *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda* and its exhibition were presented as stunning artistic and cultural achievements unto themselves. The visual strategies of these largely Shanghai-based pictorial publications rely on the affinities of text and image and the self-contained quality of the pictorial medium. Importantly, they also foster a sense of

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<sup>115</sup> Leo Ou-fan Lee, *Shanghai Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1999), 63.

<sup>116</sup> Lee, *Shanghai Modern*, 63.

immediacy through the features' firsthand accounts, which emphasize the experience of being present at the preview exhibition with little to no mention of the Paris Exposition.

### Case study 1: *Liangyou*

With a production run spanning 1926 to 1941, *Liangyou* has been described as “arguably the most dynamic monthly periodical ever published in China.”<sup>117</sup> Under the management of editor-in-chief Ma Guoliang 馬國亮 (1908-2001), the March 1937 issue of the pictorial publication presented the Shanghai preliminary exhibition of jade objects to its readers through two methods, based in photography and *manhua*, respectively, combined in a single issue (fig. 5 and 6).<sup>118</sup> Paul G. Pickowicz, Kuiyi Shen, and Yingjin Zhang have described *Liangyou* as a “visual emporium” that “pursued not just the variety of information.... but also a singularly effective way of presentation, which we describe as ‘kaleidoscopic.’”<sup>119</sup> This interpretation of the pictorial as kaleidoscopic hinges upon *Liangyou*'s continuous courting of similarity and difference in its design, in which the

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<sup>117</sup> Paul G. Pickowicz, Kuiyi Shen, and Yingjin Zhang, eds., “Introduction,” in *Liangyou: Kaleidoscopic Modernity and the Shanghai Global Metropolis, 1926-1945*, Modern Asian Art and Visual Culture volume 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 1.

<sup>118</sup> “Yu zhan” 玉展 [Jade exhibition], *Liangyou huabao* 良友畫報 (1937): 32-33, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

<sup>119</sup> Paul G. Pickowicz, Kuiyi Shen, and Yingjin Zhang, eds., “Introduction,” in *Liangyou: Kaleidoscopic Modernity and the Shanghai Global Metropolis, 1926-1945*, Modern Asian Art and Visual Culture volume 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 3. Sinologist Paul Bevan similarly describes *Liangyou huabao* and other pictorial magazines as having a “miscellaneous nature.” See Bevan, *A Modern Miscellany, A Modern Miscellany: Shanghai Cartoon Artists, Shao Xunmei's Circle and the Travels of Jack Chen, 1926-1938* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2015), 6.



style of its content remains uniform while its topics vary, and vice versa. This characterization aptly describes to the coexistence of two representational methods of exhibition coverage through which this issue reported on the Shanghai preliminary display.

On pages 32 and 33 of the issue, a two-page feature entitled “The Jade Exhibition” provided detailed photographic reproductions of elaborate jade objects on display at the Sun Department Store and described the wares as objects that were intended to be sent to Paris (fig. 8 and 9).<sup>120</sup> Although the feature included descriptive text in both English and Chinese, certain captions were provided in both languages while other objects were described in one or the other; the type and depth of information also varied by language. The Chinese-language prefatory note, for example, described jade art (玉器藝術) as a practice that reached the zenith of its development in ancient times, yet then achieved an even greater degree of perfection after the late Qing. The text added that the most brilliant of the exhibited objects had been chosen for publication in the magazine. In contrast, the English-language counterpart to this text simply referred to jade as “the pride of Chinese collectors and connoisseurs.”<sup>121</sup> In this way, the Chinese-language text framed the jade objects as part of a lineage of artistic traditions that stretched back to ancient times, a rhetorical linkage that evoked the classical past, where the English text did not. However, the text in both languages referred to the priceless

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<sup>120</sup> Intentionally or not, this article title also functions as a play on words, since “jade,” *yu* 玉, and “preview,” *yu* 预, are near-homonims.

<sup>121</sup> “Yu zhan” 玉展 [Jade exhibition], *Liangyou huabao* 良友畫報 126 (1937): 32.

of the exhibited objects, alluding to the qualities through which representations of the photographed works might accrue a new dimension of cultural capital through their mediation in a commercial format. As Vinograd has suggested, this bilingual textual framing also had spatial and visual implications. Vinograd writes:

The bilingual titles and international horizons of [*Liangyou huabao* and *Shanghai Sketch*] and other pictorials remind us that along with their status as published cultural objects, the periodicals could function as sites or places in more than one sense. The periodicals and their constituent pages were spaces that needed to be navigated in some kind of reading order, layered spaces that called for traversal. More potently perhaps, the periodicals offered analogues of complex places: cities like Shanghai with their arenas of leisure, pleasure, entertainment, sport, domestic life, recreation, work, high culture, monuments, and sightseeing...<sup>122</sup>

This sense that the pictorial could have functioned as the analogue of a particular site or event is concretized in *Liangyou's* photographic depictions of the jade exhibition, in which the various sizes and slightly overlapping layout of the reproduced images evoke the feeling of a layered collage.<sup>123</sup> In the photographs, the jade objects are frontally presented and tightly cropped to minimize the reader's sense of their environment. The quality of the reproductions allowed for a wide and rich-enough range in tone to portray glinting light on the smooth contours of the highly worked objects, which included flower baskets, a pot, a vase, incense holders, and the pagoda. In the upper left-hand corner on the second page, we see a small installation image in which the depicted visitors become proxies for our own encounters with these objects. However, the artworks here are

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<sup>122</sup> Vinograd, *Multi-medium, Site, and Dream-World*, 179-180.

<sup>123</sup> Vinograd additionally associates these qualities with an "aesthetic of surplus" that "always seem[ed] to promise more to come in the layerings of pages." See Vinograd, *Multi-medium, Site, and Dream-World*, 182.

largely presented as singular, isolated, and immediate. This juxtaposition signals that the feature did not report on the exhibition in a purely documentary manner, but rather provided the reader with a different kind of visual information enabled by the objects' diversity of presentation.

Through this differentiated function, *Liangyou's* pictorial strategy emphasized the experience of personally beholding the jade objects to promote the Shanghai exhibition as an immediate and experiential event. At the same time, the photographic spread mediated readers' encounters with these artworks by largely sequestering images of the objects from their venue of display to maximize visual legibility. This visual tactic produced an artificial portrayal of the preliminary exhibition that paradoxically afforded *Liangyou* readers a sense of metaphorical ownership over the depicted jade wares.

On page 55 of the same issue, *Liangyou's* readers were offered a more personal account of the show, relayed in an almost reverential tone and accompanied by a small line drawing of viewers who cluster with interest around the miniature pagoda (fig. 10).<sup>124</sup> In this *manhua* illustration, the mostly male viewers solemnly observe the object before them, rapt with attention. The solitary female viewer in the group wears a stylish cap, a *qipao*, and two bracelets on her thin wrist. In her short, wavy hairstyle and form-fitting dress, this exhibition-goer bears close visual similarity to the issue's cover model, Gao Binyi 高斌儀 (dates unknown), who is perfectly coiffed, adorned with lipstick and rouge, and seated with crossed legs at an angle that showcases her bare flesh (fig. 11).

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<sup>124</sup> This illustration may have been produced by *manhua* artist and illustrator Ding Cong 丁聰 (1916-2009), a member of *Liangyou's* editorial staff at the time of this issue.

Describing the presence of women in *Liangyou*, Lee has written that “If the contemporary reader began by looking at the front cover and glancing through the illustrated pages before reading the articles, the sequence would naturally form a chain of visual links. The woman on the cover was expected to lead the reader in: her look and dress established an initial surface impression which was linked to other pictures inside the magazine.”<sup>125</sup> In this sense, the insertion of the stylish woman in the illustration of the preliminary jade exhibition may reflect a self-conscious exploitation of the “modern girl” phenomenon—as well as the social capital associated with this figure, whose manifestations on *Liangyou* covers “highlighted the gap between what the spectator feels herself to be and what she would like to be.”<sup>126</sup> The representation of this glamorous woman next to the pagoda thus conflates the sophistication of the “modern girl” with that of the art exhibition in an act of associative transference that confers qualities of glamor, coolness, and urbanity on the preliminary jade display.<sup>127</sup>

The text of accompanying article, titled “The Jade Art Preview Exhibition” (玉藝預展), described the objects exhibited in the display as exquisite and rare works, among which images of the most rare and precious had been specially obtained for publication in the issue “so that readers in all parts [of the country] without the opportunity to visit the

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<sup>125</sup> Lee, *Shanghai Modern*, 68.

<sup>126</sup> Carrie Waara, “The Bare Truth: Nudes, Sex, and the Modernization Project in Shanghai Pictorials,” in *Visual Culture in Shanghai, 1850s-1930s*, edited by Jason C. Kuo (Washington, D.C.: New Academia Publishing, 2007), 177.

<sup>127</sup> This association is even more explicit in a 1939 image of the pagoda, presumably taken at the Golden Gate Exposition, next to movie starlet Anna May Wong.

exhibition can also enjoy this sight.”<sup>128</sup> Emphasizing that this action had been undertaken for the benefit of *Liangyou*’s readers, the language of this article aligned with the publication’s documented strategies of branding itself “as a good and constant companion in the daily lives of its readers.”<sup>129</sup> At the same time, this account self-referentially redirected the reader to the previously discussed two-page photographic feature and pointed to the potential use of comparing these *Liangyou* images to other images of the jade wares, and of the pagoda in particular. *Liangyou* thus provided the reader with two avenues of engagement with the Shanghai jade exhibition that functioned as cultural surrogates for the experience of visiting the display, while emphasizing the importance of seeing it with one’s own eyes.

### Case study 2: *Libailiu*

Published in the same month as the *Liangyou* examples, *Libailiu* similarly employed a self-referential strategy to convey the significance of the jade exhibition to its audience. The cover of the periodical’s March 13, 1937 issue featured an image of the pagoda on view at the preliminary display. Inside, the magazine also included a firsthand account of the visitor experience. In this account, the article’s author, Ying Ming 英明

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<sup>128</sup> “是批玉器行將運巴黎展覽，特商得主辦人將該項玉器之最名貴者攝成照片刊登本期，使各地讀者之無緣觀光等亦得一享眼福焉。” See “Yuyi yuzhan” 玉藝預展 [The jade art preview exhibition], *Liangyou huabao* 良友畫報 (1937): 55, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

<sup>129</sup> Lee, *Shanghai Modern*, 66. See Lee’s discussion of “The Pictorial Journal as ‘Friendly Companion,’” *Shanghai Modern*, 64-66.

(dates unknown), cultivated a sense of immediacy by referring to themselves in the first person (“我”).<sup>130</sup> This informal tone conveyed familiarity and reinforced the intimacy fostered by other aspects of Ying Ming’s account, including a focus on the particularities of their visit, opinions, and experience, and the use of eyesight-focused language that reinforced the impression of presence.

Describing the audience reception of the pagoda, for instance, Ying Ming commented that “From what I observed, there is no one who wouldn’t feel amazed [when encountering the sculpture]....”<sup>131</sup> In discussing the bustling crowds of visitors and the exhibition’s lively atmosphere, Ying Ming continually referred to the specialness and singularity of the viewing opportunity by emphasizing, for example, visitors’ eagerness to pay a hefty admission fee for the event: “Although the tickets are as expensive as one *yuan*, ladies and gentlemen keep pouring in (士女還是紛至沓來), and there’s no lack of crowding [in the gallery] (不無相當的擁擠).”<sup>132</sup>

The fervor spurring this attendance was, naturally, occasioned by the presence of the pagoda. As Ying Ming wrote,

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<sup>130</sup> I use the singular “they” pronoun here because I have not identified the gender of this author based on their name.

<sup>131</sup> “.... 目睹之下，誰都會覺得萬分驚奇...” See Ying Ming, “Benkan suxie,” 625.

<sup>131</sup> Ying Ming, “Benkan suxie,” 625.

<sup>132</sup> Ying Ming, “Benkan suxie,” 625.

這個預展所以能夠轟動人，當然是為了這件中心的出品：一座翡翠寶塔。 。 。 卻是天下無二，蓋世無雙，彫工的精細，真是空前所少有。<sup>133</sup>

The sensation of the preview exhibition is of course due to the object at its center: a jadeite pagoda.... it is one-of-a-kind on this earth, unparalleled, of meticulous craftsmanship, and truly rare.<sup>134</sup>

This praise of the sculpture's singularity reinforced the sentiments conveyed by *Liangyou's* reporting: To truly experience the pagoda, one had to see it with one's own eyes.

Critically, Ying Ming's textual framing emphasized the location of this viewing possibility not at the Paris Exposition in France, but at Shanghai's Sun Department Store. Ying Ming took great care to encapsulate the exhibition experience for *Libailiu's* readers, describing jade wares of white jade (白玉) and jadeite (翠玉) "of all shapes and sizes" and other works—flower vases, mirrors, vessels, flowers and plants, insects and fish, and birds and beasts—additionally carved from coral and agate, all displayed on tables covered with blue silk.<sup>135</sup> In this focus on the atmosphere of the exhibition venue and its

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<sup>133</sup> Mention the use of the term “彫工” to describe the processes through which the pagoda was displayed.

<sup>134</sup> Ying Ming, “Benkan suxie,” 625.

<sup>135</sup> Interestingly, the word “ding” 鼎 is used here—possibly has some implications for the direction of my writing in chapter 1. See Ying Ming, “Benkan suxie,” 625.

arrangement, Ying Ming's article both naturalized the jade exhibition as a Shanghai-specific event and highlighted the commercial nature of the display.

Located on the Sun's fourth floor, the event's prestige was underscored by its site. As art historian Paul Bevan describes, within Shanghai's commercial district on Nanjing Road, the Sun was "widely considered to be the acme of Shanghai department stores" for its inclusion of hotel rooms, a nightclub, restaurants, and a movie theater in addition to its art gallery.<sup>136</sup> Interestingly, Ying Ming's account of the jade exhibition is distinctive in its particular awareness of the commercial nature and consumer appeal of the display. The article suggests that the exhibited objects were "presumably made by Shanghai jade merchants, but in antique shops, at any rate. It is impossible to see so many precious things at one time."<sup>137</sup> Understanding the artworks to be contemporary commodities, Ying Ming implied that their beauty depended upon their inspiration taken from antique objects and did not deride the works' lack of art-historical pedigree. In another instance of attention to consumer interest in the exhibition, the article describes a glass case filled with other jade objects and guarded by a staff member; "jade lovers," Ying Ming reported, observed the works while asking the employee "about a particular object worth three thousand *yuan*, and another worth twenty thousand..."<sup>138</sup>

Just as *Liangyou's manhua* illustration invited readers to flip back to its photographic feature, *Libailiu's* textual framing of the jade display also directed the

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<sup>136</sup> The Sun was also a relatively new establishment at the time, having opened in 1936. See Paul Bevan, *A Modern Miscellany*, 218-219.

<sup>137</sup> "這些大概是上海的玉商的出品，但在一個古玩店裏，無論如何。是不會一時看見這麼許多名貴的東西的。" See Ying Ming, "Benkan suxie," 625.

<sup>138</sup> Ying Ming, "Benkan suxie," 625.



reader to a different part of the issue for continuity of experience. Ying Ming's article explicitly asked the reader to refer to the issue's cover for a view of the pagoda. Playing upon the self-contained nature of the pictorial medium, this textual and visual strategy solidified the perception of the Shanghai exhibition as an entirely local occasion. On the cover, the composition and framing of the photograph of the pagoda placed the viewer directly in front of the sculpture to the exclusion of all other objects present (fig. 12). This focus reinforced the sentiment conveyed by *Liangyou*: To truly experience the pagoda, and the exhibition more broadly, one had to see it with one's own eyes.

### Case study 3: *Shibao banyuekan*

The focus on the pagoda was reiterated through *manhua* in the March 1937 issue of the publication *Shibao banyuekan* 實報半月刊 (fig. 13).<sup>139</sup> In terms of the predominance of Shanghai-based pictorial coverage of the jade exhibition, *Shibao*'s location in Beijing proves to be the exception to the rule.

In this rendering, the sculpture is flanked by smaller decorative objects that stand at a slight distance from its figurative and literal radiance (the pagoda is, in fact, capable of illumination through the use of minute light bulbs). Portrayed within a feature that illustrated news developments in the medium of *manhua*, the image of the Shanghai display is contextualized among other drawings that depict the visiting of scenic sites in spring weather, fireworks set off in Beijing to welcome the new year celebration, the

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<sup>139</sup> At the risk of being overly literal, I would suggest *Factual News Bimonthly* as an English-language translation of this journal title.

construction of a new bridge, a review of military personnel, and the administration of the smallpox vaccine. This page also illustrates the discovery of Ming dynasty military armor by the Beijing Institute for Exhibiting Antiquities (*Guwu chenliesuo* 古物陈列所). In sum, these news snippets highlighted travel, national holidays, and achievements in infrastructure, cultural heritage, and medical technology. Presented alongside these other news snippets and their focus on domestic cultural life, the pagoda's exhibition here became a distinctly Chinese event almost entirely stripped of its connections to Paris.

#### Case study 4: *Xin Zhonghua*

One month after the publication of *Liangyou*, *Libailiu*, and *Shibao*, the April 10, 1937 issue of *Xin Zhonghua* 新中华 circulated photographs of the Shanghai exhibition in a one-page display almost completely devoid of text (fig. 14).<sup>140</sup> These photographs, taken by the photographer Wu Baoji 吳寶基 (dates unknown), were described simply as a portion of the collection to be sent to the Paris exposition.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> *Xin Zhonghua*, another Shanghai-based publication, was distributed by Zhonghua Books 中華書局.

<sup>141</sup> Although it is difficult to find identifying information about Wu, it is significant that *Xin Zhonghua* named him as the photographer responsible for these images; Wu is responsible for the photographs reproduced in two of the five case studies presented in this chapter, and he is the only photographer among these examples to be identified by name. In secondary literature, two other examples of his work in photography have been identified. In one instance, Wu is credited as a photographer in a 1950 issue of the publication *China Pictorial* (Renmin huabao 人民畫報) for a featured titled “Nationalities of the People’s Republic of China Unite.” See Emily E. Wilcox, “Beyond Internal Orientalism: Dance and Nationality Discourse in the Early People’s Republic of China, 1949-1954,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 75, no. 2 (May 2016): 382, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24738612>. In another example, Wu published photographs of people mourning the death of writer Lu Xun 魯迅 (1881-1936) in a 1936 issue of the

In contrast to the coverage in *Liangyou*, these photographs attended to exhibited objects made of non-jade materials. While the pagoda does have pride of place on the page, and a jadeite pagoda-shaped incense burner is also pictured, a third photograph portrays a cluster of objects there made from coral (珊瑚), agate (瑪瑙), and crystal (水晶). These works include a figurative sculpture as well as several vessels.

Wu's photographs depict the artworks in three distinct ways. While the jadeite incense burner is completely isolated from its context of display, the pagoda is shown with a rapt, crowded audience in attendance in a highly legible installation shot. This photograph provides a clear sense of the exhibition's spatial environment, showing the silk-covered tables mentioned in Ying Ming's *Libailiu* article as well as the height of the ceiling, hanging lamps and spotlights, and a flurry of motion in the background. The pagoda is shown from a three-quarter view that offers up its particularly attractive details—the *pailou* or ceremonial archway and the two palace lamps that flank it—to *Xin Zhonghua* readers; curiously, the visitors in the photograph observe the sculpture from its back, the point of least visual appeal. In this sense, Wu's image renders the pagoda more accessible for readers' visual consumption than for that of the exhibition-goers. The pictured visitors appear to be youthful boys, with smooth, childlike faces and heads that do not significantly rise above the table upon which the pagoda is displayed. Rather than vie for glimpses of such details as the tiny jade lions, storks, edict container, and sundial,

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publication *Life Weekly* (*Shenghuo Xingqikan* 生活星期刊). See Yiwen Liu, "Witnessing Death: The Circulation of Lu Xun's Postmortem Image," *Circulation* 9, no. 2 (Spring 2019): n.p., <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.7977573.0009.204>.

these young boys all stare solemnly at the pagoda. The contrived effect of this photograph serves to maximize readers' visual consumption of the pagoda's display by both clearly picturing the sculpture and visualizing its worthiness in the form of its depicted spectators.

The staged quality of this photograph suggests the intentional cultivation of the of the jade exhibition as a culturally significant and spectacularized event. The clarity of Wu's image reinforced the message conveyed by *Liangyou* and *Libailiu*'s photojournalism: regardless of its journey to France, the pagoda and other jade carvings were significant for the viewing opportunity that they created in Shanghai.

#### Case study 5: *Shaonian huabao*

In May 1937, the children's magazine *Shaonian huabao*, published by Shanghai's Commercial Press 商務印書館, also made the jade pagoda its cover image (fig. 15). Unlike our earlier examples, this reproduction bursts with color. Blue, green, and navy hues of the Sun gallery, the silk-covered table, and the gleaming jade contrast with the warm, rusty brown of the pagoda's teakwood platform. Light bounces with precision off of the bright surfaces of the lamps and *pailou*. While the tones of the image range from very light to very dark, the reproduction also maintains the somewhat flat quality of an illustration.

The man in the image is unidentified, but provides a useful sense of scale; the difference in the scale of his body to that of the children in *Xin Zhonghua* reinforces the fact of the children's youthfulness. This cover image complemented a short article in the

magazine about the jade exhibition, using plain language for the benefit of young readers. In publishing news of the display for children, *Shaonian huabao* echoed the notion, articulated several years prior by Cai Yuanpei, that exhibitions offered unique educational opportunities. As young Cheng Qunbao of the previous chapter learned of the “greatness of Chinese art” from his school fieldtrip to the jade show, so too could youthful readers learn to identify jade as a Chinese art form by consuming local print culture that reinforced this fact.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have attempted to argue that the March 1937 presentation of Zhang Wendi’s jade pagoda at the Sun Department Store localized the Paris Exposition at a chronological and spatial remove from France. As these five case studies from *Liangyou huabao*, *Libailiu*, *Shibao banyuekan*, *Xin Zhonghua*, and *Shaonian huabao* demonstrate, the Shanghai pictorial press portrayed the Sun Department Store exhibition of jade articles as a newsworthy event in cultural life for which Paris mattered little. These images from print culture materials reflect the independent localization of the jade display—and, consequently, the 1937 exposition—in Shanghai.

This localization was reinforced by concurrent shifts in the attitude toward art exhibitions in urban centers. China’s Republican period saw a new trendiness in exhibition culture in which visiting art displays became a popular leisure activity.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> See Pedith Pui Chan, *The Making of a Modern Art World: Institutionalization and Legitimization of Guohua in Republican Shanghai* (Boston: Brill, 2017), 129.

Describing the conditions of the development of an exhibition model in the 1920s and 30s in Shanghai, Pedith Pui Chan has described a concurrent “sea change” in the conditions of art’s existence and display.<sup>143</sup> In a study of the institutionalization of *guohua* painting, Chan identifies three fundamental changes that differentiated the Republican-era urban exhibition model from Qing art-viewing practices. Chan points to the rise of the public display of art, within which paintings were now shown to a general audience rather than to personal acquaintances of the artist; viewers now also encountered paintings that were displayed on walls rather than brought out for viewing for brief periods. While Chan’s argument focuses on painting, we may just as readily consider how other objects were similarly brought into a new realm of urban exhibitionary culture. Because several of the examples analyzed here depict visitors at exhibitions, these print media products also engendered perceptions of art-viewing as stylish and timely while simultaneously demonstrating how one might engage in such an activity. As Carrie Waara argues, economic growth and the rise of a city-dwelling middle class in the 1930s coalesced to produce a readership “more concerned with the issues of everyday life.”<sup>144</sup> These pictorial features testify to the jade exhibition as one dimension of the overall newfound relevance of exhibition culture in Shanghai life and illustrate the permeation of this imagery in a cosmopolitan milieu.

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<sup>143</sup> Chan, *The Making of a Modern Art World*, 120.

<sup>144</sup> Waara, “The Bare Truth,” 167.

## Chapter 4. Between a Stone and a Hard Place: The Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council and the Exhibition of Jade

This chapter explicates a little-known dimension of China's preparations for participation in the 1937 Paris Exposition—namely, the contributions of a short-lived political entity known as the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council (冀察政務委員會, HCPC). An organization whose geographic control included Beiping, Hebei and Chaha'er provinces, and the municipality of Tianjin, the HCPC counted Beiping mayor Qin Dechun 秦德純 (1893-1963) and military leaders Shi Jingting and Zhang Zizhong 張自忠 (1891-1940) among its members. In elaborating the history of the HCPC, this chapter unites the themes that we have sketched in chapters 1 and 2. Together, those sections argued for the extraordinary ability of Zhang Wendi's jade pagoda to refract the hopes, anticipations, and desires of its viewers. These stories of the pagoda's social life largely centered on the famously cosmopolitan metropolis of Shanghai. Chapter 1 examined the motivations and goals of Chu Minyi's Association for China's Participation in the Paris International Exposition, discussing the occupations and political affiliations of its members to propose how and why *Altar* was identified as an alluring exposition display in the eyes of the businessmen and politicians who labored to send it to Paris. Chapter 2 elucidated the visual strategies through which image of the pagoda was disseminated in the Shanghai pictorial press. It analyzed how the jade pagoda came to

stand in for the Shanghai preliminary exhibition as a whole, and, subsequently, for the foreign event that occasioned that display.

Our story now shifts geographic focus to a simultaneous cultural development in north China. In these circumstances, jade—and a range of other artworks and crafts that included landscape photography, contemporary painting, and ivories—were similarly mobilized in anticipation of the Paris Exposition, this time at the hands of the HCPC. To an extent, the HCPC's preparations developed in tandem with the Association's; the two groups communicated regularly and appear, in the written record, to have shared beliefs about the power of exposition participation to enhance China's national image, as indicated by the conviction that the country should be represented in France as “one body” (一體參加) in writings from both groups. Over the course of 1930s, however, the HCPC dealt with assaults on the national body that far surpassed those experienced by the Shanghai business world. The HCPC chairman, 29<sup>th</sup> Army commander and Chaha'er provincial governor Song Zheyuan 宋哲園 (1885-1940), was also scrutinized by both the central Guomindang government and the Japanese armed forces. Song could count on the friendship of neither entity and was suspected of betrayal and disobedience by both. Against this backdrop, and perhaps strangely, Song and the rest of the HCPC increasingly embraced exhibition organization in 1937 in the months before the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in July.

In this chapter, my aims are exploratory rather than conclusive. My goal is to demonstrate the depth of the role of visual culture in the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council. I suggest that the undertakings of the HCPC elucidate certain of the functions of



jade in Republican Beijing. Along the way, we will be reintroduced to the jade pagoda as an object type, if not to *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda* itself, for I rely on oral history that identifies the notion of a jade pagoda without substantial elaboration. This seemingly anonymous pagoda still desires a role in this narrative, however, for its presence in historical memory offers new avenues for understanding the appeal of such an object type among some of the unlikeliest of audiences.

In drawing these sources together, I rely on the scholarship of historian Marjorie Dryburgh, whose careful research of the history of the HCPC greatly enriches this study. To be sure, Dryburgh is not the first scholar to approach this unwieldy, nuanced, and controversial history. However, Dryburgh's argument offers an approach to the history of the HCPC that analyzes the political entity not in terms of the binary of appeasement versus collaboration with the Japanese military, but rather through an investigation of the ways in which shifting conceptualizations of the nation affected and were affected by the HCPC's formation and responsibilities. As I have argued, in many ways, the preparations to participate in the Paris Exposition were an exercise in nationalism. In the mid-1930s, the HCPC, and particularly Song Zheyuan, experienced unique pressure to perform a highly particular brand of national loyalty that could only have developed under imminent threat of imperialist war (and the repeated invitation into the empire of the aggressor). As such, Dryburgh's research offers a critical vantage point from which to approach this history of nation-oriented participation in a world's fair. I place myself in dialogue with Dryburgh by offering my research on the role of jade in the HCPC as a

means of investigating the link between the council's cultural endeavors and political liminality.

In many ways, Nanjing's December 1935 establishment of the HCPC constituted a major capitulation to Japanese demands.<sup>145</sup> The existence of the HCPC was intimately tied to the imperial aspirations of the Japanese military in north China in the years before the July 1937 outbreak of war, as well as to the responses of Chiang Kai-shek's regime to these incursions. Even before the establishment of the HCPC, Chiang had avoided personal responsibility for dealing with this crisis by implementing a nonthreatening policy toward Japan, often described as one of appeasement, that foreclosed responses from armed Guomintang forces in many instances.<sup>146</sup> The structure and responsibilities of the HCPC developed amidst and in reaction to Japanese demands for "autonomy," the euphemistic term for the goal of stripping the northern provinces of Shandong, Shanxi, Hebei, Chaha'er, and Suiyuan from the Guomintang's financial and political control.<sup>147</sup> At the time of its founding, the HCPC consisted of 17 members. It was largely populated by militarists and politicians who maintained only loose ties to both the central government and Song Zheyuan personally.

In the spring of 1933, about a year and a half prior to the HCPC's formation, Japanese Manchurian forces entered Hebei province and began a military campaign of

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<sup>145</sup> Marjorie Dryburgh, *North China and Japanese Expansion 1933-1937: Regional Power and the National Interest* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000), 86.

<sup>146</sup> Historian Parks M. Coble, for example, uses the term "appeasement" to describe Chiang's attempts to cater to Japanese demands as a means of staving off war. See Coble, *Facing Japan: Chinese Politics and Japanese Imperialism, 1931-1937* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1991).

<sup>147</sup> Dryburgh, *North China and Japanese Expansion*, 60.

trickery, confusion, and terror that culminated in the May signing of the Tangu Truce.<sup>148</sup> The truce, which resulted in an ostensibly demilitarized zone in east Hebei, enabled Japanese military officials to drive a wedge between central and regional leaders by applying pressure on Nanjing to remove provincial governors and Guomindang forces from the provinces.<sup>149</sup> In mid-1935, the events leading up to the He-Umezu Agreement again played upon this strategy of fragmentation. That spring and summer, against the wishes of the National Defense Commission and without Chiang Kai-shek's explicit consent, Wang Jingwei and general He Yingqin 何應欽 (1890-1987) capitulated to Japanese pressure to remove central armies from Hebei altogether. As Dryburgh argues, Japan's demands manipulated the relationship between Nanjing and northern officers by necessitating a regionally specific order from the central government. Dryburgh writes that these events impeded China's ability to act as a united front by "erod[ing] the fragile bonds of trust between central and regional officials on which Nanjing's authority in north China ultimately rested."<sup>150</sup>

At the same time, Chiang distanced Nanjing from responsibility for the northern crisis through wholesale delegation of its management to Song Zheyuan and the rest of the 29<sup>th</sup> Army.<sup>151</sup> This explicit shift in leadership duties forced Song to assume an outsized role in Sino-Japanese military relations. Dryburgh writes:

The Hebei and Chaha'er crises of May and June [1935] marked the beginning of a new phase in the relationship between China and Japan in

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<sup>148</sup> Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (London and New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1990), 394-395.

<sup>149</sup> Dryburgh, *North China and Japanese Expansion*, 5.

<sup>150</sup> Dryburgh, *North China and Japanese Expansion*, 40.

<sup>151</sup> Dryburgh, *North China and Japanese Expansion*, 52.

north China.... while the crises shifted the balance of power in the north still further in [favor] of the Japanese armies, where the Chinese authorities retained a degree of initiative and control over the management of contacts with Japan, this now lay in the hands of regional rather than central officials.<sup>152</sup>

The tension between the northern regions and Nanjing was exacerbated in November 1935 with the declaration of a Japanese collaboration government, the East Hebei Anti-Communist Autonomous Council, by the politician Yin Rugeng 殷汝耕 (1885-1947). Yin's abandonment of the Guomindang forced the central government to deal more actively with north China. Nanjing's societally contentious establishment of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council on December 18, 1935, was thus borne from these circumstances.<sup>153</sup>

Although the presence of Song's leadership was an accepted structuring feature of the HCPC, his loyalty to Nanjing was repeatedly called into question by central officials who detected faint whiffs of his independent communication with Japanese forces. Dryburgh illustrates the ambiguity of Song's alliances in 1935 by presenting conflicting evaluations of his character from contemporary biographical sources, which alternately describe Song's dedication to the nation and his self-interested desire to establish a northern base of power. Tellingly, the somewhat vaguely defined responsibilities of the council included Nanjing's unequivocal stipulation against the council's hypothetical

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<sup>152</sup> Dryburgh, *North China and Japanese Expansion*, 52-53.

<sup>153</sup> Dryburgh, *North China and Japanese Expansion*, 84-85. In late December 1935, university students protested the establishment of the HCPC in Tianjin, Shanghai, Nanjing, and Hankou. This prompted the imposition of martial law in Nanjing, Shanghai, and Hankou on December 26. See "Chronology," *Bulletin of International News* 12, no. 13 (1936): 19, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25639489>.

declaration of autonomy in addition to the directive to adhere to central policies.<sup>154</sup> After the establishment of the HCPC, Song hovered in a precarious, liminal position, unable to communicate closely with Nanjing without upsetting Japanese military officials and vice versa. However, Song's attitude shifted in late 1936 and early 1937, when he consented to hold National Assembly elections in Hebei and Chaha'er, and his public rhetoric began to increasingly reflect a nation-centered mission.<sup>155</sup> In the spring of 1937, middle school students also regained access to military training as a result of Song's resistance to a post-He-Umezu Agreement Japanese demand. During these same months, against the backdrop of these choices and their departure from Song's previous attempts to avoid assuming any political stance whatsoever, the HCPC also prepared to participate in the Paris Exposition.

On March 22, 1937, the journal of the Foreign Affairs Ministry reported on a new development in the Shanghai Association's plan to represent China in Paris:

冀察政務委員會，前接中國參加巴黎國際博覽會協會代表團辦事函稱，法政府將在巴黎舉行近代文藝技術國際博覽會，盼慨充參加等語。該會以此舉，係發展文化，溝通技術，自應一體參加。因于八日特令秦德純，熊少豪，及唐寶湖夫人，裕容齡等為籌備委員，即日徵集物品，並指派裕容齡屆時赴法參加云。<sup>156</sup>

The Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council previously received a letter from the delegation of the Association for China's Participation in the Paris

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<sup>154</sup> Dryburgh, *North China and Japanese Expansion*, 101.

<sup>155</sup> Dryburgh, *North China and Japanese Expansion*, 118, 135-36, 141.

<sup>156</sup> See "Ji-Cha zhunbei canjia Bali bolanhui" 冀察準備參加巴黎博覽會 [Hebei and Chaha'er prepare to participate in the Paris exposition], *Waibu zhoukan* 外部周刊 158 (1937): 12-13, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

International Exposition, stating that the French government will hold the International Exposition of Modern Art and Technology in Paris, and hopes for full participation. The exposition promotes cultural development and the communication of technologies, so [we] should participate in it as one body. For this reason, on the 8th, Qin Dechun, Xiong Shaohao, Mrs. Tang Baochao (Yu Rongling) and others were specially ordered to be preparatory committee members. They collected items on the same day and appointed Yu Rongling to go to France to participate [in the exposition].

Curiously, this is the first instance in which the HCPC's participation was mentioned by the Ministry organ even though newspaper articles trace the involvement of the council as far back as mid-February. On February 19, 1937, *Huabei ribao* reported on a recent HCPC meeting at the Beiping Municipal Government building.<sup>157</sup> The meeting was attended by municipal representatives, representatives of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Social Affairs Bureau members, a member of the Chamber of Commerce, a Factory Federation representative, and Wu Yuanlu 武元璐 (dates unknown), the director of Beiping's National Goods Hall (國貨陳列館). The meeting chair reported that council chairmen Qin Dechun (then the mayor of Beiping) and Song Zheyuan had approved participation in the Paris Exposition because Beiping was a "cultural area"; as such, it followed that cultural objects (文化有關物品) should be collected from the city and sent

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<sup>157</sup> See "Bali bolanhui Ji-Cha fenhui zuori chengli: Zou Quansun deng wei weiyuan; hui zhi she qianmen jianlou" 巴黎博覽會冀察分會昨日成立: 鄒泉蓀等為委員; 會址設前門箭樓 [The Hebei-Chaha'er branch of the Paris Exposition was established yesterday: Zou Quansun and others are committee members; the meeting venue was located at Qianmen Arrow Tower], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, February 19, 1937. <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370219-01.1.6>

for display. The meeting's resolutions included the decisions to organize a Hebei-Chaha'er branch for exposition planning and to exhibit the council's contributions. Funding, it was decided, would temporarily be provided by the Beiping municipal government, and the Chamber of Commerce and Trade Union (商會工聯會) were to share responsibility for exhibit collection. The offices of the Hebei-Chaha'er branch of the Association were to be located in Qianmen Arrow Tower Domestic Products Exhibition Hall.<sup>158</sup>

On February 21, *Huabei ribao* reported that a woman named Mrs. Tang Baochao would attend the Paris Exposition at the request of the Hebei-Chaha'er object solicitation committee. Tang Baochao 唐寶潮 (1887-1958), who had served as military commissioner at the 1919-1920 Paris Peace Conference, was an HCPC member. While Tang's wife, the French-trained dancer Yu Rongling 裕容齡 (1883-1973), is frequently remembered as an attendant of the Dowager Empress Cixi at the Qing court, she also held a government role in Beiping after marrying Tang, and eventually became the public relations officer of the HCPC.<sup>159</sup> In her role in exposition preparation, Yu Rongling aided

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<sup>158</sup> The division of labor, as communicated by this article, poses still-unresolved questions regarding the origins of the impetus for the HCPC's involvement in the exposition. This article seemingly indicates that Song Zheyuan and Qin Dechun had issued an order and/or granted a request for Beiping's participation in the Paris Exposition; it does not appear that the two men were personally responsible for conceiving of the plans.

<sup>159</sup> Yu Rongling's father, Yu Geng 裕庚 (ca. 1836-1905), was the Chinese minister to Japan from 1895-1898 and later the minister to France. Yu Rongling studied dance with the American dancer Isadora Duncan and became one of the Empress's ladies-in-waiting upon her family's return to China in 1903. In her role as court performer, Yu Rongling studied Chinese dance and choreographed works that combined the dances of traditional dramas with folk dances. See Lily Xiong Hong Lee, Clara Lau, and A.D. Stefanowska,

the council in collecting exhibition “treasures” (珍品), and she planned to Paris to participate in the occasion.<sup>160</sup> This article also mentioned that the Hebei-Chaha’er exposition association would print a detailed list of rules and regulations for products eligible to be featured in the fair; these were to be disseminated within coming days.

On February 25, the HCPC’s communiqué published an order from Song Zheyuan that articulated the stakes of exposition participation.<sup>161</sup> The order reproduced a letter from the Association for China’s Participation in the Paris Exposition, signed by Association presidium members Chu Minyi, Wang Xiaolai, Pan Gongzhan, Lin Kanghou, and Li Shizeng. The letter requested the council’s participation in the Paris fair and asked that exposition displays from the Hebei-Chaha’er region be sent to Shanghai’s Domestic

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*Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Women: The Qing Period, 1644-1911* (Abingdon-on-Thames, U.K.: Taylor & Francis, 2015), 267-268. Besides the fact of her role as HCPC public relations officer, it is unclear precisely why Yu would have been chosen to represent the council in France, although her language capabilities and past experiences abroad undoubtedly factored into the decision.

<sup>160</sup> See “Tang Baochao furen jiang chuxi Bali bolanhui, ying Ji-Cha zhengpin hui dunqing” 唐寶潮夫人將出席巴黎博覽會，應冀察徵品會敦請 [Mrs. Tang Baochao will attend the Paris Exposition at the request of the Hebei-Chaha’er Exhibit Solicitation Committee], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, February 21, 1937.

<https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370221-01.1.6>.

<sup>161</sup> See “Xunling: Ji-Cha zhengwu weiyuanhui xunling: Zheng zi di qibaliuqi hao (Zhonghua Minguo ershiliu nian er yue ershiwu ri): Ling Qin Dechun deng: Zhun Zhongguo canjia Bali guoji bolanhui xiehui daibiaotuan banshi chu han qing canjia...” 訓令: 冀察政務委員會訓令: 政字第七八六七號 (中華民國二十六年二月二十五日): 令秦德純等: 准中國參加巴黎國際博覽會協會代表團辦事處函請參加... [Order: Order of the Hebei-Chaha’er Political Council: Order no. 7867 (February 25, 26<sup>th</sup> year of the Republic of China): Order to Qin Dechun and others: The Association for China’s Preparation in the Paris International Exposition has written to invite the council to participate...], *Ji-Cha zhengwu weiyuanhui gongbao* 冀察政務委員會公報 111 (1937): 3-4, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.



Products Exhibition Hall. The letter detailed the formation of the Association in collaboration with Shanghai's major business and banking institutions. It also named Zhao Zhiyou 趙志游 (1889-?), Liu Fucheng 劉符誠, Xie Dongfa 謝東發, and Liu Xichang 劉錫昌 as additional Association representatives. In the letter, in addition to arguing for the power of the exhibited objects to promote cross-cultural exchange and affect foreign trade, the Association Presidium explicitly suggested the power of the exposition displays to promote domestic products (宣揚國貨) and to make known the glory of China (揚我國光) to an international audience. The letter further communicates the importance of promoting such a sentiment in Paris, "the most prosperous city in the world."

The following day, a *Huabei ribao* article publicized the HCPC's stipulations for submitting objects for Exposition consideration.<sup>162</sup> The article addressed criteria for permissible objects, procedures for solicited objects, and methods of object collection. Submissions were restricted to products that sold widely in China's commercial centers, products that were currently or could become international trade goods, and objects "of a value suitable for exhibition" (精緻合用認為有出品之價值者).<sup>163</sup> Dangerous items,

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<sup>162</sup> See "Zheng pin guize gongbu – Ji-Cha canjia Bali saihui – qing ge jiguan tuanti xunji canjia" 徵品規則公佈 - 冀察參加巴黎賽會 - 請各機關團體迅即參加 [The Announcement of Solicitation Rules – Hebei and Chaha'er to Participate in the Paris Exposition – All Organizations are Invited to Participate Immediately], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, February 26, 1937.

<https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370226-01.1.6>

<sup>163</sup> The term that I have here translated as "commercial centers," *shang bu* 商埠, could also be rendered as "treaty-port" or "trading port." I have chosen this translation because

items that “obstructed customs and order and hindered hygiene” (有礙風俗秩序及衛生者), items of no exhibition value, and foreign-made goods with a domestic “face” (就外國熟貨改頭換面者) were all to be excluded.

On February 26, the Hebei-Chaha'er branch of the Paris Exposition committee (中國參加巴黎博覽會冀察徵品分會) convened its first meeting at the Beiping municipal government building. There, committee members decided that funds for exposition preparation would be allocated from the Beiping municipal government through the HCPC, with a starting sum of 10,000 yuan.<sup>164</sup> The Ministry of Education, rather than the council, was responsible for the educational component of the exhibit. Industrial and commercial products were to be collected from major manufacturers; these would be highlighted in newspapers in order to attract attention to the manufacturers and broaden the scope of publicity (宣傳). A selection of landscape photography would be collected from Beiping's major photography studios, as well. At this point in time, the list of committee members included 13 individuals, including Qin Dechun, Yu Rongling, Zou Quansun, and Xiong Shaohao.<sup>165</sup> By the end of the month, the committee had established their offices within the Beiping National Products Display Hall and was

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it does not appear that object solicitation was restricted to cities that had historically been treaty-ports.

<sup>164</sup> See “Bali saihui weihui zuo kai shou ci da hui – jingfei yi wan – Qin ren zhuxi” 巴黎賽會委會昨日首次大會 – 經費一萬 – 秦任主席 [The Paris Exposition committee had its first big meeting last night – 10,000 yuan in funding – Qin assumes chairman role], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, February 27, 1937.

<https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370227-01.1.6>

<sup>165</sup> Zou was the chairman of the Beiping Chamber of Commerce at this time.

prepared to begin collecting objects. These were to come from all areas in the realms of industry and commerce, and participants from these sectors were to strive to contribute exquisite displays (力求精美).<sup>166</sup>

By March 1, the association had already sent a letter to municipal governments in Hebei and Chaha'er provinces for the solicitation of exposition objects.<sup>167</sup> *Huabei ribao* reported on the efforts of the HCPC to impress the significance of the Paris Exposition upon all merchants in Hebei and Chaha'er and the municipality of Tianjin through the distribution of a printed notice. These concerted efforts to rally merchants around the cause of the exposition continued. Subsequent press coverage records the HCPC's contention that opportunities to promote Beiping-made products were lacking, resulting in sluggish business. The Paris Exposition was presented as a solution to this problem, framed as an excellent opportunity to promote domestic goods. Not only could the manufacturer win fame, it was said, but the promotion of products could also foster international business relations.<sup>168</sup> Participation in the exposition from Beiping's

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<sup>166</sup> “Ji-Cha canjia Bali bolanhui – ding mingri kaishi zheng pin” 冀察參加巴黎博覽會 – 定明日開始徵品 [Hebei and Chaha'er participate in the Paris Exposition – submission collection will begin tomorrow], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, February 28, 1937.

<https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370228-01.1.6>

<sup>167</sup> “Canjia Bali bolan zheng pin weihui han Ji-Cha-Jin san sheng shi qing zhengji ge gai chu chupin bing han ge shang shuoming yiyi” 參加巴黎博覽徵品委會函冀察津三省市請徵集各該處出品並函各商說明意義 [The Association for China's Participation in the Paris Exposition writes to all cities in Hebei and Chaha'er, and the city of Tianjin, in order to invite the collection of exposition objects and to explain the significance to merchants], *Huabei ribao*, March 1, 1937.

<https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370301-01.1.6>

<sup>168</sup> “Canjia Bali bolanhui wei fazhan dui wai maoyi zhi liangji xiwang ping gong shang jie yongyue canjia” 參加巴黎博覽會為發展對外貿易之良機希望平工商界踴躍參加 [Hopes for active Beiping industrial and commercial participation in the Paris

industrial and commercial worlds was framed as crucial for its ability to rejuvenate the growth of those sectors: “It [will] not only enable foreigners to understand the excellence of our country's special products, but also provide a good opportunity to promote the exhibited objects and for the development of foreign trade.”<sup>169</sup> The call for exposition objects was expanded, and it was announced that objects would be collected until March 20.<sup>170</sup>

Other press coverage from early March attests to the growing role of the Ministry of Education in exposition preparation efforts. The Ministry had already solicited submissions from provincial and municipal educational departments as well as universities, high schools, and cultural institutions. Now, it was reported that the collection of cultural and artistic objects in addition to educational exhibits was also under the Ministry's jurisdiction.<sup>171</sup> Despite the assignment of artwork collection to the Ministry, however, the question of Beiping “specialty products” persisted within the scope of the HCPC's responsibilities. The news reported that the most desirable Beiping specialty products for the exposition included carpets, ivories, glassware (*liaoqi* 料器),

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International Exposition as a good opportunity for foreign trade], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, March 3, 1937. <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370303-01.1.6>.

<sup>169</sup> “Canjia Bali bolanhui wei fazhan dui wai maoyi zhi liangji xiwang ping gong shang jie yongyue canjia,” *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, March 3, 1937.

<sup>170</sup> “Bali bolanhui: Ping kuoda zheng pin xuanbo” 巴黎博覽會: 平擴大徵品宣博 [The Paris exposition: Beiping expands the call for exhibits], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, March 5, 1937. <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370305-01.1.6>.

<sup>171</sup> “Bali bolanhui Pingshi techan – ge ren shou gongyi chupin yi xiwang baoming canjia” 巴黎博覽會平市特產 – 個人手工藝出品亦希望報名參加 [Beiping special products for the Paris exposition – individual handicrafts may also be registered for participation], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, March 4, 1937.

<https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370304-01.1.6>

iron openwork, cloisonné, stone objects (*shiwán* 石玩), and Qinglian Pavilion jade (青蓮閣之玉玩).<sup>172</sup> These objects straddled the division between art and craft, reflecting the desire to exhibit “craft objects with artistic qualities” that the Ministry of Education advertised in the exposition guidelines that circulated in the school system. Similarly, when the Beijing publication *Zhengfeng* 正風 (*The Standard Magazine*) reported on the Hebei-Chaha’er region’s collection of exposition-bound objects, the article categorized the exhibits along the lines of “art,” “textiles,” “furs and pelts,” “sculpture,” “metalwork,” “kiln-fired objects” (*yao shao pin* 窯燒品), “embroidery works,” “tea,” and “other.”<sup>173</sup> The category of art included 61 paintings, 34 photographs, 14 lacquer carvings and another eight of unspecified medium, thirty pieces of iron openwork (*tiehua* 鐵花), and two *guqin* musical instruments. The sculpture category featured seven bronze Buddhist statues; thirteen enamel objects constituted the kiln-fired works. Many of these objects, if not all, were likely collected by HCPC members.

At the same time, in certain instances, the HCPC retained control over objects more strictly categorized as artworks. When paintings were solicited from the Chinese

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<sup>172</sup> “Bali bolanhui Pingshi techan – ge ren shou gongyi chupin yi xiwang baoming canjia,” *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, March 4, 1937. I have not definitively ascertained the meaning of “Qinglian Pavilion” in this context, but I am grateful to Julia Andrews for suggesting the likely possibility that it denotes a brand. Other news coverage also identified brand and shop names in relation to these Paris-bound craft objects, as I will shortly address.

<sup>173</sup> “Jianbao: Bali bolan zheng pin” 剪報: 巴黎博覽徵品 [News clippings: collected objects for the Paris Exposition], *Zheng feng* 正風 4, no. 4 (1937): 32, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

Painting Research Society, for example, it was an HCPC officer who went to the society to request the presence of their works in order to “carry forward the national essence” (發揚國粹).<sup>174</sup> The inclusion of many paintings by the prominent artist Wang Yuezhi 王悅之 (1894-1937), reported in Wang’s March 17, 1937 obituary in *Huabei ribao*, may also have been an HCPC initiative.<sup>175</sup>

Significantly, newspaper coverage from this time also reveals the planning and execution of a second preliminary exhibition of Paris-bound works intended for exposition display, this time in Beiping. With a brief duration of only two days, this event

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<sup>174</sup> For the HCPC’s request of the Chinese Painting Research Society, see “Canjia Bali bolan zhan pin di yi pi yue zhong yun fa” 參加巴黎博覽展品第一批月中運法 [The first group of Paris exposition displays will leave mid-month for France], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, March 12, 1937.

<https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370312-01.1.6>. Established in Beiping in 1920 by the painter Jin Cheng 金城 (1878-1926), the Chinese Painting Research Society grew into a large and diverse association whose many activities included journal publication, annual exhibitions, and painting and calligraphy lessons. For an overview of the society, see Julia F. Andrews and Kuiyi Shen, *The Art of Modern China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2012), 50 and 94.

<sup>175</sup> “Wang Yuezhi quanbu yizuo juanzeng guojia” 王悅之全部遺作捐贈國家 [All of Wang Yuezhi’s posthumous works to be donated to the nation], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, March 17, 1937. <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370317-01.1.9>. Wang Yuezhi, a Japanese-trained painter and educator, was a founding member of the Apollo Art Research Institute, which developed the study of Western painting. In 1924, Wang cofounded the Beiping College of Art. He served as the principal of the Beiping Professional Art School from 1930-1934. See Michael Sullivan, *Modern Chinese Artists: A Biographical Dictionary* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006), 24. Wang was also a faculty member in the Western painting department of the National Hangzhou Art Academy (now the China Academy of Art) when the school was founded in 1928. See Andrews and Shen, *The Art of Modern China*, 62. Wang’s role in the Paris Exposition-bound group of exhibits was mentioned again in press coverage from April 15, 1937. See “E hao” 噩耗 [A tragic loss], *Yue bao* 月報 4 (1937): 862, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

was never as widely discussed in the press as its Shanghai counterpart. As a result, the historical record of the event is scant. Newspaper coverage of the exhibition describes only a few specific objects of the hundreds that the HCPC collected for the Paris exposition. Preparations for this second exhibition were nonetheless continuously covered in *Huabei ribao* during March 1937, however; news of the event, which was held at the Water Pavilion in Zhongshan Park, was first published in the middle of the month.<sup>176</sup> What is more, when the display opened, a jade pagoda once again featured among the works that were selected to represent China in France. Although little information allows us to identify this jade pagoda, I take its presence as an object type as a point of departure from which to explore the role of jades among several contemporary actors within the geographic jurisdiction of the HCPC.

The short span and sparse press coverage of the Beiping exhibition belie its sprawling scope. By March 15, the Hebei-Chaha'er branch of the Association had received over one hundred objects as exposition submissions.<sup>177</sup> By March 25, the

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<sup>176</sup> “Bali bolanhui zhan pin yue di yu zhan” 巴黎博覽會展品月底預展 [A preview exhibition of the Paris exposition displays will be held at the end of the month], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, March 18, 1937, <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370318-01.1.6>. It is worth noting that this same newspaper page reported on preparations for a different exposition to be held in London that June. While it is unclear to what event this article refers, the language used by the newspaper to rally for the event is quite similar to that used in the paper for Paris Exposition plans, with mentions of the good opportunity to promote China's status on an international scale.

<sup>177</sup> “Ji-Cha zheng pin ni xian yun Ni yi bu” 冀察徵品擬先運泥一部 [The first group of Hebei and Chaha'er object selections are planned to travel to Shanghai], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, March 15, 1937, <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370315-01.1.6>.

number had swelled to over one thousand.<sup>178</sup> On March 28, exhibit collection finally ceased, with the total number of displays exceeding 1,500.<sup>179</sup> Before traveling to Paris, these objects were to be subjected to careful scrutiny by members of the HCPC; it was reported that submissions would be reviewed “against the standards of antiquities.”<sup>180</sup> In the final analysis, approximately 800 of the HCPC’s collected displays were chosen to be sent to the Paris Exposition.<sup>181</sup> Many of the objects were “precious.” The exhibits were to be packed from April 1 onward and shipped on the fifth to Shanghai, from which point the journey to France would begin.

On March 30, the Beiping preliminary exhibition opened. In total, it included three rooms. The southern and northern halls showed cultural and educational exhibits as well as artworks and industrial and commercial products.<sup>182</sup> Qin Dechun, Yu Rongling,

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<sup>178</sup> “Bali bolanhui Ping yu zhan zuo kaishi buzhi hui chang” 巴黎博覽會平預展昨開始佈置會場 [The venue for the Beiping preview exhibition of the Paris Exposition began to be set up yesterday], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, March 26, 1937, <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370326-01.1.6>.

<sup>179</sup> “Bali bolanhui zhan pin ming ri zhanlan” 巴黎博覽會展品明日展覽 [The exhibits for the Paris Exposition will be displayed tomorrow], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, March 28, 1937, <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370329-01.1.6>. Other sources claim that the number of objects totaled 2,000. I have not been able to identify reasons for this discrepancy.

<sup>180</sup> “Shencha zhanpin yi guwu wei biao zhun” 審查展品以古物為標準 [Inspected exposition contributions to be judged against the standards of antiquities], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, March 21, 1937, <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370321-01.1.6>.

<sup>181</sup> “Canjia Bali bolanhui zheng pin yu zhan zuori kaimu” 參加巴黎博覽會徵品預展昨日開幕 [The preview exhibition of the objects for the Paris Exposition opened yesterday], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, March 31, 1937, <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370331-01.1.6>.

<sup>182</sup> “Canjia Bali bolanhui zheng pin jinri zai shui xie yu zhan” 參加巴黎博覽會徵品今日在水榭預展 [The exposition selections for the Paris Expo are exhibited today at the



Social Affairs bureau chief Lei Sishang 雷嗣尚, and Finance Bureau chief Zhou Lü'an 周履安 all visited the display. *Shi shi xinbao* reported that the “artworks” (藝術品) section of the Beiping exhibition included over 600 objects. These were not restricted to painting and calligraphy. For example, Zhang Zhiyu 張志魚 (1893-1961), while also known as a painter and calligrapher, contributed bamboo carvings to the display. In the painting and calligraphy section alone, the stylistic diversity of the exhibition was suggested by the presences of paintings by Shao Yixuan 邵逸軒 (1886-1954) and his son, Shao Shaoyi 邵少逸 (dates unknown), and daughter, Shao Youxuan 邵幼軒 (1918-2009), who all contributed bird-and-flower paintings, in addition to works by Wang Yuezhi. The displayed works by the Tokyo-trained, Taiwanese-born Wang included *Diary of Exile* (亡命日記圖) (1930-31) and *Adherents in Taiwan* (台灣遺民圖) (1934), two oil paintings on silk that engage the history of Japanese colonialism in Taiwan.<sup>183</sup> Interestingly, Wang Yuezhi's paintings were not intended to be sent to Paris, but simply part of the Beiping exhibit, reinforcing the site-specificity of an occasion paradoxically staged for a spatially and temporally distant event.

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Water Pavilion], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, March 30, 1937, <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370330-01.1.6>. Paintings by Wang Qingfang 王青芳 (1900-1956) were also included in the exhibition.

<sup>183</sup> The inclusion of these paintings is reported in “Ji-Cha Bali saihui xuan pin zai Ping juxing yuzhan” 冀察巴黎賽會選品在平舉行預展 [The Hebei-Chaha'er selections for the Paris Exposition are on view at a preliminary display in Beiping], *Shi shi xinbao* 時事新報, April 2, 1937, <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/ssxb19370402-01.1.5>.

The entire western hall of the Water Pavilion was dedicated to mineral and metal works. These had been collected by representatives of the Beiping Jewelry and Jade Guild (北平市珠寶玉石等公業公會), with special participation by guild chairman Ma Shaochen 馬少宸 (dates unknown).<sup>184</sup> More than 90 carved objects were displayed. The exhibited articles ranged from a Xiehetai (協和泰) ivory folding screen to a silver shield from the Zhong Yuan Gold Shop to a statue of the Three Kingdoms figure Guan Yu, produced in silver with enamel inlay.<sup>185</sup> A jade carving of the Buddhist bodhisattva Guanyin was also featured. *Shi shi xinbao* wrote that the most brilliant and splendid of these carved objects included an eight-leaf jasper folding screen valued at sixteen thousand yuan and a crystal sphere worth one thousand yuan, among other articles carved from jadeite, coral, and ivory.<sup>186</sup>

Two press reports on the Water Pavilion exhibition suggest the presence of a jade pagoda at the event. A *Huabei ribao* article made only passing mention of an “exquisite jade pagoda” (玉石玲瓏塔) on display, offering no elaboration. On the other hand, *Shi shi xinbao* referred to five jadeite “offerings,” (供) of a light green color (淡綠色), each approximately two feet tall, that were reported to have been carved from the same piece

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<sup>184</sup> “Ji-Cha Bali saihui xuan pin zai Ping juxing yuzhan,” *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, April 2, 1937.

<sup>185</sup> I thank Julia Andrews for rightly suggesting that “Xiehetai” probably refers to the name of a brand or a workshop.

<sup>186</sup> Additionally, another hall at the Water Pavilion showed objects that had belonged to the Kangxi Emperor (r. 1661-1722). These included a five-color vase and another three-glaze object, which were loaned by someone named Liu Xiaolan 劉曉嵐 (dates unknown).

of jade as a green jadeite pagoda that had exhibited in the Nagoya Pan-Pacific Peace Exhibition in Japan, or NPPPE (an event to which we will return).<sup>187</sup> The ambiguous language of this article clarifies neither the presence nor absence of the pagoda itself at the Beijing pre-Paris exhibition. However, this remark indicates general recognition of the jade pagoda as an object type; the *Shi shi xinbao* editor behind the report evidently expected readers to possess a certain degree of familiarity with both miniature pagodas and the occasion of the NPPPE.

In fact, scholarship on Republican jade culture in recent decades has perpetuated the perception that the object type of the jade pagoda held personal appeal for Song Zheyuan. In their 2008 volume *Dictionary of Jade Culture*, for instance, Wei Guozhong and Mu Jihong write that an “elegant jade pagoda” was transported to the Paris Exposition “under the protection and with the support of Song Zheyuan, the then-head of the [HCPC].”<sup>188</sup> Here, Wei and Mu draw on the scholarship of Chen Chongyuan, whose 2006 study of historic jewelry and jade shops similarly reports on Song’s arrangements for the Parisian display of a jade pagoda.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>187</sup> “Ji-Cha Bali saihui xuan pin zai Ping juxing yuzhan,” *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, April 2, 1937.

This coverage also implies that this jade pagoda was a high-quality object, as the green color of the five offerings was purportedly not as good as in the pagoda, which resulted in the offerings’ worth valued at “only” 160,000 yuan.

<sup>188</sup> Wei Guozhong 韋國忠 and Mu Jihong 木霽弘, *Bao yu shi wenhua cidian* 寶玉石文化辭典 [Dictionary of jade culture] (Kunming: Yunnan kexue jishu chubanshe, 2008), 112.

<sup>189</sup> Chen Chongyuan 陳重遠, *Lao zhubao dian* 老珠寶店 [Historic jewelry stores] (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 2006), 247.

Was this object the *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda*? In all likelihood, this pagoda was not Zhang Wendi's carving, the location of which remains foggy after the summer of 1937 until the Golden Gate Exposition in 1939. Factually speaking, these authors' descriptions of the pagoda tower are incompatible with *Altar*. Wei, Mu, and Chen all refer to this object as a nine-storied pagoda, while *Altar*'s tower is seven stories tall. However, these scholars also describe this pagoda as having the steps of a palace hall (*danbi* 丹陛) of stone (*shijie* 石階) in addition to a pair of lions and lamps. As an object type, the jade pagoda is already distinctive, but I know of no other jade pagoda that includes these imperial iconographic and architectural elements. The specificity of this description thus asks that we do not entirely discard the possibility that *Altar* is the protagonist of our story here, too.

The association between Song Zheyuan and a jade pagoda emerged from a 1998 text by Chen Chongyuan, whose study records oral histories of the jade artisans in Beijing's historic Liulichang district in an interview format. One conversation between two craftsmen, Li Dexiang 李德祥 (dates unknown) and Che Zizhen 車子貞 (dates unknown), focuses on jadeite carving in Liulichang workshops. During this interview, Li and Che introduce a surprising anecdote about a miniature pagoda that “alarmed” (驚動) Song Zheyuan, from which I quote at length:<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> The recorded conversation documents Li's uncertainty about whether the pagoda was made of jadeite or agate. As mentioned above, it also describes the object as having a nine-storied tower, whereas Zhang Wendi's pagoda only had seven stories. Other identifying information provided in this exchange, however—including the object's presence in a San Francisco collection—points to the likelihood that Zhang's pagoda may be the subject of this conversation.

After the He-Umezu Agreement was signed, to meet the requirements of Japan's "North China specialization," the Nanjing government established the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council. Song Zheyuan was made chairman, and Beiping was under his jurisdiction. At the time, France was preparing to hold an exposition in Paris, and Beiping was required to come up with high-quality arts and crafts [上乘工藝美術品] to display. After Song Zheyuan heard that Tie Baoting in Langfang ertiao had a jadeite... pagoda, a beautiful and special handicraft, Song ordered his second-in command to find Tie Baoting.

At the time, Tie Baoting was very scared that Song Zheyuan wanted his possession, [but] after meeting, Tie felt that Song was quite amiable. Song negotiated with Tie to send the jadeite pagoda to Paris to let the eyes of the world's people be opened to Chinese handicraft.... Tie said to him, "When Feng Yuxiang shot Li Yanqing [李彥青], and freed the Dazhalan and Langfang ertiao [districts of Beiping] from warlords, he won the peoples' hearts; today Song Zheyuan comes forth to have us participate in the Paris Exposition in order to bring glory to the Chinese people." To this, Song Zheyuan responded by laughing heartily and promising to insure the pagoda against damages for 300,000 yuan. Before the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, this pagoda previously exhibited at the Chicago international exposition in the U.S.A., where it was appreciated by all countries—we could say it is world-renowned! Why it was sold to a museum in San Francisco, I [Che Zizhen] can't say.<sup>191</sup>

This oral history, the details of which both conform to and conflict with the accepted history of Zhang's pagoda, confounds as much as it fascinates. The invocation of the Paris exposition, the Chicago fair, and a Bay Area museum aligns with established chapters in the social life of *Altar*. On the other hand, Zhang himself always referred to a carver named Li Hanchen 李漢臣 (dates unknown) as the pagoda's master artisan, and never mentioned the involvement of Tie Baoting 鐵寶亭 (1884-1965) in the pagoda's creation or stewardship. Both Li Hanchen and Tie Baoting were based in Beiping, but

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<sup>191</sup> See Chen Chongyuan 陳重遠, *Gudong shuo qi zhen* 古董說奇珍 [Antiquities speak priceless things] (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1998), 357-358.

Che Zizhen recalled that when he was personally taken to see the pagoda in its workshop, he went to Beiping's Yizhenrong (義珍榮) workshop, while Li Hanchen worked at Yizhenzhai (義珍齋).

Despite the incongruity of these details, these faint yet persistent ties between the jade pagoda object type and Song Zheyuan direct us to the wider sociopolitical context of the object's cultural currency. For this reason, we now leave the unresolved question of the pagoda's identification to return to the broader topic of Song's interest in this object type, as well as its mediation through Song's communication with Tie Baoting.

Scholarship as recent as 2018 identifies a "close relationship" between Song and Tie, a prominent merchant in the world of Republican Beiping jade culture whose prosperity and fame earned him the nickname of "jadeite king."<sup>192</sup> While it is unclear how the two men became acquainted, it is possible that Tie played a role in the Water Pavilion exhibition through the organizational efforts of the Beiping Jewelry and Jade Guild, of which he once served as president (it is unclear if Tie was involved with the guild at the time of the Beiping pre-Paris display). Perhaps more significant for our purposes, however, is the possibility that Song knew of Tie through Tie's participation in the Nagoya Pan-Pacific Peace Exhibition (NPPPE), a Japanese cultural event in spring 1937 to which Tie contributed jade objects at the personal request of the Japanese emperor.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> See Wu Piqing 吳丕清, *Hebei Huizu shi* 河北回族史 [A history of the Hui ethnic group in Hebei] (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2018), 361-362.

<sup>193</sup> See Su Xiaoxiao 蘇小小, "Qingmo 'feicui dawang' Tie Baoting de fa jia zhi dao" 清末'翡翠大王'鐵寶亭的發家之道 [The fortune-building way of the late Qing "jadeite king" Tie Baoting], *Feng liu yi dai* 風流一代 9 (2019): 57. Sources from the pictorial press further confirm that jades were included in the Hebei-Chaha'er display. See

The NPPPE, which included pavilions that represented local industries and international trade, was intended to “contribute to peace, culture and trade; to enhance local and national industry and prestige; and to improve international relations in the pan-Pacific region.”<sup>194</sup> The fair also represented Japan’s colonial holdings, including Manchukuo and East Hebei (冀東), the region in which Yin Rugeng had defected from the Guomindang and established his own regime.<sup>195</sup>

For the NPPPE, the Hebei-Chaha’er region contributed an exposition pavilion; the HCPC had begun planning for the occasion in 1936.<sup>196</sup> While the precise nature of the HCPC’s commitment to the Nagoya exhibition has not yet been identified, any degree of willingness was shattered after the fair opened. In late March, 29<sup>th</sup> Army leader and HCPC member Zhang Zizhong took Song Zheyuan’s place in a delegation trip to Nagoya, where he was to participate in opening festivities by cutting the ribbon of the

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“Ping-Jin canjia Riren zhuban zhi Fan Taiping Yang bolanhui zhi yuqi quanbu zeng zai Ping zhanlan yi ri jie wei nande zhi zhenpin” 平津參加日人主辦之汎太平洋博覽會之玉器全部曾在平展覽一日皆為難得之珍品 [All the jade wares from Beiping and Tianjin that participated in the Japanese-run Pan-Pacific Peace Exposition were treasures that exhibited in Beiping for one day], *Shibao banyue kan* 實報半月刊 2, no. 11 (1937): 104, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

<sup>194</sup> Nathan Hopson, “‘A Bad Peace?’ – The 1937 Nagoya Pan-Pacific Peace Exhibition,” *Japanese Studies* 38, no. 2 (2018), 140.

<sup>195</sup> Hopson, “‘A Bad Peace?’”, 140.

<sup>196</sup> “Xunling: Ji-Cha zhengwu weiyuanhui xunling: Zheng zi di san’erliuqi hao (Zhonghua Minguo ershiwu nian qi yue sanshi ri)” 訓令：冀察政務委員會訓令：政字第三二六七號（中華民國二十五年七月三十日）[Order: Order of the Hebei-Chaha’er Political Council: Order number 3267 (25<sup>th</sup> year of the Republic of China, July 30)], *Ji-Cha zhengwu weiyuanhui gongbao* 冀察政務委員會公報 56 (1936): 7, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

Hebei-Chaha'er pavilion at the NPPPE.<sup>197</sup> While there, however, Zhang was infuriated to discover that the Hebei-Chaha'er contribution to the exhibition was included, along with the Manchukuo and East Hebei pavilions, in the section of the exposition dedicated to Japanese colonies.<sup>198</sup> For all of Song Zheyuan's frustrations with Nanjing's inaction and engagement with Japanese officials, he never caved to the military's pressure to declare autonomy from the Guomindang. Zhang immediately telephoned Ji Hua 紀華 (dates unknown), the local Nagoya representative of the Hebei-Chaha'er region, to withdraw the Hebei-Chaha'er pavilion from the NPPPE. Ji complied. Months later, Zhang was coerced into returning to the exhibition's Chinese pavilion and giving a tour of its contents, which consisted of Chinese arts and crafts.<sup>199</sup>

In the wake of the events in Nagoya, the HCPC appears to have further embraced the organization of exhibitions and product displays. In late April, the HCPC attempted to organize a second Beiping preliminary exhibition of Paris-bound objects. Toward the end of the month, the *HBRB* reported that the Hebei-Chaha'er branch of the Association was continuing to collect jade objects.<sup>200</sup> For a time, it had seemed as though China would no

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<sup>197</sup> He Libo 何立波 and Song Fengying 宋鳳英, *Yingxiong yu guojia jiyi: kangzhan yinglie xiaoxiang* 英雄與國家記憶: 抗戰英烈肖像 [Heroes and national memory: Portraits of martyrs of the War of Resistance against Japan] (Beijing: Shoudu jingji maoyi daxue chubanshe, 2016), 104.

<sup>198</sup> See Lü Xinyu 呂新雨, "1937 nian: 'wen xian zhan' zhong de Zhongguo yu shijie," 111.

<sup>199</sup> Lü Xinyu 呂新雨, "1937 nian: 'wen xian zhan' zhong de Zhongguo yu shijie," 111.

<sup>200</sup> "Canjia Fa bolanhui xu zheng yi qi zhou nei zhanlan" 參加法博覽會續徵玉器週內展覽 [Jades, continually collected for exhibition in Paris, to be shown this week], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, April 21, 1937,

<https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370421-01.1.6>.



longer carry out its plans to participate in the Paris Exposition, but by April 21, the ship had seemingly been righted.<sup>201</sup> As a result, another preview display would be held in Zhongshan Park, this time at Mountain Hall (山堂), for a duration of five days beginning on April 28.<sup>202</sup> The Beiping Jade and Jewelry Guild was to be prominently involved in the organization of this second exhibition, which would largely consist of antiques and jades. It was reported that the recent resumption of communication with various antique dealers had led the HCPC to continue to collect archaic jades, and several of the solicited objects were said to be outstanding examples of Beiping antiquities. Jade objects were described in a *Huabei ribao* article as the most famous of Beiping's products—not “artworks,” “applied arts,” or “crafts,” but “products,” *wuchan*—and the most popular among foreigners. They were also identified as the objects most capable of commanding attention from international viewers, a perception possibly reinforced by Tie Baoting's recent trip to Japan.<sup>203</sup>

## Conclusion

While no reports suggest that the second Beiping preliminary exhibition took place, the documentation of its planning reveals how press coverage now reflected and

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<sup>201</sup> “Bali bolanhui yanqi kaimu, Ping shi zhan pin xia yue yun Ni” 巴黎博覽會延期開幕，平市展品下月運泥 [The opening of the Paris Expo has been postponed; Beiping's exhibitions will travel to Shanghai next month], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, April 23, 1937, <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqcn/newspapers/hbrb19370423-01.1.6>.

<sup>202</sup> “Bali bolanhui yanqi kaimu,” *Huabei ribao*, April 23, 1937.

<sup>203</sup> “Canjia Bali bolanhui guwan yuqi” 參加巴黎博覽會古玩玉器 [The antique jades participating in the Paris Exposition], *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, April 22, 1937, <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqcn/newspapers/hbrb19370422-01.1.6>.

naturalized the perception of jade as a manufactured product rather than an “artistic craft.” As Japanese military designs upon north China shifted focus to economic and industrial development as a means of furthering the ultimate goal of autonomy, northern regional leaders appear to have embraced jade carving as an object category that both embodied national Chinese cultural heritage and represented a stable, if not thriving, contemporary Beijing industry.<sup>204</sup> In June, Song Zheyuan assigned responsibility to Qin Dechun for another ultimately aborted exhibition, the Hebei-Chaha’er Domestic Exhibition (冀察國產展覽). *Huabei ribao* reported that the event, designed to “vigorously promote.... domestic commerce and industry,” would foster the “research and improvement” of domestic products and handicrafts, with rewards for good performance.<sup>205</sup> To be sure, the display’s exhibits, which were only publicized in vague terms, would have undoubtedly spanned many northern manufacturers and industries, likely paralleling the Water Pavilion exhibition through an eclectic mix of diverse objects. However, it seems almost certain that if this exhibition had taken place, it would have included jades.

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<sup>204</sup> For this shift in Japan’s strategy in north China, see Dryburgh, *North China and Japanese Expansion*, 120.

<sup>205</sup> “Zhengweihui chouban Ji-Cha guochan zhanlan hui, pin Qin Dechun deng wei weiyuan...” 政委會籌辦冀察國產展覽會，聘秦德純等為委員....” [Committee prepares for Hebei-Chaha’er Domestic Exhibition, with Qin Dechun and others appointed committee members...], *Huabei ribao*, June 19, 1937, <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370619-01.1.4>. See also “Ji-Cha guochan zhanlan hui xian zheng zhe shou choubei kaimu...” 冀察國產展覽會現正著手籌備開幕....” [The Hebei-Chaha’er Domestic Exhibition is currently preparing to open....], *Huabei ribao*, June 28, 1937, <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370628-01.1.6>.

## Conclusion

In its present location in the location of the Lizzadro Museum of Lapidary Art, the *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda* is displayed with the pride of place that many of this story's protagonists felt it deserved in the 1930s. In Oak Brook, Illinois, the carving is no longer hidden away as it was in Oakland, California. One cannot enter the Lizzadro Museum without encountering the jade pagoda, as I discovered firsthand on a research trip to the museum in January 2022. Housed in an elevated display case with its own spotlights in the center of its immediate surroundings, *Altar* now enjoys all of the space and attention afforded by museum exhibition.

In 1939, two years into the Second Sino-Japanese War, both Zhang Wendi and his jade pagoda were in California, where Zhang remained until his passing in the early 1960s. That year, *Altar* exhibited at the Golden Gate Exposition in San Francisco. In the winter of 1939, the pagoda again went on view in yet another display at Stockton, California's Haggin Gallery, where it was accompanied by the other jade objects of the Golden Gate fair in addition to "hundreds" of other jades that had not been able to fit in the constraints of that venue.<sup>206</sup> Although this exhibition was free of charge, the New York display of another jade pagoda that year testifies to the politicization of the jade pagoda as an object type in an American context; this second pagoda had exhibited six months prior as part of a benefit fundraising initiative by Song Meiling 宋美齡 (1898-

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<sup>206</sup> "Finest Jade Show at Haggin Gallery," *The Ripon Record*, November 17, 1939.

2003), wife of Chiang Kai-shek, on behalf of Chinese civilian victims of the war.<sup>207</sup> In terms of jade objects more broadly, a January-February 1939 exhibition at Manhattan's Arden Gallery, *3,000 Years of Chinese Jade*, also raised money for Song Meiling's fund, with an admission fee of approximately one hundred dollars in today's currency and organizational participation from such notable figures as Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962), Oei Hui-lan (Mrs. Wellington Koo, 1889-1992), and the arts and antiquities dealer C. T. Loo (1880-1957). The presence of jade in these instances of wartime philanthropy speak to the intriguing art-historical case study afforded by American benefit exhibitions on behalf of Chinese wartime causes in the 1930s and 1940s, a currently unexamined phenomenon in American art-historical scholarship of this time period.

In many ways, this project has raised more questions than it has answered, but it has, I hope, made a convincing case for the worthiness of investigating the ideological manipulation of jade objects in the Nanjing Decade. Existing scholarship suggests that considerable room remains for investigation of jade culture in the Nanjing Decade. What is more, its seemingly compatible categorizations as an "artistic craft" and an "industrial product" in historical archival sources suggests that jades may have been distinctively—

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<sup>207</sup> See Marian Young, "Plain Folk Can Now See the Treasure Once Sacred to China's Royalty," *The Muncie Evening Press*, June 19, 1939. I would suggest that this other pagoda, simply named in this article as an "Imperial Buddhistic shrine," was likely the jade pagoda currently in the collection of the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art at the University of Oregon. I base this claim on the number of stories (nine) shared by both the pagoda referenced in this newspaper article and the University of Oregon example; both objects also have a three-tiered, octagonal teakwood base in common, as well as the presence of minute gold Buddha images. Because evidence for this claim is unsubstantiated, however, I leave my suspicions here for resumption of study in a separate project.

even uniquely—equipped to carry out fascinating “social lives” over the course of the 1930s. In making jade the focus of this study, I hope to have raised questions that will contribute to continuing scholarship on jade objects at this complex historical moment.

On July 5, 1937, *Shi shi xinbao* reported that the Shanghai municipal government was planning a large celebration to commemorate the ten-year anniversary of the Guomindang government. As part of the celebration, seven large exhibitions were to open at the same time. Among the intended subjects of the exhibitions were “safety,” hygiene, air defense, and handicrafts. The handicraft exhibition was again meant to include a jade pagoda.<sup>208</sup> On July 7, the night of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, the handicraft exhibition opened with over 1,000 people in attendance.<sup>209</sup>

This exhibition appears to have received little attention in the press, but it serves as a reminder of the sheer number of imagined communities through which the object type of the jade pagoda traveled. History is necessarily retrospective; for many, July 7, with its soon-to-be-infamous gunshots outside Beiping, undoubtedly passed as any other day. Indeed, in late July 1937, just weeks before the Battle of Shanghai began, yet another exposition preparatory committee again made plans to participate in a domestic exhibition, this time in Singapore. Both Wang Xiaolai and Lin Kanghou served on the

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<sup>208</sup> This pagoda is not explicitly identified as *Altar* or as a different pagoda carving. See “Shi zhengfu chengli shi zhou jinian, choubai juxing shengda qingzhu” 市政府成立十週紀念，籌備舉行盛大慶祝 [The municipal government commemorates the tenth anniversary, prepares to hold a grand celebration], *Shi shi xinbao* 時事新報, July 5, 1937, <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/ssxb19370705-01.1.9>.

<sup>209</sup> “Shougongyi zhanlan di yi ri” 手工藝展覽第一日 [The first day of the handicraft exhibition], *Shi shi xinbao* 時事新報, July 8, 1937, <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/ssxb19370708-01.1.9>.

committee. For the Shanghai display at the Singapore event, Lin Kanghou submitted the suggestion of “Zhang Wendi’s green jadeite pagoda.”<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> “Canjia Xingzhou guo zhan zuo ri juxing choubei huiyi” 參加星洲國展昨日舉行籌備會議 [An organizational meeting was held last night for participation in the Singapore domestic exhibition], *Shi shi xinbao* 時事新報, July 28, 1937, <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/ssxb19370728-01.1.9>.

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會場 [The venue for the Beiping preview exhibition of the Paris Exposition began to be set up yesterday]. *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, March 26, 1937. <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370326-01.1.6>.

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“Bali bolanhui zhan pin yue di yu zhan” 巴黎博覽會展品月底預展 [A preview exhibition of the Paris exposition displays will be held at the end of the month]. *Huabei ribao* 華北日報, March 18, 1937. <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/hbrb19370318-01.1.6>.

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Appendix A. Figures.



Fig. 1. The *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda* (翡翠寶塔) at the Lizzadro Museum of Lapidary Art in Oak Brook, Illinois.



Fig. 2. Two pages from Julean Arnold's pamphlet on the jade pagoda (1933).

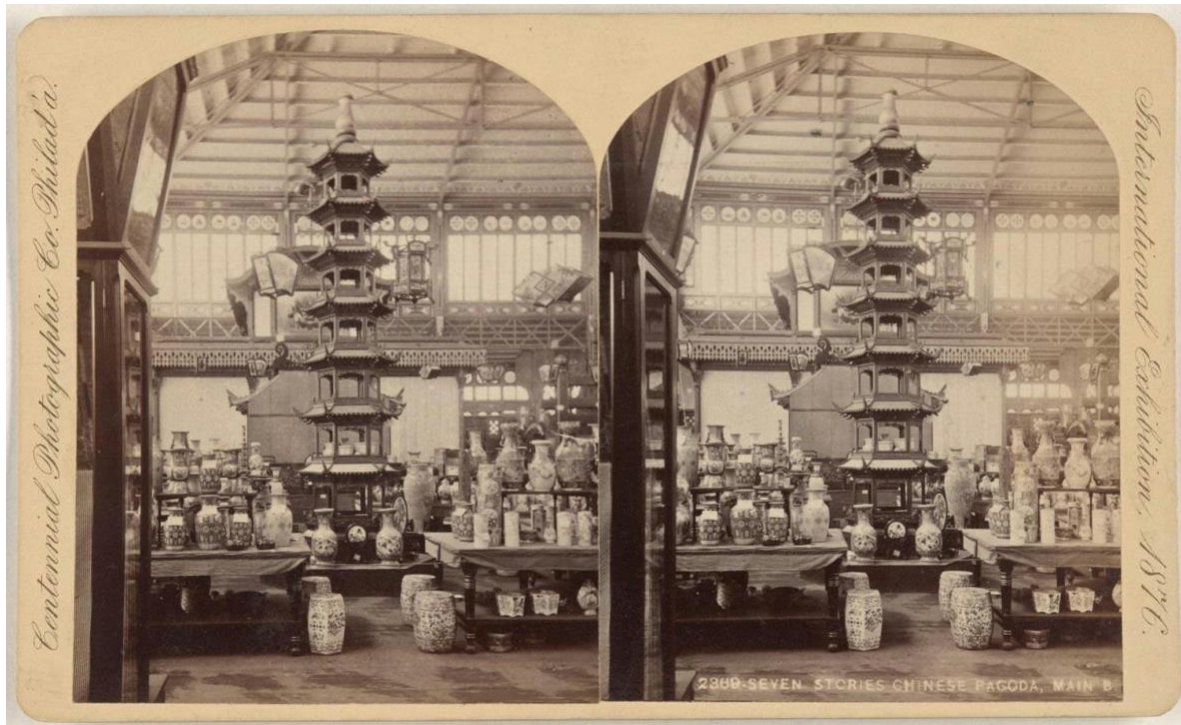


Fig. 3. *Centennial Exhibition, Philadelphia: Seven-Story Chinese Pagoda, Main Building* (Albumen silver print, stereograph, 1876), Centennial Photographic Co., Philadelphia, active 1870s-1880s. Image and sheet (each):  $3 \frac{7}{8} \times 3 \frac{1}{8}$  inches ( $9.8 \times 7.9$  cm) Mount:  $4 \frac{3}{16} \times 6 \frac{15}{16}$  inches ( $10.7 \times 17.7$  cm). Collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.



Fig. 4. Tushanwan pagoda models from the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition. Collection of the SFO Museum, San Francisco.



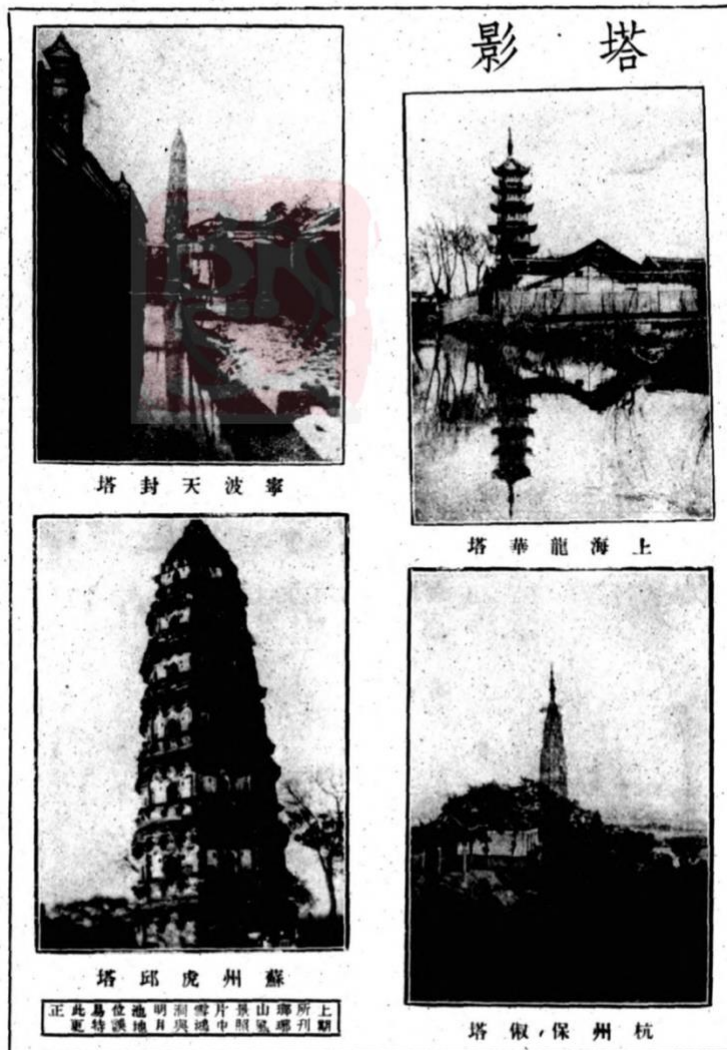


Fig. 5. “Ta ying” 塔影 [Pagoda photography], *Guohuo yuebao (Shanghai)* 國貨月報 (上海) (1935): n.p., *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tu shu guan, 2006.

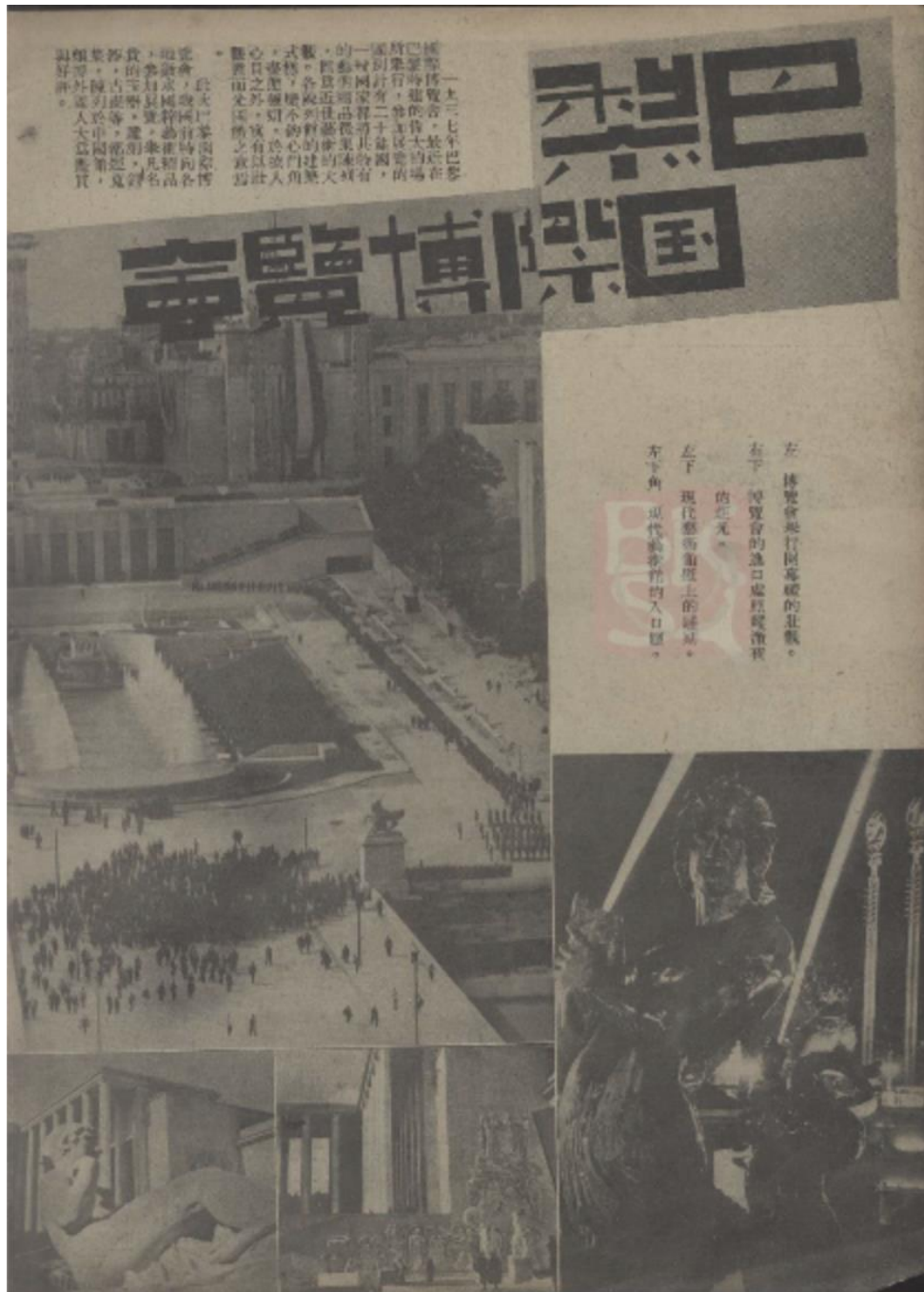


Fig. 6. “Bali guoji bolanhui” 巴黎國際博覽會 [The Paris International Exposition], *Wanyou huabao* 萬有畫報 3 (1937): n.p., *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tu shu guan, 2006.



Fig. 7. “Bali guoji bolanhui” 巴黎國際博覽會 [The Paris International Exposition], *Wanyou huabao* 萬有畫報 3 (1937): n.p., *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tu shu guan, 2006.



Fig. 8. “Yu zhan” 玉展 [Jade exhibition], *Liangyou huabao* 良友畫報 (1937): 32-33, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.



Fig. 9. "Yu zhan" 玉展 [Jade exhibition], *Liangyou huabao* 良友畫報 (1937): 32-33, *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.

北語純  
舞打神  
學無限  
制之復  
貴，不  
可同日  
而語。  
鄙人以  
民族健  
康日見  
衰頹，  
且貴誌近期極力提倡健康運動，特將鄙人等近  
所從事者略述如上，倘將此而登載貴刊，使  
一般讀者能各就環境舉行提倡，於民族復興前  
途，不無裨益也。  
上海劉楚新



小陳此大讚  
編輯先生：  
貴誌自本年開始登載我孩子先生所作「  
小陳」一記，於一月號開讀後不勝雀躍，以為  
從此在貴誌每期可得觀葉先生之大作，不料二  
月號出版，遍覓不見，不勝失望，原因何在，  
能否見示，幸以後仍能登載否？  
廣州李南山

一  
小  
陳一久盼  
不來，編  
者焦急之  
情，比開  
下為其甚  
也。上期  
缺稿原因，係作者葉氏當時忙極，無法趕及之  
故。本期起繼續刊登，如無意外相阻，深信今  
後每期將不致讀者失望也。  
編者



同生同死  
編者先生：  
貴誌第一二四期一月號第十七頁所載滬籍  
同胞葬生之兄弟，因其一人患病逝世，醫生乃  
行分割手術之照片一則，  
查當時分割後，因此  
種分割情形向屬初次試  
辦，且兩人一向身體關  
連，內部組織互有關係  
，故手術後僅十天，  
原可確其生存者亦隨即  
死亡，弟因此次獲悉該  
兄弟所遺下之兩寡婦已  
返抵此間，所待事實如  
是，特以報告……  
小呂宋黃中夫



玉藝預展  
玉器預展，連日在滬舉行。內所陳各品大  
都皆精美名貴之作。最為全場注目的，是一座  
玉砌精形的寶塔，欄干牌樓以及玉簪子等，皆  
不愧為精心的傑作，開定價八百萬元。連日往  
參觀的人絡繹不  
斷。是此玉器行  
將運巴黎展覽，  
特尚得主辦人將  
該項玉器之最名  
貴者攝成照片刊  
登本期，使各地  
讀者之無緣親光  
等亦得一享眼福  
焉。



# 報画識知

· 識知新最紹介 ·  
· 化文代現供提 ·

## 是鑰的庫實識知是

## 滙總的聞見學科是



每畫識知閱試者讀友良  
券待優

憑券附郵票或  
角圓等上海北  
四川路良友圖  
書公司購部  
當華常務近期  
知繪畫一畫

姓名  
住址

一畫一元全五元定。元全二閱購。元全五年定。尚國售畫年每  
在據以八年角二期國八年角八年角一期國五幣幣。十、月  
內郵上角四，元半外角三，年定港角二 元半內分二期零二畫一

Fig. 10. “Yuyi yuzhan” 玉藝預展 [The jade art preview exhibition]. *Liangyou huabao* 良友畫報 (1937): 55. *Quanguo baokan suoyin* 全國報刊索引 [National Index to Chinese Newspapers & Periodicals]. Shanghai: Shanghai tushu guan, 2006.



Fig. 11. Cover of March 1937 issue of *Liangyou huabao* featuring Gao Binyi.

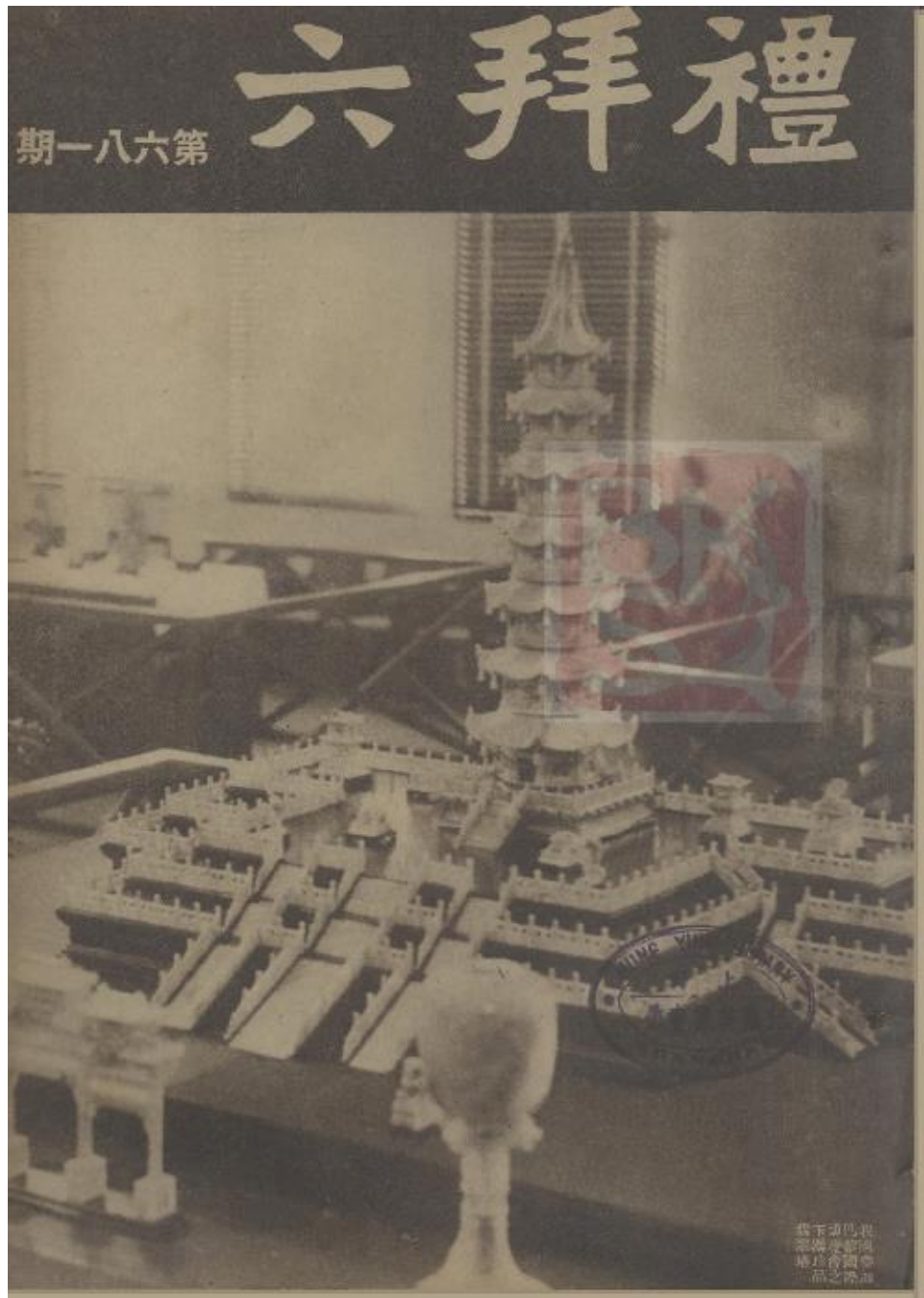


Fig. 12. Cover of the March 1937 issue of *Libailiu* featuring the *Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda*.



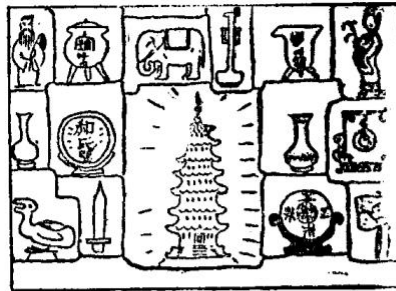
作葉金葵

要繪聞新

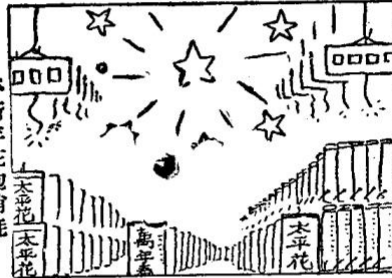
入春後天和風暖  
遊名勝士女如雲



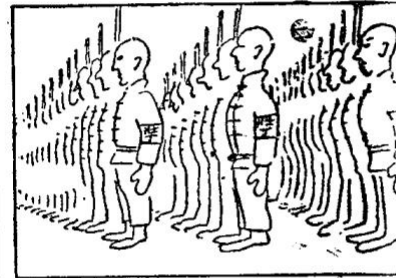
巴黎賽會將開幕  
我國出品已徵齊



平新年花炮消耗  
價值七十餘萬元



繞遠十六日檢閱  
卅萬壯丁訓練隊



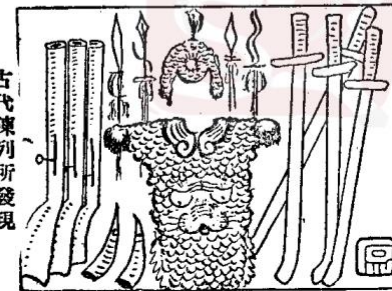
當局保護通信鴿  
申前令禁止捕殺



洛水大橋將工竣  
命名曰林主席橋



明代陳列所發現  
古代兵器千餘件



防春疫普通種痘  
衛生隊挨戶施種

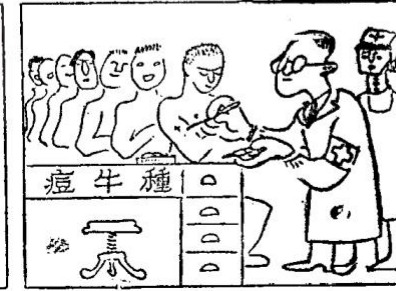


Fig. 13. An illustrated news feature that depicts the Altar of the Green Jade Pagoda in the March 1937 issue of *Shibao banyuekan* 實報半月刊.

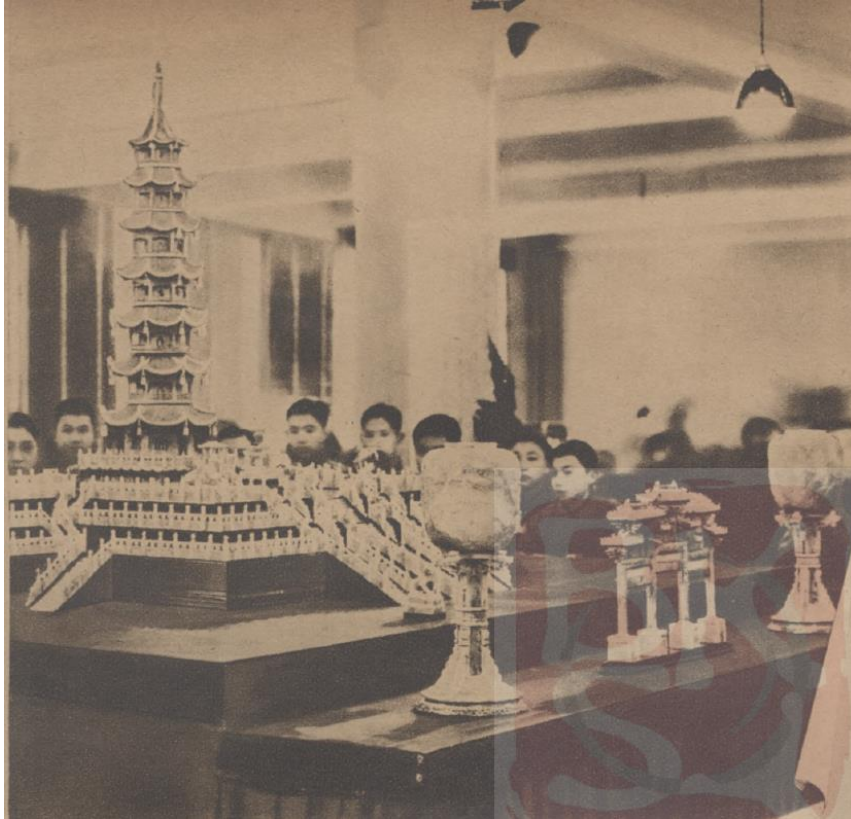


Fig. 14. Wu Baoji's photographs of the Sun exhibition of jades, published in the April 10, 1937 issue of *Xin Zhonghua* 新中华.

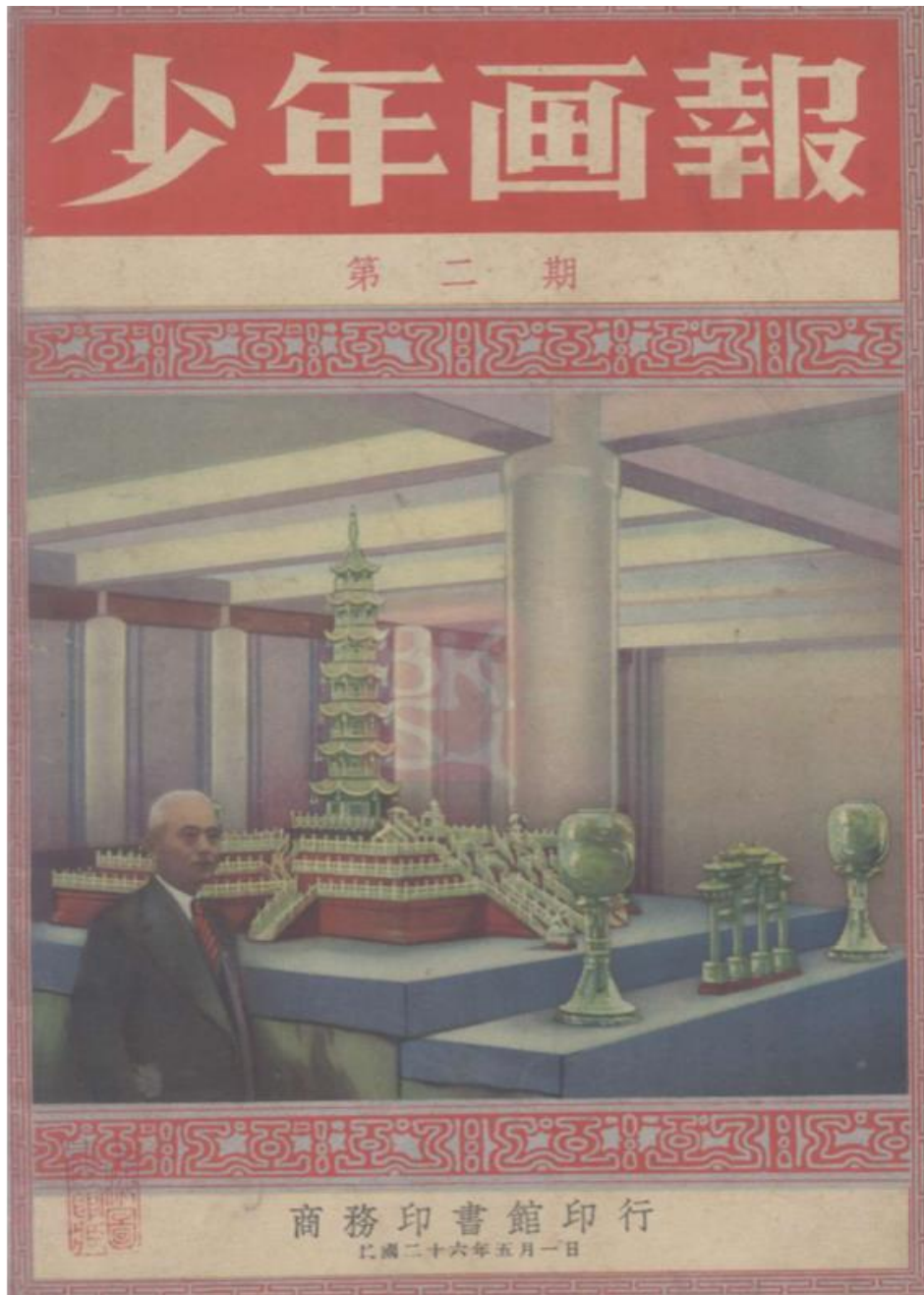


Figure 15. The cover image of the May 1937 issue of *Shaonian huabao* 少年畫報.