Photojournalism and the Revolution

Tactical Uses of Visual Media in the Making of the Republic of China

(1905-1914)

Inauguraldissertation zur Erlangung der Doktorwürde der Philosophischen

Fakultät der Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg

Vorgelegt von

Giulia Pra Floriani

Erstgutachter: Prof. Dr. Sarah E. Fraser

Zweitgutachter: Prof. Dr. Barbara Mittler

Datum: 31 Oktober 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study shows that photography, despite its use in the colonial conquests of the second half of the nineteenth century, came to empower actors in East Asia and became one of the tactics that allowed them to contest and reverse unequal power structures. At the turn of the twentieth century, Chinese revolutionary movements envisioned photojournalism as one of the tools that would lead to their plan to transform the Chinese nation from a dynastic empire into a republic. A close reading of press photographs issued in the anarchist illustrated journal *Le Monde* (1907) and the Revolutionary Alliance-affiliated *The True Record* (1912-1913), edited and published in the Chinese language in the transcultural contexts of Paris and Shanghai, sheds light on the tactical uses of photography as a mean of resistance in the context of the 1911 Xinhai Revolution. Furthermore, by focusing on the images and artefacts developed and used by Sinophone actors including politicians Li Shizeng, Wu Hui, Wu Zhihui, and Zhang Jingjiang, and also by the prominent Lingnan artists Gao Jianfu, Gao Qifeng, and Chen Shuren, this dissertation remarks on the relevance of the photographic historian's choice of sources. If the exclusive consultation of the colonial archive supports and perpetrates the perception of photography as a means of colonial violence, considering different visual archival sources and local uses of the camera uncovers a radically different story.

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INTRODUCTION

Think of a photograph of late nineteenth or early twentieth century China. Now look at two images of a beautifully framed Suzhou riverbank and a group of soldiers crossing a railway in Hankou. Which image most closely resembles the photograph you imagined (**figs. 0.1–0.2**)? Both images depict crucial means of communication, namely, the Great Canal and modern railways. The first photograph paints a pleasing scene of the Canal at Suzhou (**fig. 0.1**). The sharp print offers an idealized view of the "land of Confucius:" women wash clothes along the riverbank, framed by a harmoniously composed arrangement of a round bridge and two boats.[1] The image crystallizes a romanticized, static, and aesthetically enjoyable generic view of China. The second photograph, in contrast, offers only a thin connection to Chinese picturesque elements (**fig. 0.2**). Rather, the low-quality newspaper illustration describes a generic scene of a group of soldiers moving military equipment over rail tracks. In fact, the men are members of the republican army, which initiated the Wuchang Uprising and the 1911 Republican Revolution. The photograph refers to the central role that railway ownership played in triggering violent turmoil. Key communication and transport channels that materially and ideally abbreviated distances between remote Chinese cities, railways had been the center of a dispute between private landlords, foreign powers, and the state since their earliest development in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

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[1] Whereas picturesqueness and other features are certainly true of studio portraits by the American photographer Milton Miller working in Hong Kong in the late nineteenth century, other contemporary photographs by Thomson, Lai Afong, and etc. propose a wide range of angles, subject matters, and light renderings that do not immediately reconnect to the world of Chinese pictorial culture. While considering the complex context of turn-of-the-century China, this study does not rely on the idea that photography became essentially "Chinese" after entering China by assuming certain pictorial features such as added calligraphy, diffused light to minimize shadows, frontal views of the subject, and so on. Although the Empress Dowager Cixi wanted to obtain photographs where both sides of her face were white, at the same time the Canton photo-studios were selling heavily shadowed photographic portraits of prostitutes and mistresses.
Similar images framed with a bridge can be found in most collections of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, for example Sydney D. Gamble (1890–1968), Boats Going under a Bridge, 1908, Grand Canal 大运河, Duke University.

Soldiers stepping on the trucks serve as a metaphor for the legitimacy of the Republic's power over railways and over the Chinese Nation's modernization.

The first photograph focuses on human subjects arrayed along the shore, the boats, the bridge; the individuals are engaged in the daily activities of washing laundry and local river commerce, strengthening the impression of a "traditional" China in which people followed traditional ways for centuries. In contrast, the second image symbolizes the forceful military takeover of Chinese resources and infrastructure by Republican soldiers, expressing modernization in nationalistic terms. Whereas the first photo transmits the idea of a traditional China, gendered mostly as female, engaged in activities unchanged for centuries, the second photo embodies the new values of the revolution, characteristically male, violent, and nationalistic. An inscription by Underwood and Underwood on the first photograph further indicated that the stereoscopic image was made for and enjoyed by wealthy foreigners who wanted to armchair travel in an ossified China. The photo-journalistic image of revolutionaries, by comparison, was addressed to a local Chinese audience and displayed a marked focus on the present.

Photojournalism is the key to understanding the two images and their difference because as a practice it establishes and works in a different temporality. Photojournalistic images focus on current events to capture moments relevant to the present world, and therefore they work to insert China firmly in the present rather than the past. Photojournalistic images of the early twentieth century marked a fundamental break in the history of Chinese photography and photography of "the orient" generally because they establish a new temporal dimension. The photo-journalistic image did not attempt to provide a beatified, fossilized, static landscape for the leisure of the European audience. Rather, the photographer's focus on one specific historical momentum constructed "China" as coeval to the world's other nations, and its events pertinent to the reader's present. China emerged,

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then, not as an unchanging, centuries-old empire, but rather as a modern, ever-changing nation.

In this study I aim to deconstruct the mechanism that used to draw, and in large part still draws the eye of the contemporary reader towards the first photograph. Such mechanism is driven by the search for aesthetically pleasing details, a well-defined form of Chineseness, and the post-colonial discourse. To deconstruct such tendency in academic research, it is useful to approach sources that illuminate alternative surfaces of an increasingly multifaceted history of photography. To return to the micro dimension of this study and the two images introduced above, it must be recognized that for a 1911 revolutionary, nothing was more permeated by Chinese national consciousness than the second image. Indeed, the revolutionaries understood the strength and immediacy of the image's visual message and circulated it in different media to celebrate the establishment of the Republic of China. Very prominently, a 1912 calendar poster commemorating the revolutionary fight reproduced a colorful drawing copied from the photo (**fig. 0.3**).[2] Copied in colors and with black contour lines, the photojournalistic image assumed an aesthetic close to New Year prints and therefore appealed to a wide audience. Its propagandistic potential was maximized through circulation in different media, from the press to the calendar poster.

This study contemplates Chinese revolutionaries' attempts to create a new kind of photography of China, because the images revolutionaries produced can and do provide a different history of photography, one that goes beyond post-colonial reflection, and looks

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[2] Twenty scenes of the 1911 Chinese Republican Revolution and three portraits of its main leaders constitute the core of the poster (**fig. 0.1**). Most of the drawings mimic the structure and composition of contemporaneous photographs. Yet, the lithographer changed each of the images during the transfer from photo to lithograph, including adding beautiful colors, emphatic smoke, national flags, explanatory inscriptions, and fanciful contours. The scenes of revolutionary fighting are framed by newly established national flags, two republican soldiers, yellow and pink roses, and the calendar table itself. The addition of fanciful colors, exaggerated details, and variously shaped frames inscribes the dry photographs of battlefields into an aesthetic and celebratory context. The poster conflates memory and promises of a new beginning under the name of the Republic of China. Stafford Albums, and Bristol.

closely at the agency of local communities. Exclusively by following the actions and priorities that drove the image-making process of local actors, I show, it becomes possible to conceive historical and art-historical narratives that provide a transcultural perspective on photography.

What kinds of historical photographs are "Chinese" and why? And, ultimately, how does one account for the discrepancy between the picturesque views that global histories of photography have identified as "Chinese" and images that, within China, concretely contributed to the making of the Chinese nation? Picturesque visions of China populated souvenir albums, while stereographic prints, mounted on stereoscopes, provided the illusion of three-dimensional views that allowed rich Europeans to armchair travel. The kind of aesthetically pleasing images of China as an idealized, faraway land that circulated in souvenir collections and lantern slides in the houses of Euro-American elites do not provide a full view of Chinese photography at the turn of the century. Rather, they have gained a prominent position in the academic discourse because of their ubiquity in Euro-American collections and their success on the market. As such, my research asks: how did photographers in China, and of China – whose images do not satisfy a contemporary reader's aesthetic tastes – practice photography as a form of resistance to imperialism and as a means to promote political revolution? How do their images challenge scholarly established perceptions of "Chinese Photography?" How can historians recover the agency of photographs, whose original prints have been lost, whose authors are largely unknown, and which exclusively survive in the pages of illustrated magazines?

Photohistorians writing on the Asian, African, and South American contexts have developed sensitive analyses of how photography and the camera were colonial media in the late nineteenth-century. In the Chinese context, Sarah Fraser and Wu Hung have shown how early foreign photographers reproduced the features of a subjugational gaze on typical

subjects such as ambulant workers, coolies, or conquered buildings.[3] Collections in European ethnographic and anthropological libraries and museums, which expanded in intimate connection to the colonial enterprise, confirm Ariella Aïsha Azoulay's argument that the camera's shutter is an imperial technology. [4] Images captured under such conditions, structured by profound power imbalances, cannot be disaggregated from the larger context of imperialism, possession, and violence.

This study draws on post-colonial reflections on the history of photography in Asia. Images of colonial and semi-colonial spaces are analyzed alongside another set of visual sources: photojournalistic images produced by Chinese revolutionaries. By referencing illustrated magazines and revolutionary photography, I seek to establish that local Chinese actors also produced images to serve precise political aims. A study of such images will bring other perspectives to bear on late nineteenth ad early twentieth century Chinese photography. Although many of the images survive exclusively in the form of halftone prints, it is worth considering their role in the history of Chinese visual culture. Such an approach can expand discussions on early Chinese photography and enrich it through the perspectives of local political activists.

The negative and stereotyped impressions conveyed by images of semi-colonial China in early travel accounts stimulated my research for materials that emphasize the agency of the local over the violent power of the colonizers. Photojournalistic images provide a distinct entry point to understand the malleability of photography at the turn of the twentieth century. Used as a tactical medium to resist imperialism and consolidate various ideas of revolution,

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[3] Sarah E. Fraser, "Chinese as Subject: Photographic Genres in the Nineteenth Century," in *Brush and Shutter: Early Photography in China*, eds. Jeffrey W. Cody and Frances Terpak (Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute, 2011), 91–109**.** Exemplary in this sense were images by Felice Beato, which Wu Hung has read as images of subjugation. See Wu Hung, "Photography's Subjugation of China: A 'Magnificent Collection' of Second Opium War Images," in *Zooming In: Histories of Photography in China* (London: Reaktion Books, 2016), 47–83.

[4] Ariella Aïsha Azoulay, *Potential History: Unlearning Imperialism* (London; New York: Verso, 2019), 5.

the camera focused on new subjects, like railroads, soldiers, wounded bodies, battlefield ruins,

and the leader on the move. These themes are analyzed through a close reading of press

images and by juxtaposition with previous colonial photographs in chapters two through four.

As a method, comparison is key for tracking changes in terms of composition and function.

Overall, the choice to recover a set of images from illustrated magazines and situate them

fully within the photographic field constitutes a response to the need to reestablish a balance

between the agency of foreigners and the agency of locals in discussions about photography

in late colonial Asia.

Euro-American archives, as well as private collections and institutions focused on

photographic materials, preserve and exhibit photographs of the Opium War and portraits of

"Chinese Types" by Felice Beato (1832 – 1909), John Thomson (1837 – 1921), and Lai

Afong (Lai Afang 賴阿芳 (c.1839‑1890). For obvious reasons, the former imperialist

countries own vast collections of colonial images. One reason for the proliferation of such

images outside the colonial archive is their marketability.[5] Yet, research can trace routes that

respond neither to the logic of the colonial archive nor the rules of the market. Academic

studies can experiment with new perspectives and different archives. Some scholars have

already clarified the value of investigating photographs produced by communities for local

and regional consumption.[6] The present study adopts a comparable position in its attempt to

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[5] Prof. Tang Hongfeng has highlighted this aspect in a conversation about emerging institutions in China, which tend to collect images connected to the colonial past because of their market value. Conversation with Prof. Tang Hongfeng, August 2023.

[6] Studies on local uses of photography include research by Chritopher Pinney and Nicolas Peterson, Rosalind C. Morris, Jefferey W Cody, and Frances Terpak, Markus Ritter and Staci G. Scheiwiller, Luke Gartlan and Roberta Wue, and numerous essays published by the online journal Trans Asia Photography have already moved in the direction I propose here. See Christopher Pinney and Nicolas Peterson, eds., *Photography's Other Histories* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003); Rosalind C. Morris, ed., *Photographies East: The Camera and Its Histories in East and Southeast Asia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009); Jefferey W. Cody and Frances Terpak, eds., *Brush and Shutter: Early Photography in China* (Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute, 2011); Markus Ritter and Staci G. Scheiwiller, eds., *The Indigenous Lens?: Early Photography in the Near and Middle East* (Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter, 2018); Luke Gartlan and Roberta Wue, eds., *Portraiture and Early Studio Photography in China and Japan* (New York: Routledge, 2019).

reinsert Chinese revolutionary images and illustrated magazines into the history of photography in Asia.

Images and texts from the revolutionary press demonstrate that locals were often keen to produce photographs that were neither souvenir or colonial images but rather journalistic illustrations that aimed to subvert existing power structures. They were not isolated editors or lonely experimenters but prominent representatives of Chinese art and politics at the turn of the century: painters Gao Jianfu 高剑父 (1879‒1951) and Gao Qifeng 高奇峰 (1889‒1933), and scientists and politicians Li Shizeng 李石曾 (1881‒1973, also known as Yu Ying 煜瀛) and Wu Zhihui 吳稚暉 (1865‒1953). For Chinese elites concerned about their society's future (starting from the first years of the twentieth century), photography was an emancipatory tool. In this history, I seek to write a photographic history of China by analyzing sources - illustrated magazines - that seldom have been integrated into existing photo-histories. In the process of contextualizing them, my focus remains on the local population's understanding of these images rather than on their appeal to contemporary aesthetic appreciation.

Online databases have made a wide range of journals and magazines available to scholars worldwide.[7] These publications offer a spectrum of explorations in visual culture, but also included literature, art, literary criticism, and graphic design. They reflected the views of their editors, but also the photographers and writers who contribute to their pages. A close reading of the images in one specific genre of publication, revolutionary journals,

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[7] Numerous photography databases for the Chinese area include, among others, the Historical Photographs of China database based at the University of Bristol Welcome | Historical Photographs of China (hpcbristol.net), the online collection of the Hoover Institution China | Hoover Institution, the virtual Shanghai platform Virtual Shanghai Project | Virtual Shanghai, and the Getty Photo Archive Getty Photo Archive. Databases that allow the study of Chinese Illustrated Magazines across continents are the Shanghai Library based 全国报刊索引| BKSY 全国报刊索引| (cnbksy.cn), and the open-access WOMAG and Chinese journals Online, based at Heidelberg University Chinese Women's Magazine (uni-heidelberg.de).

provides these largely unidentified photographers and editors with a voice. Their relationship to photography as a medium contributes to complicating narratives about "Chinese Photography," further affirming the point that the photographic images of China preserved in Euro-American institutions are but a small fraction of a much wider whole.

A shift toward sources such as propaganda posters and illustrated magazines allows me to see that it was only a matter of few years before the Sinophone community in China and abroad appropriated photography as a medium, distancing it from colonial compositions and adapting it to a nationalist political agenda. This is not to ignore the post-colonial perspective, which remains a necessary optic and must continue to guide the work of museums and archives with a colonial past. Together with provenance research, sensitivity to the colonial legacy embedded in museum collections is increasingly communicated in transparent and accessible forms. This study builds on reflections on the colonial past, but moves in a slightly different direction by attempting to craft a narrative in which Sinophone revolutionary voices are heard. To achieve such aim, I consult archives collected by the historical actors themselves, either in the form of classic archives (the Chinese Fund of the Institut franco-chinois de Lyon (now in the Lyon Municipal Library), the Shanghai Library, the Stanford University East Asian Library, and the Hoover Institution) or in the form of the compact "archive" provided by the illustrated magazine. These journals include images, texts, and drawings, and incorporate a mix of materials that resemble the features of the archive. They provide a unique entry point into the thought and aspirations of Chinese revolutionaries. In short, this study moves away from the imperialist uses of photography to focus on the camera's pragmatic use as a tool of resistance.

Photography, as well as the relationship between the camera and the republican revolution, are understood as historical and practical applications rather than invariable technologies and political structures. It is reductive to reduce the nation and the camera to

foreign superimpositions that reproduce an undifferentiated colonial gaze. For the sake of my argument, it is more useful to look at the concrete embodiments of such machines and ideologies within the specific context of the struggle against the imperialist powers and the Qing court. Oliver Moore suggests a similar approach to Chinese Photography, urging scholars working with Chinese sources to shed light on the "rich dimensions of photography's local history in China," which are "the means through which to show how Chinese agency also adopted controlling positions."[8] Moore stresses the local appropriation of photography, where local visual practices partially subverted colonially-charged media to achieve their own aims. Additional work by Wu Hung, Claire Roberts, and Yi Gu, as well as a range of historical research in Chinese by Gu Zheng, Chen Yang, and Tang Hongfeng, demonstrate the need to approach Chinese photography by emphasizing its local uses. These studies, together with research on the modern press in China, inform the approach of my dissertation.[9] It is irrefutable that the nation was a modern European invention and photography's discovery was situated in the French and British industrial contexts. To fully understand the history of modern China and its visual culture, however, we must move away from a focus on the colonial gaze to observe the localized appropriations and adaptations of both nationalist ideals and photographic technologies in East Asia.

The present work centers the strategic and tactical uses of the camera. Such vocabulary derives from Michel De Certeau's juxtaposition of the "strategy" and the "tactic." Scholars studying the practice of everyday life distinguish strategies, which are the dominant and superimposed social structures distributed by commercial or political power, from the tactical uses of such structures, where "the imposed knowledge and symbolism become objects

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[8] Oliver Moore, *Photography in China: Science, Commerce, and Communication* (London and New York: Routledge, 2022), 8.
[9] For my literature review see chapter 1.

manipulated by practitioners who have not produced them."[10] The camera and the idea of the nation, although invented in Europe and introduced to China through colonialism, do not determine the actions of the individuals who take them up. Rather "between the person (who uses them) and these products (indexes of the 'order' which is imposed on him), there is a gap of varying proportions opened by the use that he makes of them".[11] In this sense, my research is concerned with how Chinese revolutionaries developed tactical uses of the camera and appropriated the idea of republican revolution.

Chinese students and young revolutionary intellectuals, this study argues, fully understood the advanced processes of image making and display. They were well-aware that images could affect mentalities and they thus aimed to reach a wide audience. After an initial chapter on methodology and sources, chapters two to five focus on four tactical uses of photography that emerged from revolutionaries' use of photographic images to spread their ideas. It will become apparent how Chinese revolutionaries made full use of the persuasive power of photography in the course of nation-building and strengthening Republican ideals. It is in this sense, I contend, that the camera participated in the making of the revolution. Hence this dissertation's title: "Photojournalism and the Revolution".

The term photojournalism in China deserves a nuanced definition. Photojournalistic images include photographs that show a piece of *news*, defined as a fact relevant to the present and/or a picture published in the press. In my conceptualization, and within the context of early twentieth century China, while photojournalism largely overlapped with the "documentary," it showed a greater emphasis on the ephemeral moment. I use the term with reference to the Chinese term *shishi xiezhenhua* 時事寫真畫 (images of actual events), which

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[10] Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1984), 32.
[11] De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 32.

was used in the magazines' context to refer to both drawn and photographed news-images. Magazines and illustrated newspapers that published the earliest examples of news-photography were part of a larger set of journals that were instrumental in shaping a new civic and national consciousness among the Chinese elite at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. Among the booming number of journals and newspapers (shibao 時報), most publications were driven by an increased interest in the momentous news of the day. The earliest and most representative example is the drawing-based *Dianshizhai Huabao* 點石齋畫報 (1884-1898). Photographs entered the scene at the beginning of the twentieth century. If some of the earliest photo-illustrated publications focused on the experiences of women (*The Women's Eastern Times*, Funü Shibao 婦女時報) or were closer to the European ideal of the newspaper as a platform for civic discussion to share news (*Shenbao* 申報), others promoted a radical political agenda (*Le Monde* 世界, and *The True Record Zhenxiang huabao* 真相畫報). In this dissertation I focus on one such journal, *The True Record*, which was tightly connected with the Revolutionary Alliance and the 1911 Revolution. In so doing, I present a limited selection of press photographs, but nonetheless argue that such images were symptomatic of the larger use of new printed media in 1900s-1910s China. To support my argument that *The True Record* (1912-1913) was not an isolated revolutionary publication, this study also considers another radical Sinophone magazine published in Paris, *Le Monde* (1907), that was symptomatic not only to the political activism of young intellectuals but also to the transnational dimensions of the early Chinese press. Both journals, like other cutting-edge publications in the scientific and entertainment press, pioneered the inclusion of photographic material.

What is especially significant about photojournalism, compared, for example, with portraiture or landscape photography, is that the photojournalistic image is only effective

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when it captures a significant moment from a meaningful current event. Such focus on the moment, then, features both in the larger context of the newspaper and magazine boom in China, Shanghai especially, and takes on an even more prominent role in photographs of political and social events. The photo-journalistic image inscribes events in China within a present-time frame, adding a new temporal dimension to photographic images of China, one where the subjects live and act in the now rather than in an undefined past. Photojournalism is, therefore, a useful analytical tool for understanding the tendency of nineteenth and twentieth century press photographs to focus on contemporaneous disasters such as wars, floods, famines, and social scandals, and for assessing the images' claims to truth.[12] In this sense, photojournalism is understood here not as a movement that can be attributed to a specific time and place, but a transcultural phenomenon that transcends both.[13]

The idea that art, and visual culture more generally, was a medium used to trigger and defend social revolution, has clear links with the socialist understanding of creativity in which art's purpose is to awaken the people's spirit and direct the masses' support to socialism. Socialism in the management of culture and art assumed a prominent role in China with the the increasing power of the Communist Party, and Mao Zedong, in the 1930s and 1940s, especially after the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art (Yan'an wenyi zuotanhui 延安文藝座談會) was established in 1942. Mao and the Communist Party saw art as subservient to politics.[14] After the leader announced the foundation of the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949, an understanding of art as an aid or support for the revolution

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[12] The term "photojournalism" emphasizes the agency and fruition of the local photographer and reader. In this sense, it contrasts with categories such as "ethnographic photography" that in this period crucially implied a subaltern relation of power between the photograph's maker and the photograph's subject(s).

[13] The locations of the earliest press which included photographs is listed in Table two.

[14] Mao Zedong, Zai wenyi zuotanhuide jianghua yinyan yu jielun 在文藝座談會的講話引言與結論 [Introduction and Conclusion of the Speech at the Literary Symposium] (Yan'an Liberation Press, 1943). English translation: Bonnie S. McDougall, *Talks at the Yan'an Conference on Literature and Art: A Translation of the 1943 Text with Commentary* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center for Chinese Studies, 1980).

characterized creative production in China at least until the end of the Cultural Revolution (1976). Yet, in 1910 socialism was not yet a key term on the agenda of the Revolutionary Alliance and the Nationalist Party, whose guidelines were Sun Yatsen's three principles - nationalism, democracy, and the people's livelihood - rather than Marxist doctrine. Retrospectively reading the revolutionaries' understanding and use of visual arts through Maoist language or a Marxist frame as a prequel to the socialist use of art under the PRC would prove anachronistic.[15]

Photography and the Republic of China

Were both photography and the Republic limiting structures that were imposed on China by the outside world, or were they platforms that became useful to local communities? Building on the recognition that not ideas but also things have the power to trigger social change, the present research traces the connections between photojournalism, visual media, and nation-building at the foundation of the Republic of China. [16] Knowledge and commodities travel together, yet both change during their dissemination. Europeans invented the camera and the nation in Europe and during their imperial expansion in the nineteenth century they used these cultural techniques to subordinate, regulate, and classify the whole world. Yet, once Chinese revolutionaries adapted them for their own purposes, both techniques gained an emancipatory power.

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[15] Sarah E. Fraser has pointed out that conceptions of art as a means of social change still characterizes the production of influential contemporary artists. Xu Bing, among others, follows a similar narrative in artworks such as the *Magic Carpet series* and in the banner *Art for the People* (MoMA). See Chia Chi Jason Wang, "Art as a Vehicle for Social Change," in Sarah E. Fraser and Li Yu-Chieh eds., *Xu Bing, Beyond the Book from the Sky* (Singapore: Springer, 2020), 137–151.

[16] Such approach is deeply indebted to scholarship on the socio-cultural changes caused by the increased circulation of printed books. These include Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing 1450–1800* (London; New York: 1976, first published in French 1958); and Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

The 1911 Xinhai Revolution posed a full stop to over two millennia of dynastic succession. Since the late nineteenth century, reformists and revolutionaries sparked a lively intellectual debate with visions of many new possible Chinas. For the reformists, the country should embrace a constitutional monarchy under the rule of the Qing dynasty. For the revolutionaries, on the other hand, the sole solution to national problems was a violent uprising. Although reformist movements acting both within and without the court had achieved some successes in the reforms of 1898, their hopes for the implementation of gradual reforms were extinguished during the first decade of the twentieth century. Due to Empress Dowager Cixi's 慈禧 (1835–1908) *de facto* imprisonment of Emperor Guangxu 光緒 (1871–1908), the inefficient response to the foreign military assault after the Boxer Rebellion (1899–1901), and the increasing corruption of the court, most intellectuals realized that change could only be achieved through revolution.

Internal political turmoil motivated Chinese intellectuals to search for possible solutions in theories and techniques developed outside of China, ranging from T.H. Huxley's Social Darwinism and Peter Kropotkin's anarchism. Largely translated into Chinese from Japanese, such written sources have attracted the attention of sinologists and historians.[17] In contrast, few studies have sought to conceive knowledge production at the turn of the century in terms of commodities and visual artefacts.[18] Newly introduced products including letterpress printers, portable cameras, and photo zincography enabled Chinese intellectuals,

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[17] These include Mary Rankin, *Early Chinese Revolutionaries: Radical Intellectuals in Shanghai and Chekiang, 1902–1911* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971); James Reeve Pusey, *China and Charles Darwin* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983); David Strand, *"Civil Society" and "Public Sphere" in Modern China: a Perspective in Popular Movements in Beijing, 1919–1989* (Durham: Asian/Pacific Studies Institute, Duke University, 1990); Peter Zarrow, *After Empire: The Conceptual Transformation of the Chinese State, 1885–1924* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012).

[18] Regarding the press, see especially Christopher A Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1876–1937* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004); J. Cynthia Brokaw and Christopher A. Reed, eds., *From Woodblocks to the Internet: Chinese Publishing and Print Culture in Transition circa 1800 to 2008* (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

artists, and journalists to reproduce their journals in large volumes in a short time, to photograph with a wider degree of freedom, and to increase the availability of visual materials. The revolutionaries fully exploited the potential of journals, illustrated magazines, and photographs to drive hatred against the Euro-American imperialistic powers and the Qing Dynasty, spread their republican ideas, and, ultimately, communicate the possibility, necessity, and glory of an armed uprising.

Nations are the product of violence, struggles between colonial powers, dynastic rule, royal empires, and the wills of politically engaged elites. Undeniably, the paradigm of the nation, modeled on European standards, reproduces a degree of epistemic violence when it becomes the only possible choice for colonized or semi-colonized societies to achieve international legitimacy.[19] In parallel, the introduction of the photographic gaze in colonial or semi-colonial countries during the second half of the nineteenth century reproduced a violent and civilizational gaze.[20] Yet, Chinese intellectuals produced images that subverted those frames and used them as tactics to advance their emancipatory agenda. That is to say that even within the limited field of action allowed by the rigid conception of the modern nation and the rectangular frame of the camera image, there was space for Chinese anarchists and republicans to intervene and adapt these structures for their own needs. Sharpening the focus on China, I will argue that during the first decade of the twentieth century, young Chinese artists and students internalized the possibilities and practices offered by the nation and the camera and were fully aware that both could serve their revolutionary cause.[21] In the

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[19] See the discussion in the field of postcolonial studies, especially Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

[20] See for example Elizabeth Edwards, ed., *Anthropology and Photography, 1860–1920* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

[21] Tactics are here conceptualised as the ways the subaltern finds to turn things and theories to her own advantage, despite their original aim being their disadvantage. The language is derived from Michel de Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life,* where the scholar identifies the tactics used by individuals to make objects created for the masses their own. See Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

periodical press, revolutionaries envisioned photographs as the means to project a new political and cultural narrative that did not exclusively reify the culture of the modern Nation, but rather embodied the culture of the modern and revolutionary Republic of China.

The cultural history of China at the turn of the twentieth century shows how images shaped people's lives and activism. One of the most important cultural figures of Republican era literature and culture, Lu Xun, 魯迅 (1881–1936), originally planned to become a doctor. During his medical studies in Japan he attended a photographic slideshow. One slide showed a Chinese man, a detective for the Russian army, whom the Japanese catured and decapitated. In the image, Chinese onlookers surrounded the violent scene. The passivity of their gazes and their lack of rebellion made Lu Xun realize the Chinese required a spiritual and moral cure more urgently than any physical therapy he could provide with his medical degree.[22] He subsequently abandoned medicine for literary and artistic pursuits. Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培 (1868–1940) was also a tireless promoter of the benefits of an aesthetic education in China. His conception of art education largely overlapped with the Lingnan painter Gao Jianfu's conception of art. "So called modern art," Gao argued, "must first and foremost reflect the truth of life, to enable a wide audience to understand it. In other words, art must be 'popularized.' Simultaneously, art must be impregnated with an educative purpose."[23] Whereas Gao wrote as an art practitioner, Cai Yuanpei and Lu Xun reflect the wider concern for visual education in the intellectual circles of educators and writers. It comes as little surprise that Gao Jianfu became a representative painter fighting for "art revolution," and that both Cai Yuanpei and Lu Xun placed a strong emphasis on the power of the visual and art

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[22] "Mr. Fujino," in *Lu Xun: Selected Works, vol. 1*, translated by Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1980), 34–35.

[23] Gao Jianfu 高劍父, "*Wo de xiandai guohua guan* 我的現代國畫觀 [*My idea of modern Chinese Painting*]," in *Xin guohua yaoyi* 新國畫要義 [The essentials of new Chinese painting] (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Meishu Chibanshe, 2016), 12.

education in their subsequent careers, the woodcut movement for the former and the promotion of aesthetics as a religion for the latter.[24]

This dissertation covers the years between 1905 and 1914, two fundamental dates for the history of the illustrated press in China and, more broadly, for Chinese modern history. As early as 1904, some Chinese schools started to substitute the classical curriculum based on the Confucian classics with translated books that introduced new disciplines such as geography, international history, and sociology. The following year, the civil service examination, which had been the exclusive gateway to public service for centuries, was abolished. These transformations opened spaces for publications that emphasized new forms of knowledge and were aimed at readers uninterested in the traditional styles and contents examined in the imperial selection process. Further, halftone printing was adopted in China around 1904. The technology enabled editors to print photographs side by side with text at a relatively low cost. As a result, the period following 1905 saw a significant increase in magazines that creatively combined commercial, social, and political aims with expanded reading platforms for a broader audience. The 1910s formed a hybrid period between the drawing-based illustrated press represented by the *Dianshizhai Pictorial*, and the more advanced and commercial employment of photo-reproductions in the *Young Companion*. From 1912 until 1914, the republican constitution guaranteed press freedom. In 1914, the final year I consider in this dissertation, Yuan Shikai's government implemented strict new censorship laws. His regulations condemned the issue of any publication positioned against

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[24] On the woodcut movement see Tang Xiaobing, "The Making of the Avantgarde," in *The Origin of The Chinese Avant-garde: The Modern Woodcut Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 113–164. On Cai Yuanpei's conception of art as a spiritual guidance see Cai Yuanpei, "Replacing religion with aesthetic education (以美育帶宗教 *Yi meiyu dai zongjiao*)," in *Modern Chinese Literary Thought: Writings on Literature, 1893–1945*, ed. Kirk A. Denton and translated by Julia F. Andrews (Stanford and California: Stanford University Press, 1996), 87.

the regime, imposing on authors fines ranging from 40 to 400 yuan. [25] A climate of widespread censorship and limitations to press freedom immediately following Song Jiaoren's assassination led to the closure of revolutionary publications such as *The True Record* in 1913, although the lack of funds played a complementary role. The period considered here constitutes a bridge between the late Qing climate of intellectual debate and the May Fourth Movement.[26]

The focus on an extremely dense decade of the early twentieth century allows me to unpack the 1911 Republican Revolution and to reconceive it as a long-term project rather than a single event. After all, the revolution was only one of the many insurrections that erupted in Southern China at the dawn of the twentieth century. Numerous protests before the 1911 Wuchang Uprising had set the stage for the establishment of the Republic. Further, revolts and uprising to counter the power of Yuan Shikai and of powerful landlords that controlled large sections of China continued after 1912. Furthermore, collective memory of the 1911 Revolution as a significant historical event had to be nurtured in the years that followed through the production and dissemination of photographs, texts, and artefacts. Although the revolution constituted a radical change in Chinese history, significant continuities continued to exist into the late imperial period and the early Republican era.

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[25] Promulgated in December 1914 and valid until 1926, the censorship law was based on an earlier version issued by the Qing government. See Jean-Pierre Drège, *La Commercial Press de Shanghai 1897–1949* (Paris: Collège de France, 1978), 16.

[26] The period before the revolution and the era inaugurated by the May Fourth movement in 1919 have been widely studied, the period between 1911 and 1919 deserves increased scholarly attention. See Joan Judge, *Republican Lens: Gender, Visuality, and Experience in the Early Chinese Periodical Press* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2015), 5. Beside Judge's work on both visual and textual materials from illustrated magazines, Chen Pingyuan, Chen Yang, David Strand, and Henrietta Harrison all have contributed to the growing historical inquiry into this politically turbulent period. See for example Chen Pingyuan 陈平原, 左图右史与西学东渐—晚清画报研究 *Zuo tu you shi yu xixuedongjian: wanqing huabao yanjiu* [Image on the left and history on the right and western learning: research on illustrated magazines of the late Qing] (Beijing: Sanlian Shudian 三联书店, 2018); Chen Yang 陈阳, 真相的正－反－合：民初视觉文化研究 *Zhenxiang de zhen, fan, he: minchu shijue wenhua yanjiu* [Acceptance, Opposition and Synthesis: Research on Early Republic Visual Culture], Fudan Daxue Chubanshe 复旦大学出版社, 2017；David Strand, *An Unfinished Republic: Leading by Word and Deed in Modern China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2011); Henrietta Harrison, *The Making of the Republican Citizen: Political Ceremonies and Symbols in China, 1911 – 1929* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

History is here conceived as a series of uneven processes rather than a succession of discrete, single events. History on the ground is not experienced in sudden breaks. Rather, such breaks are marked and crystallized *a posteriori* precisely via the circulation and canonization of historiographical writing and documentary images.

Another implication touches on the periodization of Chinese history. Ambiguous personalities, such as the censorious Yuan Shikai, who acted as an intermediary between the Qing court and the republican revolutionaries and even declared himself emperor of a new dynasty in 1915, throws into question 1912's historiographical status as the clear-cut line of demarcation between imperial and republican power. The shift from ancient to modern, from obsolete to advanced, from Qing to republican, then, is not a given of historical analysis. Rather, it relies precisely on the textual and visual narratives that revolutionaries and reformists promulgated to promote their projects. Hence, an in-depth analysis of visual propaganda and photojournalism, understood as forms of contemporary historiography, enables historians to accurately describe the transition between the Qing imperial period, the Republic of China, and even the People's Republic of China.

This study combines insights into Chinese photographic practice and the emergence of Chinese nationalism by reframing photography as a medium of revolution rather than just coloniality. Incisive and timely critiques of colonial photography in the nineteenth and twentieth century continue to produce important studies based on materials collected in Euro-American archives. As materials in China continue to emerge, a growing number of studies focus on the photographic practices of Chinese photographers. [27] Relatively low-quality

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[27] These include studies on Republican-period photographers Lang Jingshan and Jin Shisheng. Mia Yinxing Liu. "The "Emulative" Portraits: Lang Jingshan's Photography of Zhang Daqian," *Trans Asia Photography* V. 6, Issue 1: Composite Realities: The Art of Photographic Manipulation in Asia, Guest edited by Claire Roberts and Yi Gu (Fall 2015) The "Emulative" Portraits: Lang Jingshan's Photography of Zhang Daqian (umich.edu). Qiuzi Guo, "The Odyssey of an Amateur Chinese Photographer: Nostalgia, War, and Exile in the Work of Jin

halftone magazine images that broke from contemporaneous aesthetics contribute to my discussion. Besides emphasizing the practice of photography as appropriated in China, revolutionary images departed from the picturesque views found in souvenir photography, seeking rather to capture the immediate and the momentous.

Some points are relevant in terms of the perspective established by this study. Journals *Le Monde* and *The True Record*, the main objects of this study, were revolutionary-oriented and among the earliest publications to reproduce photographic images consistently. The Shanghai Library and the Lyon Municipal Library preserved the journals because Chinese students, scholars, and librarians acquired and collected the publications; such provenance contrasts with the history of photo-collections acquired by Euro-American tourists as souvenirs and consequently deposited in institutions.[28] In this study, I make use of images that are blurry, low-quality, or aesthetically unpleasing to the contemporary eye. The reason is twofold. On the one hand, such images embodied the avant-garde of the newest technology and these photographs must have appeared modern and appealing to a late Qing or early republican reader. On the other hand, magazines are the only platform to preserve such images, and their inclusion in academic accounts reveal the powerful appropriation of visual media by Chinese revolutionaries. The camera, then, is a flexible tool that conditions, but does not determine, the results of its operation. In other words, it does not impose epistemic violence just because it was originally invented and deployed in an imperial context. Rather, photography's potential *can be and was exploited* by groups opposed to those same power structures. It is the task of academic research to identify where and when such subversion occurred.

Shisheng" *Trans Asia Photography* 8, no. 2 (Spring 2018). The Odyssey of an Amateur Chinese Photographer: Nostalgia, War, and Exile in the Work of Jin Shisheng (umich.edu).

[28] Online databases allow access to magazines that only a few years ago were not easily accessible.

One may object that the different nature of the images in the colonialist and revolutionary narrative is related to periodization rather than the photographer, researcher, or archive's perspective. However, although photographs of the second Opium War by Felice Beato, as well as photographs by John Thomson, predate images of the revolution by decades, those images reproduced a colonial and picturesque gaze that can be traced in nearly every photographic archive of Chinese photographs. In other words, images of an Orientalized China as seen in early photo-accounts continued to animate the Euro-American imagination of Asia throughout the 1910s and beyond.[29] I refer to early photographers Beato and Thomson to provide known anchorage points in the history of Chinese photography. Yet, the narration could rely on reference to photographs of the humiliation that foreign powers imposed on Beijing following the military suppression of the Boxer Rebellion (1900).

The researcher's perspective and the mediation of archival institutions are paramount in the shaping research results. Archives and libraries contain a partial selection of the material that existed historically. Photographers, traders, editors, librarians, and archivists have operated a selection of the material long before any contemporary scholar can access the materials. Yet, this limit does not diminish the relevance of such archival material. Historians and art historians who work with colonial sources necessarily obtain research results that reflect on colonial inequality, submission and violence. In comparison, sources produced parallel to colonial photography create space for the agency of local communities. A fresh look at journals and revolutionary visual materials reveals a different possibility to rebalance the distribution of agency among foreign and Chinese photographers in turn of the century

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[29] Orientalism refers to Edward Said's landmark volume and the recent use of the terminology in photo-history. See Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978). See also Ali Behdad and Luke Gartlan, eds., *Photography's Orientalism: New Essays on Colonial Representation* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2013).

China. Ultimately, sources from non-imperial and non-commercial archives shape new narratives where regional emancipatory movements play the leading role.

Outline

The first chapter introduces the sources that constitute the primary materials for this study, the history of the illustrated press in China, and the methodologies that I apply in this study. Chapters two to five analyze four visual strategies that revolutionary groups employed to convince their readers of the justness and necessity of revolutionary action. Beyond grouping together images that rely on conceptually similar visual tactics, my study follows a loose chronological order that takes the reader from the formation of nationalist consciousness to the realization of the revolution.

Although the emphasis on photojournalism's relevance to the making and preservation of the memory of the revolution is the overarching theme of the dissertation, I have refined my chapters based on the specific tactics that the press used to maximize the revolutionary potential of the chosen images. The first tactic exploited the constructed overlap of photography and truth (chapter two). While the positioning of the camera as a modern scientific instrument was a global idea, in China it assumed an especially relevant role in the revolutionary narrative. Because the camera was alleged to capture reality "as it is," the coordinated and staged message that revolutionary editors and photographers communicated appeared to readers to be unfiltered, direct, and, most importantly, true. Chapter three develops the tactical use of images of the "pain of others."[30] Emotions conveyed through photojournalistic images of suffering and death emerge as powerful motivating elements; revolutionary images and texts forcefully embodied hate towards the enemy and empathy

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[30] Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2003).

with the ally, especially through images of wounded bodies. In the analysis of images of suffering in chapter three, gender constitutes an important analytical category for discussing the invisibility of women's pain in the nationalist narrative. Chapter four explores the concept of Revolution as a process of both destruction and rebirth. Remnants and ruins were especially relevant to the visual narration of devastation and reconstruction fundamental to the revolution. Finally, chapter five considers the tactical introduction of photojournalism in the depiction of revolutionary leaders. Rather than proposing static images of the ruler, the revolutionary narrative relied on photographs of the dynamic leader, especially in depictions of Sun Yat-sen 孫中山 (1866–1925), who is represented constantly on the move or appearing in public spaces. Such images of the leader, captured in a specific moment of action, posed a striking contrast to the immobile and eternal images of the Qing rulers.

The chapters significantly overlap in terms of timeframe and networks. They all demonstrate that the interrogation of non-traditional sources such as illustrated magazines provides unexpected and refreshing insights on the practices of photography in turn of the century-China.

CHAPTER ONE

GLOBAL AND ACTUAL: *LE MONDE* AND *THE TRUE RECORD*

Introduction

Why are revolutionary illustrated magazines from the late Qing and early Republican period worth researching? Young revolutionaries responsible for the production of radical publications later developed more moderate political positions, which set the ground for the establishment of the symbols and institutions of the Republic of China in 1912. Before the fall of the Qing dynasty, those reformers and revolutionaries lived in exile or travelled extensively across Europe, Japan, and the U.S. to raise funds to sustain the revolutionary cause or simply gain access to new political, scientific, and technological knowledge. Based in a range of locations, including Japan, the foreign-controlled areas of Shanghai, and Europe, revolutionaries clustered around periodicals that they used to systematize and circulate their ideas in the diaspora and, despite intermittent censorship by the imperial state and later Yuan Shi-kai, in Chinese cities. Although the impact of revolutionaries' magazines and pamphlets is not easily quantified in numbers, without a doubt they provide an entry point to the writers' mentalities during their youth. The publications, then, provide a privileged window into the modes of reasoning, and the modes of visual persuasion, that young artists and intellectuals such as Gao Qifeng, Gao Jianfu, Li Shizeng, and Wu Zhihui developed in their formative years. In what follows, I provide an introduction of the relationship of my research to the secondary literature and the two magazines that constitute the primary materials for this dissertation.

A History of Chinese Photo-based Journals

Le Monde (Shijie 世界) and *The True Record* (Zhenxiang huabao 真相畫報) are representative of a larger body of illustrated pamphlets, magazines, and newspapers that characterise late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century China. Newspapers such as the Shenbao 申報, the Dianshizhai Huabao, the *Eastern Miscellany* (Dongfang zazhi 東方雜志), and *The Young Companion* (Liangyou 良友) were all part of a similarly effervescent universe in which entertainment coexisted with political turmoil. Their pages allowed not only a flux of texts and images, but also provided a space to develop written reflections on the news in China and the world. It is in such a context that the magazines analyzed in this study became representative of the larger practice of positioning the printed press with a specific agenda. Whereas the *Shenbao* and *The Eastern Miscellany* were mostly concerned with news and their social impact, and *The Young Companion* with fashion and different representations of Shanghainese modernity, *Le Monde* and *The True Record* were strongly political. The two magazines exemplified larger developments in the Chinese press, but were also peculiar in their strident politics and use of photojournalistic images. As such they proved especially relevant to the aims and scope of this research.

Histories of photography and the press touch on many fields of historical enquiry including the history of science, cultural history, and art history. Illustrated magazines in China had a longer history that stretched back decades before the 1910s. The Republican-era journalist and scholar Sa Kongliao 薩空了 (1907–1988) was the first to categorize Chinese illustrated magazines produced before 1931. Sa divided them into groups according to the printing technologies involved. He described three technique-based periods: the initial stage between 1884 to 1920, characterised by lithography (*Shiban* 石板); the decade from 1920 to 1930, marked by the diffusion of photozincography (*Zhaoxiang tongxinban* 照相銅鋅版);

and the period starting from 1930, characterised by the photogravure method (*Yingxie aoban* 影寫凹版).[31] After Sa, A Ying 阿英 (1900–1977) established an alternative classification method based on both printing technique and content.[32] For the present study, however, Sa's typology remains relevant. *Le Monde* and *The True Record* represent pioneering journals that anticipate the second period individuated by Sa. Such shift in terms of technology also characterizes the period considered in the present study, that is from the early 1900s to circa 1915.

Before the development of halftone printing, which would allow images to be printed together with text, images were sold as separate publications in the form of lithographic prints, engravings, or "original" photographic prints.[33] For example, *Shenbao*, a few weeks after distributing a famous photograph of the Wusong Railway in 1876, distributed a large and expensive hand-colored copper-engraved Map of East Asia that was designed to be removed from the magazine and hung on the wall.[34] In the decade following 1879, the Dianshizhai Studio issued black and white and hand-colored lithographic prints that reproduced paintings by historical and contemporaneous painters.[35] Artworks both past and present were also the main focus of the *Shenzhou Guoguangji* (神州國光集), which largely

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[31] Sa Kongliao 萨空了, "*Wushi nian lai Zhongguo huabao zhi san ge* shiqi 五十年来中国画报之三个时期 [Three phases in the production of Chinese illustrated magazines]," in Zhang Jinglu 张静庐 ed., *Zhongguo xiandai chuban shiliao/yi* 中国现代出版史料/乙 [Sources on the history of the Chinese modern press/two] (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1955), 408–15.

[32] See A Ying 阿英, "*Zhongguo huabao fazhan de jingguo* 中國畫報發展的經過 [The process of development of Chinese illustrated journals]," in *Wanqing wenyi baokan shulüe* 晚清文學期刊述略 [Introduction to late Qing literary publications] (Shanghai: Gudian wenxue chubanshe, 1957), 1–46. First published in *Liangyou* 良友 [The young companion] n. 150 (1940), 1. Cited in Chen Yang, *Acceptance, Opposition, and Synthesis*, 3–4.

[33] Hu Zhichuan 胡志川, Ma Yunceng 马云增 eds., *Zhongguo sheying shi* 中国摄影史 [The history of Chinese photography] (Beijing: Zhongguo sheying chubanshe, 1987), 54–55.

[34] Rudolf G. Wagner, ed., *Joining the Global Public: Word, Image, and City in Early Chinese Newspapers, 1870–1910* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2007), 112.

[35] Wagner, "Joining the Global Public," 119–120.

relied on collotype to circulate its reproductions.[36] Illustrated magazines saw constant growth

in the following decades; Chen Pingyuan estimates that between 1877 and 1919, there were

at least 120 pictorials in China.[37] The earliest Chinese illustrated journals that focused on

current events were the lithography-based *Huanying pictorial* (*Huanying huabao* 寰瀛畫報)

and the *Dianshizhai pictorial*.[38]

Nevertheless, in the Chinese press photographs were not printed alongside text until

1904–1906, and only became widespread in the 1910s with the import of the

photozincography method and the halftone printing technique (see Table 1). Hu Zhichuan

and Ma Yunzeng have shown that some of the first Chinese language magazines to include

photographs printed together with the text were issued outside China, most prominently the

illustrated magazine *Le Monde*, published in Paris by overseas Chinese students.[39] Among

the earliest illustrated magazines to include photographs that were designed and printed in

China were *The Eastern Miscellany*, *The great stage of the twentieth century* (Ershi shiji da

wutai 二十世纪大舞台), *The World of Women* (Nüzi shijie 女子世界), and *The World of*

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[36] 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*, ed. Joshua Fogel (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 273–373. See also 劉宇珍 Liu Yu-Jen, 照相複製年代裡的中國美術：《神州國光集》的複製態度與文化表述 [Chinese Art in the Age of Photographic Reproduction: The Art Periodical "Shenzhou Guoguangji"], *Taida Journal of Art History*, 35 (2013), 185–258. More details on the relation of *The True Record* to the circulation of art reproductions are given in chapter seven.

[37] Chen adapts his estimations form a previous list compiled by Peng Yongxiang. See Chen, *Zuo tu you shi,* 15.

[38] Other publications of this kind include the Qimeng huabao 启蒙画报 [Enlightenment pictorial], Shishi huabao 时事画报 [Current Events Illustrated] Xinghua huabao 醒华画报 [Raise China pictorial], and the Xingshi huabao 醒世画报 [Raise the world pictorial]. Chen Pingyuan sets two criteria that identify Chinese news illustrated. These are the Chinese nationality of the authors and the regular report on current news. Chen shows that although it is in Dianshizahi Pictorial that current news images first become prominent, some news images were already present in the Huanying huabao 寰瀛画报 [Huanying pictorial]. See Chen Pingyuan 陈平原 *Zuo tu you shi yu xixuedongjian: wanqing huabao yanjiu* 左图右史与西学东渐—晚清画报研究 [Image on the left and history on the right and western learning: research on illustrated magazines of the late Qing] (Beijing: Sanlian Shudian, 2018), 11–13. Rudolf Wagner, in contrast, follows A Ying in identifying the Huanying Pictorial as the first Chinese pictorial, excluding the missionary publications Xiaohai huabao 小孩画报 [Children pictorial] and the Tuhua xinbao 图画新报 [New images journal]. See A Ying, *Zhongguo huabao fazhan de jingguo*, 90. Cited in Wagner, *Joining the Global Public*, 113. The Huanying Pictorial, then, can be considered a precursor of Chinese illustrated news pictorials, which achieve a complete form in the well-known Dianshizahi Pictorial.

[39] Hu and Ma*, Zhongguo sheying shi,* 85–86.

Education (Jiaoyu shijie 教育世界), which were all established in 1904.[40] Newspapers such as the *Daily Journal in Beijing Dialect* (Jinghua ribao 京話日報) and the *Journal of National Affairs* (*Guoshi bao* 國事報) started to use photography as soon as 1906-1907.[41] Although scattered photographic images were included in earlier publications, it is only in 1912 that photography became a consistent presence in *The Eastern Miscellany* and in *The True Record*. In the third phase, especially after 1930, popular publications such as *The Young Companion* used the photogravure method to take printed illustrations to their commercial acme.

Including photographs in newspapers and magazines through letterpress printing was, thus, a novel form of knowledge production and circulation and a technology that travelled on a global scale. This technological diffusion coincided with the dissemination of revolutionary ideas to and throughout China. It was not a casual choice for revolutionary and reform groups to embrace such new technologies to maximize their messages and to distinguish themselves from the backwards enemy embodied by the Qing dynasty. Early pictorials and magazines selectively appropriated foreign ideas and machines, adapting them to the political aims of the Sinophone revolutionary elite. Chinese illustrated magazines of the early twentieth century reunited the elements of newspapers, entertainment pamphlets, and religious or history-oriented journals with a renewed focus on contemporary news images.

Why are illustrated magazines worth scholarly attention? According to Chen Pingyuan, most late Qing magazines did not have great ambitions in the literary or political field because they depended strongly on a market based in low culture readers, children, the

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[40] Hu and Ma, *Zhongguo sheying shi,* 86.
[41] Hu and Ma, *Zhongguo sheying shi,* 87.

elderly, and women's needs. [42] Intellectuals turned to less entertaining and more elite broadsheet newspapers and were for the most part excluded from the readership of late Qing illustrated journals. One important exception was the *Current Events Illustrated* (Shishi huabao 时事画报) edited by Pan Dawei 潘達微 (1881–1929) and Gao Jianfu. Members of the Revolutionary Alliance and participants in various revolutionary actions, they relied on financial support from their political party to produce a journal principally devoted to politically persuasive images rather than commercially profitable illustrations. [43]

Joan Judge, the scholar of late Qing and early Republican Chinese culture, assumes a slightly different stance, emphasizing the ephemerality of magazines and making their histories emblematic of the wider popular context. Judge uses the texts and images from *The Women's Eastern Times* as a lens to recover some of the early Republican period's politics, materiality, and ingenuity. [44] My research builds on Judge's insight that illustrated magazines are relevant historical materials that can provide the contemporary reader with a sense of the historical complexity of early twentieth century China. The illustrated press is more interesting for historians of the everyday than for the scholar interested in discrete historical facts as it describes complex, fragmentary, and occasionally self-contradictory processes rather than rationally ordered world visions. Furthermore, in the specific context of revolutionary action, revolutionaries combined quotidian information and images with political, scientific, and revolutionary ideas and illustrations in their aim to reach a wider audience. Rather than an exclusive focus on the everyday, my research looks at how

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[42] Chen Pingyuan 陈平原, "*tuxiang xushi yu didiao qimeng: wanqing huabao sanshi nian (xia)* 图像叙事与低调启蒙——晚清画报三十年（下） [Images' narrative and low-key enlightenment: thirty years of late Qing pictorial]" in "tuxiang yu lishi shiye zhong de xiandai wenzue yanjiu zhuanji (er) 图像与历史视野中的现代文学研究专辑（二）[Research on modern literature from the perspective of the interaction of images and history]," special issue, Wenyi zhengming 文艺争鸣 [Literary debate] (July 2017), 62–3.

[43] Chen Pingyuan 陈平原, "Images' narrative and low-key enlightenment."

[44] In her research on the *Funü shibao*, Joan Judge remarks scholarly attention has been largely devoted to the late Qing era (1890–1911) and the May Fourth period (1915–25), whereas only few studies have provided in depth research on the early Republican period. Judge, *Republican Lens*, 5.

apparently innocuous images messages such as modern weddings carried a loaded political significance that was communicated to their viewers.

Any research on Chinese pictorial magazines—a hybrid platform that brings together different media—requires the researcher to engage several fields of study. A set of textual and visual materials distinguishes illustrated magazines from artworks hung on the wall or rolled in a closet, as well as from text-based books. Such multi-layered sources naturally encompass a multidisciplinary perspective, an approach focused on both the visual and the textual aspects of the publication. Visual culture studies, media studies, and art history naturally pose a starting point for such analysis. Yet, one must critically evaluate whether these approaches, and the renewed emphasis on the visual triggered by the visual turn in English-speaking academia, can be translated in a transcultural context. At every stage of research, it must be asked whether any assumptions have been made about the Chinese sources based on experiences derived from different spaces and times, and whether they are appropriate. I have sought to adapt concepts such as modernity, revolution, public sphere, and nation, to the particularity of the context without renouncing the comprehensive global breadth and level of generalization that such concepts allow.[45]

Such a tension between generalization and the nuance of a specific locale is especially evident when it comes to the relationship between the press, the formation of a public sphere, and nascent nationalism. While I discuss this further later, for now it is enough to state that print capitalism emerged in China, and especially in Shanghai, during the second half of the nineteenth century.[46] Studies by Joan Judge, Barbara Mittler, Bryna Goodman, Cynthia J. Brokaw, and Kai-Wing Chou have pointed to the press' relevance as a platform to build a

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[45] Each of the key terms is discussed in the chapter where it is most relevant. Modernity and visual modernity are analyzed in chapter two; The key-term Revolution is introduced in chapter three. The concepts of Nation and Public Sphere are relevant to the theme of chapter five.

[46] Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai.*

yanlun 言論, or a channel that gave voice to previously mute actors.[47] While rich textual evidence on the power of the press has been foregrounded, images usually appear as a subordinate set of sources. In other words, material written by Chinese reformers and revolutionaries has been the object of in-depth academic research, while the strategic use of visual material as a means to contribute to shaping the idea of the Chinese Republic in the popular realm has yet to be examined.[48] In my analysis of the overlap the Republic's formation and advanced uses of photography, I seek to persuade the reader that images speak their own language. Beyond their reference to the physical and mental position of the artist, photographic images can bear witness to what is not explicitly formulated in textual sources.[49] As such, images are not mere illustrations for written texts. Rather, they present layers of interpretation and manipulation that produce new arguments.[50]

The present study is situated thus in the range of inquiries that investigate the causes and effects of the Chinese modern press, yet calls for renewed attention to the role of images as agents of social change, casting them as protagonists rather than secondary actors.[51]

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[47] Joan Judge, *Print and Politics: "Shibao" and the Culture of Reform in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996); Barbara Mittler, *A Newspaper for China?: Power, Identity, and Change in Shanghai's News Media, 1872–1912* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2004); Bryna Goodman, "Networks of News: Power, Language and Transnational Dimensions of the Chinese Press, 1850–1949," in "Transnationalism and the Chinese Press," ed. Bryna Goodman, special issue, *China Review* 4, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 1–10; Cynthia J. Brokaw and Kai-Wing Chou, eds., *Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005). In the same field, David Strand provides a detailed account of the turbulent political and personal relations between men and women revolutionaries during the years of the "Unfinished republic." See David Strand, *An Unfinished Republic: Leading by Word and Deed in Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

[48] Some exceptions are found in the recent work of Joan Judge and Barbara Mittler, who combine a close attention to visual material with their expertise in twentieth century China to provide a more nuanced reading of texts in context. See Judge, *Republican Lens*; and Barbara Mittler, *A Continuous Revolution: Making Sense of Cultural Revolution Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2012).

[49] Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (London: Reaktion Books, 2001), 31.

[50] For an introduction to the possibilities and problems that arise from historical research in the photography of China in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, see Christian Henriot and Wen-hsin Yeh, "Introduction," and Christian Henriot, "Wartime Refugees: Chaos, Exclusion and Indignity. Do Images make up for the Absence of Memory?" in *History in Images. Pictures and Public Space in Modern China*, eds. Christian Henriot and Wen-hsin Yeh (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 1–11 and 17–54.

[51] I refer here to Eisenstein's vocabulary in reference to the press in Europe. I adopt her approach, which itself refers to the classic study by Febvre and Martin on the impact of the book in early modern Europe, yet I redirect the focus from written texts to images. Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as Agent of Change*

Consistent with such an approach, recent developments in transcultural historical theory propose that transculturation happens in and across different media and it is thus necessary for historians to address multimediality in their research on textual materials.[52] In other words, historians need to grapple with pictorial sources, investigate their role in shaping of social and political discourse, and explain the interaction between textual and visual narratives.

How does photography interact with the historical field of enquiry that investigates the production of technology and its global dissemination? In a sense, the camera perfectly fits within the history of commodities and the study of how they change when they are transferred to a new context. A focus on the processes of knowledge-making analyzes photography considering the following questions: how was the concept of photography developed and understood in China?[53] How did it interact, or not interact, with larger processes of modernization and nation-building? Were nations and photography both "imported media" that locals passively accepted as models without negotiation and adaptation? Recent scholarship on the malleability of products and the agency of things has underscored the role of commodities in the fashioning and transformation of knowledge.[54]

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1980); see also Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, *L'Apparition du Livre* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1971). Translated by David Gerard as *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing, 1450–1800* (London: N. L. B., 1976).

[52] Madeleine Herren, Martin Rüesch, and Christiane Sibille, eds.*, Transcultural History: Theories, Methods, Sources* (Berlin; Heidelberg: Springer, 2012), 112–115. On the relevance of images in postcolonial studies, see also Martin Jay and Sumathi Ramaswamy, eds., *Empires of Vision: A Reader* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 5–11.

[53] Gu Yi has provided an intellectual history of the terms used for photography in late nineteenth and early twentieth century China. See Gu Yi, "What's in a Name? Photography and the Reinvention of Visual Truth in China, 1840–1911," *The Art Bulletin* 95, no. 1 (2013): 120–138. For a more recent study see Oliver Moore, *Photography in China: Science, Commerce, and Communication* (London and New York: Routledge, 2022), 52–82.

[54] Fernando Ortiz pioneered the study of cultures based on commodities. He proposed understanding Cuban society through the analysis of two parallel and distinct commodities, namely tobacco and sugar. See Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995); More recent scholarship that further investigates the connections between objects and cultures includes: Nicholas Thomas, *Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture, and Colonialism in the Pacific* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991). In the context of the history of Chinese Science, see Joseph Needham's research: Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China,* 7 v. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954–2008). On the development and import of press technology to China, see Christopher A. Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1876–1937* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004).

Yet the camera, unlike chocolate or coffee, is not exclusively a product. It also produces other three-dimensional objects, namely photographs. Characterized by specific dimensions, printing techniques, paper quality, format, and inscriptions, photographs go on to live their own lives as commodities.

Moving from the history of technology to a broader understanding of photography as a global phenomenon, the history of Chinese photography is part of "Photography's Other Histories."[55] In their landmark volume, Christopher Pinney and Nicolas Peterson interrogated the problematic use of specific area markers for photographic histories located outside "the West." Why does "Photography" conceptually include Euro-American photography, and exclude practices located in other places, which must be identified as Chinese photography, Moroccan photography, South-Asian photography, etc.? Further, how can contemporary scholars engage other histories to subvert such Eurocentric narratives? The present research builds these questions. By situating an articulated discussion of Chinese photography in English-speaking academia, the study contributes to widening the scope of the history of photography.

World histories of photography list Felice Beato and John Thomson as some of the earliest photographers of China.[56] Active in Asia during the second half of the nineteenth century, their work was linked to the colonial conquest of Asia and China. Beato accompanied the 1860 Anglo-French military expedition to China during the Second Opium

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[55] Christopher Pinney and Nicolas Peterson, eds., *Photography's Other Histories* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).

[56] See, for example: Naomi Rosenblum, *A World History of Photography,* 4th ed. (New York: Abbeville Press, 2007). Felice Beato is mentioned on pages 120–122 and 182–184; John Thomson's practice in Asia appears, between others, on pages 73, 125–126, and 172.

War.[57] His work mainly focused on celebratory battlefields, Chinese architecture, and urban panoramas.[58] Thomson, on the other hand, provided a wider angle on "China and its People." Published in 1873–4, his four-volume report demonstrates a stronger focus on the activities, material culture, and landscape of contemporary China.[59] Chinese photographers, such as Lai Afong, have also received attention for their picturesque works of an Orientalized land.[60]

Recent decades have seen the flourishing of specialized research on the histories of photography in China. Terry Bennet's volumes on the history of early photography provide a thorough overview and analysis of foreign and Chinese photographers active in China up to 1879.[61] One of the earliest scholars to undertake systematic research into nineteenth-century Chinese photography, he has the advantage of relying on his own collection which continuously provides primary research material. A similar case of collector and scholar is that of Beijing-based Tong Bingxue, whose publications and collection have significantly contributed to expanding the field.[62] Case study-based investigations on photographers Felice Beato and Milton Miller by Wu Hung, topic-driven research such as Sarah E. Fraser's research on the colonizer's gaze and images of coolies, and research on images of Beijing monuments by Régine Thiriez have furnished solid base for further research in the burgeoning

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[57] Anne Lacoste ed., *Felice Beato: A Photographer on the Eastern Road* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2010), 10.

[58] The images Beato produced during his 1860 travels in China set a striking contrast to the hand-colored staged portraits of characteristic figures he made in Japan. On the one hand, his work in China was of a journalistic-propagandistic nature. On the other hand, his photographs of Japanese folklore satisfied more commercial-touristic needs.

[59] John Thomson, *China and its People in Early Photographs: An Unabridged Reprint of the Classic 1873/4 Work* (New York: Dover Publications, 1982).

[60] Rosenblum, *A World History of Photography,* 125–126.

[61] Terry Bennett, *History of Photography in China 1842–1860* (London: Quaritch, 2009); Terry Bennett, *History of Photography in China: Western Photographers, 1861–1879* (London: Quaritch, 2010); Terry Bennett, *History of Photography in China: Chinese Photographers, 1844–1879* (London: Quaritch, 2013).

[62] These include Tong, Bingxue 仝冰雪, *Zhongguo zhaoxiangguan shi (1859-1956)* 中国照相馆史 [The history of Chinese photographic studios] (Beijing: Zhongguo sheying chubanshe, 2016); Tong Bingxue, *Yi zhan, yi zuo, yi sheng* 一站一坐一生 [Sitting, standing, living] (Beijing: Zhongyang Bianyi Press, 2018).

field of Asian photography. [63] Moving into a slightly later the period, with important technological developments and changes in subject matter, I investigate the entanglement of photography and the making of the Revolution and the Republic of China. A focus on images of current events published in the press, inspired by the approach of Carol Lynne Waara, Joan Judge, and Chen Yang, allows me to read the text (the photograph) together with the paratexts (captions, designs, essays, drawings, etc.) that appear in connection with the images.[64]

Photojournalism and its revolutionary aims characterized the histories of diverse geographical areas in the nineteenth and twentieth century, and the camera was a global medium adapted to serve the needs of a wide array of users. Photo-historians working on different geographical areas have confronted the relationship between the nation, the revolution, and the camera from a range of perspectives. Joan M. Schwartz, for example, has effectively highlighted the power of photographs in constructing Canadian nationalism.[65] Building on a similar logic, Costanza Caraffa and Tiziana Serena have investigated the connections between the formation of the idea of the nation and the photographic archive.[66] Both studies inform my reading of photographs through the lens of the nation. Closer in time and in a similar context of political turmoil, John Mraz's analysis of the relationship between

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[63] Wu Hung, *Zooming In: Histories of Photography in China* (London: Reaktion Books, 2016), 18–83; Sarah E. Fraser, "Chinese as Subject: Photographic Genres in the Nineteenth Century," in *Brush and Shutter: Early Photography in China*, eds. Jefferey W. Cody and Frances Terpak (Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute, 2011), 91–109; Régine Thiriez, *Barbarian Lens: Western Photographers of the Qianlong Emperor's European Palaces* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019).

[64] Carol Lynne Waara, "Arts and Life: Public and Private Culture in Chinese Art Periodicals, 1912–1937" (Ph.D. Diss., University of Michigan, 1994); Chen Yang 陈阳, *Zhenxiang de zheng, fa, he: minchu shijue wenhua yanjiu* 真相的正－反－合：民初视觉文化研究 [Acceptance, Opposition, and Synthesis: Research on Early Republic Visual Culture] (Fudan Daxue Chubanshe 复旦大学出版社, 2017); Joan Judge, *Republican Lens: Gender, Visuality, and Experience in the Early Chinese Periodical Press* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2015).

[65] Joan M. Schwartz, "'Records of Simple Truth and Precision:' Photography, Archives, and the Illusion of Control," Archiviaria 50 (Fall 2000), 1–40. See also Joan M. Schwartz, "Photographic Archives and the Idea of Nation: Images, Imaginings, and Imagined Community," in Photo Archives and the Idea of Nation, eds. Costanza Caraffa, and Tiziana Serena (Berlin; Munich; Boston: De Gruyter, 2015), 17–40.

[66] Caraffa and Serena, *Photo Archives and the Idea of Nation,* 3–15.

the Mexican Revolution (1910–1920) and photography is helpful here.[67] His thorough study of photographs of the Mexican Revolution focuses on the production and circulation of images of five iconic revolutionary figures to analyze not only such images' flexible meanings, but also the thick historical context that surrounds them. My analysis benefits from Mraz's close readings of the images, his discussion of authorship, and his masterful weaving together of the technological and social contexts. I build on his interest in the links between visual culture and revolution and extend them to point out the photographic medium's transformation from colonial instrument to emancipatory tool. I reference a diachronic perspective to mark the relevance of photo-historical changes. One difference between our approaches rests in the images' sites and their categorization. Whereas Mraz works with a range of sources mainly located in archives, I predominantly rely on two "archives" that the revolutionaries themselves collected in the form of two revolutionary magazines.

The division of the fields of enquiry described above has simplified the picture. Yet, distinguishing between different approaches to the production and use of photographs in the early twentieth century is useful for establishing the stakes of my dissertation, which contributes to ongoing discussions in Chinese visual culture studies and photography's other histories. Broadly, my materials and approach position my research in the fields of art history, sinology, and transcultural studies, and I address not only photo-historians of China but also art historians interested in the transnational circulation and effects of objects, people, technologies, and ideas.

Each chapter analyzes different tactical uses of photography as forms of resistance and revolution. In other words, each section individuates one tactical use of photography that contributed to the production of a Chinese indigenous republican identity and helped to

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[67] See John Mraz, *Photographing the Mexican Revolution: Commitments, Testimonies, Icons* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012). I wish to thank John B. Turner for bringing Mraz's research to my attention.

further a local, albeit, elite political agenda. The focus lies on one specific type of photography: photojournalism. Photojournalistic images capture a current event or important fact. Technological development led to faster shutter speeds and more portable equipment, which enabled photographers to capture subjects in motion. More broadly, photojournalism refers to other kinds of images that are recycled from other contexts that nonetheless serve as a medium for communiting the news. These illustrations include photographs recycled from souvenir albums or didactic materials repurposed for the news circle. An example of photojournalism's capacity to capture the present moment is the image of Revolutionary soldiers moving their weapons across railways in Hankou during the Revolution (**fig. 0.2**). This image depicts a unique moment in time, the soldiers in action, and suggests to the audience that it is able to witness the event's happening materially. The conception that photos show something momentous and true helps photographers and editors to convince their audience of the actuality and urgency of the revolution. The more subtle repurposing of old images to raise awareness and trigger social change is represented, for example, by the recycling of a picturesque image of opium smokers made by Lai Afong in an anti-opium campaign engineered by *Le Monde* (**figs. 2.13-2.14**). Whereas for Lai Afong the smokers appeared as "types" inscribed on a heavily aestheticized stage, in *Le Monde* the image was used to show the damage of addiction.

Conjunct Reading of Two Revolutionary Magazines

My argument is grounded in the analysis of the two illustrated magazines *Le Monde* and *The True Record*, the earliest Chinese language periodicals to use photographs

consistently throughout the publication (**see Table 2**).[68] They have never been analyzed together because studies of late nineteenth and early twentieth periodicals in China tend to select and categorize their objects based on their focus in either art, politics, or science.[69] In this study, I propose to read the two magazines through the lens of the Republican Revolution. Both journals contributed to the Revolution through political activism and the circulation of their editors' seminal ideas. The analysis is corroborated with external objects closely related to the visual tactics undertaken in the publications. Revolutionary journals and other objects belonging to the same wide visual field allow to shed light on the participation of images in the wider historical context and to identify cross-media exchanges. Further, by reading the images together with similar objects that appeared in different contexts with similar and divergent uses, it is possible to provide a broad idea of the degree of circulation and reception of such visual elements. Although there is no way to determine the precise number of readers who had access to these journals and their visual contents, situated readings of the images together with connected objects show that revolutionary tropes spread well beyond the printed page.[70]

Le Monde and its text-based sister, *La Novaj Tempoj* (Xin shiji 新世紀), were associated with early Chinese anarchism in France. *The True Record*, in contrast, was closely related to the Revolutionary Alliance (*tongmenghui* 同盟會). Besides the Chinese title, the first magazine was titled in Esperanto, language favored by anarchist movements, the second in French, and the thirds in English. Gao Qifeng, the editor-in-chief of *The True Record*, was

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[68] Chen Shen 陈申, *Zhongguo sheyingshi* 1840–1937 中国摄影史 1840–1937 [History of Chinese Photography 1840–1937] (Beijing: Chinese Photography Press, 1987), 85–87.

[69] Waara, for example, grouped *The True Record* with *Meishu shenghuo* in her dissertation because both publications are relevant to the fields of fine art and art history. Waara, "Arts and Life."

[70] Michel Hockx, Joan Judge and Barbara Mittler, *Women and the Periodical Press in China's Long Twentieth Century: A Space of their Own?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 19. See also the section on methodology in this chapter.

a republican activist and artist who adhered to Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary group during his studies in Japan. Despite the apparent political incompatibility between the anarchists in Paris and the Revolutionary Alliance, the two groups demonstrate significant overlap. Most anarchists based in Paris became members of the Revolutionary Alliance and the Nationalist Party, obtained prominent political positions in the Republic of China, and enjoyed close friendships with eminent republican intellectuals and politicians like Sun Yat-sen and Cai Yuanpei. The sponsor of *Le Monde*, Zhang Jingjiang 張靜江 (also known as Zhang Renjie 張 人傑, 1877–1950), for example, was personally acquainted with Sun Yat-sen and became a generous supporter of the republican revolutionary cause.[71] One photograph depicts Zhang walking with Sun while surrounded by Republican officials (**fig. 1.1**). The photograph bears witness to the close personal and political relationship between Sun and Zhang, a connection that further supports the argument that the two magazines can and should be read together to perceive the changes in political thought that characterized the young Chinese anarchists who eventually "converted" to republicanism. It was not an exception for intellectuals of the period to combine apparently contradictory conceptions and ideas into one organic system. Young Cai Yuanpei too, was interested in anarchism and yet joined the Republican Government's Education Ministry. Despite the political shifts and intellectual struggles that characterized the experience of these revolutionary figures, their tactical political use of images and photojournalism demonstrates strong continuities.

Shared human networks, political action, a common focus on education and propaganda, and, most importantly, the compelling use of photographic images demonstrate affinities between *Le Monde* and *The True Record*. If illustrations of *Le Monde* elucidate the processes of knowledge-making that led to the formation of revolutionary conscience before

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[71] Nanchen Zhang, Laurence Chang, and Song Luxia, *The Zhangs from Nanxun: A One Hundred and Fifty Year Chronicle of a Chinese Family* (Palo Alto; Denver: CF Press, 2010), 133–41.

1911, visual materials in *The True Record* illustrate the rather commemorative and historiographic function of photographs. In this sense, photographs worked as revolutionary tools and agents of social change, but also as monuments of the revolutionary struggle. The two journals are connected by common subversive tendencies as well as shared human networks. One might object that other Chinese revolutionary and reformist movements in late nineteenth century China should be considered too. Yet the present research is restricted to the anarchists, represented by *Le Monde*, and the Revolutionary Alliance, represented by *The True Record*, because compared to other contemporaneous revolutionary publications, these two journals made significant use of photographs (**see Table 2**).

In sum, I propose four reasons for why the two magazines can be studied conjunctly. First, they were the earliest Chinese language magazines to embrace photography, the newest and most expensive technology for making press images. Second, they both embodied some of the extreme revolutionary thought of their time. Third, they were positioned in the two main centers of knowledge production in the early twentieth century, Paris and Shanghai, and fully embodied the transcultural formation of revolutionary movements and cultural nationalisms (for a list of journals located in other centers see Table 2). Fourth, their founders and promoters played a key role in the making of the revolution and Republican-period politics and arts. Therefore, despite a lack of sources on the journals' readership, the publications are worth considering because they disclose much about the mentalities of their producers and intellectual circles. Photographs included in such magazines differ from texts by, say, Wu Zhihui or paintings by Gao Qifeng because press photographs are indexical, they rely on the collective work of the press staff, and their meaning is always formed in the association of text and image. For these reasons, photos reveal embedded meanings that are not stated on the written or painted surface.

After providing an overview of the history of illustrated magazines and photography in China, my study's relationship to that literature, and the reasons behind the choice to study the two magazines in conjunction, what follows sketches the social background, price, leading actors, and overall aspirations of *Le Monde* and *The True Record*.

Le Monde

Le Monde was the first Chinese-language magazine to make wide use of photographic images (**fig. 1.2**).[72] Established in 1907, it delivered two issues, the first counting sixty-seven and the second ninety-three pages. Nancheng Zhang suggests that ten thousand copies were printed and distributed on the international market.[73] Nevertheless, it is hard to determine the exact number. Although there is no record of the magazine's print run, a list of distribution locations where the magazine was available provides a hint to its impact. Printed in Paris, the publication was distributed by the Shanghai branch of The World Society (*Shijie she* 世界社) located in *Sima lu Wangping jie* 四馬路望平街 to the major Shanghai presses, including the Commercial Press (*Shangwu Yinshuguan* 商務印書館) and the Civilization Press (*Wenming Shuju* 文明書局), and to other cities including Tokyo, Hong Kong, and Hankou for the then-expensive price of two *dayang* 大洋.[74] It is reasonable to assume that it reached the readers of its text-based sister, *La Novaj Tempoj*, in Chinese overseas communities and in revolutionary secret societies in China. The production of this journal forced young Chinese anarchists not only to embrace new forms of knowledge and technical devices, but also to systematize their perception of reality. Besides presenting high quality black and white prints, the publication comprised a few beautifully printed color images. Wu Zhihui noted that the arrangement and

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[72] See footnote 24.
[73] Zhang, *The Zhangs from Nanxun*, 170.
[74] Shijie 世界 [Le Monde] 1 (1907): n.p. [journal index].

control of text and illustrations, their adaptation to the reader's taste and their readability were quintessential.[75] Due to high printing costs, the magazine did not last long. Nevertheless, the journal provides important information on the world vision of Chinese anarchists living in France. Further, it points to the fact that their mission to circulate their interpretations of European theories and global news was not limited to written sources, but instead comprised a range of visual materials.

Le Monde's authors and editors were young Chinese students enrolled in French schools, commercial dealers, and long-term residents of France. All were anarchists. They were interested in Darwinism, Social Darwinism, and other advanced natural and social theories, which they introduced to the Chinese reader via their publications. The magazine's main aim was to introduce European culture to Chinese readers. *Le Monde* also mounted visions of anarchism and evolutionary theories within a Chinese language frame. Students and young professionals including Li Shizeng, Wu Zhihui, Yao Hui 姚惠 (?–1919), and Zhang Jingjiang, formed The World Society, which issued, in addition to *Le Monde*, the long-lasting publication *La Novaj Tempoj,* named after *Les Temps Nouveaux* by Jean Grave, renamed *Le Nouveau Siècle* in 1909, and closed in 1910.[76] The World Society also issued the *New Century Series* (Xin shiji congkan 新世紀叢刊). The text-based *La Novaj Tempoj* has attracted the interest of scholars working on Chinese anarchism, particularly Mary Rankin,

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[75] 張光宇, "*Wu Zhihui xiansheng tan shijie huabao* 吳稚暉先生談世界畫報," in *ouxiang* 萬象 [idol] (vol. 3, 1935), cited in Liu Shao and Li Bin 刘晓, 李斌, "*shijieshe yu xinhai geming* 世界社与辛亥革命 [The World Society and the Xinhai Revolution]," in *ziran bianzhengfa tongxun* 自然辩证法通讯 [Journal of Dialectics of Nature] 33, no. 5 (Summer 2011): 35.

[76] French anarchist magazines circulating then included, besides *Les Temps Nouveaux, Le Révolté, Le Père Peinard, Le Libertaire,* and *L'Endehors.* The original title of the magazine *La Novaj Tempoj* was in Esperanto. Apart from the periodical and the illustrated *Le Monde*, the World Society also issued one collection of short biographies of relevant Western intellectuals.

Ge Maochun 葛懋春, and Peter Zarrow, but *Le Monde* has not, to my knowledge, yet been

the subject of scholarly research.[77]

The lack of readers' feedback and authors' firsthand testimonies works against any

estimation of the publication's readership. Early twentieth century publications were

distributed in the underground market in the hope they would escape Qing censorship.

Furthermore, revolutionaries in France, Japan, and China would pass on such publications to

a multitude of readers, multiplying circulation and increasing the estimated readership to

figures that cannot easily be determined. That said, the publication's relevance lies not only

in its readership, but also its authors' contribution to political and social life in the Republic

of China. Future republican politicians Li Shizeng, Wu Zhihui, and Zhang Jinjiang were

among the main contributors to the magazine. If one sets aside its reception, the magazines'

pages remain relevant role because they constituted a platform to organize their views on

their world and transmit them to their fellow Chinese citizens. Further, the publication is key

because of its extensive use photographs, which provides unique insight into the early

Chinese revolutionaries' tactical use of the camera.

The Suzhou anarchist revolutionary Yao Hui, who married the trader Zhang Jinjiang in

1899 or 1900 and died tragically in 1919, was *Le Monde*'s main editor.[78] Her contributions to

the Chinese anarchist movement in France have yet to be uncovered. Possible reasons for her

absence in narrations about Chinese anarchism are, besides her gender, that her intellectual

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[77] Mary Rankin, *Early Chinese Revolutionaries: Radical Intellectuals in Shanghai and Chekiang, 1902–1911* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971); Ge Maochun 葛懋春, ed., *Wuzhengfu zhuyi sixiang ziliao xuan (shang xia)* 無政府主義思想資料選 （上下）[Collected sources on anarchist thought, 2 v.] (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1983); Peter Zarrow, *Anarchism and Chinese Political Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).
[78] Yao Hui's father Yao Zhoubu was a well-known scholar and had served as a provincial minister of education. The union of Yao and Zhang was probably arranged by Zhang Jingjiang's father Zhang Baoshan, who hoped for his son to become a mandarin. Nanchen Zhang, Laurence Chang, and Song Luxia, *The Zhangs from Nanxun: A One Hundred and Fifty Year Chronicle of a Chinese Family* (Palo Alto; Denver: CF Press, 2010), 159–60. On the date of her death, see Joanna Lee, "Georgette Chen: a Biographical Introduction," in *The Artist Speaks: Georgette Chen*, ed. Sara Siew (Singapore: National Gallery, 2018), 9.

activities were not primarily textual, and she died prematurely in 1919.[79] Yet Yao Hui had received the same education as her brothers and was the intellectual equal of her husband Zhang Jingjiang.[80] Other contributors to the society's journals and activities included Chu Minyi 褚民誼 (1884–1946) and Cai Yuanpei. *Le Monde*'s editorial board also included the chemistry professor and doctor of medicine Prof. Alfred Naquet (Nan Kui 南逵, 1834–1916) as the magazine's evaluator (*jiandingzhe* 鑒定者).[81] His name appears on the index not only because his political position was close to the World Society's, but also because a foreign name would help to secure protection by foreign authorities in Shanghai in case of future disputes.[82] The anarchists asked Naquet to write a preface to the magazine's first issue. With a heavy reliance on evolutionary theory, his French essay, which also appears in full Chinese translation by Yao Hui, expresses the hope that the Chinese people, morally superior to Japanese, would embrace progress to move forward towards a universal social Republic based on justice and equality.[83]

Such multilingual and international dialogue provides an impression of the magazine's wide scope and aspirations. Based in Paris, a metropolis animated by burgeoning debates on politics, philosophy, social theory, and art, the journal collected extensive information about the past and present, and from a range of sources. Translations, original articles, and images at times copied from postcards explored topics including the latest scientific discoveries, Darwinist evolutionary theory, education, history, Euro-American landscape, new

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[79] One of her daughters, Georgette Chen, became a well-known artist in China and Singapore. See previous footnote.

[80] Zhang, *The Zhangs from Nanxun,* 159.

[81] *Le Monde* 1 (1907): n.p. [journal index]. Alfred Naquet was an extreme leftist. He is better known for his political works, which include *Socialisme collectiviste et socialisme libéral* (1890, Eng. trans., 1891), and *L'Anarchie et le collectivisme* (1904).

[82] On the practice of adding a foreigners' name to pass censorship controls, see Lee-hsia Hsu Ting, *Government Control of the Press in Modern China, 1900–1949* (Cambridge, MA: East Asian Research Center, Harvard University, 1974), 38.

[83] *Le Monde* 1 (1907): n.p.

technologies and political movements, and news on the fight for women rights. The section

of the magazine, entitled "Phenomena in the Recent World" is relevant to the discussion of

early photojournalism in China, because it groups images of socially relevant events.

Featuring not only news on current events in Shanghai and Hong Kong, but also information,

ideas, and news about global issues, the magazine sought to place China and the Chinese

reader on a global stage. [84] Space and time were both presented in a pristine and

internationally-oriented way. Unlike most Chinese-language magazines from this period, the

years were indicated not by referring to the Emperor's reign (seventeenth year of Guangxu's

reign, *Guangxu sanshisan nian* 光緒三十三年) but to the Chinese transcription of the

Gregorian calendar year, 1907 (*yi jiu ling qi* 一九零七). The magazine, thus, set out to

introduce the philosophy of Western politics, science, and art to China, tasking on a

transcultural quality dictated by its Chinese language and its geographical position in France,

the images it reported, and the scholars who contributed to its production.

The cover of *Le Monde* illustrates both the global scope and the editors' political stance

(**fig. 1.2**). Zhang Jingjiang himself wrote the title for the magazine's cover.[85] The featured

map depicts civilizations of different ages marked in distinct colors. The map was originally

designed by the geographer Élisée Reclus (Shao Kelü 邵可侶 1830-1905) and published in

his great compendium of human geography *L'Homme et la Terre* (**fig. 1.3**).[86] Reclus was an

anarchist whose thought played a significant role in the formation and spread of anarchist

communism as proposed by Bakunin. In his view, geography shapes human life, which in

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[84] *Le Monde* 1 (1907): C1–C20.
[85] Zhang, *The Zhangs from Nanxun,* 170.
[86] Élisée Reclus, *L'Homme et La Terre, Tome Premier: Les Ancètres-Histoire Ancienne* (Paris: Librairie Universelle, 1905), 322.

particular regions can develop autonomously from any central government.[87] Paris-based Chinese anarchists were familiar with Reclus' theories and gave them a prominent position on *Le Monde*'s cover. Early Chinese anarchists' connections to Reclus were not limited to the appropriation and study of his intellectual work. Li Shizeng also met Paul Reclus, the geographer's nephew, who recommended anarchist-oriented texts, including works by Bakunin and Kropotkin, and introduced him into Parisian intellectual circles.[88] The Recluses, then, provided stable reference points for Chinese anarchists based in Paris.

One of the earliest Chinese students in France, Li Shizeng, travelled to France in the winter of 1902 with Zhang Jingjiang and his family as a member of a diplomatic delegation sent from Beijing.[89] While Li canceled his affiliation with the embassy shortly after reaching Paris, Zhang maintained such connection until 1905.[90] After starting out as a raw silk and tea seller, Zhang became a wealthy merchant of Chinese art and antiquities in Paris.[91] Li, on the other hand, studied in Montargis (Southern France) between 1903 and 1905, where he learned about European history and historical theories including the Enlightenment, Lamarckian evolution, socialism in French thinkers Proudhon and Comte, and Reclus' world conception.[92] Li, a convinced vegetarian, eventually established a short-lived tofu factory in Paris with financial support from Zhang Jingjiang, which became a place of work as well as the exchange of revolutionary thought for Chinese students. Both Li and Zhang were organizers of the Diligent Work-Frugal Study Association (*Liufa qingong jianxue yundong*

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[87] On Reclus' geographical conception, see John Philip Clark and Camille Martin, *Anarchy, Geography, Modernity: Selected Writings of Elisée Reclus* (Oakland, California: PM Press, 2013). James Scott makes a similar point in his definition of a largely anarchic society in Zomia before the modern period. See James Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

[88] One newspaper article on Paul Reclus is preserved in the Lyon Municipal Library Archive, within the folder of secondary materials on the life of Chinese anarchists in France.

[89] Zhang, *The Zhangs from Nanxun,* 161.

[90] Zhang, *The Zhangs from Nanxun,* 162.

[91] *Zhang, The Zhangs from Nanxun,* 163–5.

[92] Liu Shao and Li Bin, *Shijieshe yu xinhai geming*, 31.

留法勤工儉學運動), which enabled Chinese of limited financial means to study and work in France.[93]

The founders of the World Society belonged to Chinese elite families and had the privilege to live abroad in a period of political and economic struggle. Wu Zhihui was the oldest of the French-based anarchists. Initially confident in the Emperor Guangxu's willingness to embrace reform, his direction shifted towards revolutionary thought after he visited Japan and was asked to organize Canton University in 1902.[94] After working in education in Shanghai with Cai Yuanpei and collaborating with Zhang Binglin 章炳麟 (1869 – 1936) on the radical newspaper *Subao* 蘇報, he became more critical of the Manchu rulers. Endangered by his subversive positions, he had to flee to Hong Kong and then London in 1903.[95] In London, he enrolled in the Samuelton Technical School in 1905, where he studied photo-copper printing.[96] The same year he joined the Revolutionary Alliance. He first visited Paris in 1905 on Zhang Jingjiang's invitation who, in turn, he had met via their common acquaintance Li Shizeng.[97] Wu eventually joined Li Shizeng in 1906 to establish the revolutionary publications in Paris.[98]

Zhang Jingjiang, finally, was the wealthiest member of the group. He put the economic success he had achieved with his trading company in France toward sustaining the Chinese

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[93] Zhang, *The Zhangs from Nanxun,* 167. On the Diligent Work-Frugal Study Association, see Paul Bailey, "The Chinese Work Study Movement in France," *The China Quarterly*, no. 115 (September 1988): 441–461.

[94] Richard Tze-yang Wang, "*Wu Chih-hui: an Intellectual and Political Biography*" (Ph.D. Diss., University of Virginia, 1976), 10–116.

[95] Zhang, *The Zhangs from Nanxun,* 167.

[96] Zhang, *The Zhangs from Nanxun,* 72.

[97] Zhang, *The Zhangs from Nanxun,* 76. Back in China after the 1911 revolution, Wu Zhihui engaged in moral campaigns against corruption, prostitution, and gambling, and participated in the systematization of the *Zhuyin Zimu* 注音字母 (later renamed *zhuyin fuhao* 注音符號), a phonetic system designed to regulate characters' pronunciation. Returned to France after the raise of Yuan Shikai's authoritarian power, he contributed with his partners to the establishment of the *Liufa qingong jianxue hui* 留法勤工儉學會 [Diligent Work-Frugal Study Movement]. The program allowed Chinese students to work along studying to be able to be financially self-sufficient.

[98] Zhang, *The Zhangs from Nanxun,* 167.

revolutionary cause.[99] After studying anarchist texts and thought, he bought printers and typesetters from Paris and Singapore in order to guarantee high print quality for the journals issued by the World Society.[100] He had worked with reformers based in both China and Japan, therefore he understood that publications could play a paramount role in spreading evolutionary theories, anarchism, and Marxism in Chinese intellectual circles.[101]

To sum up, the magazine *Le Monde* was characterized by the use of high-quality images, a focus on European culture and new scientific and political theories, and a Sino-French transcultural background. Despite its limited circulation, *Le Monde*'s value rests not only in its distribution and its visual features, but also in the influence it exercised on its makers' lives and consequent political careers. Much the same can be said for *The True Record*, the second publication that I analyze in this dissertation.

The True Record

Chinese presses started publishing photography-based illustrated magazines in 1912, when portable cameras and the half-tone technique achieved wider diffusion. Shooting the image and developing the film was now split. Lighter cameras, which could be easily carried, as well as the increase in film sensibility allowed for the capture of subjects on the move. Compared to late nineteenth century authors, the early twentieth century photographer could

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[99] Zhang, *The Zhangs from Nanxun*, 133–41.

[100] Zhang Jingjiang, "*Jinji fanggou yinziju cailiao zhi Zhihui Li Shiceng han* 近即訪購印子局材料致稚暉李石曾函 [Letter to Zhihui and Li Shizeng on my recent research of printing material]," in *Zhang Jingjiang xiansheng wenji* 張靜江先生文集 [Zhang Jingjiang's collected writing] (Taibei: Party History Committee of the Central Committee of the Kuomintang of China, 1982), 3. The World Society was based at the *Imprimerie Chinoise* at 25 Rue Dareau, Paris. See Zhang, *The Zhangs from Nanxun*, 170.

[101] Zhang Jingjiang wrote a letter to Wu Zhihui in 1911, when the revolutionaries had just occupied Hanyang in Wuchang. In the letter, he pointed out that the French newspaper had abundantly reported on the news of the revolution. This timely response in the foreign media had led him think that foreign governments would support the foundation of the new Republican government. Successively, he laments that the Japanese and English press had blocked the distribution of "French newspapers full of images of Manchu troops opening fire against Wuchang," because that would damage the foreign countries. See Zhang Jingjiang, *Zhang Jingjiang xiansheng wenji,* 8.

be more flexible in terms of subject, background, velocity, and perspective. Furthermore, large publishers located in Shanghai, such as the Commercial Press, were eager to acquire the most up-to-date printing technologies and to employ foreign experts and technicians.[102]

The influential Shanghai Shangwen Press (*Shangwen yinshuguan* 上文印書館) printed *The True Record.*[103] Gao Qifeng (often appearing as Gao Weng 高嵡) was the journal's editor-in-chief. Contributors, both in terms of images and texts, included artists of the Lingnan school of painting (*Lingnan Huapai* 嶺南畫派) such as Gao Qifeng himself, Gao Jianfu (Gao Qifeng's elder brother), and Chen Shuren 陈树人 (1884–1948). The three artists shared common roots in Guangdong Province, had similar study experiences abroad in Japan, and had developed a deep commitment to the ideals of the Revolutionary Alliance. The Shanghai-based The True Record Society (*Zhenxiang huabao she* 真相畫報社) and the Canton-based Zhonghua Photography Team Office (*Zhonghua xiezhen dui shiwu suo* 中華寫真隊事務所) were responsible for the distribution of the magazine to "big bookshops in all provinces."[104] An annual subscription cost seven *dayang*, and single copies cost a quarter *dayang*, excluding postage.[105] The magazine, thus, was significantly less expensive than *Le Monde*, one of the reasons for its longer life. Its 19.5 cm × 27.1 cm format was slightly smaller than an A4 paper sheet.

The True Record embodied a technologically, politically, and culturally tumultuous period. Press photographs do not exclusively matter for the history of the press. Rather, they

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[102] Christopher Reed describes the process of the internationalization of The Commercial Press and its acquisition of foreign machines. As early as 1903, The Commercial Press became a Sino-Japanese joint venture and hired Japanese technicians and printing experts to run the newly purchased machineries and teach other employees technical knowledge. See Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai*, 60. Other technicians came from the United States, for example Francis E. Stafford, who worked at the photoengraving department of the Commercial Press between 1909 and 1915.

[103] Zhenxiang huabao 真相画报 [The True Record] 3 (1912): n.p. [51].

[104] *The True Record* 3: 51.

[105] *The True Record* 3: 51.

fit into a wider history of images or, more broadly, Chinese visual culture. This and other journals are prisms that make visible the every-day life of the early Republican period. Precisely because of the intermingling of image and text, they are invaluable sources for problematizing the intersection of art, photography, and politics.[106]

Established by the Cantonese painters after their return from study residencies in Japan, the magazine propagated republican ideals that contributed to the formation of a national collective memory of the revolution. Besides, its pages reported on current events of interest to national politics, such as the assassination of the Nationalist Party leader Song Jiaoren 宋教仁 (1882–1913) in 1913.[107] Beyond politics, artistic and literary debates animated the magazine's pages as well as reproductions of artworks from China and abroad, both past and present. The three artists from the Lingnan School of Painting shared a common interest in the formation of a syncretic pictorial style that would renew Chinese painting with characteristics drawn from modern-day *nihonga* works (Japanese modern painting). Despite preserving tradition in their ink works, both modern *nihonga* painters and the Lingnan School were open to integrating novel techniques such as chiaroscuro and compositional aids such as linear perspective. The Lingnan artists, thus, acted at the intersection of art and politics in their efforts to renew national painting. And, as trained visual artists, they understood the subliminal power of images to transmit ideas, influence mentalities, and produce and reproduce knowledge. Therefore, their contributions to Sun Yat-sen's political action took the form of an image-based magazine.

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[106] Judge, *Republican Lens*, 5.

[107] See for example *The True Record* 14 (1913): n.p. [3–4].

The objectivity attributed to the photographic medium in the early twentieth century global context was key to the magazine's narrative.[108] Gao Qifeng designed one of the magazine's covers, which embodies the role of photography and the revolutionary press: a gentleman in a smoking jacket removes the thick curtain over "the truth" (*zhenxiang* 真相) (**fig. 1.4**). Whereas the man is traced with firm, black brushstrokes, the characters for "truth" behind the curtain are composed with irregular white spots and lines, as if actual facts were only starting to emerge from a grey, misty muddled background. The man opening the curtain on the truth can be interpreted as the editor of the magazine himself, as one of its photographers and writers, or as the mediums of photography and the illustrated magazine themselves. Much like the gentleman, the camera and the periodical press opened a curtain for the reader to see real facts more clearly. Framing photography in such a narrative of truth, *The True Record* promised to reveal a reality that had been censored by the Qing officials, the imperial powers, and more broadly by the absence of effective news media.

The Chinese context cannot be understood in isolation from international discourse. The belief in the objective power of photography was a global trend in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and was not peculiar to China in this period. Photography's presumed objectivity was used for political purposes on a global scale.[109] Unlike painting, the camera captures many of the unwanted elements that characterize human vision. That is to say, whereas the canvas excludes disturbing elements, photography maintains elements that cannot be fully controlled, which make the resulting image "closer to the real." Such a

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[108] For a detailed analysis of the historical background in which objectivity was established as a parameter to evaluate knowledge in mid-nineteenth century Europe, see Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2010).

[109] In Weimar Germany (1919–1933), for example, photography was engaged in the political debate. Rita Leistner remarks on the influential position of the Bauhaus school of art and the Hochschule, both based in Weimar Germany, in the training of politically engaged artists and photojournalists. See Rita Leistner, "Photography Goes to War," in *The Routledge Companion to Photography and Visual Culture*, ed. Moritz Neumüller (New York and London: Routledge, 2018), 140.

globally-accepted sense of visual truth became especially useful for the Chinese revolutionaries' efforts to motivate their followers politically. Chapter two refines the analysis of the connection between photography, truth, and science. For now, it suffices to specify that photographs in *The True Record* provided the impression that the viewer was witness to a real fact.

The journal survived for seventeen issues between June 1912 and circa April 1913. Its precise date of closure is difficult to ascertain because of an inconsistency in its dates, namely, news of Song Jiaoren's death published in the last magazines issues. Issue fourteen is dated February 1, 1912, almost two months before Song's assassination.[110] Yet, Song's postmortem portrait appears in the first pages of the magazine. Why so? One plausible explanation is that art for the covers was painted in advance according to the original editorial plan, but deferments in printing and editing led to publication delays.[111] Since Song died on March 22, issue 14 had to have been issued between the end of March and the beginning of April 1913. If the following three issues respected the thrice monthly publication schedule, then the journal must have run until at least the end of April or the beginning of May 1913.

Whereas *Le Monde* has attracted little academic interest, scholars in art history and media history have valorized innovative elements of *The True Record*. Ralph Croizier and Carol Lynne Waara approach the magazine's entanglement with the early twentieth century artworld and the Lingnan School of painting from the perspective of art history.[112] Chen Yang, on the other hand, reads the journal from the angle of media studies.[113] Croizier situates the magazine within the scope of the Lingnan School's artistic production. He remarks on the school's dept to Japanese painting, and thereby emphasizes the transcultural

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[110] *The True Record* 14 (1913): n.p. [cfr. 1–4].
[111] I am grateful to Prof. Gu Zheng, who suggested this possibility.
[112] Ralph Croizier, *Art and Revolution in Modern China: The Lingnan (Cantonese) School of Painting 1906–1951* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); Waara, "Arts and Life," 1994.
[113] Chen Yang, *Acceptance, Opposition, and Synthesis.*

dimensions of the Lingnan School style.[114] In the dissertation *Arts and life: Public and private culture in Chinese art periodicals, 1912–1937,* Waara analyzes *The True Record* and *Art Life* (*Meishu Shenghuo* 美術生活). After a review of the technologies, she connects *The True Record* to the influential *Young Companion*; Waara conceptualizes the journal edited by the Lingnan School artists as the forerunner to "hybrid" magazines that were fully developed in the commercial publications of the 20s and 30s.[115] Chen Yang's study provides an excellent contextualization of the illustrated and its producers from the perspective of media studies. Chen's analysis of photographs in *The True Record* is here expanded through a wider perspective on the history of Chinese Photography as well as of images created by different revolutionary movements in the early twentieth century. This study links the 1912 to 1913 period with a diachronic view that expands to 1905 to 1914, enriched with select images from the 1860s to the 1920s. Thus, I show the larger implications of the use of images of revolution in the history of photography in China as well as the history of Chinese republican nationalism. The study provides an integrated and situated reading of the sources. Such analysis goes beyond a single journal or the illustrated magazine genre and reads the journal within the broader visual universe.[116] This study also conceptualizes photographs as active producers of change. The presence of images, in other words, did not exclusively represent events. Images did, in fact, contribute to the unfolding and creation of those occurrences.

Photojournalism in the illustrated press is conceived at the intersection of revolution, art, and quotidian life. Many of the essays included in the two magazines were published anonymously or under a pseudonym. Therefore, rather than following clues to reconstruct their author-audience network, I build my argument through sorting the constellations of

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[114] Croizier, *Art and Revolution,* esp. 24–60.
[115] Waara, "Arts and Life," 141–90.
[116] Hockx, Judge, and Mittler, *Women and the Periodical Press*, 1–18.

images according to their common visual tactics. Where previous studies principally reconstructed the lives and political thought of the magazines' authors, the images and the tactics used to construct them rest at the center of my study. Actors are only introduced when necessary to understand a pictorial fully. I have identified four key tactics: the presentation of photography as a means able to represent "truth" (chapter two); the open show of violated human bodies to provoke shock (chapter three); the reinterpretation of ruins as signs of rebirth (chapter four); and the representation of leaders in public places (chapter five).

Let me return to my reasons for conducting a conjoined reading of *Le Monde* and *The True Record.* First, they were the earliest Chinese-language periodicals to adopt new media to maximize their message, albeit at a relatively high price. Not coincidentally, both endorsed a radical revolutionary agenda. Precisely because they promoted social change, they had to find ways to reach readers using the most effective, new, and surprising formats. Second, their locations in Paris and Shanghai account for the inherently transnational processes behind the formation of the Chinese Revolutionary Alliance as well as various forms of ethnic and cultural nationalism. Finally, the protagonists of these short-lived magazines became key figures who shaped the politics and art of the Republic of China. For these reasons, the magazines can provide, if not an example of mass media circulation, certainly a set of insights into the mentalities of their authors. Images enclosed in the magazines offer a fresh perspective on the modes of knowledge production in early twentieth century China, which is not opposed to but rather complements text-based historical reconstructions.

Methodology: Integrated and Situated Reading

Because the magazines are complex image-text palimpsests, the methodology that guides this study is rooted in periodical and visual culture studies. Approaches developed by Michel Hockx, Joan Judge, and Barbara Mittler in their study of Chinese periodicals, namely

integrated and situated reading, are central to this analysis.[117] An integrated reading places individual print media within a wider contextual field that includes similar magazines. Journals are understood "not as discrete works but as part of a larger constellation of publications." [118] The chapters include images excerpted from the two revolutionary magazines as well as sections derived from other contemporary periodicals, never mind their connections or political affiliations. This allows me to account for the wider diffusion and impact of photography as an agent of social change within and beyond revolutionary discourse. A situated approach provides a broader perspective by taking into account a range of materials beyond the magazine genre. For example, I include sources such as maps, photographs, and posters that were key to forming the revolution's visual narrative. Situated and integrated readings are combined to stress the popular press's constant interaction with the broader artistic and sociocultural context. That is to say, the historical reading of the press is combined with the analysis of artefacts and visual materials located outside the periodicals. This strategy allows me to see the shaping of a revolutionary republican conscience and nation not as the outcome of a single agent, but as the fruit of a collective, if uneven, project.

This study attributes remarkable agency to images, and as such relies heavily on formal and textual analysis and on comparisons between images and artefacts. Instead of attempting a reconstruction of the network of people who built and developed these magazines, the images themselves work as the principal knots in the network, and historical events are the threads that connect them. This is not to say that images acted independently of humans and events, but to propose that focusing too much on the actors and historical events would obscure the presence of the images.

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[117] Hockx, Judge and Mittler, eds., *Women and the Periodical Press*, 1–18.
[118] Hockx, Judge and Mittler, eds., *Women and the Periodical Press*, 19.

The tools typically used in the fields of visual culture studies and art history enable me to valorize the agency, modes of production, and emotional resonance of images. On a basic level, iconography – the reading of the elements that constitute an image – allows a more detailed reading of the meanings embedded in such illustration. Popular images are approached based on the proposition, derived from visual culture studies, that all sorts of images influence people's daily lives, and therefore the study of art, isolated from the wider visual context, would be limiting. Finally, within the context of visual culture studies, discourse analysis plays an important role in my consideration of the role of images in the production and modeling of knowledge, and in the establishment and subversion of the power structures behind them.

Although many of the images that animate this dissertation might seem, at a first glance, to be opaque, faded, and of low quality, the onlooker should not judge them by today's aesthetic standards. In contrast, those blurred prints incorporated the best technologies available, and therefore must have surprised and attracted their readers just as three-dimensional digital reality stupefies the contemporary viewer. The use of the most advanced technologies in photography reproduction promised an incredibly effective form of propaganda.[119] An understanding of the technological impact of advanced photographic and printing apparatuses is methodologically useful because it forces the viewer to rethink "print" or "photography" as material objects rather than abstract names.[120]

To conclude this section, let me briefly return to the main aim of this study. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a myriad of new republican nations overthrew

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[119] Similarly, in another historical and social context, Nazi propaganda in Germany widely used the radio to enter people's houses and spread their political thought. See, for example, Adelheid von Saldern, "Volk and Heimat Culture in Radio Broadcasting during the Period of Transition from Weimar to Nazi Germany," *The Journal of Modern History* 76, no. 2 (June 2004): 312–346.

[120] For an introduction to the added value a reconsideration of the materiality of photographs can give to photo-history research, see Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart, eds. *Photographs Object Histories: On the Materiality of Images* (London; New York: Routledge, 2004).

monarchical systems on a global scale. They revolutionized social rule to align with a world-scale system in which only nations were recognized as legitimately sovereign. Yet, the structures of these nations and their modes of the revolution were always adapted to local cultural contexts. At a quotidian level, citizens were not necessarily affected by the changes introduced by the superstructure of the nation or by the political changes initiated by the revolution. Not all the photographs that circulated in the press were produced as tactical images to further the revolutionary project, nor did all magazines subscribe to a robust nationalist agenda. Yet, the figuration of newness in the fields of technology, clothing, and women's emancipation in the press all encouraged the formation of new cultural practices associated with the modern republican nation. The parallel I establish between photojournalism and the revolution is based, ultimately, in their common worldwide spread in modern times, their imperialist legacies, and most importantly in their ability to serve as a set of tactics to generate renewed communities.

To return to the geographical area of interest, this dissertation conceives photography in the first and second decade of twentieth century China as a set of tactics that enabled social change, namely the revolution, and historicized its impact. This is argued on the premise that visual materials trigger cognitive processes and reactions based on emotions, memory, and a set of shared experiences. These ingredients are the fundamental components for any sense of belonging, including republican nationalism. Revolutionaries were aware of such mechanism and strived to exploit the potential of images. They employed the most advanced visual medium of the time because, when compared to previous communication media, it provided the viewer with the impression of being able to witness a truthful fact. The construction and perpetration of such impression of truth is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

SCIENTIFIC TRUTH THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHS

Introduction

Photography provides the viewer with a sensation of truth. Its lens has been situated at the intersection of art and science since its discovery.[121] Initially used in the natural sciences as a documentary tool able to record diseases and catalogue races, it is now widely accepted that photographs and images manipulate reality to a certain degree. Particularly when the camera is concerned with politics, activism, and war, it frames events to communicate one selected piece of information. In other words, reporters do not capture their images by relying on an "innocent eye," a gaze that is totally objective.[122] Rather, their background, the agenda behind the commission of their images, and their equipment interpose a set of filters between the objects they capture and their depiction of facts.

My purpose here is not to debunk the historical value of journalistic images. In contrast, I argue that the contributions early twentieth century Chinese revolutionaries are valuable precisely because they provide access to their intellectual dynamics as well as to their practices of knowledge-making. Early twentieth century photographs associated with Chinese revolutionary movements provide access to the interpretations and manipulations embedded within visual materials, which in turn uncover the intentions of the actors involved in their production and distribution. In the pages of the illustrated magazines, the revolutionaries demanded the viewer's absolute trust precisely because photographs were not supposed to lie.

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[121] Significantly, Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre (1787–1851) presented Photography at the French Académie des Sciences on January 7, 1939. On the objectivity and scientificity of photography, see Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2010), esp. 191–251.

[122] Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (London: Reaktion Books, 2001), 19.

The Chinese term *xiezhen* 寫真, literally "transcribing the truth," captures the overlap between printed photograph and a witness to a real fact. Such overlaps strengthened photographic images' propagandistic and educational power within revolutionary journals. Incorporated into republican discourse, photographic and photojournalistic images acted to guarantee the revolutionaries' genuine spirit and transparent consciousness.

What service did the truth-value attributed to photography (indexicality) provide to Chinese Revolutionary groups? As part of the wider argument that I make in this dissertation, the textual and visual evidence presented in this chapter shows how political activists used the camera as a tactic of resistance and emancipation. Nineteenth century cameras had displayed China's pain, suffering, and sickness to the rest of the word, to the point that it created the legend of the "sick man of Asia."[123] Chinese intellectuals and revolutionaries of the late Qing and early Republican eras sought to subvert the camera's epistemic violence. Local revolutionary communities deployed the medium to showcase and resolve the social issues caused by imperialism and corrupt dynastic rule as well as educate the reader on the viability and necessity of establishing a Republic. Education, together with political reform, were key to the program of both anarchists and republicans (many figures shifted from the first to the second) such as Wu Zhihui, Li Shizeng, Sun Yat-sen, and Cai Yuanpei.[124] I show that as a visual tactic photojournalism played a paramount role in the project and of social

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[123] In regard to the use of images in the discourse of disease in nineteenth century China and their contribution to the shaping of the myth of "the sick man of Asia," see Larissa Heinrich, *The Afterlife of Images: Translating the Pathological Body between China and the West* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2008).

[124] Cai Yuanpei, in particular, proposed to substitute religion and superstition from the Chinese past with a newly-conceived aesthetic education. See Cai Yuanpei, "Replacing Religion with Aesthetic Education," trans. Julia Andrews, in *Modern Chinese Literary Thought: Writings on Literature, 1893-1945*, ed. Kirk A. Denton (Stanford University Press, 1996), 182–189.
Wu Zhihui tried to standardize spoken Chinese language and to create methods to research Chinese characters in dictionaries. Wu participated in the systematization of the *Zhuyin Zimu* 註音字母 (renamed *zhuyin fuhao* 注音符號), a phonetic system that standardized the pronunciation of Chinese characters. Richard Tze-yang Wang, "Wu Chih-hui: an Intellectual and Political Biography" (Ph.D. Diss., University of Virginia, 1976), 76.

change, and in circulating the claim that only revolutionary republicans were capable of realizing such a transformation.

This chapter substantiates these claims by analyzing photography's use as a scientific instrument and its call for truth and civilization within the context of the revolutionary magazines. The first section provides an overview of Chinese audiences' understanding of photography in early twentieth century China. I consider the intimate connection between photography, science, and civilization, which supported republican editors' claims to truth. In this sense, the camera formed only one segment of the palimpsest of innumerable machines that represented modernity and an advanced level of civilization in a global popular culture. The second section zooms in on the pragmatic use of photography as it unfolded in the revolutionary narrative. Photojournalistic images in the illustrated revolutionary press and the emotional reaction they demanded are analyzed. The third and final part of this chapter reads the connection between photography and truth as a justification for the narration and construction of racial difference within the revolutionary and nationalistic agenda. Young anarchists in Paris were some of the earliest Chinese intellectuals to embrace Social Darwinism and to explore the possibilities that clear-cut racial divisions could provide for the crystallization and idealization of the nation. Inscribed in an anti-Qing context, the Manchu ethnic group was targeted as the foreign enemy, whereas the Han were represented as the legitimate and historically grounded rulers of China. The discussion in this chapter shows that the revolutionaries attempted to use photography as an authoritative medium not only to inform their audience about important news, but also to comment on the social and political situation and convince the reader of the urgency of embracing revolutionary ideas. The authors' understanding of the photographic lens as a transparent channel to the truth magnified these propagandistic objectives.

Photography, Science, and Civilization

The historian of modern China Fa-ti Fan has pointed out that "Science" and "Mr. Science" appear in cursory studies of the May Fourth Movement, but fail to provide an incisive analysis of science as both a form of knowledge and a cultural practice of intimate importance to Chinese intellectuals at that time.[125] Building on his observation, I inscribe the general aspiration to science, which fired the souls of young Chinese revolutionaries, within a local political context, focusing in particular on the scientific qualities attributed to the camera. In other words, I assume that actors exposed to scientific tools do not adopt them to produce objective knowledge in an identical way. Rather, they selectively chose appropriate instruments according to historically specific socio-political needs. Much like knowledge and science, photography too is situated.[126] For photographic images to be effective and articulate a straightforward language, the camera must be presented as an objective and impartial medium.[127] The magazines *Le Monde* and *The True Record* employed language and images to define photography as a tool of science, which in turn enabled its products, photographs, to be positioned within the realm of transparent truth.

The View that Perceives Nature without the Mediation of a Self

The term *xiezhen* used to indicate photography refers to the truth quality of photographs.[128] A pictorial descriptive term found in Chinese art theory since the sixth

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[125] Fan Fa-ti, "How did the Chinese Become Native?: Science and the Search for National Origins in the May Fourth Era," in *Beyond the May Fourth Paradigm: In Search of Chinese Modernity,* eds. Kai-wing Chow, Tze-ki Hon, Hung-yok Ip, and Don C. Price (Plymouth, UK: Lexington Books, 2008), 184.

[126] On Situated Knowledge, see Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3 (Autumn 1988): 575–99.

[127] Daston and Galison, *Objectivity*, 115–183.

[128] *xiezhenhua* 寫真畫 [photography], and *zhenxiang* 真相 [truth] are linguistically and semantically close to *xiezhen* 寫真 [photography, inscribing the truth]. All three terms present the character *zhen* 真 [true].

century CE, *xiezhen* originally referred to realistic renderings in ink.[129] After appearing in relation to research on the natural sciences, *xiezhen* (*shashin* in Japanese) was adopted in nineteenth century Japan to indicate the new technique of photography. Maki Fukuoka has shown that before it indicated the camera, the term *shashin* was employed in research on botanical species conducted by the Shôhyaku-sha, a group of Japanese medical herbalists that aimed to verify the presence of medical herbs registered in other countries in Japan. She notes that the Japanese scholar and painter Shiba Kôkan 司馬江漢 (1747–1818) also used the term to reference the reality effect of Western painting.[130] After *shashin* came to indicate photography in Japan, in its Chinese pronunciation *xiezhen* it was reimported into China with the newly acquired meaning of photography via the lives and works of Chinese students trained in Japan and in translations of Japanese texts. In China, *xiezhen* was an alternative to *sheying* 攝影 and *zhaoxiang* 照相.[131]

The expression *xiezhen* grouped, among others, Japanese publications that circulated photographs of Japan's victories over China (1895) and Russia (1905). Two such illustrated books are *The Russo-Japanese war photographic pictorial* (*Nichiro Sensō shashin gahō* 日露戰爭寫真畫報) and *A true record of the Russo-Japanese war* (*Nichiro sensō jikki* 日露戰爭實記) (**fig. 2.1**).[132] The connection of Chinese Revolutionary publications and language is not

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[129] I wish to thank Prof. Gu Zheng who informed me about early uses of the word *xiezhen* in Chinese art history. In the Northern Qi text *Yanzhijia xun za yi pian* 顏氏家訓雜藝篇 [Yan Family Precepts: Miscellaneous Arts and Crafts], *xiezhen* refers to the painter's ability to realize realistic portraits where the sitter is recognizable. The text goes: (…) Prince Wulie is more skilled in describing the truth (*xiezhen* 寫真). After he casually uses colors to portray the sitter, the result would present such a close resemblance that even a child would be able to tell the subject's name and surname.

[130] Maki Fukuoka, *The Premise of Fidelity: Science, Visuality, and Representing the Real in Nineteenth-Century Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012).

[131] Regarding the variety of terms used to identify photography and their semiotic nuances, see Yi Gu, "What's in a Name? Photography and the Reinvention of Visual Truth in China, 1840–1911," *The Art Bulletin* 95 (2013): 120–138; and Oliver Moore, *Photography in China: Science, Commerce, and Communication* (London and New York: Routledge, 2022), 52–82.

[132] The earliest Japanese photography magazines included two Tokyo-based monthly magazines *Shashin Shinpō* 寫真新報 [Photographic News], published between 1882 and 1940, and *Shashin Geppō* 寫真月報, issued from

exclusively conceptual. Rather, individuals living in Japan or publications translated from the Japanese transmitted ideas that connected photography and propaganda. During their lengthy residencies in Japan, politically engaged Chinese artists, specifically the Gao brothers, became familiar with propagandistic publications on the wars against China and Russia, which inspired their subsequent editorial work at *The True Record* (**fig. 2.2**). It is not surprising that the magazine's design closely recalled similar politically engaged journals in early twentieth century Japan, or that Gao Qifeng and his colleagues adopted the term *xiexhen* to emphasize the camera's ability to describe truth.

In line with Japan and the West, photography came to be associated with scientific precision, objectivity, and truth. Chen Shuren's analysis of the medium, which may be a Chinese reinterpretation of an original Japanese text, hints at the intimate connection between the camera and the real world. Speaking in his column "New Painting Methods" in *The True Record*, Chen asserts that although the pictorial media used in the past were effective in representing reality, an extensive memory was required during the transfer of the three-dimensional world to the two dimensional support.[133] In the painting process, the painter relied on his memorization of reality to reproduce it on the plain canvas; the artist, therefore,

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1894 to 1940, as well as the Osaka-based monthly magazine *Shashinkai* 寫真界 [Photographic World] (1905–1928). In 1884–1885 during the Sino-Japanese War and in 1904–1905 during the Russo-Japanese War, the Japanese army sent photographers to the front to communicate news and celebrate Japanese victories. The expeditions during the fight against China produced the photobook, *A Photographic Album of the Japan-China War,* among others. See Kazumasa Ogawa, *Nisshin Sensō shashinchō* 日清戰爭寫眞帖 [A photographic album of the Japan-China war] (Tōkyō: Hakubundō, 1894). War publications on the Russo-Japanese war with a clear propagandistic aim included the *Nichiro Sensō shashin gahō* 日露戰爭寫真畫報 [The Russo-Japanese War Photographic pictorial], which celebrated Japanese war victories. Its publisher, *Hakubunkan* 博文館, was also responsible for the publication of *Nichiro sensō Minoru-ki OR jikki* 日露戰爭實記 [A True Record of the Russo-Japanese war]. See Shirayama Mari, "Major Photography Magazines," in *The History of Japanese Photography*, eds. Anne Wilkes Tucker, Dana Friis-Hansen, Kaneko Ryūichi, and Takeba Joe (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 378. Events related to photography and war in 1906 include an exhibition commemorating victory in the Russo-Japanese War held at Tennoji Park in Osaka (the war ended in September 1905) in March and the release of a commemorative picture postcard of the ceremony welcoming soldiers back from the fronts by the Ministry of Communications in April. See Tucker, *The History of Japanese Photography*, 317.

[133] *Zhenxiang Huabao* 真相画报 [The True Record], Issue 4 (1913), n.p. [48–50]. The essay is possibly translated from Japanese.

always interposed a filter between the real world and its representation. In contrast, Chen maintains that photography is "the view that perceives nature without the mediation of a self," and is therefore "able to capture the real appearance of nature instantly."[134] The Japanese-based Chinese artist supported the idea that photographs provide an objective view of things. They are transparent, unmediated, and capable of producing realistic images in a shorter time span. *The True Record*, then, positions photography as a medium that provides a faithful mimesis of reality.

The camera and photography fit the revolutionary agenda because they were understood to be global scientific instruments, and useful tools of modernization at the local level. The increasing production of photographs as scientific images further supported the positioning of photography in the field of science. The camera was one of the instruments and advanced scientific theories that, during the second half of the nineteenth century, strove to provide an objective scientific taxonomy for all aspects of reality.[135] Since its very discovery, the camera was put to work in a range of forms of knowledge including medicine, archaeology, and art history. It replaced drawing with faster, clearer, and "truer" photographic images.[136] Books on medicine, botany, and evolutionary theory used images to illustrate their findings and invest them with authority. Images of scientific interest, such as x-ray scans and enlargements of microscopic views, validated photography's status as a scientific instrument (**fig. 2.3–2.4**). All those visual tools materially and conceptually conveyed a sense of clarity, reality, and transparency. Materially, they provided a stable and immediate indexical image that went beyond the possibilities of the human eye. Conceptually,

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[134] *The True Record* 4, n.p. [48–50].

[135] On the emergence of the concept of Objectivity in the European sphere see Daston and Galison, *Objectivity*. On one of the uses of "the real" in visual materials in science in Asia in the nineteenth century, and on the uses of the Japanese *shashin* before it came to indicate photography, see Fukuoka, *The Premise of Fidelity*.

[136] Understanding photography as a scientific tool coincides with the general faith in the power of science that animated late nineteenth and early twentieth century France. See for example the concept of a "Republic of science and reason" promoted by Prime Minister Jules Ferry.

they constituted a clear counterpoint to traditional knowledge forms, which were deemed messy, retrograde, and useless. Furthermore, photographs and detailed essays on scientific knowledge reflected a widening interest in science not only among circles of professional researchers, but also in the wider intellectual and political community. Understanding photography as a scientific tool fit the agendas of Chinese anarchist and republican revolutionaries, who urgently needed reliable evidence of their action. On a meta-level, photography itsenf was one of the new technologies that embodied the vision of modern knowledge and marked a rupture with the "traditional past" that revolutionary China sought to transcend.

Photography as a Tool of Civilization

Photography overlapped not only with science but also with a sense of higher civilization in two senses: first, the camera was an object that represented civilized elites due to its connection with science and mimesis against "superstitious and irrational beliefs." Following such a narrative, since the late nineteenth century Chinese elites had appropriated photography as an attribute and symbol of their modernity, which became more prominent in the 1910s and 20s. Second, photography served to circulate images of scientific and modern instruments and machines that, in turn, stood for advanced civilization.

Before exploring the link between photography, technology, and civilization in early twentieth century China in more detail, a short historical overview of this trifold association is necessary. This reconstruction of the perception of photography as one of the scientific tools that contributed to the formation of a wider positivist idea of science builds on Michael

Adas's conception of machines as a measure of civilization.[137] Chinese intellectuals, faced with the challenge of violent foreign invasion in the nineteenth century, gradually adopted technological advance as a measure of civilization to explain their defeat and promote, in its place, national emancipation.

From the late eighteenth century onwards, European accounts had depicted China as a land of technological backwardness. Consequently, the ideology of the "civilizing mission" became prominent during the nineteenth century, and Christian missionaries in China increasingly saw material underdevelopment as a form of heathenism. [138] By the mid-eighteenth century, technology and science gradually replaced religion as the measure of civilization, and they served as the index that European travelers and thinkers considered when affirming the superiority of their culture compared to countries like China and India.[139] Technology became the means through which Europeans reaffirmed their difference and distance from the other. On a more concrete level, advanced technology became a symbol of European superiority in encounters triggered by colonial conquest, when modern firearms literally threatened the lives of local people. It was not just a fascination with foreign scientific discoveries that pushed indigenous communities to domesticate imported technologies. Pragmatic decisions were made in considering how such technologies could prove helpful in protecting, affirming, and strengthening local power.

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[137] Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and the Ideologies of Western Dominance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989).

[138] Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men*, 133–266.

[139] Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men*, 3–4. Whereas early travelers and artists working in China, such as Giuseppe Castiglione 郎世寧 (1688–1766), placed Christianity as the fundamental distinctive element between the indigenous and themselves, and thus understanding religious conversion as the civilizational objective of their mission, it soon became clear that the Chinese emperors were more interested in the scientific and technological novelty they could introduce at court. The unique series of copperplates commissioned from French craftmakers by Qianlong to commemorate his victories in Western China shows how the emperor admired the great skills of European copperplate artisans, and used them for his own political purposes. For a discussion of the partial assimilation and resistance to pictorial techniques such as oil painting and fresco in the context of 17th century China and the encounter with European missionary painters see Nie Chongzhen 聂崇正, *Qinggong huihua yu xihua dongjian* 清宫绘画与西画东渐 [Qing court paintings: Western painting go Eastern] (Beijing: zijincheng press, 2008).

Technology as an index of local communities' degree of civilization coupled easily with nascent Chinese sentiments of nationalism and resistance to foreign imperialism, which were the driving forces behind late nineteenth century revolutionary and reformist movements. While revolutionaries demanded the overthrow of the Qing Dynasty in favor of a Republic, reformists advocated for a constitutional monarchy. Despite their divergent political ideals, a series of foreign attacks on Chinese soil and the ineffectual Qing response strengthened the nationalist and militant commitments common to both groups. The Opium Wars between 1839 and 1860 had led to the opening of treaty ports that permitted foreigners to live and trade outside Qing control. In 1884–1885, the French army had occupied Vietnam, a former Qing tributary state. Ten years later, Japan had defeated the Chinese army and assumed control of Taiwan and Korea. Finally, yet crucially, the Boxer Uprising and the consequent humiliating treaties imposed by the international community on the Chinese court underlined for reformers and revolutionaries the lack of viability in the court's politics. The unstable socio-political situation naturally triggered attempts at reform from within the court and, at the same time, heightened the revolutionary tendencies of radical groups located both inside and outside of China. Such groups picked up advanced science and technology as signifiers of a higher degree of civilization. Among those pristine technologies was the camera. Following from these premises, revolutionary journals used photographs and advanced printing technology to represent the mechanical instruments associated with China as an independent, modern, and powerful nation.

Modernity through the Lens

Studies of the press and photography in late nineteenth and early twentieth century China must grapple with the broad and somewhat ambiguous concepts of modernity and visual modernity. In numerous theoretical studies on peripheral art histories, these concepts

have been stretched to the point they have lost much of their analitycal value. Although it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to evaluate their inadequacy for the early twentieth century China case, their relation to photography and the press cannot be overstated. Do these English terms carry relevant signs of Eurocentrism because they project that every community must be constituted as a nation-state that aims to forge a "modernity" modelled after Europe? After considering the advantages and disadvantages of these concepts for understanding the 1911 Chinese Revolution and associated photographic works, I conclude that modernity and visual modernity provide valid frames of reference for effectively comprehending the Chinese historical context, with some caveat. The same applies to similar layered and complex concepts such as revolution, nation, and public sphere, which I will address separately in the following chapters. Although these concepts were formulated is studies of the European eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, they can be helpful to understand historical phenomena in other parts of the world if they satisfy at least one of two criteria. First, the historical actors directly employ the terms or conceptualize ideas in new languages inspired by their models. Second, the phenomena and structures present significant commonalities with those described in historical analyses of modern Europe. Nonetheless, these concepts command a critical approach and must be reworked considering the particular context at every given moment and geographical area, first and foremost to avoid reproducing epistemic violence. In this specific study, the specificities of the Chinese situation at the turn of the twentieth century must be taken into account, in order to provide a nuanced and multifaceted reading of the terms. The first term is modernity, one of the most extensively used concepts in historical and art historical analysis of turn of the century China, which I will read and interpret in close connection with the medium of photography.

The camera and the technologies used to develop film symbolized the new elite's urban lives. Before becoming widely available to amateurs in the 20s and 30s, photography was a

novel object for wealthy and modern-looking Chinese during the 1910s.[140] Besides the financial exclusivity of being able to purchase a camera, technological improvements also changed the way people related to photography. Whereas cumbersome dry-plate cameras from the late Qing required professional photographers to work in the studio and seldom move into the field, the invention of film and portable cameras expanded the photographer's degree of freedom. Photographers could easily store used film rolls to develop later in the darkroom or have a professional develop the images for them. Individuals associated with cameras, the chemicals used in development, and photographs as objects all became projections of the Chinese aspiration to the modern world.

One example of the association between photography and the modern way of life appeared on the cover of *The True Record*, where a man in Western suit operates a camera (**fig. 2.2**). The illustration, reproduced from a painting by Gao Qifeng, features a standing photographer in the foreground and a forested landscape in the background. The landscape is rendered with a few quick brushstrokes filled with ink washes of the ground and sky, and pale beige for the tree trunks. Gao Qifeng regularly made paintings that were used for the cover and illustrations in the magazine, which show the quick touch typical of journal sketches yet manage to preserve the nuances and suggestive effects of ink painting. Black spots complete the landscape by adding an impression of shadows projected on stone and by enhancing the trees' rough bark and knots. All these elements, including the standing gentleman, trace a darkened frame around the actual protagonist of the image: the central camera. The apparatus, used to photograph the natural landscape, further enhanced by light spots above and to the right, stands on a wooden pedestral at the very center of the image.

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[140] The Dowager Empress Cixi, for example, was fond of photography and repeatedly asked Yu Xunling 裕勳齡 (1874–1943) to capture her in 1903–4. The last emperor of China Pu Yi experimented with a camera, which he became fond of as part of his broad affection for Euro-American commodities, clothing, and culture.

Gao chose to depict the machine from the photographer's perspective rather than head-on, as if to suggest that the reader was part of the process of photographing the landscape. Viewers, then, were not exclusively the audience for ready-made photographs but rather were invited to join the process of photography making.

The vision Gao proposes is one of leisure, of modern, wealthy men engaged in amateur photography, and yet the journal's marked republican agenda suggests the medium should be read as a broad signifier for modernity and, more critically, as a way for intellectuals such as Gao himself to communicate the truth to his fellow citizens. The image establishes four distinct layers: the landscape, subject of the photograph or video; the camera itself; the cameraman; and the viewer. Such structure encapsulates the role attributed to the camera by Gao and his fellow revolutionaries: photography's goal is to capture "the truth." The revolutionary, standing at the camera's side, undertakes the task of photographing reality and transmitting it to the journal's readers. When looking at the illustration, the reader becomes part of the process and is prompted to understand the camera and the revolutionary artist as neutral filters that provide access to true facts. The positioning of the viewer behind the camera provides the impression of immediacy that is key to photojournalism. The reader is placed in the present, part of the scene rather than a mere spectator to it. Such an active role for the viewer inscribes photography, as I have suggested above, within a new temporal dimension in which images are not abstracted effigies of a fossilized *status quo* but rather momentous figurations of the present. The elements and structure of the image, then, clearly illustrate the centrality of the camera to the revolutionary narrative embedded in *The True Record* and the tactical use of illustrations to construct such centrality via visual language. In this case, although the image and the actors who produced it do not regularly employ the term "modernity," the analytical value of the "modern" to explain the newness of the images is apparent.

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An additional example that illustrates the urban interest in photography and the applicability of the idea of the "modern" is a drawing included in the collection *Duyu baimeitu zhengxu ji* 杜宇百美圖正續集 by Dan Duyu 但杜宇 (1897–1972) (**fig. 2.5**).[141] The image combines the novelty of photographic development with the figure of the creative woman. The woman in the image appears to have finished the process of enlarging and developing three photographs, and she is observing the prints in the light entering through a window. She confidently operates in the darkroom, surrounded by her chemicals and the basin she uses to wash the prints. The illustration expresses a strong sense of modernity that resonates with globally disseminated advertisements of women photographing outdoors.[142] The subject is rendered from behind, as if the illustrator was able to enter the scene without being noticed. Such a depiction is similar to the representation of the photographer in Gao Qifeng's painting. Yet in Dan Dayu's sketch, the focal point concentrates on the creative woman and her scrutiny of the prints rather than on the medium of photography. If the camera was the center of Gao's painting, in Dan's sketch photographic equipment is nothing but a frame for the modern woman.

Compared to Gao Qifeng's painting, the sketch provides less variation in terms of color and ink nuances, yet the clear-cut black lines present more telling details. If the man operating the camera on the cover of *The True Record* cannot be easily identified as Chinese or European, the shape of the black blouse—the narrow waist, the two slits on the sides, and

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[141] 但杜宇 Dan Duyu (drawings) and 許指嚴 Xu Zhiyan (texts), *Duyu baimeitu zhengxu ji* 杜宇百美圖正續集 [A Hundred Beauties by Duyu, sequel] (Shanghai: Xin minguo shuguan 上海 : 新民圖書館, 1924), v. 4:4. Cited in Louise Edwards, *Citizens of Beauty: Drawing Democratic Dreams in Republican China* (Washington: University of Washington Press, 2020), 169.

[142] Advertisements included Kodak, which associated the figure of the modern woman with the camera. One contemporaneous example of the association of women and photography in order to transmit the sensation of leisure and modernity is found in the *Funü shibao* 妇女时报 [Women's eastern times], issue 14 (1914), cover. On the connection between women and the camera in Republican China, see Guo Qiuzi, "When Kodak Came to China: Photography, Amateurs, and Visual Modernity, 1990–1937" (Ph.D. Diss., Heidelberg University, 2019), 79–86.

the half sleeves, together with the long black braid - suggest the woman in Dan Duyu's volume is Chinese. Trousers, instead of the more common long skirt, are another indication of the woman's independence and attraction to the modern ideal of a self-standing female individual. Such images of strong women engaging technologies eventually became ubiquitous in Republican-era journals and visual culture as Chinese women's bodies were increasingly associated with the health and prosperity of the Chinese nation.[143] Although it is beyond the scope of this study to assess the validity of such representations of modern women as either displays of verisimilitude or open exaggerations by male editors and illustrators, it is meaningful for the scope of this chapter to show that machines and equipment related to photography embodied different facets and layers of modernity, including aspirations to gender equality and an increasingly powerful connection between the new woman, new technologies, and the new nation.

Two images of modern citizens operating cameras show how photography operated as a symbol of modern Chinese life. The narrative of newness in all fields of knowledge and society, embodied by the scientific and truth value attributed to the photographic medium, was not an exclusively Chinese phenomenon but was, rather, symptomatic of a transnational idea of modernity understood as a conscious severing with the past and the foundation of a new project. Such ideology was typical of nineteenth and twentieth century revolutions. Although modernity was imposed on Asian cultures by colonialism, the same ideology also

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[143] Research in education and gender, nevertheless, has shown that women's emancipation was generally limited to the level of representation, and that women largely remained "mothers of citizens" rather that citizens. See Joan Judge, "Citizens or Mothers of Citizens? Gender and the Meaning of Modern Chinese Citizenship," in *Changing Meanings of Citizenship in Modern China,* eds. Merle Goldman and Elizabeth J. Perry (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 23-43. Paul Bailey introduces the concept of "Modernizing Conservatism" to describe the status of female students in late nineteenth and early twentieth century society and the press. The concept refers to reformers' focus on women's education in modern hygiene and house management, and the Confucian principles of deference and spirit of self-sacrifice. See Paul J. Bailey, *Gender and Education in China: Gender Discourses and Women's Schooling in the Early Twentieth Century* (London; New York: Routledge, 2007). In regard to the fight for women's political rights, and the Revolutionary Alliance's (later Nationalist Party) unrealized promises, see David Strand, *An Unfinished Republic: Leading by Word and Deed in Modern China (*Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

provided a tool of emancipation from the colonial forces that had introduced it in the first place. Similarly, photography had been used as a colonial tool since its earliest introduction to China, yet only a few years later became a tool of emancipation.

To further refine the concept of modernity in relation to Chinese history, it is useful to deconstruct its ideology. Modernity is a form of temporal ideology that valorizes newness and a linear chronology. Bruno Latour's suggestion that, "the adjective 'modern' designates a new regime, an acceleration, a rupture, a revolution in time, and that when the word "modern," "modernization" or "modernity" appears, one is defining then, by contrast, an archaic and stable past" informs such understanding of modernity.[144] There is a tendency not just to trace a clear line between what is perceives as archaic and is imagined to be modern, but also to imply a qualitative judgement: the modern is supposed to be the victor against the outdated past. Modernity interprets history as a linear and continuous progress, as if all humanity had to undertake a series of steps walking up the same street toward a common destination. Historicism, therefore, defines modernity as the goal of all nations and therefore casts China as suffering from a constant lack.[145] Leo Ou-Fan Lee similarly associates modernity in China with a new linear consciousness of time and history derived from the Social Darwinism introduced by Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873－1929) and Yan Fu 嚴復 (1853–1921).[146] In conceiving a modern identity, the old and the new, the past and the present, are located at opposite poles and any continuity between is discarded in favor of rupture, newness, and revolution.

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[144] Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 10.

[145] Kai-wing Chow, *Publishing, Culture, and Power in Early Modern China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 5–7.

[146] Leo Ou-Fan Lee, *Shanghai Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China 1930–1945.* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 43–47.

The Chinese revolutionaries constantly used language that evoked forms of novelty that reflect the widespread concerns of the modern. Yet, despite a common aspiration to technological development and the dissemination of new objects and practices that accelerated people's lives, understanding modernity as a singular, globally homogeneous process would be misleading. Rather, the continuous transformation and adaptation of "the modern" in various historical and spatial contexts must be attended to. In this sense, my analysis benefits from the concept of "multiple modernities," which, rather than imposing a general epistemic paradigm, notes the plurality of modern experience.[147] The plural "modernities," in other words, best account for the multiple refractions of comparable historical phenomenon at a global scale. Carol Gluck has coined an alternative formulation, Modernity in Common. Barbara Mittler uses the term to describe modernity on both a global and local scale.[148] The concept stresses the necessarily interconnected nature of modern societies with other parts of the world. Gluck notes that studies of modernity based on materials from outside Europe can offer ways to rethink the idea of modernity itself. Rather than considering all forms of modernities as different entities, then, Gluck suggests rethinking the idea of modernity (singular) as a fluid concept always concretized in specific local manifestations and phenomena.

Although modernity can be explained through the change to world vision described by both Bruno Latour and Lee Ou Fan, and its local iteration in the Sinophone context can be conceptualized as either one of many multiple modernities or as a manifestation of a larger modernity in common, it is more challenging to explain what modernity means in relation to

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[147] On multiple modernities, see Dominic Sachsenmaier, Jens Riedel, Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, eds., *Reflections on Multiple Modernities* (Leiden: Brill**,** 2002).

[148] One the use of "Modernity in Common" see "All Things Transregional? in conversation with Barbara Mittler," Blog for Transregional Research, published November 11, 2015, edited December 8, 2022. "All Things Transregional?" in conversation with… Barbara Mittler – TRAFO – Blog for Transregional Research (hypotheses.org)

visual culture. "Visual Modernity" is used to group sets of images under a broad all-encompassing umbrella. Chen Yang, Pang Laikwan, and Zhang Huiyu, for example, all use the concept of visual modernity to describe the practice of photography in early twentieth century China. [149] I suggest that the idea of visual modernit*ies* best describes markedly different modern developments in global visual culture. By using the term in the plural, it becomes clear that there are diverse forms of modern visualities in different periods. This is a response to uses of "visual modernity" that are both diluted and overly comprehensive, which results in its application to a wide range of materials without real analytical value. Visual modernity, in other words, has been applied to art forms as disparate as Chinese realist oil paintings, photographic attention to the cityscape, and to Fauvist painting. A category this flexible has been stretched to the point of losing its critical usefulness. Visual modernitie*s*, instead, accepts that modern technologies, inventions, and culture trigger changes, but also accounts for the differences among visual artifacts produced under distinct circumstances. Which attributes of photography and late nineteenth to early twentieth century visual culture does "visual modernity" refer to? If visual modernity refers to the use of one point perspective, for example, Qing court *trompe-l'œil* illusionistic paintings designed for Qianlong's 乾隆 (1711 – 1799) apartments in the eighteenth century would qualify. [150] If it refers to the reproducibility of visual materials, historians could trace its origins even earlier with woodblock reproductions of Buddhist texts and images. If it refers to the use of technical devices to represent reality, scholars of the early-modern period could refer to the

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See also Chen Yang, *Acceptance, Opposition, and Synthesis*, 15–34; Laikwan Pang, *The Distorting Mirror: Visual Modernity in China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007); Zhang Huiyu 張慧瑜, *Shijue xiandaixing: 20 shiji Zhongguo de zhuti chengxian* 視覺現代性：20 世紀中國的主體呈現 [Visual modernity: The representation of the Chinese subjects in the 20th century] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2012).

[150] For a detailed analysis of the illusionistic pictorial technique applied to hanging paintings in Qian Long's apartments, see Kristina Kleutghen, *Imperial Illusions: Crossing Pictorial Boundaries in the Qing Palaces* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015).

circulation of lenses and optical devices during the Qing dynasty. [151] The exclusive application of the term visual modernity to the changes brought by photography obscures the presence of "visually modern" paintings and prints in China before the advent of photography. Definitions of visual modernity are, then, always locally embedded and do not equally apply to the same technique at a given time in different regions. Visual modernities, in contrast, accounts for the differences among visual phenomena but also recognizes a shared "modern" character.

If understood as combining the visual field and Latour's understanding of modernity as the rupture with the past, the term "visual modernity" presents problems of definition. For example, art educators Xu Beihong and Cai Yuanpei believed that realism in oil painting truly embodied "Chinese Modernity," whereas academic realism was not considered to be "modern" in 1900 Paris or among avant-garde modernist groups such as the Storm society (*Juelanshe* 决澜社). Finally, modernity's ideological meaning as a clear-cut break with the past implies, in writing about late nineteenth and early twentieth century Chinese visual culture, a geographical reference rather than judgement of aesthetics or technical features. "Visually modern" at times appears as a synonym for "Western." In other words, the meaning of "visual modernity" shifts from indicating newness in opposition to the "traditional" past to denoting which objects or works are "Chinese" and which "Western." "Modernity" and its relation to the visual becomes a synonym for "Westernization," the

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[151] In another context, Jonathan Crary has pointed to the use of optical devices in the nineteenth century. He emphasizes the interconnection between the instruments used and the making of the modern observer. Yet, his understanding of the modern mainly refers to instruments produced and used during the nineteenth century. Crary does not directly stress the unique features of photography as a modern medium; rather he contextualizes it within a range of other modern media. See Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990). Oliver Moore notes that Chinese intellectuals widely experimented with lenses, mirrors, and the camera obscura prior to 1839. The camera was just one of many scientific and optical instruments they embraced, and it did not mark a break with the rest of the media but was rather one component in a wider development of advanced optical instruments in China. See Moore, *Photography in China,* 19–49.

deformed mirrored image of Euro-American modernity, applied to the period of semi-colonial domination in some parts of China.[152]

In her study of late nineteenth and early twentieth century visual culture, Pang Laikwan introduces the idea of visual modernity as a tension between the observer and the observed, an imported and adapted visual mode, at the intersection of the global nature of the phenomenon and the local transformation of modernity in China.[153] Although she attempts to solve the dichotomy by enhancing the overlap of popular and elite cultures, her narration still rests on the dualistic contraposition of "the West" and "China," where the first is an embodiment of modernity and the second of backwardness. Although it has proved attractive for many scholars working on histories of visual culture in China, the definition of visual modernity encourages a mode of reasoning based on exclusive binaries. It implies the passive acceptance of "Western" media and erases the agency of local communities in appropriating and adapting them to advance their own projects. It also fails to account for the specific features of photography in China as a unique and specific phenomenon that had, certainly, commonalities, but also differences with global contemporary photography. For this dissertation's argument it is paramount to draw a distinction between being modern and being Western such that modernities can adopt different forms depending on the context of their development. The plurality implied in "visual modernities" is helpful to overcome the dualism and focus on a range of different interpretations of modern media.

A transcultural perspective provides an effective alternative to the impact or response mode of thinking because it centers the transformative power of cultural encounters.[154] Conceived in opposition to "acculturation" – which erases the agency of the colonized –

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[152] Pang, *The Distorting Mirror*, 15.
[153] Pang, *The Distorting Mirror*, 11–21
[154] Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 97–103.

"transculturation" envisions the production of something new that is neither equal to the culture before contact nor equivalent to the culture imposed by the hegemonic or colonizing nation. Chinese visual culture at the turn of the twentieth century is better understood not through dualistic lenses such as modern or traditional, or Eastern or Western, but as a transcultural system that combines elements drawn from various contexts in creative, contradictory, and uneven ways.

Visual modernities might offer a starting point to understand press-photography in early twentieth-century China. Yet, a more specific terminology can overcome analytic problems that originate in the term's ambiguities. This study talks about photojournalism as a revolutionary act, which restricts the field to the particularity of photographic images and relevant technological transformations at the turn of the century and their relation to the political change from monarchy and semi-colony to republic. The changes that photography itself brought about and how those elements influenced local forms of vision are not the main focus. Rather, central to this study are the technological advances and the social changes that transformed photography from an elite medium reserved to foreigners and the rich into one for a politically engaged elite. The revolution, then, is not the shift between the world before and after the advent of an abstract idea of "photography," but rather the visual universe before and after the introduction of concrete technologies such as portable cameras, film, and photo-zincography. These techniques enabled an expansion of photography's ability to capture new subjects, show them in the press, and ultimately imbue such subjects with clear political meanings. Photojournalistic images positioned the events depicted, and the Chinese political situation, within the global present. Political Revolution, then, cannot be separated from technological revolution. The two are mutually constitutive.

Ultimately, the advantage of conceptualizing developments in early twentieth century China as a revolutionary moment in terms of the immediacy of photojournalism and its

connections to political revolution rather than the generic visual modernity is that confusion about geographic location or dislocation would be significantly restricted.

Photos of Modern Things

At the turn of the century, the camera embodied one kind of visual modernity and rupture with the "traditional past" through technological advance in two ways: as a symbol of modernity and as a medium to produce images of other machines. The camera was an iconic instrument associated with modern elites living in metropolitan areas. Images of photographic equipment were themselves visualizations and prescriptions of the new lives of such elites. The first section of this chapter analyzed two depictions of the medium of photography in relation to the citizens of the new nation, both male and female. In what follows the focus shifts to representations of infrastructure, a ubiquitous subject in early twentieth century photographic magazines, because it provided an immediate account of the nation's modern development. Photographs of other machines, such as advanced infrastructure and transport, indicated the degree of technological and scientific advance achieved in China and abroad, and placed China on the same temporal and technological level as other countries.

Infrastructure connected far away places in new, efficient, and faster ways. They contributed to individuals, ideas, and things traveling both within and outside the nation. *Le Monde*, published by the Chinese anarchist community in Paris, combined a call for the modernization of China with themes also found in early twentieth century French magazines. One panoramic photograph commemorated the 1905 opening of the railway connection

between Shanghai and Suzhou (**fig. 2.6**).[155] The photograph refers to the conflict over railway ownership, key to the modernization of China and also to the revolutionary struggle. If the Qing government did not sponsor or support the development of railways until the end of the nineteenth century, after the first Sino-Japanese war in 1895 it had become evident that advanced technologies, including weapons but also more efficient infrastructure, were key to the modernization and economic independence of the nation, therefore railroad expanded rapidly between the years 1895 and 1911. Yet, a great part of such new railroad was owned by foreign companies and nations, and the gains of the transportation projects did non contribute to enriching the locals, which led to increasing miscontent with the Qing administration. In 1904 the Qing government eventually allowed local provinces to organize their own railway companies and to sell shares to the public. The Shanghai–Hangzhou Railway, completed in 1909 represented in the photograph published by *Le Monde,* was financed by the governments of Jiangsu and Zhejiang.

The railways became even more central to political debates when, in 1911, some of the provincial railway ventures bankrupted, and the Qing government faced the challenge of deciding whether to rely on foreign loans to support the railways, or to nationalize them. The government eventually delivered on the nationalization or railways, which caused strong public outrage and protests. Such manifestations and public turmoil directed against the Qing government eventually let to the 1911 Revolution in Wuhan, which then expanded to the rest of China and posed a full stop to the dominance of the Qing dynasty. After the foundation of the Republic of China, although Sun Yat-sen left his role of Provisional President to Yuan Shikai, he still played a key role in coordinating railways development, and served as the president of the China Railway Company (*Zhongguo tielu gongsi* 中國鐵路總公司）in

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[155] The essay compares the image of the Chinese railway with its French counterpart, and criticizes the overreaction of Chinese audiences at the opening ceremony. Shijie 世界 [*Le Monde*] 1 (1907): E4.

Shanghai from September 1912. It was his role to obtain loans from foreign banks and governments to further develop railways in China. In 1913, after the assassination of Song Jiaoren planned by Yuan Shikai, and the consequent "second revolution," which failed to contrast the strong military power of Yuan, Sun was forced to exile in Japan. Despite the short-lived attempts of Sun at developing a more efficient train system in China, it remained clear to all intellectuals as well as to the landlords who achieved power after Yuan's death, and to the Nationalist Party in the 1920s and 1930s, that railways were a way to guarantee the increase of commerce, wealth, and modernization.

The choice of theme and the way the railway is portrayed in *Le Monde* encapsulates the centrality of railways in the political and economic discourse as well as its relevance to the revolutionary discourse, which I have mentioned in the introduction. Images of rumbling trains are found in numerous accounts of modernization in colonial and non colonial contexts, because locomotives are symbols of the industrial revolution that is the most important element of modernization. Yet, if one compares the representation of railway in a colonial context and in the representation proposed in *Le Monde*, some differences emerge. One example addressed to a Japanese audience is an image issued by the Japanese to legitimate and promote their colonial power in Manchuria (north-east China) (**fig. 2.7**). The train, the central subject of the page, appears as a monumental presence captured from below. The imposing appearance of the locomotive, followed by numerous wagons, impresses an idea of distance and respect, fear and modernity. Unlike the *Le Monde* photograph of the railway, here the crowd is absent. This further strengthens the sense of isolation and domination imposed by the immense machine. The sterile appearance of the photo, accompanied by the transcription of a celebratory song, an accompanying essay, a series of maps of railway development, and two Manchurian cityscapes, is a classic embodiment of Japanese colonial propaganda in the Chinese northeast. The colonial narrative envisioned railways as a means

of modernization – but one that erased local agency superimposed the intimidating infrastructure on the land as a form of control. In comparison, *Le Monde* emphasized the presence of people around the machine, stressing the active participation of the Chinese population in the modernization of the nation.

Railways were not the only infrastructure that became key in the narration of Chinese modernity. Journals remarked on the ambitious transportation infrastructure assembled in Europe at the turn of the twentieth century, including airplanes, ships, and subways.[156] Following a progressive technological narrative similar to *Le Monde*, *The True Record* presented a collage of photographs of airplanes (**fig. 2.8**). Issued as a foldable poster, the assortment provided an overview of "up-to-date airships in various countries."[157] The composition placed Chinese technology side by side with aircraft from England, Germany, Japan, and the U.S.[158] Further, the collage suggested that the Chinese nation is active in the same temporal dimension and moment as other nations, and is not blocked in an indefinite past. The juxtaposition and confrontation of the newest technologies in the advanced countries and China becomes here one tactic for showing that China could and should become part of a global technologically and scientifically advanced universe.

Photographs and drawings of advanced technologies became an obsession not only in revolutionary publications. Widely distributed magazines produced the same narrative. One essay in *The Eastern Miscellany* (dongfang zazhi 東方雜誌), for example remarked on the

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[156] *Le Monde* 1 (1907): E1–E8.
[157] *The True Record* 11 (1912–3): n.p. [5].
[158] The Chinese aircraft in the top left corner is marked with number 37. The display functions through visual comparison, a way of structuring knowledge characteristic of photographic reproduction. See chapters 6 and 7 of this dissertation.

importance of infrastructure for the advance of Chinese civilization.[159] According to such

conceptions, when judging the degree of civilization in each nation (*minzu* 民族), one should

account not only for literary and artistic achievements, but also for local infrastructural

development.[160] The circulation of human knowledge and culture relies on communication

systems, and states (*guo* 國) that fail to develop a good transportation system end up being

perceived as "tribal cultures," no matter how refined their art and literature.[161] In reference to

conservative policies promulgated by the Qing government to limit foreign commerce and

the exchange of knowledge that emerged from it, the essay ultimately calls for the

improvement of China's communications network. [162] It is apparent, thus, that the

development and use of the newest technologies in all fields of knowledge was one of the

most urgent goals in the new China. Photographs of technologies printed and circulated in the

press projected the idea that machines and infrastructure were pertinent to modern China as a

whole and not just to elites based in the coastal cities.

Similarly, the role of technology as a measure of a nation's degree of civilization

becomes apparent in the key role attributed to printing techniques. Printers are also key to the

diffusion of photographs, which strengthens the relation established between photographs and

science. It was due to the development of halftone printing that images could be widely

distributed in the Chinese press. Advertisements for the Shanghai presses' latest printing

technologies were ubiquitous in the 1910s periodical press. For example, the 1910 *Book*

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[159] Yue Zhi 愈之 trans., "*Jiaotong yu wenming zhijian de guanxi* 交通發達與文明之關係 [The relationship between communication and civilization]," Dongfang zazhi 東方雜誌 [The Eastern Miscellany], volume 15, issue 1 (1918): 47–51.

[160] Yue Zhi 愈之, "The relationship between communication and civilization," 47–51.

[161] Yue Zhi 愈之, "The relationship between communication and civilization," 47–51.

[162] To strengthen his point, the author compares Ancient Greece, Rome, China, and contemporary Europe and America. At the end of the article, one advertisement for the publication *Faming yu wenming* 發明與文明 [Inventions and civilization] strengthens the key role played by new technologies in marking the difference between civilized and uncivilized. The same issue published three photographs of the transportation means used to deliver mail in the Chinese "periphery," showing that efforts were being made to reach out to every corner of the country. See Dongfang zazhi 東方雜誌 [The Eastern Miscellany], volume 15, issue 1 (1918), n.p.

Report (Tushu huibao 圖書彙報) remarked that a higher degree of civilization implies a rise in printing needs and that the press therefore proposed as many as nine different printing processes including four photographic techniques.[163] Printing's status as an embodiment of progress was, much like the double role ascribed to the camera, twofold. On the one hand, new printing techniques, such as halftone printing and collotype, allowed for the reproduction of photographs. On the other hand, the machines used in the printing process became themselves one of the subjects published in illustrated magazines to illustrate the advanced state of the printing industry (**fig. 2.9**). All those machines contributed to shaping the Republic of China visually as a scientifically and technologically advanced country ready to establish itself as a modern nation in dialogue with, and not in submission to, other modern nations.

The outbreak of World War I a decade later challenged the association between modern technology and civilization. World War I elevated many voices that critiqued the claim that technological advance was synonymous with higher civilization.[164] After all, the Europeans, regarded as highly civilized because of their advanced technology, had used that same technology to kill each other in new and terrible ways. Some intellectuals in the May Fourth Movement, who had promoted Darwinist theory and a "New Culture" that refused the teachings of Confucianism, started to nuance their stronger claims.[165] Liang Qichao and Yan Fu, for example, while remaining convinced Social Darwinists, eventually amended their position on the role of traditional Chinese culture in the modernization of China. Nevertheless, this was not yet the case in the publications of the first decade of the twentieth

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[163] Tushu huibao 圖書彙報 [Book Report] issue 1 (1910), n.p.
[164] James Reeve Pusey, *China and Charles Darwin* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 439–40.
[165] Pusey, *China and Charles Darwin*, 438–9.

century. In their pages, science, technology, and civilization were still closely associated, and promised the Chinese reader a bright and civilized modern future.

To sum up, photography in 1910s China was inscribed within the wider context of a continuous demand for advanced technology, science, and civilization. International confrontation generated anxiety about being up-to-date with all the new technologies and scientific tools. The techniques involved in the shooting, developing, and printing of photographs were sisters to other advanced technologies such as planes, trains, and other tools of transportation, which in turn became the modern nation's civilizational tools. The camera was one of the objects that local elites embraced as a symbol of the new era. Yet, it was an especially productive one because, unlike most other modern commodities, it allowed a great degree of flexibility in the production of other objects, namely photographs. In other words, photography became associated with scientific endeavors and civilizational discourses such that the medium acquired a place within the broader discourse of national renovation. "If we have the technology" was to say, "we are civilized."

The connection between conceptualization of photography and technologically advanced objects as bounded to a scientific and civilizational vision supports the camera's propagandistic power. The second section of this chapter investigates the revolutionaries' exploitation of photographs as vehicles of their political agenda. The first set of objects are photo-journalistic images of problematic social phenomena; the second group of photographs investigate the participation of photograph to the construction of the ideology of race. In both groups of pictures, the actors rely on the scientific value attributed to photography to present the subjects as facts rather than interpretations.

Social Issues Acquire Visibility

The concept of images as documentary testimony of an event and a means of political propaganda did not emerge with photography. Rather, image-based documentation had numerous precedents in the history of Chinese visual culture.[166] During the second half of the eighteenth century, for example, the Emperor Qianlong (1711–1799) ordered from France a set of copperplates that celebrated his conquests in Central Asia. A passionate collector of clocks, astronomical instruments, and other machines imported from Europe, Qianlong was fascinated by the precision of copperplate prints that had reached China via missionaries' books and prints. Although copperplates as a medium allowed for the mass reproduction of images, the emperor did not widely circulate the French-engraved celebratory prints. Rather, he treated the prints much like the documentary paintings court artists issued to bear witness to events of significance for the Qing family and state.[167] The emperor himself was the intended audience for those paintings and the copperplate prints. It was not until the diffusion of the illustrated press during the late Qing dynasty that engravings communicated news on current events to a wider audience.[168] The influential *Dianshizhai Illustrated* (Dianshizhai Huabao 點石齋畫報), for example, published expressive drawings of the Sino-French war

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[166] One early example is found in the painting *Han Xizai yeyan tu* 韓熙載夜宴圖 [Night Revels of Han Xizai]. The original painting by Gu Hongzhong 顾闳中 (937–975 CE) is lost. Nevertheless, a Song dynasty copy is extant. Southern Tang emperor Li Yu 李煜 (c. 937–978 CE) commissioned the work from Gu. The ruler was concerned about the minister Han Xizai's affection for parties and women. The image, therefore, was intended to serve as a witness to the events that happened during Han's lavish banquets.

[167] During the late Qing dynasty Giuseppe Castiglione (1688–1766) and other missionary court painters employed copperplate printing to realize the drafts for the series *Pingding xiyu zhantu* 評定西域戰圖 [Images of the conquests in the western regions]. Planned to be cast in France, the plates celebrated Qianlong's conquests in present-day Western China. According to Nie Chongzheng's classification, Qing court paintings can be divided into five categories: documentary paintings, historical paintings, Taoist and Buddhist paintings, flower and bird paintings, and landscape paintings. Documentary paintings were mainly representations of the emperor's activities, and they fit well in both the documentary paintings and historical paintings categories. The classification shows the relevance of images as documentary evidence before the modern period. See Nie Chongzhen, *Qinggong huihua*, 9–16.

[168] Before that, woodblock prints were used to reproduce religious texts and images, especially Buddhist, and for the production of New Year prints.

that consumed Indochina (Vietnam) between 1884 and 1885, and transformed the battles into public events.[169] Yet, in the *Dianshizhai* example, the assigned artist never visited the battlefield during combat. Even when the drafters had the chance to visit the battlefield, they only arrived after the cessation of the fighting. Their pictorial reconstructions, therefore, sprouted from a mingling of the artist's understanding of field reports, imaginative reconstructions by witnesses, and the artist's phantasy. One propaganda poster from the series, *Images of battles to restore the Republic of China* (Zhonghua Minguo guangfu zhanshi tu 中華民國光復戰事圖) provides an example of such imaginative interpretation in the context of the 1911 Revolution (**fig. 2.10**). The vividly colored poster of the revolutionaries' conquest of the railway station in Hankou added cartoon-like white explosions to the rendering of this republican triumph within the frame of an exaggerated one-point perspective. Although the artist in charge of drawing the image most probably worked with photographs of the site, he necessarily invented and added the soldiers and smoke in motion.[170]

Photographers and photojournalists working in China in the early twentieth century conflated an established local use of images as documentary witnesses with the global practice of staging photojournalistic images. The advent of photography on a global scale demanded the reporter's presence on site. Yet, at the beginning of photojournalism the camera operator did not participate in the conflict. War photographers Roger Fenton (1819–1869), Felice Beato (1832–1909), Mathew Brady (1823–1896), as well as Ogawa Kazumasa

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[169] After an initial period when they were employed by Christians to spread religious knowledge, illustrated magazines acquired a strongly commercial purpose. A representative example of such a commercial turn is the *Dianshizhai pictorial* established in Shanghai by the English businessman Ernest Major (美查, 1841–1908) in 1884. See Rudolf Wagner, *Joining the Global Public: Word, Image, and City in Early Chinese Newspapers, 1870–1910* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2007), 105–173. On the "going public" of images of battlefields in the late Qing press see esp. 121–126. See also Chen Pingyuan 陳平原, *Zuo tu you shi yu xixuedongjian: wanqing huabao yanjiu* 左圖右史與西學東漸: 晚清畫報研究 [Image on the left and history on the right and western learning: research on illustrated magazines of the late Qing] (Beijing: Sanlian Bookstore, 2018), 30–47.
[170] see for example one photograph of the same site **fig. 0.2**.

小川 一眞 (1860–1929) travelled to the battlefields, yet they only visited when the conflict had ended, or they captured it from a distance.[171] Reasons of safety as well as technological insufficiencies made it difficult to capture subjects in motion. Early war photographs, therefore, naturally relied on staging and accurate framing as strategies to convey the horror or pathos of the battle through post-battles tableaus.[172] Chinese revolutionary photographers and other 1910s authors, whose work was used in constructing the revolutionary narrative, were no exception. Pan Dawei, the Chinese Photography Team (*Zhonghua xiezhendui* 中華寫真隊), as well as Francis E. Stafford, who photographed events related to the 1911 Revolution, only visited the battlefields after the fighting was over.

The media that allowed for the maximization of the impact of those images were, apart from posters, illustrated magazines, and modern newspapers. The printed page in an illustrated magazine melded documentary illustration and the modern concept of a popular platform employed to monitor political action and social facts. The European context, especially in France and Great Britain, set the trend with influential publications such as *The Illustrated London News* and *L'Illustration,* as well as with radical magazines such as Jean Grave's *Les Temps Nouveaux.*[173] In the Chinese context, the new impulse towards the politicization of newspapers and magazines came from links with the Japanese sphere.

Japan played a foundational role in the making of the revolution, the crafting of revolutionary publications, and the strategic use of visual materials in political arguments. It

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[171] The development and wide diffusion of fast, portable cameras during the 1910s, and in China especially during the 1920s and 1930s, eventually allowed professional and amateur photographers to capture subjects in motion, including soldiers on the battlefield.

[172] See for example the staging of corpses in Felice Beato's photographs discussed by Fred Ritchin and Wu Hung's recognition of the sense of subjugation conveyed by the photographs. See Fred Ritchin, "Felice Beato and the Photography of War," in *Felice Beato: A Photographer on the Eastern Road*, ed. Anne Lacoste, 119–32; see also Wu Hung, "Photography's Subjugation of China: A 'Magnificent Collection' of Second Opium War Images," in *Zooming In: Histories of Photography in China* (London: Reaktion Books, 2016), 47–83.

[173] The latter was one primary source of inspiration for the French-based Chinese anarchists. Their magazine *Xin Shiji* 新世紀, subtitled in Esperanto "La Tempoj Novaj," referred to the French anarchist publication.

suffices to remember that the Revolutionary Alliance was established in Tokyo in 1905. Furthermore, artists Gao Qifeng, Gao Jianfu, and Chen Shuren all lived in Japan for extended periods. Reformers and revolutionaries such as Liang Qichao, Zhang Binglin, and Qiu Jin 秋瑾 (1875–1907) similarly lived in Japan for years. During their permanence in Japan, they had the chance to view Japanese war-related publications, which enjoyed unprecedented popularity during the Russo-Japanese War. [174] Russia's defeat had propelled Japanese newspaper to increasingly offer accounts that dramatized national power and affirmed Japanese strength on the Asian and international stages. The first Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) had also played a key role in the diffusion of war photography in the Japanese public sphere.[175] Increased interest in war had raised the profile of photography as a means of communicating news events.[176] During their stays in Japan, Chinese revolutionaries as well as reformist artists interested in the manipulation of images for political activism visited photographic exhibitions and read publications celebrating Japanese victories. It is natural, then, that young Chinese revolutionaries in Japan Gao Qifeng, Gao Jianfu, and Chen Suren,

[174] The earliest published illustrations based on photographs were copperplate engravings because technology did not yet allow their mechanical reproduction. Publications with individual photographs tipped in were issued at the beginning of the late 1880s. After the first Sino-Japanese War at the beginning of the twentieth century, half-tone printing eventually allowed for the widespread circulation of printed illustrations, and the simultaneous printing of text and photographs. See Karen M. Fraser, *Photography and Japan* (London: Exposures, 2011), 89.

[175] Correspondents documenting the war included eleven artists such as Kubota Beisen (久保田 米僊, 1852 – May 19, 1906), whose work was published by the periodical Kokumin, and four photographers whose works were copied as lithographs in the newspapers. See James L. Huffman, *Creating a Public, People and Press in Meiji Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997), 201–208.

[176] Kinoshita Naoyuki, "The Early Years of Japanese Photography," in *The History of Japanese Photography,* ed. Anne Tucker, 34. Individual photographers trained abroad such as Ogawa Kazumasa (1860–1929) were key to the increase in the public visibility of photographs. Other elements included the increasing urban population, significantly more alphabetized and literate, and the extensive number of new technologies introduced in the country. See James L. Huffman, *Creating a Public,* 224. After studying photography in Boston between 1884 and 1886, Ogawa Kazumasa (1860–1929) became an instructor in photography for the Japanese army in 1885. See Kinoshita Naoyuki, "The Early Years of Japanese Photography" in Tucker, ed., *The History of Japanese Photography*, 33–34. In 1889, Ogawa Kazumasa established the art magazine *Kokka* 國華 [Essence of the Nation] published by the Ogawa Photoengraving Company. On Kazumasa's contribution to Japanese Photography, see Kelly M. McCormick, "Ogawa Kazumasa and the Halftone Photograph: Japanese War Albums at the Turn of the Twentieth Century," *TransAsia Photography Review* 7, no. 2 (Spring 2017). https://quod.lib.umich.edu/t/tap/7977573.0007.201?view=text;rgn=main accessed 17.05.2021.

as well as their France-based counterparts Li Shizeng, Wu Zhihui, Wu Hui, and Zhang Jingzhang, absorbed the theory and practice of illustrated magazines and adapted them to fit their political agenda. As a result, at the beginning of the 20th century radical groups including the Revolutionary Alliance and the Paris group of anarchists increasingly deployed the illustrated press to carve out fertile spaces for the circulation of revolutionary thought.

Le Monde and *The True Record*, the first situated abroad and the second in the relatively censorship-free Shanghai foreign settlements, relied on the truth value of photography to express their political aspirations. Images that witness a relevant historical moment became sites of resistance and political debate. Three visual critiques of imperial power in China suggest images aimed to trigger social change. The first image captures Chinese protesters' boycott of American goods in 1905, which aimed to protest foreigners' continuous misconduct in Shanghai. The second picture criticizes one of the most representative commodities of the imperial oppression of China, Opium. The third iconic image, a portrait of Sun Yat-sen's visit to the Ming Tombs in Nanjing, embodies anti-Qing racist sentiment at the locus between photojournalism and propaganda.

Photojournalism and Resistance

The conceptualization of revolutionary photojournalism as a resistance tactic falls within a wider understanding of the camera as a malleable medium. A comparison between sources collected in Euroamerican and Chinese collections establishes that photography's rectangular frame could be adapted to both colonial and anticolonial agendas. Accounts based on photographic collections found in colonial archives are necessary to reconstruct the painful history of the colonial past, yet they run the risk of perpetuating the violence and world vision that supported colonialism. Studies on the use that nationalism and resistance made of photography are not immune from ideological manipulation and the involuntary

repetition of nationalist narratives. Yet, such studies can provide a starting point to achieve a more nuanced understanding of "photography of China." The researcher must decide how to strike a balance and provide sufficient historical nuance.

It is more useful to investigate the practical uses of technologies in specific historical contexts than to freeze them in the moment of their discovery. Although the camera did impose a rectangular frame, indexical rendering, and one-point perspective, technological determinism ultimately fails to account for the flexibility of photographic practices. Although those pre-determined visual features effectively "dissected" reality, this did not prevent local communities from appropriating and subverting their visuality as a tactic of resistance and emancipation.[177] Each technology only becomes effective in its empirical use, and both "printing press" and "photography" are conceptual abstractions that ultimately must be anchored to tangible objects such as journals, photographs, and prints.[178]

That said, technology did play a key role in the development of photojournalistic photography. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, improved lenses, Eastman Kodak's flexible celluloid film, and hand-held cameras expanded the range of activities that photography could capture.[179] Documentary photography showed a gradual abandonment of the rigid iconography of the late imperial period as new technologies allowed a journalistic reportage to develop that extended photography's use to new themes, viewpoints, and framings. Technology affected not just the shooting process. It equally affected the printing, cost, and distribution of images. The introduction of new printing techniques in China at the turn of the century allowed illustrated magazines to publish photographs on a large scale.

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[177] I refer to Ariella Azoulay's postcolonial critique of photography. Ariella Aïsha Azoulay, *Potential History: Unlearning Imperialism* (New York: Verso, 2019), 2–3.

[178] Elisabeth Edwards and Janice Hart, *Photographs Objects Histories: On the Materiality of Images* (London; New York: Routledge, 2004).

[179] Factory-made glass plates appeared at the beginning of the 1880s.

Photographs escaped their narrow status as elite commodities preserved in albums, postcards, or 3D stereoscope viewers, and entered public space via illustrated magazines. Images in the press allowed the wider public to access images, albeit of lower quality, and shape its understanding of photographs as visual documents. The capture of one moment in photojournalistic accounts became key to the reader's sense of witness and participation in current events.

Involving the Audience in Violent Revolts

Photojournalistic images attracted audiences with the suggestion of science and truth. Documentary impressions transformed discrete events into social occasions. Such illustrations did not exclusively act as activist media, they were also a pristine form od commercially successful visual materials. Photographic studios praised themselves with the ability to shoot photographs of "big events, fatal car accidents, or assassinations."[180] Studios staged prints of these momentous current events to advertise their advanced skills. Properly captioned and staged in photo-studio shop windows, photos with a focus on the present would immediately attract a city clientele because such images illustrated "true facts" that the passerby knew exclusively through newspaper articles.[181] A novel phenomenon in early twentieth century China, news photographs came to inhabit daily modern life and the press.

Violent protest against authoritarian power was the foremost principle of the revolutionaries, whether anarchist or republican. Photographs of uprisings against the enemy, thus, inhabited the revolutionary discourse. One of the earliest journalistic images included in the Chinese language press shows Shanghai citizens observing the English vice-ambassador's

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[180] Xiehebao 协和报 [cooperation news], issue 39 (1911): n.p. [9–10].
[181] Xiehebao, issue 39 (1911): n.p. [9–10].

burned-out car (**fig. 2.11**). The image, published in the anarchist journal *Le Monde*, displays the relationship between local citizens and a foreign power, which had unraveled in the treaty port two years before the publication of this image. The fight, disclosed in the violent protests in 1905, occurred in a context of anti-American boycotts and more generalized anti-foreign sentiment. According to the attached article, it was still hard to determine exactly how events had unfolded, but their very existence was representative of the change in the Chinese people's temperament. In the preceding ten years, local citizens had acquired a new degree of civilization and therefore would not stand for any further abuse.[182] Accordingly, international public opinion interpreted the event as an act of resistance by Chinese citizens who demanded the return of their power.[183] The display of public dissent against the imperialist powers showcased both the possibility and necessity of revolt and revolution. It rationalized the statement that the Chinese people should not fear the foreign powers that partially controlled their land. Instead, they must realize the need to object and, if necessary, attack the status quo through violent action. The intertwining of image and text thus called on readers' sympathy and encouraged them to join the movement against the semi-colonial powers and in favor of Chinese self-determination.

The figure of the bombed car of the British vice-ambassador captured the sense of unrest and violent reaction against subjugation that characterized revolutionary discourse in Shanghai (**fig. 2.11**). The smoke emanating from the vehicle and the crumpled metal wreckage, including a weal strategically placed at the very center of the photograph, became a metaphor for the damaged authority of the foreign community in Shanghai and in China. Curious onlookers include a child explicitly observing the scene while passing by and a group of men in the left foreground who have come to the site of the accident to ascertain

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[182] *Le Monde* 1 (1907): C17.
[183] *Le Monde* 1: C17.

what happened. Their postures—one man at the extreme left is looking at the spectacular event in the middle of the Shanghai crossroad, whereas the close-up man seen from behind appears to be looking for an explanation or waiting a chat about the event---suggest a moment of observation, doubt, and fermentation. Individuals to the right side of the image maintain the same attitude: they turn their faces towards the car to display interest, and yet continue walking to avoid causing trouble. The presence and attitude of the onlookers in the image communicate a sense of curiosity and interest in the revolutionary change that the event embodies, that is, the local population's involvement in violent protests.

The unidentified photographer chose a perspective that strengthens such a sense of participation. The panoramic camera is positioned on the same level as the car and the child's gaze. Such a perspective suggests, on the one hand, sympathy with the other onlookers, and on the other hand offers the possibility to actively participate in the scene. The close up of the onlookers and the rather low position of the lens thus construct a panoramic image where the viewer is invited to partake in the action. The audience reading the photograph, then, can figuratively assist in the event. The image is much more that the sterile record of one current event; rather, it invites the viewer to join forces with their fellow citizens in a reflection, first, on the power of the revolution (foreground), but also in the violence action in the center background. The image, ultimately, suggests that revolution is possible, and asks the viewer to join the effort.

The innovative presence and active participation of individuals in the photograph become evident if the image is compared to images of current events from an earlier period, especially the Opium Wars. One well-known photograph - of the Taku Forts by Felice Beato - documents the decisive battle that led to the end of the Second Opium War on 21 August 1860 (**fig. 2.12**). Beato chose an elevated position and organized the composition in a triangle—the left margin of the photo constitutes the basis, the top of the fort's wall creates a

long horizontal side, and a series of three bodies staged on the earth ramp design the oblique segment that closes the geometric figure. The viewer is left out of the triangle, which appears curated to communicate a sense of distance rather than proximity. This is especially evident when Beato's use of geometrical shapes is contrasted with divergent compositional strategies in revolutionary photography. Whereas Beato's triangle tends to exclude the viewer and therefore create an aestheticized and sterile vision of conflict, the image of the exploded car published in *Le Monde* forms a light-colored semicircle, which can only be closed when the position of the photographer and the more onlookers at his side are considered. Beato's position as the official photographer accompanying the British detachment in China is evident in his detached treatment of violence, where the cameraman, as well as the reader, does not participate in the action nor does he sympathize with the subjects. Rather, human bodies are perceived as pictorial elements in a larger composition. [184] In contrast, the panoramic photograph of the 1905 boycott is structured around a circular shape, which in turn suggests the active participation of both author and onlooker. Revolutionary photojournalism characterized the *Le Monde* image because it did not exclusively capture a current event from a distance—as Beato did -- but rather demands and implies the viewer's active involvement in the revolt. Further, the images' structures also suggest different conceptions of the time of the event. If Beato's detached look suggests the event comes from a distant past, the inclusive perspective in the Shanghai boycott photograph provides the impression that the explosion is happening in the present.

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[184] Beato's tendency to insert individuals in his Chinese works as a prop to demonstrate the size of buildings or as decoration to balance the photograph is evident in his numerous depictions of Chinese architecture. Among the numerous examples are *Nine-storied Pagoda and Tartar Street*, *Temple of the Tartar Quarter* (both mages of Canton realized in April 1860), and *Mosque, nearPekin, Occupied by the Commander in-Chief and Lord Elgin*. See Lacoste ed., *Felice Beato: A Photographer on the Eastern Road*, plates 22, 24, and 29.

Souvenir Images Recycled in a Revolutionary Frame

The Opium Wars and the Unequal Treaties left a profound wound in Chinese modern history, and images of opium and the catastrophes it caused were part of the larger nationalist argument on the unacceptability of foreign occupation and the humiliation of submission to external forces. Artifacts that exposed the disadvantages caused by the semi-colonial control of China became sites of protest and resistance. The visual representation of opium addiction provides an exemplary case. The drug had been a symbol of the fight between the British Empire and the Qing since 1839. The British imported massive amounts of opium into China, which constituted a lucrative commercial activity and, at the same time, effectively weakened the Chinese. Operating within a set of power relations sanctioned by the Unequal Treaties, Qing campaigns against opium consumption proved ineffective and the drug was still widely available towards the end of the century. Revolutionary discourse linked opium addiction to foot binding on the list of plagues that made "all of the countries in the world laugh" at China.[185] Intellectuals of the May fourth movement similarly condemned such cultural practices, interpreting them as the unwanted legacies of imperialism and Confucian social order.

Three images of Chinese opium smokers and an opium ship published by *Le Monde* along the essay on the damages of opium addiction framed drug consumption as a social issue that required an immediate response (**fig. 2.13**). The image series embodied a different kind of photojournalism where picturesque images initially designed as souvenirs or devices for armchair travelling were reinterpreted through a new lens advanced in the radical press. Lai Afong's work at the right side of the sequence, for example, has been interpreted in rather

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[185] *Le Monde* 1 (1907): C19.

different ways when published in *Le Monde* and in an English-written study on anthropology (**figs. 2.13 and 2.14**). The three photographs in the Sinophone anarchist magazine provide distinct accounts of the consequences of opium's diffusion in China. In the right-hand photograph, a group of wealthy men seem to enjoy the drug as just one of their past-times—objects in the room suggest calligraphy, painting, and conversation are other favourite occupations. At the center, ships storing and transporting opium suggest a thriving coastal business. Only in the left photograph can one spot traces of opium's disastrous social effects. The bare room displays only a few pieces of furniture. The two thin men, dressed in plain clothes, stare at the shutter with a lost gaze. Their position and behavior, together with the simplicity of the room, contrast strikingly with the wealthy men in the right picture.

The arrangement of the images suggests a narrative in which the drug endangers the prosperity of wealthy families. The group of three images does not report on a single, distinct, unrepeatable moment like the photograph of the exploded car in Shanghai. Yet the images embodied photojournalistic documents in so far as they communicated a current social issue, were circulated in the press, and embodied a distinct political agenda. When one reads the illustrations along with the essay, it becomes clear that the aim of the images was to arise Chinese resistance to opium, which came to stand in for the persistent semi-colonial control of China's coasts.

Yet, the images taken one by one do not necessarily communicate that opium addiction was a severe problem for both the individual and the Chinese nation. Rather, the visuals provide a picturesque view of smoking, which does not immediately resonate with the forceful tone of the accompanying essay. Why was this the case? In the absence of images of contemporary opium smokers staged to convey disgust and misery, the editor recycled photographs he could trace in published books and albums. One of these widely circulated illustrations was the work of the Hong Kong-based commercial photographer Lai Afong.

Well-known author of portraits, landscapes, and romanticized views of China, his photographs were disseminated beyond China via tourist albums and postcards. The editors of *Le Monde* recicled one of his frontal views of four men smoking opium, which was reproduced in numerous publications also in the form of a retouched lithographic print. English naturalist Charles John Cornish (1858–1906) eventually used the image in his account of the human and animal races (**fig. 2.14**).[186] Scenographically staged to provide a symmetrical vision, the image inscribed opium within a range of other iconic Chinese artifacts such as ink paintings, vases, fans, and a spittoon. These objects and their equilibrated positioning rendered the photograph recognizably Chinese and, therefore, boosted its commercial success in the context of souvenir photo-albums and commercial printmaking.

In contrast to its original picturesque conception, *Le Monde* effectively transformed the aestheticizing commercial photograph into a call for attention to social struggles such as opium smoking and into a call for immediate anti-imperialist action. The radically divergent uses of the same image support the conception that photographs are semantically flexible, that they adapt to their users' needs. More precisely, photographs, initially conceived as picturesque souvenirs of "Chinese types," can be recycled to become documentary photographs that actively participate in revolutionary struggles. *Le Monde* authors, resident in France, did not have direct access to Chinese newsapers so that the reuse of former images to illustrate more current issues also underscores a pragmatic choice. The magazine largely used photographs taken from other sources, including French publications and postcards, to achieve its overall aim of introducing European culture and science to a Chinese readership.

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[186] Charles John Cornish, *The Standard Library of Natural History; Embracing Living Animals of the World and Living Races of Mankind IV* (New York: The University Society, 1909), 125.

Images of China, used to discuss political issues, were also largely derived from the same European sources, but reinvented and reinterpreted according to the authors' agenda.

Along with the reuse and resignification of stereotypical views adopted by French-based anarchists, in China the revolutionary industry produced propaganda posters that aimed to combat opium addiction explicitly. A set of colorful sketches grouped in a lithographic poster shows the terrible effects of opium addiction on human life (**fig. 2.15**). Those nightmares include poverty and family separation. In the top central vignette, two smokers dressed in worn-out clothes covered in patches have lost all they had to pay for their drugs. The inscription indicates: "although the hole of the opium pipe might seem tiny, it can make vast things vanish, and it could make one's fields and properties disappear into smoke." Such didactic images condemned distributors and consumers of opium and provided solid grounds for condemning the British opium trade and its long-term consequences. As an interlocutor in such anti-imperial discourse, *Le Monde*, speaking from Europe to the Chinese reader, criticized opium addiction. Relying on a preexisting aversion for a British Empire that had forcibly imposed drug addiction, they called for both an individual and national awakening that would put an end to imperialist practices that weakened China, primarily opium smoking and foot binding.

Sun Yat-sen's Revolution in the News

Iconic images of revolutionary leaders constitute the final example of the strategic use of photographs to foment resistance by shaping national consciousness. I will return to the theme of portaits in the revolutionary ideology in chapter four. This section introduces one photograph of the leader, because it serves to connect the themes of photojournalism, science, truth, and race, subject of the next section. When Sun Yat-sen, the leader of the Revolutionary Alliance, returned to China after the 1911 Revolution, he paid homage to the

last Han rulers of China, the Ming dynasty (1368–1644), which the Manchu Qing had usurped (**fig. 2.16**). Sun's homage also referred to the founder of the dynasty, Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 (1328–1398), whose portrait appears behind the leader in other widely circulated photojournalistic accounts. [187] Republican revolutionaries, then, constructed a continuity between contemporaneous Han Chinese and the Ming dynasty. Such historical continuity justified their demand for the reclamation of political power usurped by the Qing oppressor. When Sun visited the Ming tombs in Nanjing, thus, he was effectively modeling history to bolster Han nationalist and racist sentiments. [188] Therefore, in the republican visual narrative, revolution went hand in hand with the restoration of the Han ethnic group's power.

Yet, racial discrimination was not the exclusive ingredient contributing to reinforcing Sun's authority. Carefully selected frames and perspectives for his photographic rendering contributed to the formation of his public aura. One widely-published image situated Sun as he walks on a white path away from one of the buildings constituting the Ming tombs (**fig. 2.16**). The photographer stood on an elevated platform, another tomb pavilion, which allowed him to capture the crowd of people following Sun. The image exemplifies key features of a model representation of a republican and revolutionary leader. The stress lies on the leader's positioning on the move, surrounded by loyal supporters and fellow citizens. Conceptually close iconic images, for example, capture his departure and arrival at railway stations. [189] This remarkable visual affinity with travels and transportation is not surprising as Sun traveled widely in the Chinese diaspora to raise funds for the revolution. Therefore, the photograph embodies a palimpsest of meanings. On the one hand, it expresses the photojournalistic

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[187] News on Sun's visit was widely reported in the revolutionary media. See for example *The True Record* 7, n.p. [5–18].

[188] See chapter six of this dissertation.

[189] One iconic image, which was later copied and distributed as a lithograph, captures Sun at the Shanghai railway station. See chapter four.

image par excellence as it witnesses the news of Sun's visit to the Ming tombs. On a secondary level, it strengthened nationalist sentiments by remarking on the foundation of a Han race-based nation and on the continuous effort of its leaders to travel and raise funds to save it.

The understanding of the camera as a scientific medium presented events as truthful facts. Chinese revolutionaries also understood photographs as scientific evidence in reference to the ideology of racial difference that supported Sun's agenda. Early revolutionaries in Europe and Japan supported such racialized understandings of Chinese society through Social Darwinism. Because the invention of race was key to revolutionary ideology and the truthful capacity of photography supported both social change and racial distinctions, the connections between these categories deserve further analysis.

The Invention of "Race"

The final section of chapter two explores the formation of national and ethnic boundaries in scientific photographs. Theories of racial development derived from Social Darwinism promoted a clear-cut distinction between human races, which became useful for shaping a modern "Chinese" identity. The idea of the "survival of the fittest" suggested that the Manchu and other minorities were weaker than the more numerous Han ethnic group, and that minorities should gradually be assimilated into a larger and more loosely defined "Chinese Race." Photography, understood as a scientific and truthful medium, perfectly fitted the aim of showing evidence for the existence of human races. What follows may appear detached from the immediacy of "photojournalism," yet the development of racial and racist photographs is helpful to fully understand the degree to which the camera was considered a scientific medium.

Throughout the late nineteenth and twentieth century, territories under colonial or semi-colonial control were forced to rethink their cultures from the perspective of the modern nation. The first step in the nation-building process demanded a clear definition of national borders. In China and Asia, porous frontiers had allowed commerce and local self-administration a certain degree of flexibility, and the establishment of strict boundaries was not necessarily a pressing issue on the Qing political agenda. With the establishment of a modern Chinese nation, clear boundaries became a pressing isuue. Visual and textual material gathered from radical periodicals and beyond shows the revolutionaries used visual comparison to define the boundaries of the republican nation. Not unlike other publications promoting Social Darwinism, Revolutionary journals arranged anthropologic studies and photographs comparatively, to highlight dissimilarities and thereby support the construction of racial difference. Such ethnographic images come coupled with maps that visualized the nation in a global context and debates on China's relationship with other states and "races." Only after establishing a preliminary conception of racial and national boundaries could the revolutionaries set the stage for the promise of the revolution and China accession to the international stage. Images that construct racial difference in the Sinophone press build an especially significant case, because they provide access to an unfamiliar level of thought, which does not entirely cohere with the information gathered from textual sources.[190]

[190] Historians and scholars of art seldom approach photographs and sketches published in the press. Historians of anarchism in China have worked with the magazines *Xin Shiji*, but to my knowledge have not paid attention to the images included in it. Furthermore, no research has been done on the illustrated *Le Monde*, which is the earliest photo-magazine in the Chinese language tightly connected with the Chinese anarchists in Paris. *The True Record*, in contrast, has received more attention in both the English and Chinese literature. Carol Lynne Waara and Chen Yang in particular have researched the magazine in their dissertations, the first within the field of art history, the second in the field of media studies. For a detailed literature review on their contribution and approach, see chapter one. Publications by Wang Cheng-hua, Liu Yu-Jen, as well as Shen Kuiyi, reevaluate Republican-period illustrated magazines through a perceptive art-historical lens. 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 Fogel (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2012); 劉宇珍 Liu Yu-Jen, 照相複製年代裡的中國美術：《神州國光集》的複製態度與文化表述 [Chinese Art in the Age of Photographic Reproduction: The Art Periodical "Shenzhou

Human Race(s) in Le Monde

During the politically unstable years at the beginning of the twentieth century, Chinese intellectuals attempted to find new ways to reform the Qing Empire. On the one hand, reformists including Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858–1927) and Liang Qichao acted both within the court as well as in exile to challenge the Qing imperial system and change it from within. The Qing Court, most prominently the Empress Dowager Cixi, obstructed their attempts at reform. On the other hand, revolutionaries believed the solution to China's problems was a violent uprising that would overthrow the ruling dynasty and establish a Republic, marking a clear-cut break with the corrupted past.

In the context of the sociopolitical struggle against Qing rule, Chinese elites appropriated a range of European scientific theories, including prominently Social Darwinism and the conception of the "survival of the fittest." Oversimplifying, the theory proposed that only the individuals which structure and behavior best fitted the environment would survive. Sociologists including Herbert Spencer translated Darwin's theory, which referred to the evolution of animal and vegetal individuals, to human groups. Yan Fu's translation of Spencer's writings in 1903 and Japanese evolutionary literature interpreted by the

Guoguangji"], *Taida Journal of Art History* 35 (2013); Paul Pickowicz, Kuiyi Shen, and Yingjin Zhang, eds., *Liangyou: Kaleidoscopic Modernity and the Shanghai Global Metropolis, 1926–1945* (Leiden: Brill, 2013). In the fields of the history of knowledge and cultural studies, Peter Burke provides an entry point to the historical value of visual material. See Burke, *Eyewitnessing*. Scholars in the field of cultural and transcultural studies have similarly accounted for the necessity of including visual materials in historical analysis. See Madeleine Herren, Martin Rüesch, Christiane Sibille, eds*., Transcultural History: Theories, Methods, Sources* (Berlin; Heidelberg: Springer, 2012), 112–115; on the use of images in historical research in China, see Christian Henriot and Wen-hsin Yeh, "Introduction" and Christian Henriot, "Wartime Refugees: Chaos, Exclusion and Indignity. Do Images Make Up for the Absence of Memory?" in *History in Images: Pictures and Public Space in Modern China*, edited by Christian Henriot and Wen-hsin Yeh (Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley, 2012), 1–11 and 17–54.

revolutionary Zhang Binglin introduced literature embedded in Social Darwinism to the Chinese context.[191]

Frank Dikötter has noted Chinese intellectuals' common practice of selectively adopting elements of the theory of natural selection to contend that endurance was based on racial competition and racial survival.[192] Reformists including Liang Qichao widely discussed issues related to the establishment and maintenance of a stable, race-based society and the potential power of this idea for strengthening the Chinese nation.[193] During his exile in Japan from 1898 onwards, Liang conceived a hybrid terminology in which the concepts of ethnicity, race, and nation partially overlapped under the umbrella term *minzuzhuyi* 民族主義 (nationalism). His theorization of the concept shifted over time; at times, he articulated the Chinese nation as bound to Han ethnicity. In other moments, he included the Qing Manchu under the umbrella of the Chinese nation based on the fact that they had long since adopted the Chinese language and Confucian social structure.[194] In contrast to the Manchu, he firmly believed the inhabitants of Mongolia, Tibet, and Xinjiang had not yet been assimilated within a broader China.[195] Closer to revolutionary thought, Zhang Binglin presented fierce anti-Manchu rhetoric and asserted the right to self-determination for Tibetans, Muslims, and Mongols. Yet, he also accepted the possibility of their incorporation into the Republic of

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[191] Yan Fu translated *The Study of Sociology* by Herbert Spencer as *Qunxue yiyan* 群學肄言 (A Study of Sociology).

[192] Literally translated as *zhogzu jingzheng* 種族競爭, and *baozhong* 保種.

[193] The group-society (qun 群) described by Liang is understood alternatively as the "Yellow race," the "Han race," or the "Chinese race." Frank Dikötter, *The Discourse of Race in Modern China* (London: Hurst and Company, 1992), 103.
About Liang's positive interpretation of racial mixing, see Edward J. M. Rhoads, *Manchus and Han: Ethnic Relations and Political Power in Late Qing and Early Republican China* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2000), 3–6.

[194] China is interchangeably called Zhongguo 中國 and Zhonghua 中華.

[195] Joseph W. Esherick, "How the Qing Became China," in *Empire to Nation: Historical Perspectives on the Making of the Modern World*, edited by Joseph W. Esherick, Hasan Kayali, and Eric van Young (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 235–6.

China.[196] Reformists such as Liang Qichao, who aimed to establish a constitutional monarchy led by the Manchu emperor, thus, promoted the conception of a multi-racial China. In contrast, revolutionary groups such as those guided by Zhang Binglin constructed racial difference to drive hatred against the Manchu and consequently promote the overthrow of the Qing dynasty.

Chinese anarchists based in France in the early twentieth century were one of the revolutionary groups that argued that Qing imperial rule and the power of the Manchu must be terminated by violent means.[197] in 1906 anarchists Li Shizeng, Wu Zhihui, Yao Hui, and Zhang Jinjiang established "The World Society," which issued *La Novaj Tempoj* and the illustrated *Le Monde*.[198] Cognizant that anarchy was not yet fully realizable in contemporary China, they endorsed the foundation of a republic as a first step towards the future development of a government-less society. Therefore, they maintained close personal relationships with Sun Yat-sen, Cai Yuanpei, and other prominent intellectuals. The connection eventually resulted in former anarchists achieving high official positions in the 1912-established republican government.

Images published in *Le Monde* elucidate how "scientific" visual material powerfully contributed to the assembly of constructed ethnic differences. Photographs made differences visible and intelligible. Labelled as a scientifically effective medium able to replicate truth, the camera became one of the instruments that, along with other anthropometric tools,

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[196]Esherick, "How the Qing Became China," 237–8.
Social Darwinism and the consequent move towards integration of minorities resonated with the historically rooted local practice of jiaohua 教化, to civilize, to indoctrinate, literally translated as "change through education." Derived from Xunzi's belief that human nature had to be trained into goodness, the concept provided a ground to the Han Chinese imposition of its cultural, political, and social conventions on subaltern ethnicities.
[197] For a comprehensive history of early Chinese anarchism and its role in the revolution, see Robert Scalapino and George T. Yu, *The Chinese Anarchist Movement* (1961; repr., Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1980); Mary Rankin, *Early Chinese Revolutionaries: Radical Intellectuals in Shanghai and Chekiang, 1902–1911* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971); and Arif Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).
[198] On the circumstances surrounding the magazine's establishment, see Chapter 1.

produced clear distinctions between human "races." For example, the article "Evolutionary Theory" (1907) in *Le Monde,* possibly by Yao Hui, Li Shizeng, or Wu Zhihui, explains how young Chinese intellectuals residing in France understood concepts of "race" and "civilization."[199] The essay presents a wide range of visual sources in support of the text, including portraits of Charles Darwin and Ernst Haeckel, a graphic on biological categories, a richly illustrated list of different species of flora and fauna, a succession of chronologically ordered human and animal skeletons and bones, as well as scientific images of human birth from cellular gestation to the development of the fetus.

Within such a lengthy and richly illustrated essay on Darwinist evolutionary theory, the text includes a discussion of the continuities and ruptures between monkeys and homo sapiens. The article suggests that the existence of non-progressed ethnicities, which retain strong commonalities with primates, supports the theory that humans descended from monkeys.[200] Those "primitive" features include hairiness and a certain degree of stupidity, visually exemplified by the man depicted on the righthand side of one telling visual representation of two individuals, listed as an Australian native (**fig. 2.17**).[201] At a visual level, comparison plays a crucial role. The "barbarian" depicted in the article features a threatening white axe, long and untidy hair, a bare chest, and dark skin, while the Chinese literatus-like figure has a clean-shaven face, wears tidy light-colored clothes that fully cover his skin, and looks directly at the camera with a friendly gaze. The visual contrast between the two photographic portraits illustrates the authors' understanding of a clear-cut distinction between "civilized" and "primitive" man in a more immediate and striking way than in the text.

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[199] "*Jinhuaxue shuo* 进化学说 [Evolutionary Theory]", *Le Monde* 1 (1907): B1–B16.

[200] *minzu* 民族 indicates ethnicity. "*Jinhuaxue shuo* 进化学说 [Evolutionary Theory]," *Le Monde* 1 (1907): B7.

[201] Shifting from the issue of race to civilization, the author states that civilization cannot be defined *a priori*, instead it only emerges from comparison.

During the late Qing and early Republican Period, the denomination Haozhou 濠州 was used in reference to Australia.

Although the reception of the image cannot be verified with circulation numbers, the comparative approach it employed was symptomatic of the early twentieth century understanding of photography as an ethnographic scientific tool. Here re-inscribed into a Sinocentric interpretation of Social Darwinist theory, photography had helped to construct and name the human races and ethnicities in the context of colonial occupation during the second half of the twentieth century. J. H. Lamprey was one of the earliest scientists to employ the camera in an ethnographic context. In 1869, he developed a system to juxtapose and measure individuals within photographic representations.[202] Silk threads were used to compose a standard grid against which the subjects could be visualized and measured.[203] The method became widespread in colonial-period research as it promised an objective base against which each race could be invented, gauged, and studied. The conception of photography as a means to measure the human race and civilizations soon outran scientific and ethnographic-oriented studies and crossed over to travel magazines and popular publications such as *Le Monde*.

Due to increasing anxiety around physical and cultural possession of the land, the late Qing and early Republican period saw a rising interest in geography and its role in defining the visual and conceptual boundaries between the races.[204] Human races acquired visibility

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[202] Christopher Pinney, *Photography and Anthropology* (London: Reaktion Books, 2011), 28–29.

[203] Each square's side was five centimeters long. See Pinney, *Photography and Anthropology,* 28–29.

[204] Remarking on the printing and use of systematized geography texts, Peter Zarrow has noted that geography as a discipline became central to the conception of China as a modern nation. One of the books associated with that rise, the *Zhongguo dili jiaokeshu* 中國地理教科書 [China Geography Textbook] compiled by Tu ji 屠寄 in 1910 and associated with Zhang Zhidong 张之洞 (1837–1909), listed seven races based on linguistic differentiation. See Peter Zarrow, *After Empire: The Conceptual Transformation of the Chinese State, 1885–1924* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 160.

Accounts published in the popular press contributed to the debate and bolstered the idea that physical geography and civilization were mutually constitutive. The essay "Relationships between Geography and Civilization," published in the *New Citizen Journal* (Xinmin congbao 新民叢報) in 1902, asserted that geography was one of the main causes for the differences in world civilizations. The author, possibly Liang Qichao, writing under the penname "New Citizen of China" (*Zhongguo zhi xinmin* 中國之新民), casually cited Guanzi and Aristotle's common argument that one must be able to feed oneself well before developing complex thought, therefore strengthening the idea that land, climate, and altitude are key to cultural development. In the second part of the

not only through the strategic use of photographs but also via the device of race-based maps.

"Evolutionary Theory" included a full-colors map of ethnic groups by the zoologist Philip

Sclater, where color-coding illustrates the origin, diffusion, and differentiation of the human

races (**fig. 2.18**).[205] On the left side of Sclater's map, a detailed diagram summarizes the

development of the myriad "human races," all descendants of the so-called savage man.[206]

Sclater theorized that the whole of humanity originated from the sunken continent of Lemuria,

located close to the Indian peninsula in the Arabian Sea or Indian Ocean.[207] The Lemuria-

centric map support the evolutionary statement that all ethnicities originated in a common

region, and therefore strengthen the magazine's call for universal unity. Nevertheless, the

map maintained that humans could be classified according to their physical features.[208] The

essay, the narrator explains that Europe was able to achieve a higher degree of civilization precisely because of its geographical features. While on the one hand Africa and Asia were troubled by earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and other natural disasters, Europe was characterized by a more stable environment that allowed it to develop efficient trade routes and to enter the "second stage" of civilization. Peripheral zones, including Spain, Portugal, and Italy, saw a stronger presence of superstition and religious thought because of their geographical position. The text reiterates the Chinese writer's anxiety about technology: advanced machines are identified as foreign imports but, at the same time, the text stresses that many of them, including most prominently gunpowder and printing, were first developed in China. See "Dili yu wenming zhi guanxi 地理與文明之關係 新民叢報 [The relation between geography and civilization]," *Xinmin congbao* 新民叢報 1 [The new citizen journal] (1902): 49–60; continued in *Xinmin Congbao* 新民叢報 2 (1902): 53–7.

[205] Zhongxi biao 種系表 [Races Table], *Le Monde* 1 (1907): B14–5. Hair color and shape assume a prominent position in the distinction of human races; a differentiation between glossy and woolly hair constitutes the first racial division. Glossy haired people are further categorized as straight haired; they are identified with the ancient Malayan people and Australians. From the Malay further descend the Mongolians and the curly haired Davidians, the Mediterraneans, and the Nubians. The other lineage developed from the savage man, the category characterized by wooly hair, further divided into "jungle-haired" and "very hairy," is mainly located in Africa and the New Zealand islands. According to the map, people of the Mongolian race inhabited most of Chinese territory, apart from the southwest occupied by Mediterranean people.

[206] One theory asserts the possibility that humanity originated in two different points: Africa, where monkeys and people had long-shaped heads, and Asia, where their skulls were flat-shaped. The other theory, first put forward by Sclater, contended humanity originated in Lemuria, which would justify the presence of lemur fossils in both Madagascar and India. *Le Monde* 1 (1907): B14.

[207] The essay describes two current scientific theories related to the origin of humanity, both still awaiting corroboration from scientific studies in "research in the comparison of races" and fossil science. The text posits two antithetical possibilities, but the visual reference gives prominence to Sclater's theory. Sclater's original map called this point "paradise," a reference omitted together with all other English geographical reference terms in the version published by Le Monde. In the Chinese-inscribed map, Lemuria's unclear location is supplemented by a question mark.

[208] Chinese scholars and politicians proposed contrasting and contradictory explanation on the origin of the human race and the Chinese race. Nevertheless, they shared the idea that Chinese people had originated in a point located in Euro-Africa, and only later migrated to China and established their power there. Conceptions of a common origin of humanity in the Middle East, from where some peoples moved eastwards in antiquity, were

choice to reproduce the diffusionist map accounts for the anarchists' tendency to focus on human geography and to erase national boundaries. Most Chinese anarchists residing in Paris were young scientists, and exercised their rhetorical and visual skills to serve both their scientific and political orientation.

Ethnographic Interests beyond the Revolutionary Discourse

European printing techniques quickly spread across the globe and, in early twentieth century Shanghai, halftone printing allowed for the rapid proliferation of illustrated magazines with photo-mechanically reproduced images. Images that projected boundaries and the existence of human races entered the public imagination after the foundation of the Republic of China. The racialization of identity relied not only on the fabrication of difference with people located outside China, but also on the distinction of a range of ethnicities within the nation. Thus, photographs of people showing different nationalities and ethnicities, as well as anthropological typological studies of their objects, formed the visual side of the on-going project of constructing, strengthening, and displaying China as a multi-ethnic nation. In the late 1900s it had been a revolutionary priority to constitute Manchu ethnicity as outside Chineseness, but by the 1910s the republican government had to nuance their former racism to include all "five races" within China to maintain their authority over

translated in Chinese as soon as the first years of the twentieth century. Liang Qichao's edited *Xin min bao* 新民報 [*New People's Journal*] published translations of the French Sinologist Terrien de Lacouperie's essays between 1903 and 1905. De Lacouperie theorized that the Europeans and Chinese had common origins in Babylonia, and Chinese ancestors had arrived and established themselves in China's Gansu region around the twenty-third century BCE. The scholar Liu Shipei 劉師培 (1884–1919) embraced the Western-origin theory to demonstrate how Han people, stronger in a Social Darwinist sense, had fought against weaker local ethnic minorities and eventually settled to live in China. For a comprehensive description of different perceptions of race, see Dikötter, *The Discourse of Race*, 61–163; Zarrow, *After Empire*, 147–180; and Sufen Sophia Lai, "Racial Discourse and Utopian Visions in Nineteenth-Century China," in *Race and Racism in Modern East Asia: Western and Eastern Constructions, Volume I,* ed. Rotem Kowner and Walter Demel (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2013), 327–349. On de Lacouperie, see Albert Etienne Jean-Baptiste Terrien de Lacouperie, *Western Origins of the Early Chinese Civilization from 2300 B.C. to 200 A.D.* (London: Asher, 1984), cited in Dikötter, *The Discourse of Race,* 119–120; see also Fan Fa-ti, "How did the Chinese Become Native?: Science and the Search for National Origins in the May Fourth Era," in *Beyond the May Fourth Paradigm: In Search of Chinese Modernity*, edited by Kai-wing Chow, Tze-ki Hon, Hung-yok Ip, and Don C. Price (Plymouth, United Kingdom: Lexington Books, 2008), 186–188.

important frontier regions in the north and west. The five races, symbolically represented in

the five colors of the republican flag, are the Han, the Manchus, the Mongols, the Hui, and

the Tibetans.

Scattered ethnographic portraits of minorities frequently appeared in the pages of

mainstream illustrated magazines distributed in the Chinese metropolis even before

European-trained students introduced structured fields of study including anthropology and

ethnography.[209] A group of six photographs printed in the popular magazine *The Eastern*

Miscellany provides an overview of the ethnic groups "found" in Mianning County, Sichuan

(**fig. 2.19**).[210] Possibly recycled from an earlier expedition, the photographs situate the

subjects on neutral ground, loosely re-purposing Lamprey's scientific vision of ethnographic

difference with a renewed attention to anthropological marks such as garments and

headdresses. Photographs of ethnic groups perceived as minorities embodied the aspiration

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[209] Although they were not systematized and assumed an ambiguous and contradictory structure, elements of racial theory and ethnographic interest towards minorities arose simultaneously with the conquest of new territories during the Qing, and later with the introduction of scattered translations of texts and images via books and illustrated magazines such as *Le Monde*.
The disciplines did not produce concrete fieldwork-based research until the 1920s with Li Ji's 李濟 Ph.D. dissertation and after Cai Yuanpei's popularization of the fields. Li Ji's dissertation was published in 1923. The Academia Sinica, founded in Nanjing in 1928, hired ethnographers Ling Chunsheng 凌純聲 (1901–1981) and Rui Yifu 芮逸夫 (1898–1991). See Gregory Eliyu Guldin, *The Saga of Anthropology in China: From Malinowski to Moscow to Mao* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1994), 31; and Wang Peng-hui, 王鵬惠, "失意的國族、詩意的民族、失憶的族/國：顯影民國時期的西南少數民族 (Re)envisioning Southwest Ethnic Minorities: Visual Images in Republican Era and their Impacts on Shad/ping Modern China, (Ph.D. Diss., National Taiwan University, 2009). In his 1924 article "On Ethnology: (Shuo minzuxue 說民族學), Cai Yuanpei reported on the German conception of anthropology as the study of humankind from the viewpoint of zoology, and its counterpart ethnology as laying emphasis on the differences and similarities of ethnic cultures. See Cai Yuanpei, *Collected Writings of Cai Yuanpei* (Hangzhou: Zhejiang Education Press, 1993); cited in Wang Mingming, "The Intermediate Circle: Anthropological Research of Minzu and the History of Civilization," *Chinese Sociology and Anthropology* 42, no. 4 (Summer 2010): 63. On the new relation to the past triggered by the birth of new disciplines of knowledge in early twentieth Century China, see Sarah E. Fraser, "Buddhist Archaeology in Republican China: A New Relationship to the Past," The Elsley Zeitlyn Lecture on Chinese Archaeology and Culture, *Proceedings of The British Academy* no. 167 (London: Oxford University Press, 2011), 155–198.
[210] "*Sichuan Mianyingxian jingnei zhi minsu* 四川冕寧縣境內之民俗 [Folklore in Mianying prefecture, Sichuan]", Dongfang zazhi 東方雜誌 [The Eastern Miscellany] 2 (1911): front matter. Two images are included in the Stafford album, accounting for their circulation at the Commercial Press. See Ershi shiji chu de Zhongguo yinxiang: yi wei Meiguo sheyingshi de jilu 20 世紀初的中國印象： 一位美国摄影师的记录 [The Origin of Modern China: Record from an American Photographer] (Shanghai: Shanghai Classics Publishing House, 2001), 24.

for a clear racial taxonomy that, by erasing individuality and transforming subjects into scientific specimens, reproduced a fundamentally colonial gaze.

Isolated artefacts, too, supported the binary narrative that distinguished between traditional and modern societies. Reproduced objects included ritual tools, musical instruments, jewelry, and clothing that were isolated visually from their context of origin and accompanied instead by explanatory captions (**fig. 2.20**). Up-to-date machines and techniques were published in the same magazine or on the same page, which worked to strengthen the contrast between a "traditional" way of life and the "modern" life of the Han community. A lack of advanced technical tools was deployed to strengthen the idea that within Chinese national boundaries different degrees of civilizations coexisted and that the Han Chinese, by assimilating other races, drove progress.

Racial differences and discrimination produced by the display of ethnographic objects emerge most prominently in revolutionary republican publications. A photograph of Tibetan jewelry published in *The True Record* provides an apparently neutral overview of earrings, bracelets, and pendants positioned against a plain background (**fig. 2.21**). The jewelry is set in an orderly fashion on a panel organized in an exhibition-like mode. Despite such an apparently neutral milieu, the attached essay provides a political and moral admonishment representative of the republican position towards ethnic minorities. After reminding the reader that the Republic of China should envision the union of the five races, it suggests that neither Tibetans nor Mongolians should attempt to take the "stupid step" of doubting the unity of the Republic under one national authority, as some "unworthy people" had dared to do.[211]

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[211] Zhenxiang Huabao 真相畫報 [The True Record] 9 (1912), n.p. [22].

The images show that ethnographic photography mostly positions its subjects on a lower level compared to the photographer. Republican publications were no exception. Images of "human types" as well as their objects, when read through a Social Darwinist optic, provided a view of comparatively backward life both in China as well as abroad, and therefore strengthened Chinese civilizational discourse. Besides providing a stereotypical vision of minorities in China, the press relied on recycled photographs of people from other Asian and Oceanic areas in which they were portrayed as traditional and backward in contrast to the civilized and tidy Chinese citizen. The striking juxtaposition of a civilized Chinese man and his "barbarian" Australian counterpart in the first part of this section illustrates the visual immediacy of this process (**fig. 2.17**).

Le Monde's circulation and influence were limited by censorship and a lack of funds, but cases from widely circulated publications show that a similar pattern emerged only a few years later in the Chinese popular press. The *Women's Eastern Times* (Funü shibao 婦女時報) reproduced numerous racializing, anthropological images.[212] Not necessarily assuming a uniform political stance, the *Women's Eastern Times* nevertheless embraced strategies devised to solidify the image of a perceived "other" both within and without the Chinese nation. The editorial choice to juxtapose an image of a Javanese and a modern Chinese wedding is an example. "Modern" becomes, in fact, a synonym for the Western style (**fig. 2.22**). In a model following the representative tactics found in *Le Monde* and in global colonial photography, nudity characterizes the uncivilized tribe, while the fully covered Chinese couple appears as the symbol of a civilized society.

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[212] In regard to the impact, readership, and topics addressed in the magazine, see Joan Judge, *Republican Lens: Gender, Visuality, and Experience in the Early Chinese Periodical Press* (Oakland, California: University of California Press), 2015.

The categorization of ethnic groups and their naming, already well-developed following the Qing conquests in Central Asia, assumed a wider scope in the early twentieth-century transcultural context of nation building.[213] Contact with other cultures in the context of the global recognition of national entities forced Chinese intellectuals to find ways to draw boundaries between themselves and others. Social Darwinism and the invention of race fit the demand. Scientific images in the popular press crystalized ideas of alterity and the existence civilization on the Chinese and the global stage by providing instantaneous visual information. Images communicated those categories through a photographic language that did not simply accompany textual accounts but performed a parallel role in an accessible and morally-loaded language. Recognized as methodologically scientific, anthropometric measurements and photographs contributed to the visualization and invention of ethnic minorities and human races.[214]

Division and Union in the Newly Established Republic

Upon the establishment of the Republic of China, revolutionaries' thought shifted from a racist conception of ethnic minorities to an inclusive attitude aiming to maintain the Qing-conquered territories as part of a multiracial Republic. The shift is especially evident in representations of the Manchu ethnicity. Principal targets of violent revolutionary action during the late Qing, the Manchu eventually became one of the five races represented in the flag of the Republic. The conceptual manipulation of Manchu ethnicity as a symbol of otherness and enmity assumed a paramount role in the formation and broadening of a

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[213] For a reconstruction of the perception of races and differences in skin color throughout Chinese history, see Don J. Wyatt, "A Certain Whiteness of Being: Chinese Perceptions of Self by the Beginning of European Contact," in *Race and Racism in Modern East Asia: Western and Eastern Constructions, Volume I,* ed. Rotem Kowner and Walter Demel (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2013), 309–326.

[214] On the museification of ethnic minorities, see Tony Bennet, *The Birth of the Museum* (London: Routledge, 1995), 109–162; and Clare Harris, *The Museum on the Roof of the World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012).

national revolutionary consciousness. Anti-Qing publications regularly reported on the Manchu's violent conquests that had destroyed Han families, cities, and communities during the seventeenth century.[215] In the context of the Republican Revolution, Sun Yat-sen himself heavily relied on racial discourse to strengthen hate against the "foreign" Manchu, who had usurped the imperial throne and placed it under foreign dominion for centuries. The iconic photograph of Sun Yat-sen visiting the Ming tombs in Nanjing fittingly embodies such racialized juxtaposition between the backward Manchu Imperial Court and the modern Han Republican leader (**fig. 2.16**).

The comparison and contrast between the attire of corrupt Qing officials and the modern military official grew into an object of criticism and parody. Intellectuals realized that Qing functionaries had shifted to the republican side not because of political agreement but as a compromise that allowed them to keep their power. A satirical sketch reiterates the conventional understanding of clothing as a marker of identity (**fig. 2.23**). Qing officials wear caps and long tunics representative of their ranks. The corresponding republicans dress in a long military coat and trilby hat. The mirror satirically interprets the historical division between the two categories of Qing officials and the republican governing elite.[216] Yet it also plays on their connection to point to the actual survival of Qing-affiliated officials within the republican intelligentsia. The mirror, deemed to be a "revealer of one's ghosts," reveals the inner hypocrisy of the two newly converted republican men. Hence, moral judgment had a complicated relationship with racial identity and affiliation with the Qing.

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[215] Peter Zarrow, *After Empire: The Conceptual Transformation of the Chinese State, 1885–1924* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 161.

[216] The same metaphor animates the cover of *The True Record*, issue 17, 1913. In the cover drawing, a gentleman wearing a cylinder hat looks at his Qing-clothed reflection in the mirror. The metaphor of the mirror as an object able to reveal one's true nature is connected with Buddhism. In order to be assigned to a category for reincarnation, the death's soul would be judged by the King of hell, who used a special mirror to see the Karma of the judged individual. Concerning the linguistic and conceptual connection between the mirror and photography, see Yi Gu, "What's in a Name? Photography and the Reinvention of Visual Truth in China, 1840–1911," *The Art Bulletin*, 95, no. 1 (2013): 120–138.

Before the overthrow of the ruling dynasty, revolutionaries asserted that the Han Chinese would only survive if they proved to be morally correct. Likewise, the Manchu would disappear precisely because of their wickedness. Such a moral understanding of natural selection is derived from the anarchist Petr Kropotkin's reading of Darwinian Theory. Unlike Huxley, who stressed the violent and cruel element involved in the struggle for existence, Kropotkin envisioned natural evolution not as a war between members of the same species but the result of mutual aid and support.[217] Pusey's study on Darwinism in China highlights that the attribution of moral superiority in addition to the physical strength to the survivor was first applied to the study of animals and only later transferred to the field of human society.[218] Moral natural selection encountered fertile terrain in Chinese anarchist and revolutionary circles because they already held to Confucius' and Mencius' interpretation of the fundamentally good nature of humans. Furthermore, a moral reading of Darwinist theory justified the assassination of the Manchu: although members of one "species" were not supposed to fight each other, the revolutionaries approved the murder of key government members in the name of universal love.[219] The Darwinist revolutionaries stated that it was precisely natural evolution that dictated revolution, the overthrow of the Manchu rulers, and their assimilation within a larger Chinese race.[220] This conception provided justification for the exercise of coercion and violence not only towards the Manchu, but also towards people living on the empire's peripheries. This tendency shifted significantly after the foundation of the Republic when politicians aspired to redirect focus towards a wider conception of the Chinese race that united Han and non-Han peoples residing in the former Qing Empire.[221]

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[217] James Reeve Pusey, *China and Charles Darwin* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), 370–433.
[218] Pusey, *China and Charles Darwin,* 370–433.
[219] Pusey, *China and Charles Darwin,* 430.
[220] Pusey, *China and Charles Darwin*, 323.
[221] The enlarged concept of the Chinese race is called Zhonghua Minzu 中華民族. See Fan Fa-ti, "How did the Chinese Become Native?," 186–188.

Regions located at the national periphery, characterized by a distinct geophysical and cultural system, were contested zones of negotiation between domestic and foreign powers. Although revolutionaries before 1911 had generally promoted the conception of emancipated nations whose boundaries would be defined by racial differences, after the fall of the Manchu rulers that conception came into conflict with practical issues of national security. A 1911 map of the five ethnicities inhabiting China reveals not only the clear-cut distinction between human races, but also the anxiety triggered by the presence of foreign powers in the borderlands. Russia, the U.K., France, and Japan, who exercised great influence in neighboring regions either through colonialism or a broader international influence, are listed immediately astride China's national borders (**fig. 2.24**).[222] A potential alliance of any of China's frontiers with the empires that controlled bordering territories would constitute a serious threat to the Chinese-speaking regions in the southeast.

The republicans' concern of losing control of peripheral zones to foreign powers is evident when one considers Mongolia's political situation around 1912. Whereas the Living Buddha, the religious-political leader of Mongolia, had agreed to cooperate with the Manchu dynasty since the establishment of the Qing Empire based on religious grounds, independentist tendencies emerged within Mongolian society after the foundation of the Han-centered Republic of China.[223] Following an alliance between Russia and Mongolia to guarantee the protection of the latter from the Chinese army, the Republic of China felt even more threatened by Russian forces and their influence on Mongolia. The Chinese intelligentsia recognized liminal areas, including Mongolia and Tibet, as important buffer zones necessary to protect the state from foreign invasions. Therefore, Sun Yat-sen and other

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[222] The four powers are listed on an early map of the Republic of China. Zhonghua Minguo wuzu yuqu tu 中華民國五族域區圖 [Map of the regions of the Republic of China inhabited by five ethnic groups], *Jun zhong baihua xuanjiangshu* 軍中白話宣講書 [Military Propaganda Pamphlet in Vernacular], issue 4 (1911): [3]. Note that the Qinghai region 青海 is not attributed any racial connotation.

[223] Both practiced tantric Buddhism. See Esherick, "How the Qing Became China," 241–243.

revolutionaries, who first tended to represent the "Han-race" as superior to people living on the borderlands and governed by religious leaders, were forced to change their attitude to avoid claims to independence. Consequently, Sun and the rest of the Revolutionary Alliance devised new political and cultural strategies to make their claims visible and convincing.

Once the republicans' political positions shift towards more inclusive ideas of nation and "race," that allowed for the assimilation of ethnic minorities, the representation of minorities in artefacts and visuals changed. One of the tactics republican revolutionaries employed to integrate other races into a larger and more loosely defined category of "Chinese" was the five colors flag, designed to represent the unity of the five established ethnic groups under the umbrella of the Chinese nation.[224] The flag became not only a ubiquitous element in ceremonial photographs, it also appeared on numerous artefacts. One jar produced for the occasion of the first anniversary of the foundation of the Republic shows the five colors flag in association with the Wuchang flag against a white ground (**fig. 2.25**).[225] The decoration features the Wuchang flag composed of eighteen stars for the eighteen provinces of China proper, which excluded all peripheral territories. Despite the design of the more comprehensive five colors flag, then, the Wuchang banner was still in use, accounting for a certain degree of flexibility in representations of national identity.[226] The ubiquitous presence of symbols of the Republic as a container of the five races in prints, photographs, and artefacts from the years 1912 and 1913 accounts for the urgency of envisioning a shift from a Han-based to a multiracial nation.

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[224] Red indicated the Han, yellow the Manchus, blue the Mongols, white the Hui or Muslims, and black the Tibetans. See Henrietta Harrison, *The Making of the Republican Citizen: Political Ceremonies and Symbols in China, 1911–1929* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 98–111.

[225] I would like to thank my colleague Feng He Schöneweiß who pointed out to me the jar's technical name is *Jiangjun Guan* 將軍罐.

[226] See Harrison, *Making of the Republican Citizen*, 98–111.

The vision of China as one of the many nations on the global stage, fighting to protect its boundaries, is particularly striking when the difference in world-vision that characterized the period before the nineteenth century is considered. Before systematic contacts and commerce with distant places became possible, Chinese cartography and literature represented China as "all-under-heaven."[227] From a universalist perspective, this conception envisioned China not as one of, or the highest of world cultures, but as the sole possessor of culture. Around the early nineteenth century, different word-views sought to locate China in a larger context. A double map dated to the nineteenth century summarizes visions of China in universalist- and relativist-oriented terms (**fig. 2.26**). On the right-hand side, the sketch offers a universalist vision of China. China stands at the center, framed by Asia, Europe, and Africa, which are all surrounded by the sea, where a myriad of other islands are marked in red. The whole is enclosed in a round-shaped piece of land.[228] On the left side, a close-up sketch of China depicts its main geographic features including rivers, mountains, seas, the Great Wall, and the vast territories connecting it to the rest of Asia. Culturalism, or the universalist understanding of Chinese culture, conformed to the intellectuals' call for the assimilation of ethnic groups, including the Manchu and other communities living on the frontiers, into the nation. Scholars including Liang Qichao exploited this idea to persuade their readers that ethnic minorities should not be guaranteed independence; instead, they should move towards integration and be kept within China's national borders.[229] Within the republican struggle to

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[227] The tianxia 天下 world vision envisioned Chinese culture as culture *per-se*.

[228] On this kind of maps see Li Jun 李軍, Kuawenhua yujing xia chaoxian "Tianxiatu" zhi zhenxing: jianlun gudai ditu yanjiu de fangfalun 跨文化語境下朝鮮《天下圖》之"真形"：兼論古代地圖研究的方法論問題 [The "True Form" of the Korean Tianxia Map in a Transcultural Context: Methodological Issues in the Study of Ancient Maps], Meishudaguan 美術大觀 12 (2020): 20–37. Concerning the relevance of visual material in the writing of Intellectual History, see Martin Hofmann, "The Persuasive Power of *Tu*: A Case Study on Commentaries to the Book of Documents," in *Powerful Arguments: Standards of Validity in Late Imperial China*, edited by Martin Hofmann, Joachim Kurtz, and Ari Daniel Levine (Leiden, Boston: BRILL, 2020), 177–233.

[229] Julia C. Schneider, *Nation and Ethnicity: Chinese Discourses on History, Historiography and Nationalism (1900–1920)* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2017), 51–58.

construct an image for their nation equal to others, a loose idea of China as culture per se legitimized a civilizational mission of assimilating ethnic minorities.

Scientific and popular photographs sources collected in Chinese journals, often arranged in a comparative way, played a central role in the formation and communication of racial and national boundaries. The information transmitted by images traveled on tracks different from those followed by textual narration, and stoke conflicting emotions such as familiarity and disgust, a sense of belonging contrasted with otherness. A loose chronological order has enhanced and emphasized the shifts in the visual representation of nation and ethnicity in the few years before and after the Republican Revolution (1907–1912). First, the idea of the survival of the fittest corroborated the natural ascendance and empowerment of the most numerous and powerful group, the Han, and the future assimilation of others. Besides, the idea that Chinese people had originated in Babylonia together with all other human "races" strengthened the intellectuals' self-confidence by denying Western claims to their inferiority as measured by "modernity." A set of ideas profoundly connected with Social Darwinism, but also partially re-proposing the conception of Han-Chinese culture as intrinsically superior, was creatively adopted by the Chinese intelligentsia, in particular by anarchists and republican revolutionaries. The idea that humanity is classified in distinct groups was manipulated to assert a clear-cut division between Han and other ethnicities living in China, especially the dominant Qing Manchu. Accordingly, revolutionary leaders stressed their Han identity via the visualization of a set of objects and traditions marked as "purely Chinese," including the Ming tomb mausoleum in Nanjing. After the establishment of the Republic in 1912, however, the republican government's goal became the accommodation of ethnic minorities within a culturally and racially marked category of Chinese people.

Cataloging and visualizing the boundaries between cultures constituted a first step towards the incorporation of those same cultures into a wider concept of "China." In other words, the production of knowledge and of scientific visual information about the frontiers of the nation and the people inhabiting them functioned as a base for circulating a renewed image of the Republic. Racial hierarchy provided one answer to the many questions triggered by the Opium Wars, the Taiping Rebellion, the Treaty Ports, and the violence that followed the Boxer Uprising. The formation of clear-cut racial and national boundaries, inscribed in a larger quest for scientifically and technically exact knowledge, provided one viable mechanism to reassert legitimacy on the periphery, project an aura of national emancipation, and convince the reader of the necessity of sustaining the republican cause.

Conclusion

The revolutionary illustrated press embodied the interconnection of science, truth, civilization, and the medium of photography in the early twentieth century. The conceptual understanding of photographs as scientific witness to and evidence of real historical facts is useful if we set aside present-day concerns about the trustworthiness of photographs. Some of the earliest Chinese photojournalistic images testify to such truth-value and to the tactical adaptation of images to revolutionary discourse. If the first section read photojournalistic images as evidence for the occurrence of a real fact, the second set of materials comprised illustrations of disgrace and drug addiction that were contrasted to the picturesque tableaus found in tourist albums or social documents in revolutionary publications. One of Sun Yat-sen's charismatic photographic portraits introduced the theme of racial discrimination within revolutionary sentiment. To fully understand the racist messages conveyed by Sun's photograph in the Ming tombs, the use of visual comparisons in Social Darwinist narratives is relevant. Therefore, the final part of chapter two analyzed the use of photographs as scientific

support for the racialized understanding of the world typical of early twentieth century China. Such photographs of races, necessarily connected with a colonialist understanding of reality, are not inscribed in the category of photojournalism highlighted in this study because they tend to reproduce "the other" as a fixed identity located in the past. Yet, images that account for the construction of racial difference are key to painting a more complete picture of the intimate connection between the camera, science, and current political thought. All the photographs addressed in this chapter showed, in different ways, that revolution was possible, real, and urgent. As such they contributed to the production and reproduction of the knowledge necessary to actualize its principles.

The following chapters are closely connected to the concepts and images discussed here. Based on an understanding of photography's use in the revolutionary narrative, chapters three and four zoom in on images of the Republican Revolution, specifically journalistic images of violence directed against human bodies (chapter three) and illustrations of partially destroyed things or remnants of the imperial past (chapter four). The use of photographs in the press shows that republican activists were aware of the power of images and used them to provoke emotional responses in their viewers. Their goal was to convert the viewer to revolutionary ideas or strengthen the resolve of those already committed to the revolutionary cause.

CHAPTER THREE

VISUAL SHOCK AND VIOLATED HUMAN BODIES

Introduction

Until the late nineteenth century, death, nudity, and physical suffering were almost totally absent from Chinese visual culture.[230] Unlike the Christian tradition, where the vision of Christ's wounds, blood, and suffering penetrated the quotidian life of most Europeans regardless of their background, images in China rarely revealed the human body in its weaknesses and imperfections. In China, these topics belonged to an individual's personal life and therefore rarely appeared in paintings and prints. Individual portraits with a clearly recognizable identity generally showed members of the court, ancestors, and, more rarely, the painter. The change in the pictorial regime that saw the distribution of images of human suffering coincided with the advent of war and destruction, as well as the introduction of new representational techniques brought through international exchange and the semi-colonial occupation initiated by the Opium Wars (1839–1842 and 1856–1860). In the context of the Opium Wars, photographs of European violence perpetrated in China and the subordination of the Chinese people circulated in the media environments of the European empires.

The British were among the first to employ shocking images of violated bodies to affirm their power over the Chinese during the wars that established the treaty ports and

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[230] Some exceptions can be discerned in pictorial representations of the Buddhist hell, where human suffering appears in pitilessly amputated bodies subjected to severe forms of punishment depending on their karma. Ancestral portraits, on the other hand, belong to a different domain. Rather than reminding the viewer of the gravity of punishment, ancestral figures serve as sites of memory. The subject is intact and usually expresses a solemn aura. Despite the post-mortem nature of such portraits, suffering and death are never overtly depicted.

transformed China into a semi-colony in the second half of the nineteenth century.[231] Later, in the context of Chinese resistance to the Euro-American powers, photographs that similarly focused on issues of death and human distress became protagonists in pre- and post-revolution publications. Images of human suffering had been used as a means of punishment, revenge, and as one of the ways foreign powers taught lessons to the poorly-armed Chinese. For example, scenes of European violence against Chinese rebels were circulated during and after the repression of the Boxer rebellion at the century's turn. In recognizing the emotional dimensions of such tragic images, republican revolutionaries inserted similar images into their narratives as hooks to resist the dominant power, which was not only the foreign powers but, even more prominently, the Qing dynasty.[232] In other words, within the context of resistance to global imperialism and the Qing, republicans consciously used the camera as a tactic to further their political agenda.

It is natural then to ask: what kind of images did revolutionary journalists strategically use to shock their readers and convince them of the rightness of revolution? Who were the victims of violence during the 1911 Revolution? What kind of emotions did the editors and photographers aim to stimulate in their audience? Recent research at the intersection of photo-history and the history of emotions provides some grounds for studying audience reactions to visual materials. In his study of the circulation of Che Guevara's dead body's image, John Berger has pointed to the power of post-mortem photographic portraits in calls

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[231] China was depicted as a weak and subordinated subject, and identities such as the coolie were preferred. See Fraser, "Chinese as Subject," See also Wu Hung, "Photography's Subjugation of China."

[232] Foreign photographers in the nineteenth and early twentieth century regularly captured images of violence, destruction, and social unrest. Photographs include coolies, public beheadings, ruins of destroyed buildings, sick Chinese citizens, and women with bound feet. Some of the most humiliating images in the Chinese context were produced during the campaign to suppress the Boxer Rebellion at the dawn of the twentieth century. An army composed drawn from the eight global powers entered China and occupied Beijing to punish the insurrectionary population and, more generally, the Chinese community. Consequently, the widespread circulation of subjects associated with defeat and physical fragility produced the image of a feeble and sick China on the international stage, especially when photographs referred to diseases associated with Asia. See Larissa N Heinrich, *The Afterlife of Images: Translating the Pathological Body Between China and the West* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2008).

for social reaction and change.[233] Susan Sontag, on the other hand, questioned the power of

photographs to trigger change and the assumption of the viewer's moral responsibility.[234] She

has stressed the flexibility of images of suffering and their synergy with captions, which are

paramount for clarifying the intended meaning for the reader and raise different feelings such

as indignation, disgust, surprise, approval, and sympathy.[235] The affective power of images of

war and violence, therefore, is ambiguous. They can be a call for peace or a demand for

revenge. William Reddy, writing at the intersection of the history of emotions and the French

revolution (whose dynamics resonate with the use of images in China's 1911 revolution), has

argued that novels, paintings, theatre, and other cultural artifacts can be best understood as

"emotive rehearsals" through which the revolutionaries trained their feelings of benevolence

and nurtured their utopian ideals.[236] In East Asian photography, Thy Phu has emphasized the

productivity of a renewed attention to emotions in analyses of Asian photographs.[237]

This chapter builds on these scholars' attention to the representation of the pain of

others, the role of emotions in the making of revolutions, and the intersection of emotions and

Asian photography. I extend their points by investigating Chinese revolutionary artists' use of

images of suffering and violence. Section one looks at the strategic use of depictions of death

and nudity, specifically in the context of representations of political assassinations. The

second part questions why women are absent from visual representations of suffering during

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[233] John Berger, *Understanding A Photograph*, ed. Geoff Dyer (New York: Aperture, 2013), 3–16. Cited in Jane Tormey, "Presenting the Unpresentable: Confrontation and Circumvention," in *The Routledge Companion to Photography Theory* (London and New York: Routledge, 2020), 21–36.
[234] Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*.
[235] Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, 11–2.
[236] William E. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), esp. 258.
[237] By recognizing the paramount role of cultural context in shaping emotions, recent scholarship has underscored photography's relevance for establishing visual conventions and the political purposes they serve. See Elspeth H. Brown and Thy Phu, eds., *Feeling Photography* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014); and Thy Phu, Elspeth H. Brown, and Andrea Noble, "Feeling in Photography, the Affective Turn, and the History of Emotions," in *The Routledge Companion to Photography Theory* (London and New York: Routledge, 2020), ed. by Thy Phu, Elspehth H. Brown, and Andrea Noble, 21–36.

the revolution. In both sections, I show that revolutionary photographers relied on the camera, a colonial medium, yet suppressed photography's colonial gaze and picturesque idealizations to reinvest the medium with an idealized sense of national renaissance.[238] Studying visual representations of death and nudity, and their circumscription, allows me to recover the editors and artists' intent in using depictions of violence to provoke an emotional response. Emotional reactions to images of pain included disgust, sorrow, and pathos, among others, which in turn directed the viewer's sympathy to the cause of the Republican Revolution.

The Revolution of Death and Nudity

Image-making does not occur in a vacuum. Sociopolitical revolution and visual revolution unfold simultaneously and mutually constitute each other, especially in the case of late nineteenth and early twentieth century China. As shown in previous chapters, the widespread distribution of revolutionary pamphlets, posters, and journals accompanied violent uprisings. Letterpress and halftone printing widened magazines and newspapers' ability to publish texts and images.[239] Such textual and visual materials expanded access to revolutionary principles and republican knowledge. [240] Images informed fellow Chinese readers of new possibilities, and provided them with hopes for a different, utopian future in which their roles would shift from subjects of dynastic rule to rightful citizens of a republic. Limited literacy prevented most of the population from fully accessing magazines. [241] In

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[238] For an in-depth discussion on the possibility (or rather impossibility) of using the term "Renaissance" to define a period in Chinese history, see Barbara Mittler and Thomas Maissen, *Why China Did Not Have a Renaissance - and Why That Matters: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue* (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2020).

[239] Christopher A. Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1876–1937* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004).

[240] For a discussion of Benedict Anderson's idea of "Imagined Communities" and the relevance of the press in producing the Chinese Nation see chapter 1.

[241] Bastid cites S. W. Williams, *The Middle Kingdom* (1: 544), and reports his estimate regarding literacy in the first six years of the twentieth century. Though most of the population was able to read at least a few basic characters, access to written culture was reserved to only 6 to 7 percent of the population. See Marianne Bastid, *Educational Reform in Early Twentieth-Century China*, trans. Paul J. Bailey (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese

contrast, images provided an accessible means to introduce a broader public to innovative ideas, especially when placed in open spaces. For example, magazines were found in public reading rooms and pasted as posters on the city's walls (**fig. 1.5–1.6**). On the one hand, photographs and paintings modeled a promise of change by emphasizing the revolution as a subject matter. On the other hand, photographs revolutionized their own genre conventions by depicting alternative frames and subjects, most prominently a new interest in depictions of human suffering.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the desire to document the painful calamities of war had already emerged in different parts of the world.[242] In Asia, Japan was a pioneer in the use of this kind of photography. In 1884–1885 during the first Sino-Japanese War, and in 1904–1905 during the Russo-Japanese War, the Japanese army sent photographers to the front to communicate wartime news and celebrate Japanese victories. Visual representations published in the press and in photobooks bolstered national sentiment and affirmed Japan's on emergence as an international power. *A photographic-album of the Japan-China War* (Nisshin Sensō shashinzu 日清戰爭寫眞圖) was one example of the Japanese government's propagandistic use of photographs.[243] *The Russo-Japanese War Photographic pictorial*

Studies, the University of Michigan, 1988), 32. Bastid further points out that between 1905 and 1909, local gentry established short-term literacy schools that offered classes during the evening or for a half-day (Bastid, 80). After the revolution, Cai Yuanpei established an educational system with five educational sectors including military education, practical training, civic morality, the teaching of an independent point of view, and aesthetic education (Bastid, 85). On education and literacy, and the role journalism played in their transformation in early twentieth century China, see also See Paul J. Bailey, *Reform the People: Changing Attitudes Towards Popular Education in Early 20th Century China* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990); and Natascha Gentz (Vittinghoff), *Die Anfänge des Journalismus in China (1860–1911)* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002).

[242] Susan Sontag has remarked that the moral necessity of depicting disasters and wars in photography reached a first peak in photographs of the American Civil War (1861–1865). Mathew Brady, Alexander Gardner, and Timothy O'Sullivan created the most widely circulated images of this conflict. See Sontag, *Regarding*, 46–7.

[243] Illustrated magazines and photobooks of Japan's military victories against China and Russia were key to the formation of a national consciousness and pride. Japan had not only defeated its larger sister China, but also a Western power. Therefore, it was nationally and internationally recognized that Japan should have a diplomatic seat on par with the Euro-American nations and build a colonial empire. Exhibitions too contributed to the celebratory efforts of the Japanese nation. For example, in 1905 the Japanese government held exhibitions in public parks to commemorate victory in the Russo-Japanese War. See Anne Wilkes Tucker, Dana Friis-Hansen, Kaneko Ryūichi, and Takeba Joe, *The History of Japanese Photography* (New Haven and London: Yale

(Nichiro Sensō shashin gahō 日露戰爭寫真畫報) and *A True Record of the Russo-Japanese war* (Nichiro sensō jikki 日露戰爭實記) also sought to use images to project positive and victorious emotions around Japan's military victories.[244]

The Japanese press' widespread use of celebratory and propagandistic images inspired Gao Jianfu and Chen Shuren, editors of *The True Record*, to adopt similar tactics to express and actualize their political ideals. [245] Gao and Chen experienced such enthusiastic atmosphere of national self-celebration during their studies in Japan. In a common effort with Gao Qifeng and Sun Yat-sen, they researched ways to maximize and politicize images of violence to support the revolutionary cause.[246] Based on successful Japanese war magazines, they embraced the idea of moving war photographs from private photographic albums into the public sphere. Such a shift in space and distribution changed the images' intended viewer from the individual to the community and magnified their communicative and political power.[247]

Direct violence against the Qing dynasty and the siege of their garrisons were key to realizing the long anticipated Chinese Revolution. The 10 October 1911 Wuchang uprising was followed by unrest in many other Chinese cities. Hangzhou, Guangzhou, Nanjing, and

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University Press, 2003), 317. One key figure in the development and diffusion of propaganda photography and photographic technologies in Japan was Ogawa Kazumasa (1860–1929). After studying photography in Boston between 1884 and 1886, he became a photography instructor for the Japanese army in 1886 and produced the album, *A photographic album of the Japan-China war* (Tōkyō: Hakubundō, 1894.) See Tucker, *The History of Japanese Photography,* 34. Concerning Kazumasa's war albums, see Kelly M. McCormick, "Ogawa Kazumasa and the Halftone Photograph: Japanese War Albums at the Turn of the Twentieth Century," *Trans-Asia Photography Review* 7, no. 2 (Spring 2017)http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.7977573.0007.201   accessed March 2021.

[244] See also chapter two.

[245] Ralph Croizer. *Art and Revolution in Modern China: The Lingnan (Cantonese) School of Painting*, *1906–1951* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 26.

[246] The use of representations of violence to stoke an emotional response that would lead to political action emerged in the late Qing period and characterized much Nationalist and Communist propaganda in the years to follow.

[247] Nineteenth-century magazines represented armed conflicts with drawings reproduced via lithography. Yet photographs were more convincing as they provided the audience with the sensation of being able to see the news as an immediate witness.

Xi'an all declared their independence from the Manchu before the end of 1911. The revolutionaries moved quickly and violently: they destroyed Qing garrisons and indiscriminately executed ethnic Manchu.[248] Violent uprising was not exclusively framed as necessary steps towards the reform of the Chinese political administration. Brutality also became a central focal point of revolutionary propaganda, fomenting hate against the Manchu and, more broadly, against the Chinese past.

Revolutionaries relied on the visual immediacy of photographs to depict human pain and death. Images of brutality and the destruction of war, found in the private albums of foreign collectors and photographers based in China between 1840 and 1890, barely circulated in the public sphere before the end of the nineteenth century. Open representations of violated bodies aimed to surprise and shock their spectators, inspire pathos, and convince them to support revolutionary ideals. The introduction has mentioned the exemplary case of writer Lu Xun, who changed his mind about his role in society when he saw a projected image of an execution, changing his focus from medical studies to literary engagement.[249] Even more accessible than the lantern slides that inspired Lu Xun, media including revolutionary pamphlets, posters, and magazines published an extensive volume of images of death, destruction, and pain in an effort to provoke the reader's emotional involvement.

A 1911 poster displays the revolutionary uprising in Hankou (**fig. 3.1**). The chromolithographic print, printed in Tokyo and distributed by a Tianjin shop in the Japanese concession, depicts a dead soldier and a wounded comrade in its foreground, with a vivid representation of a fierce confrontation between the republicans and the Qing army in the middle-ground. The dramatic scene, which follows the Japanese tradition of colorful and

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[248] Edward J. M. Rhoads, *Manchus and Han: Ethnic Relations and Political Power in Late Qing and Early Republican China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000), 187–205.
[249] See also Introduction.

vivid war representations, is complemented by fire and smoke swirling in the background. Yuan Shikai and Li Yuanhong are shown at the top right and left of the print, respectively, although the unfaithful representation of Li suggests the artist did not have his photograph at hand. On the right two Qing soldiers ride horses, surrounded on four sides by the republican army. The scenic arrangement communicates to the republican reader not simply the idea of a brutal fight but also the positive message of victory. The Qing soldier in the foreground faces a mass of oncoming republicans, while the second has already been hit, his cap knocked off from the blow. The two figures are about to fall under republican control, which in turn presents to the onlooker the abruptness and possibility of sudden, radical political change after almost three hundred years of Qing rule.

Press photographs, more ruthlessly real and less retouched than lithographs, depicted murdered individuals for a range of reasons.[250] Favorite subjects in the revolutionary press included not only assassinated Qing officials but also murdered revolutionaries, whose images were used to strengthen the Revolutionary Alliance's hierarchical order and incite sentiment against the Qing.[251] When the graphics did not explicitly identify the mistreated body, captions become key to uncovering different meanings attached to pictorially similar

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[250] For a theoretical grounding, see Carlo Ginzburg, "From Aby Warburg to E. H. Gombrich: A Problem of Method," in *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1989), cited in Christopher Pinney and Nicolas Peterson, eds., *Photography's Other Histories* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 3.

[251] Photographs of public beheadings had constituted an admonishment to the enemy since the very first years of the camera's presence in China during the semi-colonial occupation of the treaty ports. Sarah E. Fraser has shown that the public execution of enemies constituted an established practice during the conquest of Beijing by foreign forces after the Boxer Rebellion. The atrocious practice did not only carried out the death sentence but also provided an admonition to onlookers. See Fraser, "Chinese as Subject," 101–2. Revolutionary forces adopted the practice of photographing fierce executions for their own aims. During the days following the Wuchang revolution, when anti-Manchu sentiment reached its apex, a series of attacks against Qing representatives and ethnic Manchus alike were allowed. Horrible displays of beheaded republicans appear, for example, in the Frances E. Stafford Collection at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University: Francis E. Stafford photographs – Works – Digital Collections (hoover.org); in the Stanley Wyatt-Smith collection, digitalized by "Historical Photographs of China" at the University of Bristol: Wyatt-Smith, Stanley Collection | Historical Photographs of China (hpcbristol.net) (both accessed 24.06.2022); and in the collection of photographs on the 1911 Revolution at the British Library.

images.[252] A comparison between two graphically similar but semantically different images can clarify this point. Two post-mortem portraits published by *The True Record* show well-dressed men resting in coffins with hands folded over their abdomen (**figs. 3.2–3.3**). In both images, the coffin is inclined in order to allow the camera a full view. The first image provides information on the location, namely Guanyin hill in Canton. In contrast, the second image omits geographical details and shifts focus to human pain by providing a full view of the man's wounded body and the despair of a kneeling woman. The immobile figures were republican revolutionaries Huang Shisong 黃世頌 (?–1912?) and Zhang Zhenwu 張振武 (1877–1912).

Yet within the context of the revolutionary journal the meaning of their deaths radically diverges. Huang's death is described as a just punishment (*yifa* 伏法) following his "disobedience to orders from above" and arrogation of "provisions and funds due to the revolutionary forces."[253] In other words, Huang's corpse bears witness to his corruption and insubordination, his dead body a warning to the reader to be obedient to orders coming from above and to ensure the honest distribution of resources. In contrast to the violence meted out to Huang, justified because the alliance's leadership had to make an example and teach a lesson to the reader, the post-mortem portrait of revolutionary Zhang Zhengwu emphasizes pain and injustice. A woman cries for the dead, which contributes to staging a more human environment and creating empathy between the viewer and the tragic scene. Vice president Li Yuanhong planned Zhang's assassination in August 1912 with approval from Yuan Shikai, provisional president since March. His murder infuriated fellow revolutionaries, including the

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[252] As Susan Sontag has perceptively observed, identity is paramount to the militant and captions are the only key to falsifying or verifying it. See Sontag, *Regarding*, 9.

[253] Chief of the General Affairs Department of the National Army, Huang Shisong was one of the three revolutionaries condemned for insubordination by the leadership of the Revolutionary Alliance in this occasion. Zhenxiang Huabao 真相畫報 [The True Record] 1 (1912): n.p. [31].

editors of *The True Record*, who believed Zhang's death represented a shameful scandal the entire country should abhor.[254]

Despite the close parallels in their visual compositions, the two photographs carry opposed meanings, already hinted at in the ways in which the portraits were staged and that emerge most clearly in the paratext, the captions and essays attached to the images. Captions reveal that the Chinese revolutionary who edited the essay, possibly Gao Qifeng, used comparable depictions although he intended to nurture diametrically opposed emotions. Language plays a key role in adding an emotional or educative tone to visually similar depictions. The essay that follows Zhang's photograph describes in detail the circumstances of his death. In a moment of social instability following the foundation of the Republic, "while the people's hearth still felt uncertain," Chinese citizens "have been shocked by such an event."[255] The whole nation should therefore "feel astonished and sympathize with the victim," and agree that his "death is out of any doubt illegal."[256] The written account of Zhang's assassination emphasizes its unlawfulness and calls for the viewer's astonishment. Despite the analogous framing features, Huang and Zhang's deaths embody divergent meanings and demand dissimilar emotional responses. Thus, images of death and human suffering served the revolutionary cause as emblems of revolutionary order or indictments of undeserved violence.

The death of their fellow revolutionary was condemned in different media, both photographs and drawings, to magnify a sense of reality and ceremonial ritual respectively. Zhang's execution is the topic of one additional lithograph-based reportage where language

[254] *The True Record* 8 (1912): n.p. [6].
[255] *The True Record* 8: n.p. [6].
[256] *The True Record* 8: n.p. [6].

soaked in pain and suffering is marshaled to convey a sense of injustice.[257] The illustration captures a key moment in the craft of revolutionary propaganda: the making of Zhang's post-mortem photographic portrait (**fig. 3.4**). In the line drawing, Zhang's wife and other crying figures kneel desperately, while one standing man hides his mouth in astonishment. Where the photojournalistic image provides a close-up of the body, the drawing reconstructs the lamentations for Zhang's death and the practice of post-mortem portrait making. The photograph functions as a form of documentation, while the drawing embodies a dramatic reconstruction of the performance of mourning. The inscription, integrated into the image in a fashion derived from Chinese painting as well as early graphic news, describes the situation: "When they opened the coffin to take a photograph, Zhang's eyeballs were protruding out of his face, his intestines leaking out of his abdomen. It looked like the gunshot was not enough to wound him to death, so he was further strangled with a rope."[258] In contrast to the description of Huang Shisong's fair punishment for insubordination in which his pain goes unmentioned, in the description of Zhang's death the author chose violent language to provide a dramatic description of his torture and resistance. Image and text incite the reader's indignation and underscore the need to undertake a trial before the execution.

A connected reading of captions and photographs translates the images introduced in this section from the level of documentation to one concerning the readers' own experiences, directing their feelings and demanding their emotional participation. Suffering and death were not the only subjects for dramatic revolutionary imagery. An association between the revolutionary fight and the nude body was also deployed in revolutionary photojournalism.

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[257] Lithography is not as shocking as photography yet it allows the artist greater control over the image. Hand-written colophons conform to a tradition of news-lithography that dates back to the *Dianshizhai pictorial* (1884-1898), and graphically connected news-images to common aesthetic practices used for Chinese paintings. Suffering was communicated in the top section of the page showing Zhang's death too, which shows Zhang tied to a pole under torture. See *The True Record* 7 (1912): n.p. [35].

[258] *The True Record* 7 (1912): n.p. [35].

Nudity contributed to the shock produced by photographs of violence. Naked or partially-uncovered bodies are extremely rare in the history of Chinese painting and visual culture. [259] Yet images of the uncovered bodies of male revolutionaries appeared in combination with depictions suffering to communicate a specific propagandistic aim in the 1910s. The multiple post-mortem portraits of Song Jiaoren, leader of the newly established Nationalist Party, provide a central example of depictions of the full display of the pain and death suffered by assassinated politicians. One memorial photograph published in *The True Record* shows Song as he lies half-naked in bed after a chirurgical operation in an attempt to save his life (**fig. 3.5**). The image openly shows Song's naked body and the wound that caused his death. The truculent photo did not function simply as a form of documentation; rather, it aimed to shock the viewer.[260] The straightforward display of a man's nudity and suffering, which had no precedent in Chinese visual culture, must have had an astonishing effect on contemporaneous viewers. Close-up images of the wounded body are virtually absent from Chinese iconography before the appearance of Song's portrait. Imported or locally produced Christian icons were the sole medium in which human suffering and the naked body were openly shown.[261] The proximity of the camera to the body invites onlookers to participate in the tragic scene, sympathize with the victim, and direct their anger towards Yuan Shikai.

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[259] Some exceptions can be detected in Chinese art and visual culture as far as violence and nudity are concerned, although these two remain largely unrelated. As noted, violence appears in representations of the Buddhist Hell as well as in figurations of Buddhist tales. On the other hand, nudity or the partial visibility of women's bodies appear in so called *meirenhua*, where women reveal part of their bodies as a sensual gesture. See James Cahill, *Pictures for Use and Pleasure: Vernacular Painting in High Qing China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

[260] Gu Zheng has shown that revolutionaries invited professional photographers from commercial studios to document their news and make propaganda photographs, including the post-mortem portraits of Song Jiaoren. Lecture "The Body as a Means for Political Mobilization: Portrait Photo between Journalism and Propaganda and Minli Bao's Coverage of the Assassination of Song Jiaoren," (Heidelberg University, CATS, Institute of East Asian Art History, 11 July 2019).

[261] Prof. Wu Hung has suggested the depiction of the wound in Song's post-mortem portrait can be connected to images of Jesus. The connection is further supported by the belief of the Song family in Christianism. Conversation during the Uchicago/Getty postdoctoral workshop, Beijing, August 2023.

A gifted republican official close to Sun Yat-sen and the Revolutionary Alliance, Song was assassinated in March 1913.[262] *The True Record* extensively reported on Song's death, published photographs of his wounded body, and published articles criticizing those behind his assassination. The journal even dared to point to provisional president Yuan Shikai as the primary perpetrator, which eventually led to the journal's closure.[263] In a tone comparable to *The True Record*, the English-language journal *The China Republican* provided a detailed report on the letters in which the attack on Song was arranged, and condemned Yuan Shikai: "It is a humiliating spectacle to see this abject cowardice being displayed and a palpable attempt made to shirk a great responsibility because, forsooth, the fortunes of one or two men are trembling in the balance. No matter how high the pedestal on which the murderer of Mr. Sung is perched, it should not make it possible for him to be out of the reach of justice."[264] A similar sense of indignation towards Yuan Shikai animated political debate in republican circles with both a Chinese and foreign background.

Still, the question remains: why were photojournalistic images of suffering an especially effective propaganda tools compared to drawings? A comparison between the photograph and the lithographic rendering of Song Jiaoren provides some clues. Since no camera was present at the crime scene, a photograph of the murder does not exist, and photographs of the event were limited to representations of Song's hospitalization. Nevertheless, one print reconstructed the moment immediately after the attack on Song at the Shanghai railway station (**fig. 3.6**). In contrast to the limited range of action allowed by the

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[262] Wounded in the Shanghai railway station on March 20th, Song Jiaoren died two days later in hospital.
[263] "The Great Murder Case of Mr. Süng Kiao Yan," *The True Record* 14 (1913): n.p. [4]. In his lecture "The Body as a Means for Political Mobilization: Portrait Photo Between Journalism and Propaganda and *Minli Bao*'s Coverage of the Assassination of Song Jiaoren," (Heidelberg University, CATS, 11 July 2019) Prof. Gu Zheng presented his extensive research on the circulation of Song Jiaoren's post-mortem photographic portraits in the press. He accurately described the process behind the shooting of post-mortem portraits of the leader and traced down their publication in the *Minlibao* and *Song Yufu* (volume one).
[264] "A Review of the Sung Documents," *The China Republican*, May 13th, 1913 n.p. column 2, Joshua B. Powers Subject file: China, Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

indexical medium of photography, the illustrator's fantasy is free to reconstruct the scene and conceive a journalistic image of a fact that he has not witnessed.[265] Taking advantage of such freedom, the drawer enriches the scene with compelling details such as a group of people helping Song to sit on a bench and the armed assassin running off to the left. Journalistic drawings of this kind, which had characterized early Chinese illustrated such as the *Dianshizhai Huabao*, provided rich content but were, nonetheless, less effective in conveying the reality effect guaranteed by the camera. Understood to be a scientific instrument for capturing the real in 1910s China, photography was more successful in producing a sudden awareness of a fact and a shock.[266] Unlike drawing, photography communicates an immediate sense of being able to witness the other's pain. Photographs, in other words, transmit to the reader a sensation of truth, and therefore assume an increased value as a propaganda medium.

To briefly summarize the argument of this section, revolutionary editors relied on the intersection of photography and violence in revolutionary images to openly display unexpected subjects, with the aim of inciting emotional reactions in their readers. Images of murdered revolutionaries were circulated as calls for indignation or signifiers of revolutionary pathos. The open display of death, which had been almost taboo in Chinese visual culture until the late nineteenth century, was accompanied by nudity and depictions of suffering to magnify the shock effect of photographs. Proceeding form representations of violence inflicted on the male human body to displays of violence against female revolutionaries, the next section discusses the virtual absence of images of suffering women from revolutionary visual narratives.

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[265] The drawing accurately describes the train station. Thus, the artist must either have visited the crime scene or copied it from a photograph. In contrast to the image published in *The True Record*, the lithograph employs a wider angle that interposes a greater distance between the viewer and the displayed violence.

[266] For the connection between photography and truth, see chapter two.

Women's Unviolated Bodies

The first part of this chapter has shown that images of pain and death were instrumental for constructing a revolutionary conscience. Yet, a close look at the bodies depicted in the images in revolutionary publications reveals a gender gap, with women's bodies totally absent. I contend that for editors of *The True Record* such as Gao Qifeng physical suffering and death derived from political engagement were acceptable only when the subject in pain was a man. Although it is impossible to establish if the selection of male subjects was based on Gao's editorial decisions or the photographer's selection, the collection of images found in *The True Record* are symptomatic of a larger tendency to represent the martyred bodies of men rather than women. That is to say, the physical suffering of revolutionary woman, or more generally the suffering of women of any political affiliation, was erased from visual accounts. Nudity, which characterized political men's post-mortem portraits, was totally absent for women. When revolutionary and progressive publications published accounts on dead male revolutionaries, they purposefully expressed their critical feelings in both images and text (**figs. 3.1–3.5**). On the contrary, women's agony was exclusively confined to the text.[267] Women were seldom depicted in physical suffering.

Not only the death, nudity, physical pain, and blood of women were omitted from images of war or revolution. Even their emotional pain was hidden behind a veil of solemnity. The photograph of revolutionary Zhang Zhengwu addressed above provides a relevant starting point (**fig. 3.3**). A black spot covers the despairing widow Lu Wen, who is shown in mourning as she stands beside her husband's corpse. Her pain is purposely obscured, which transforms her appearance into an unclear mass. Considering that the public display of human

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[267] The physical discomfort of a woman is at times evoked in literature, and captions, yet it is not explicitly displayed in images that primarily relate pain, death, and violence – these are indicated exclusively by implication.

suffering played a role in revolutionary visual material, why was Lu Wen's pain manually erased from the surface? Observation of a wider group of images of revolutionary women suggests this omission of women's pain was not an isolated case. Women's suffering associated with the revolutionary fight, especially martyr heroes, was not displayed in revolutionary pictorials. These considerations lead to the following questions: why were women excluded from visual narratives of war-induced suffering? Furthermore, why did photographers and editors display men's pain and partial nakedness, whereas the visual exposition of women feeling similar emotions was not externalized?[268]

This section reads revolutionary visual culture through the lens of gender. Investigating the intersection of revolution and photography shows that women participated in the revolution, yet their suffering and death were absent from visual accounts. Naturally, then, gender becomes useful as an analytical category.[269] The questions addressed in this section follow my overarching assumption that images are not solely illustrations of textual accounts. Rather, when approached as valuable sources with their own independent voice, photographs reveal parallel histories.

In this section, I show that, while shocking, presenting a dead, partially naked man in the press was socially acceptable but showing dead or wounded women was impossible. Revolutionary women appear in the visual sphere, but their bodies are never violated. Rather, they are idealized as embodiments of the intact nation. I develop my argument as follows: first, I look at the tactics revolutionary movements used to represent and idealize women who

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[268] Griselda Pollock has pointed to gender's importance in the construction of iconic images of war. In reference to images of Nazi executions during the Holocaust, she assumes a Freudian-Warburgian perspective that discerns a partial overlapping of eroticism and death in images of women about to die. See Griselda Pollock, "Photographing Atrocity: Becoming Iconic?," in *Picturing Atrocity: Photography in Crisis*, eds. Geoffrey Batchen, Mick Gidley, Nancy K. Miller, and Jay Prosser (London: Reaktion Books, 2012), 64–78. Unlike the twentieth century European context, wounded and dying women are nearly absent from narratives of the Chinese Revolution, and their agency is replaced with less shocking signs such as their tombs or weapons.
[269] Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (Dec. 1986): 1053–75.

had suffered and died for revolutionary ideals, most prominently Qiu Jin. I then consider the phenomenon of crossdressing to ask whether women had to visually become men to embody the fight for the good of the nation. Finally, I propose that female revolutionaries did not necessarily have recourse to manly clothing to become (actively or passively) symbols of the new nation. Instead, they relied on tactics that maintained their femininity but imbued it with a militant dimension. They posed with blades, swords, and horses, which inscribed them into the violent narrative presupposed by the revolutionary uprising without revealing their physical suffering, therefore preserving their images' social acceptability.

Images of Violence without Suffering

Strong hopes for gender equality emerged in China during the first decade of the twentieth century.[270] Extensive educational reforms allowed women to attend public schools.[271] Progressive schools such as the Datong School (*Datong xuetang* 大通學堂) in Shaoqing, directed by Qiu Jin and opened in 1905, promoted a mixed education that aimed to strengthen female citizens' intellects and bodies.[272] Qiu Jin's school educated young women in military practice, foreign languages, and other newly introduced disciplines such as geography and history. Further, the school functioned as an effective propagator of anti-Qing and anti-Manchu sentiments. It was on precisely these grounds that the Qing military closed it in 1907 and summarily executed many of its students, events that in turn led to Qiu's suicide. Although the Datong School's history was short, it provided an influential example for other didactic institutions in the country. Among them was the Patriotic Girls' School

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[270] In the same period, depictions of athletic women's bodies appeared in popular visual culture. Scenes of women practicing sports and training in fighting techniques appear sporadically in the 1910s press and became quotidian by the 1920s.

[271] Paul J. Bailey, *Gender and Education in China: Gender Discourses and Women's Schooling in the Early Twentieth Century* (London: Routledge, 2007).

[272] Xu Xilin 徐錫麟 (1873–1907) established the school in Shaoxing, Guangdong, in 1905.

(*Aiguo nü xuexiao* 愛國女學校), which was supported by the future Minister of Culture Cai Yuanpei and one of the co-founders of the Parisian anarchist *World Society*, Wu Zhihui.[273] Such institutions' pedagogies proposed that the education of women should not exclusively focus on the training of mothers, sisters, and daughters as household administrators. In contrast, they argued that education should shape a woman's independence based on physical strength, unbound feet, and individual self-determination. Yet, such determination, even when paired with military engagement and participation in the revolutionary struggle, should never come at the expense of women's established social roles and feminine appearance.[274]

Women's education was also involved in women's militarization. The active part women played in the making of the Republican Revolution has received scholarly attention in Louise Edwards' research on Chinese women's suffrage movements. She points out that activist women joined the organization with the primary intent of defeating the Manchu and establishing a Republic.[275] Edwards' scholarship has brought to light the activities and achievements of the women revolutionaries. He Xiangning 何香凝 (1878–1972), for example, hosted political debates in her Tokyo house together with her husband Liao Zhongkai 廖仲愷 (1877–1925). Fang Junying 方君瑛 (1884–1923) joined the Revolutionary Alliance in 1905 and in 1907 became the head of the alliance's assassination section, in charge of organizing armed attacks against Qing officials.[276] Other militants set up women's armies. Wu Shuqing (1892–?) led the women's revolutionary army in joining the Republican Revolution and participated in the fight against the Manchu in Hankou and Nanjing. Following the first

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[273] Bailey, *Gender and Education in China,* 25.

[274] Bailey has called this phenomenon "Modernizing conservatism." See Bailey, *Gender and Education in China,* 8.

[275] Edwards estimates approximately 100 women composed the group. Besides the women mentioned in the text, other military-engaged women activists included Yin Weijun (1894–1919 or 1920) and her sister Yin Ruizhi (1890–1948). Louise Edwards, *Gender, Politics, and Democracy: Women's Suffrage in China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 45–48.

[276] Edwards, *Gender, Politics, and Democracy*, 46–7.

successes in the south, more women joined newly formed military sections seeking to liberate the rest of China from Qing rule.

Images of strong revolutionary women were created and circulated to support the narrative of emancipated and militarily-engaged women. A 1911 Tokyo-produced lithographic print shows the female faction's role in the revolutionary struggle in Nanjing. The "battalion prepared to die" (*juesi dui* 決死隊) appears along its male counterpart, the "battalion daring to die" (*gansi dui* 敢死隊) (**fig. 3.7**).[277] A modified version of the Wuchang flag and white armbands mark the soldiers' republican identity. At the center of the composition a dead Qing soldier is slumped over a cannon and, above him in the upper part of a triangle described by the flag's pole and one side of the soldier's body, is the corpse of a male republican soldier. The women engage in a fierce fight against Qing military forces, whose yellow dragon flag appears in the distance. They fiercely direct their swords and bayonets against their enemies. Yet, the Japanese designer took great care to mark their appearance with elements reflecting early twentieth-century Chinese femininity. In contrast to the male soldier's plain uniform, they wear colorful tunics, hairpins, and earrings. Furthermore, despite the focus on the women's violent combat, the image never explicitly displays their agonies or deaths. Death, in contrast, is exclusively associated with the representation of male soldiers, enemies as well as comrades.[278] A revolutionary subject's gender and its connection to social conventions directly affected the modes of visual representations.

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[277] In contrast with the illustration, Edwards points out the *gansidui* 敢死隊 was the women's battalion.

[278] One woman in the lower right corner appears to have been hit, yet her figure is obscured by another fighter, and her suffering is not openly displayed.

Images and Texts of Qiu Jin's death: Overlapping and Gaps

The gendered division in representations of revolutionary martyrs can be seen in images of the archetypal female revolutionary martyr, the anti-Manchu activist and educator Qiu Jin. Reportage and images related to her martyrdom highlighted the gap between textual and visual representations of revolutionary women. During her short life, she participated in preparations for the revolution in Japan, founded feminist-oriented journals, and advocated for women's freedom in marriage and against bound feet. Condemned in 1907 by the Qing army in Zhejiang, she chose suicide as a form of resistance to prevent the Qing army from executing her. Consequently, her story became part of revolutionary narratives that envisioned a strong new woman that fulfills her duty towards the nation even at the cost of her own life. [279] After Qiu Jin's death, the press reaction was immediate not only in revolutionary periodicals but also in mainstream journals, such as *Shenbao* 申報, that increasingly criticized the actions of the ruling dynasty. [280] Although they evoked her unjustified torture in potent language, those accounts did not provide any visual evidence of her persecution and suicide. When reporting on her exemplary passing, reports explicitly mentioned her courageous act of "bleeding for the nation," which nonetheless went undepicted in the visual field in either photographs or drawings.[281] For example, in 1912 Xu Anzhen published her poem on the heroine:

Warm blood sparks on the Xuan pavilion,

We are in pain because our lake and our mountains [our nation] have not yet been

liberated,

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[279] See Fan Hong, *Footbinding, Feminism and Freedom: The Liberation of Women's Bodies in Modern China* (London; Portland: Frank Cass, 1997), 77–118.
[280] In regard to the reports on Qiu Jin's death ,see Xia Xiaohong 夏曉虹, *wanqing shehui yu wenhua* 晚清社會與文化 [Late Qing Society and Culture] (Hubei Education Press, 2000), 208–248.
[281] See for example the caption to fig. 3.8.

And the invaders still occupy our land.

Fall wind [Qiu feng 秋風] and fall rain [Qiu yu 秋雨] make people sorrowful.

You died with many regrets,

You returned to your hometown embodying the soul of the nation.

And yet [despite your sacrifice] calamities constantly keep happening

And wars never come to an end.

People still live out of selfishness and pursue their private interest, forgetting the values of the nation [you fought for].[282]

Blood and pain are protagonists in the brutal and evocative lyrics by Xu Anzhen. Yet, the ubiquitous reporting on her martyrdom tended to ignore her mangled body, either in drawing or in photographs. Instead, images of her tomb stood in as a metonym for her torment (**fig. 3.8**). Although Qiu's death does not explicitly appear in visual records, Qing authorities displayed her corpse at a busy Shaoxing crossroad after her suicide in 1907 to set an example, and she was only moved into a proper tomb on the West Lake, Hangzhou, months later in 1908.[283] Therefore, it is evident that it would have been possible to photograph her horribly exposed body. However, either such an image was never taken or it was excluded from publication. Imagining the suffering of women was widespread in textual sources, including captions to photographs, and hence the imagined violated woman was socially acceptable. In comparison to what one sees in images of dead revolutionaries and

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[282] "*Xu Anzhen wan qiu jin nüshi* 徐安鎮挽秋瑾女士 [Xu Anzhen laments the death of Qiu Jin]," Shehui shijie 社會世界 [Social World], issue 2 (1912): 89. Translation by the author.

[283] The ceremony saw many speeches. One speech by a Manchu remarked on the benevolent rule of the Qing over the Han, which was a criticism of Qiu's revolutionary acts and led to protest by mourners present. The funeral became a political statement: a speaker reminded the assembled of the Qing killing of the Han population during the Ming-Qing transition. Qiu Jin's tomb in Hangzhou would eventually be demolished. Afterwards, her body was moved to new burial sites nine times. After the establishment of the Republic of China she became a hero and symbol of the revolution. See Hu Ying, "Qiu Jin's Nine Burials: The Making of Historical Monuments and Public Memory," *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture* 19, no. 1 (Spring 2007): 143–9.

murdered Qing officials, unequivocal and straightforward expressions of women's pain and

passing did not appear in visual accounts of the fight against the Qing. The absence of such

visualizations of the female body in pain contributed, on the one hand, to the mythicization of

figures such as Qiu Jin in the revolutionary and historiographic discourse and, on the other

hand, to obscuring women's active role as active combatants in the 1900s revolutionary

turmoil.

Having established that suffering induced by violence is nearly invisible in

revolutionary women's visual representations, one might ask: is pain inflicted by "slow

violence" more visible?[284] I borrow the term "slow" to indicate a form of violence that

develops over time and through means that do not immediately appear violent, such as

famine or lack of medical care. David Wang has examined the widespread trope of the

starving woman in Republican-period literary sources.[285] Wang stresses the connection

between the suffering woman and an "arguably male imaginary of the physical and

metaphysical destitution that besets modern China."[286] Was the imagined representation of

women's suffering acceptable, then, if that pain derived from physical, bodily, or slow-

violent causes, i.e. floods, famines, menstruation, or delivery?[287] Even if some forms of

suffering were directly connected to the body, yet were not visible like the bleeding wounds

of the revolutionaries who appear in literary texts studied by Wang, I observe that women's

physical distress was seldom depicted in medical advertisements from the early Republican

period, even less so in photojournalistic images. Even when the bodily suffering of women

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[284] Rob Nixon coined "slow violence" in reference to environmental abuse. See Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).

[285] David Der-Wei Wang, *The Monster That is History: History, Violence, and Fictional Writing in Twentieth Century China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 117–47.

[286] Wang, *The Monster That is History*, 119.

[287] One might argue that in many cases famines are artificially generated. Yet their effects on the human body appear natural, manifest themselves slowly, and therefore do not evoke an immediate sense of violence when compared to images of a wound or a dead body.

was depicted in documentary visual narrations, such images tended to hide their suffering under a veil of idealization.

One photograph of the poverty that tormented the Jiangbei region at the turn of the century depicts the reality that families of refugees faced who traveled to Jiangnan and wealthier areas to escape natural disasters and famine (**fig. 3.9**). The photograph of "a refugee widow with her daughter and two sons, faces bloated with hunger" aimed to illustrate the attached journalistic account of flood and to establish a sense of empathy with the victims. The mother dressed in thick clothing looks at the camera with suffering eyes; apart from her small infant, she carries a bowl and some other everyday supplies in two baskets mounted on a carrying pole. The photographer, interested in the human and emotional dimensions of the disaster, most probably asked the family to pose in front of a polished background and to look directly into the camera's lens to ensure the visual focus converged onto the subjects' misery. Although the distress of the family is central, and the image asks for its reader's sympathetic participation in the national calamity, it does not display visual traces of vicious pain, i.e. wounds or blood. Neither does it specify the subject's name; rather she is abstracted as an archetype. Therefore, the image is less likely to provoke an immediate reaction such as shock in a fashion comparable to the images of the male revolutionary martyrs analyzed above.[288] Notwithstanding the general taboo of representing suffering women, thus, a few exceptions can be found when a woman's pain was induced by natural causes and her wounds were invisible.

To return to the central question of this section, why were female actors excluded from visual narratives of war suffering? I propose two main causes. First, the omission marks a

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[288] Blood is evoked not only as a symbol of patriotic sacrifice in revolutionary propaganda, but also an element of daily life in the emerging discourse on menstruation and hygiene. Nevertheless, it never appears in the corresponding visuals. See Joan Judge, *Republican Lens,* esp. 115–131.

continuity with local pictorial conventions. As highlighted in this chapter's opening, for the most part depictions of violence and physical suffering were absent from documentary paintings and other artefacts in Chinese art history, although they were mentioned in textual sources. Yet this reason alone does not explain the gender gap as assassinated male revolutionaries were in fact primary subjects for revolutionary photographs. The second cause of the gender gap can be found in the intertwined concepts of the healthy woman and the liberated nation that pervaded political and popular debates during the late Qing and early Republican period. With increasing opportunities to participate in public life, women's positions in society shifted from an almost exclusive domestic role to a hybrid one at the intersection of home and the nation.[289] In turn, representations of women in the public sphere also underwent a metamorphosis from mothers to "mothers of citizens."[290] Their bodies, reproductive sites that guaranteed the generation of Chinese citizens, therefore became screens on which to represent a forceful, healthy, and young Chinese nation. Images of the violated bodies of women, for example photographs of female feet deformed through the practice of foot binding, could be used to signify the retrograde world that Chinese reformers and revolutionaries aimed to overthrow.[291] Why revolutionary and nationalist images tended to avoid the display of women's suffering becomes apparent: the revolutionary narrative, after all, sought to visualize the emerging nation in all its determination, fertility, and vigor, which were best represented by intact and prosperous female bodies.

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[289] Literature on the status of women in Republican China includes: Joan Judge, "Citizens or Mothers of Citizens? Gender and the Meaning of Modern Chinese Citizenship," in *Changing Meanings of Citizenship in Modern China*, ed. Merle Goldman and Elizabeth J. Perry (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 23–43; Mechthild Leutner and Nicola Spakowski, *Women in China: The Republican Period in Historical Perspective* (Berlin: Berliner China-Studien, 2005); Gail Hershatter, *Women in China's Long Twentieth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007); Paul J. Bailey, *Gender and Education in China: Gender Discourses and Women's Schooling in the Early Twentieth Century* (Oxfordshire: Taylor and Francis, 2007).

[290] Joan Judge, "Citizens or Mothers of Citizens?," 23–43.

[291] Dorothy Ko has provided a nuanced historical perspective on the practice of footbinding, where its praxis as well as its condemnation are read as parts of Chinese history. See Dorothy Ko, *Cinderella's Sisters: A Revisionist History of Footbinding* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), esp. 9–37.

Qiu Jin: Warrior in a Feminine Frame

How, then, to represent revolutionary women in an acceptable way that would underscore their activist engagement without showing their pain? In what follows, I investigate the alternative visual strategies early republican visual culture used to express revolutionary women's part in the fight without showing their individual physical pain. Whereas recent research by Louise Edwards highlighted how women warriors in Chinese legends and stories cross-dressed to mask their genders and assume social attributes normally attached to men, in this section I show that the republican narrative heavily stressed the feminine features of revolutionary fighters. [292] Visual representations of female revolutionaries show them either as female warriors or in male civil clothing, a clear-cut gender distinction that reveals republican men's anxieties about women's participation in political decision-making.

Thus, the intersection between woman and warrior did not necessarily rely on masculinity because there was a precedent of female heroes who acted in the world through suicide or violent rebellion that could serve as examples to crystallize a continuity between past heroines and contemporary female soldiers. Women's political rights with few or no signs of violent action, on the other hand, were seldom seen in Chinese history. Even in the most obvious examples, the warrior Hua Mulan 花木蘭 (a legendary figure situated between the 4th and 6th century CE), the Empress Wu Zetian 武則天 (624 – 705 CE), and the Empress Dowager Cixi (1835–1908), disproportionate violence always accompanied their intelligence and strategic skills in the historiography. Because of the lack of historical examples of capable female politicians who acted non-violently, revolutionaries associated peaceful refined political action with the male gender. If capable and illuminated rulers in Chinese

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[292] See for example the exemplary case of Hua Mulan described in Edwards, *Women Warriors*, 17–39.

historiography were always men, stories of suicidal and soldierly heroines already had a space within the Chinese popular imaginary, which made the figure of the fighting woman acceptable and admirable. Such tales provided solid bases for the development of myths around the figure of the modern revolutionary Qiu Jin. If it was acceptable and desirable for the revolutionaries that women fought for the nation, they had to do so in the appropriate womanly attire and connect their political engagement to violent action. It is not a surprise that women in imaginary accounts of the revolution wear colorful tunics with narrow waists, hair ornaments, and earrings (**fig. 3.7**).

Women who acted as leaders, gave orders, or made public speeches were virtually absent from the revolutionary visual stage. These non-violent and mostly intellectually forms of political action were normally associated with male leaders, although only a few years before China had been governed by Empress Dowager Cixi. It is in this sense that Qiu Jin's practice of crossdressing assumed a pristine meaning. Qiu Jin notoriously commissioned and circulated photographic portraits of herself in male attire. One of her most influential and controversial photographs, published in the anarchist journal *La Novaj Tempoj*, among others, depicts a smiling Qiu in a black suit (**fig. 3.10**).[293] Qiu confidently looks into the camera as she leans one hand on a stick and holds her other arm against her side.[294] Besides wearing

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[293] "Zhongguo wuqian nian weiyou zhi nü haojie shanyin Qiu jing xiong jun Jin zhi yiying 中國五千年未有之女豪傑山陰秋競雄君瑾之遺影 [Portrait of the now deceased Qiu Jin, a heroic woman of the kind China has not seen for five thousand years]", *Xin shiji* 新世紀 [La Novaj Tempoj, new century], issue 13 (1907), cover. The magazine *La Novaj Tempoj* (title in Esperanto) was issued by the World Society in Paris and had a much longer life than the illustrated *The World,* published by the same organization established by Li Shizeng, Wu Zhihui, and Zhang Jingjiang. One copy of the original photograph, consequently widely reprinted in the press, is preserved in the National Museum of China, Beijing (fig. 3.10).
[294] In one of her poems, Qiu Jin referred to her photographic manly appearance. The poem, translated by Jonathan Spence, runs: "Inscription on My Photo – in men's clothing / Who is this person, staring at me so sternly? / The martial bones from a former existence regret their female embodiment. / The flesh of this world is from the start a deception, / The land of the future, surely, is real. / You and I should have been together long ago, to share our feelings; / Looking out and lamenting these difficult times, our spirits garner strength. / Tell them I've scrubbed off all that old mud." In Jonathan Spence, *The Gate of Heavenly Peace: The Chinese and Their Revolution, 1895–2008* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 17–20. Cited in Edwards, *Women Warriors*, 58. Edwards relates the poem to another photograph of Qiu Jin in male clothing, where the revolutionary poses in a photo studio with umbrella, flower, and garden backdrop. Qing *meirenhua* and

male attire, Qiu inhabits a "male space" in that she is depicted in a standard politician's pose of the time. She does not carry an umbrella or a fan, nor is she seated with flowers or in a European garden setting. Crossdressing was therefore, in the case of Qiu Jin's portrait, a tactic to test the elasticity of imposed frames in which the woman materially appropriates men's clothing to grasp hold of "masculine" social features and positions, especially the right to non-violent political participation and leadership.[295]

Although Qiu Jin's image in a male suit has become one of her most iconic portraits in the historiography, the transgressive practice of crossdressing was not widely accepted within the male-dominated revolutionary narrative, which preferred to mark gender roles with clear-cut signs that accorded with established cultural norms. Self-representation in men's clothing was appropriated by other social groups for similar reasons: high-class courtesans, for example, embraced the fashionable practice to express an idealized independence from men in terms of economy and kinship.[296] Furthermore, crossdressing imitated the provocative practices of Euro-American feminism, effectively making an argument for the modernization of conventions both in terms of culture and gender.

In Qiu Jin's case, crossdressing was a call for political rights outside the battlefield, an act that resonated with international feminism, and a question of fashion. The connection to the 1911 Revolution was not explicit; rather it was only implied in the supposed battle for women's rights to which the Revolutionary Alliance subscribed. Qiu Jin's photograph in male clothes is an exception inspired by courtesan photography rather than the established rule. Within the frame of the revolutionary narrative, the revolutionary woman is not the one

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republican photographs of both prostitutes and courtesans included such scenic elements, which effectively inscribed the subject in a feminine space. Therefore, Qiu Jin's poetry refers more convincingly to the photograph in Western manly attire with a walking stick, which describes a "masculine space" and is enriched by "masculine objects."

[295] Edwards, *Women Warriors*, 11. On Qiu Jin's understanding of crossdressing, see esp. 44 and 56–59.

[296] Courtesans often cross-dressed and their allure of independence made revolutionaries and Republican ladies imitate them. Joan Judge, *Republican Lens*, 187–211.

who cross-dresses but the one who shapes her identity within conventional structures of feminine attributes, adding the element of violent hostility. What exactly was the standard image of the female revolutionary within the revolutionary narrative, and how did photography interact with illustrated posters to modify such an image?

Revolutionaries, at least on the façade and until after the establishment of the Republic of China, applauded women and sustained the fight for women rights.[297] Yet the fashion and clothing of women were strictly regulated by rules that ensured adherence to feminine ideals.[298] That is to say, the revolutionary narrative welcomed and celebrated female warriors as far as they did not challenge their primary roles as daughters, wives, and mothers. Images of cross-dressing women, such as the Qiu Jin's portrait, do not show symbols of the struggle (**fig. 3.10**). The violence of the revolution, which was key to the narration of magazines such as *The True Record* and to nationalist historiography following 1911, first becomes explicit in images of women dressed according to womanly conventions yet accompanied by attributes symbolizing war such as guns, swords, and horses. Revolutionary women, then, could either cross-dress and attempt to assume the social role of the pragmatic and capable male politician, or preserve their feminine appearance and become warriors.

In her thorough analysis of female fighters throughout Chinese history, Louise Edwards has argued that women warriors hide the true reality of war under a veil of "eroticized glamour," and "become powerful icons to proclaim the urgency of war, of its demands that all patriots make some sort of sacrifice."[299] Taking Edwards' observation further in the context of visual culture, it can be observed that female revolutionaries were represented in feminine clothes with the important addition of objects associated with the battlefield, for

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[297] The Nationalist government dismantled Women Military Units almost immediately after the successful establishment of the Republic on Feb. 26. See Edwards, *Gender, Politics, and Democracy*, 52.

[298] Ellen Johnston Laing, "Visual Evidence for the Evolution of 'Politically Correct' Dress for Women in Early Twentieth Century Shanghai," *Nan Nü* 5, no. 1 (2013): 69–114.

[299] Edwards, *Women Warriors*, 2.

example, the bayonet and the sword (**fig. 3.7**). A blade coupled with a self-confident gaze appears in what is possibly the most ubiquitous photograph of Qiu Jin (**fig. 3.11**). The young idealist woman responsible for educating other students on the necessity of dethroning the Manchu and revolutionizing the country is largely remembered and celebrated through her iconic portrait in a Japanese-style coat and hairstyle than in her manly depiction described above.[300] Similar to portraits of other young revolutionaries, Japanese clothing speaks to the years of and political activism this figure carried out in Japan before returning to China.

Apart from drawing inspiration from the Chinese tradition of female warriors and from the context of Chinese revolutionary cells in Japan, the visual representation and circulation of armed Chinese female revolutionaries was influenced by international examples of female heroes. Immediately after the Republican Revolution, the *Women's Eastern Times* published a number of images of women soldiers, students, and revolutionaries that heavily relied on national symbols.[301] In particular, the Mexican Revolution had adopted a similar iconography of combative female revolutionaries.[302]

Whereas Qiu Jin's portrait depicts a real person, and despite constant idealization retains her features, another example of an ideal female warrior complicates the relationship between reality and imagination (**fig. 3.12**). In contrast to Qiu Jin's personal heroic portrait, hand-drawn posters of the battlefield reported on the tireless and beautifully decorated women fiercely fighting the Qing enemy (**fig. 3.7**). Does this distinction indicate that photography represented specific individuals, whereas hand-drawn images displayed

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[300] Some examples in current popular culture include the entries for Qiu on Wikipedia in both the English and Chinese versions. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qiu_Jin
and https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E7%A7%8B%E7%91%BE
The same applies to the Baidu entry on the revolutionary figure.
See https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E7%A7%8B%E7%91%BE/30055?fr=aladdin
A sculpture of her located in Hangzhou reinterprets the motif of the sword, although from a different image.
[301] funü shibao 婦女時報 [*Women's Eastern Times*] 1, no. 5.
[302] John Mraz, "Archives and Icons: Constructing Post-Revolutionary Identities in Mexico," in *Photo Archives and the Idea of Nation*, 244.

imaginary persons? One puzzling and unusual image, a heavily retouched photograph published in the Women's Eastern Times (*Funü Shibao* 婦女時報), represents "the daughter of the republican reform" (**fig. 3.12**).[303] A young woman is complemented by symbols of her willingness to fight for the nation, namely the horse she rides and the sword hanging at her side. As far as the information provided by the caption reveals, she might be an abstract representation of the real daughter of an author whose resonant pen name is "Republic Reformer," or more probably an idealized archetype for the new female citizen. In terms of media, the hybrid photograph, retouched to obscure her facial features and transform her into an impersonal concept or an idealized type, does not express either the indexicality attributed to photography, nor a simple affirmation of the drawer's imagined interpretation. In terms of its motif, the illustration perfectly fits the revolutionary agenda described above in its combination of traits of modern Chinese femininity (a long, elegant dress and graciously arranged hair) with the attributes of war. It fit within the republican narrative of a cosmopolitan and self-assured woman who was ready to sacrifice herself for the national cause, but who nevertheless preserved her feminine appearance, social roles, and unviolated body.

The modern clothing and hairstyle and the sword represent what the Republic of China aimed to be, namely a strong, modern country, confident enough to defeat imperialism and participate with other nations on the international stage. The representation of strong women in the press revealed the conscious use of photography to construct a consistent narrative for the renewed nation. Consistent with the strategies adopted by nationalist movements in other nations, women's bodies became screens for the projection of the nation's aspirations.[304]

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[303] *Zhonghua Minguo zhi nü'er* 中華民國革新之女兒.

[304] A closely-related intellectual and representative strategy has been throughout studied in the French context. See for example: Antoine de Baecque, *The Body Politic: Corporeal Metaphor in Revolutionary France, 1770–1800* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997); and Joan B. Landes, *Visualizing the Nation: Gender,*

Images published in the reformist and revolutionary press outlined a new woman who would be able to carve out a space to exercise her citizenship, though that citizenship remained circumscribed by her primarily reproductive role. Nevertheless, this grand project, which used exemplary figures such as Qiu Jin, was never fully realized and women were systematically excluded from political activities after the birth of the Nationalist Party, Yuan Shikai's rule, and during the long period of disorder and civil conflict following his death.[305]

Conclusion

Examples of representation of violence published in *The True Record* in comparison to other images in the same visual field provide starting point to answer the questions: Which images of "the pain of others" did revolutionary editors use to convince the reader of the revolution's rightness? How did these images become meaningful propaganda and how did they differ from written texts?

Photographs included in *The True Record* do not provide straightforward positive or negative interpretations of violence. Rather, illustrations of violations of the human body express dense and overlapping meanings, where brutality is alternatively condemned and promoted. Despite the claim of photojournalists at *The True Record* to display reality, the images were produced to prompt trust in the revolutionary cause, that is, the photographs worked as *propaganda*. Images of murdered leaders and battlefields stoked precise feelings and reactions, prominently shock and indignation. The pitiless images of dead revolutionaries,

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Representation, and Revolution in Eighteenth Century France (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2001). For a discussion on the use of women's bodies as sites of modernity in China, see Andrew D. Morris, *Marrow of the Nation: A History of Sport and Physical Culture in Republican China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); and Denise Gimpel, "Exercising Women's Rights: Debates on Physical Culture since Late Nineteenth Century," in *Beyond the May Fourth Paradigm: In Search of Chinese Modernity,* ed. Kai-wing Chow, Tze-ki Hon, Hung-yok Ip, and Don C. Price (Plymouth, United Kingdom: Lexington Books, 2008), 95–130.

[305] On the exclusion of women from political life on the foundation of the Republic and the strong reaction to feminist activists such as Tang Qunying, Shen Peizhen, and Wang Changguo, see David Strand, *An Unfinished Republic: Leading by Word and Deed in Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 13–51.

which provide realistic descriptions of suffering and death through the open display of wounds and partially naked bodies, demand the reader's participation and identification with the victim by arousing disgust and pity and demanding condemnation of the war and a call for peace. Besides condemning Yuan Shikai's assassination of Song Jiaoren as illegal, post-portem portraits of the Nationalist leader also embodied a profound sense of injustice, heroism, pathos, and call for revenge. These vengeful calls for violence were satisfied by photographs of Qing officers killed by the revolutionaries and post-mortem portraits of revolutionaries condemned by the party leadership for insubordination (Huang Shisong).

The second part of chapter three analyzed the images through a gender perspective to observe the divergent pictorial strategies used in visual representations of male and female revolutionaries. The analysis revealed that images of women distributed in the revolutionary moment contributed to the discourse of change and novelty in 1900s and 1910s China. Nonetheless, women had to remain within frames of social respectability. The revolutionary narrative encouraged women to take part in the violent struggle against the Manchu without discarding their gendered roles as mothers, wives, and daughters. They could, nevertheless, participate in combat and aspire to the role of exemplary heroines and warriors. The association of women's bodies and violent action was justified and celebrated within the discourse of self-sacrifice for the nation. Yet, the corporeal suffering of women was, in contrast to men, not displayed in graphics or photographic accounts. The show of abused female bodies was acceptable only when they symbolized the backwardness of Qing China, for example in images of bound feet. Violated female bodies did not appear in representations of women in the revolutionary fight and in the new Republic. Interestingly, the association of republican women with physical distress can be found in textual sources, including captions and poetry, yet was absent from visual representations. This, in turn, suggests that visual

sources spoke a parallel yet different language, and therefore illuminate unexpected facets of the historical record.

Violence, destruction, and the reconstruction of a new world are key features of any revolutionary movement. The Chinese Revolutionary Alliance was no exception and reported extensively on its assassinated leaders and battlefield losses. Although the human body was a primary target of revolutionary attacks, buildings and other objects were also favored symbols of demolition and rebirth. Attacks directed towards buildings, districts, and cities, especially when they were perceived to embody retrograde institutions, were widespread during the revolutionary period. Chapter four focuses on the effects of revolutionary violence beyond the human body, specifically on images of ruins and remnants.

CHAPTER FOUR

REVOLUTION: REMNANTS PROMISE REBIRTH

Introduction

Revolution

The Republic of China is not a continuation of the Qing empire, nor is it an unchanged copy of English, American or Japanese models. Rather, it embodies a spatially and historically situated polity that combined both global and local elements to shape a new form of knowledge. In the context of turn of the century-China, "Revolution" possessed multiple meanings. The nowadays-used *Geming* 革命 originally indicated changes in dynastic power. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the Chinese characters 革命, pronounced *kakumei* in Japanese, were adopted by Japanese writers to translate the English term "revolution." The term gained currency in Chinese political debates only around the turn of the century, and especially with the publication of Zou Rong's pamphlet *The Revolutionary Army* (*Gemingjun* 革命軍) in 1903. Prior to the translingual filtration of *geming* as a translation for revolution in Japan, violent uprisings in turn of the century China were named *Zaofan* 造反 or *Qiyi* 起義. While the first emphasized the direction of the uprising against the Qing, the second stressed the unity of the rebellions. Despite their slightly different semantic implications, the terms equally indicate a violent uprising that radically severs links with previously established forms of power. In contrast, the revolutionaries also employed *Guangfu* 光復 to indicate the liberation, or "enlightening", that the rebirth as a Republic would bring about. Recognizing that the Qing rulers were unable to transform the imperial dynasty into a modern state eventually convinced the intellectual elite that revolution was the

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only option. Thus, the term *geming* became ubiquitous in early twentieth century republican texts precisely because it indicated clear-cut historical rupture with the past and resonated with the epochal changes that the intellectual elite expected.[306]

I understand revolution not as an historical event but as a consciously constructed narrative through which the revolutionaries defined their relationship with the past as rupture and projected themselves in the future. Breaking totally with their past via Revolution, to use Latour's words, became the only way for moderns to understand their past.[307] Historically, the Republican Revolution in China overthrew a millennia-old imperial system. Yet, on the other hand, this change did not significantly affect the masses' daily life. The continuity in political leaders, above all Yuan Shikai (袁世凱 1859–1916), before and after the revolution were symptomatic of strong political continuity rather than the rupture described by textbooks and early accounts of the revolution. In fact, Yuan Shikai continued to serve as the mediator between the Qing Court and the republicans, acting as President in 1912 before he proclaimed himself emperor in 1915. After his death, a dark period of fighting between powerful landlords and warlords began, and many republican institutions lost their power. While important political continuities can be discerned in the politicians who were involved in decision-making both before and after the Qing, the relevance of the Republican Revolution to people's everyday lives is debatable. The argument that the political revolution constituted a radical change that favored all citizens was central to the revolutionary narrative. Further, it served as a model for all consequent historical writing in terms of both images and texts.

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[306] Interestingly, the Communist Party kept using close language when referring to the promises of the Communist Revolution starting from the 20s. Terms such as *geming* were usually accompanied by the concept of liberation, *jiefang* 解放.

[307] Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*. 140–141.

What is a political revolution? A description of the nuances of the term in English and Chinese languages suggest that "Revolution" carries both a universal and local dimension. In English the term primarily evokes the idea of change. It projects a clear turn in the route a specific community follows, for example, from Monarchy to Republic in the French Revolution (1789) or from the Dictatorship of the Proletariat to Democracy in Eastern Germany (1989). More specifically, a political revolution entails the people's active choice of this new political direction.[308] Before a new direction can be established, the old must be dismantled. Thus, the ideas of destruction, change, and rebirth assume a powerful position within revolutionary narratives. More specifically, in the struggle to constitute the Republic of China, journals, pamphlets, posters, and photographs heavily relied on the narrative of the destruction of the old that would clear space for a new political configuration. I use the terms change and destruction in reference to the Chinese word *geming* 革命, and rebirth in reference to the concept *guangfu* 光復. *Geming* indicates a radical change in government, such as a shift from one dynasty to the next, or in this case from the Qing Empire to the Republic. In contrast, *guangfu* emphasizes overcoming difficulties and refers to an orientation towards a bright future, that is to say, a new birth. At the dawn of the twentieth century in China, "modern" was seldom used to indicate a break from the past. However, "new" regularly preceded the names of things and categories of people to indicate their distance from a bygone era. New machines, new concepts, new political systems, new fashions, and new citizens populated both the early twentieth century's revolutionary

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[308] For a closer study of the terms used to indicate revolution around the 1910s, see chapter 1. Reinhart Koselleck noted that the term revolution originally carried the astronomical sense of a rotation or a return. The term only started to change in the early 19th c. Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. by Keith Tribe (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

republican agenda and popular culture. [309] Revolution, if one follows the Chinese term *guangfu*, is then primarily the promise of a new birth.

Before rebirth, the old system must be undermined and the process of deconstruction of the old, both materially and symbolically, is a vital component of revolutionary movements. Chinese Revolutionary movements celebrated the destruction of the Qing in various forms of documents and propaganda, including the relatively new medium of photography. What kind of destroyed or ancient artifacts assumed a significant role in the revolutionary imagination of rebirth? In this chapter, I show that revolutionary intellectuals manipulated images of recent and ancient remnants to convey a complex message that involved themes of both demolition and renaissance. Scholarship has stressed the effective power of ruins as markers of subjugation in Western imperial visual narratives and their connotative meaning of national humiliation in China. In particular, Wu Hung has shown that Felice Beato's photographs of ruins conveyed an image of China as conquered and subdued by European might, specifically in figures of the Summer Palace (*Yuanmingyuan* 圓明園*).*[310] Cohen and Callahan have further stressed how the narrative of national humiliation bolstered by such images has fueled Chinese nationalism throughout the twentieth century and up to the present.[311] In the course of this chapter, I retrace the shift, within revolutionary publications, from *ruins* that represent negative emotions and signify Chinese humiliation, to *remnants* that were reinterpreted as symbols of positive socio-political and cultural phenomena, specifically the rebirth of the Chinese nation under republican order.

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[309] Some examples of the widespread use of "new" in the literature and discourse of early twentieth century China are: *Xinmin* 新民 [New Citizen] *Xin Qingnian* 新青年 [New young, also title of the influential magazine *Xin Qingnian* 新青年 *La Jeunesse* founded by Chen Duxiu and published between 1915 and 1926], *Xin Funü* 新婦女 [New woman] *Xin Shiji* 新世紀 [New century, also title of the anarchist *La Novaj Tempoj* magazine issued by Li Shizhen, Wu Zhihui, and Zhang Jingjiang in Paris].

[310] Wu Hung, *Zooming In: Histories of Photography in China* (London: Reaktion Books, 2016), 47–83.

[311] Paul A. Cohen, *China Unbound: Evolving Perspectives on the Chinese Past* (London; New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 148–184; William A. Callahan, "National Insecurities: Humiliation, Salvation, and Chinese Nationalism," *Alternatives* no. 29 (2004): 199–218.

To understand the reinterpretation of ruins as remnants, this chapter is divided into two parts: first, I isolate the conceptualization of remnants as lively sites of novelty rather than dead symbols of memories (ruins). Through a close reading of images of remnants in China and abroad and their attached explanatory articles, I observe how revolutionaries consciously strove to create the imagery of a promising future by contrasting it to a carefully curated image of a dark past. Therefore, I emphasize the difference between ruins as symbols of the past, especially common in traveler accounts of China at the time, and remnants from the present as symbols of a new progressive beginning as they appear in the republican revolutionary narrative. In other words, I analyze images that convey a clear-cut break with the past within revolutionary visual materials, specifically press-issued images of destroyed buildings and semi-destroyed walls. In the second section, I trace the revolutionaries' tactic of restaging "useless" ancient remnants and scattered pieces of the Qing Imperial Collection as cornerstones of the Republic of China. Since most of the artistic heritage of the Chinese area was locked up in private collections by individual collectors up until the 1910s, historical artefacts that emerged from the earliest archeological findings beginning in the first decade of the century, as well as items in the Qing imperial collection, were rediscovered as public heritage or were sold to finance the revolutionary cause. Through their photographs and articles, the revolutionaries argued that objects of artistic and cultural value should be exhibited for public display and education. National remnants, in other words, should assist in engendering the rebirth of the republic.

Remnants from the Present

The political revolution in 1911 China began with destruction, which the revolutionaries understood as the base for a new and promising beginning. I show how revolutionaries interpreted remnants as sites of a renaissance rather than as symbols of

destruction. At the same time, I argue that revolutionaries appropriated tropes from global war photography, existing at the intersection of journalism and propaganda, to reinforce their agenda. The Qing dynasty ended because Chinese people, especially in the south and in the diaspora, were dissatisfied with the dynasty's politics and organized a series of violent and racist attacks against the Manchu. Following the logic of demolition and reconstruction, anti-Manchu and pro-republican movements, including but not limited to the Revolutionary Alliance, condemned buildings and walls that personified imperial rule and its backwardness to demolition.

If one tried to take a step back and look at the images of ruins and remnants in China, depictions by European visitors provide the earliest examples. Newly arrived artists from European cultural backgrounds were responsible for the introduction of the image of ruins into Chinese visual culture in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Their representations romanticized the Far East and aestheticized its ruins according to the traditions of European painting. One of the earliest European artists to depict Chinese ruins was William Alexander between 1792 and 1794.[312] He was followed by other painters attracted to the idea of an abstract, idealized antiquity. During his participation in the Second Opium War, Felice Beato was one of the earliest artists to produce photographs of Chinese ruins.[313] In their work on China, these artists referenced a European pictorial and photographic tradition, where ruins

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[312] See, for example, his watercolor of the Great Wall in the British Library Drawings of China by William Alexander | British Library - Picturing Places - The British Library (bl.uk). Last accessed: 17.05.2002.

[313] See for example photographs collected in Lacoste, *Felice Beato: A Photographer on the Eastern Road*. Ruins became a popular trope among foreign as well as local commercial photographers; see for example a photograph by the Tung Hing studio (Tong Xing 同興) in Clark Worswick, *Imperial China: Photographs, 1850–1912* (New York: Pennwick/Crown, 1978), 165.

embody nostalgia, melancholia, a lost ideal world, and time's persistent power over human agency.[314]

The point of reference for artists like Alexander and Beato was the romantic idea of ruins embedded in a century-long tradition of European landscape painting. Yet, the turn of the century Chinese concept and image of partially destroyed objects differed. Before proceeding to a visual analysis of revolutionary photographs, a short overview of the Chinese terminology used for and remnants will provide grounds to better understand how images with the same subjects were perceived discrepantly. In his study of ruins, Wu Hung points to *qiu* 丘, *xu* 墟, and *ji* 跡 as Chinese Language terms employed to indicate ruins.[315] The term closed in meaning to the kind of ruins described in this section is *ji*, which stresses the survival and display of artefacts rather than the erasure of human traces. *The True Record*, the revolutionary magazine edited by Gao Qifeng, Gao Jianfu, and Chen Shuren and closely affiliated with the Revolutionary Alliance, provides some other intriguing terms to define partially destroyed artefacts: ancient remnants (*guwu* 古物), traces (*chenjin* 陳跡), and victorious places (*mingsheng zhi qu* 名勝之區), which are grouped under the category "Sites of Victory."[316] The editors of the magazine not only promised to preserve the memory of victorious spots, but also assumed the responsibility to "protect ancient remnants."[317] The Gao brothers, then, writing in *The True Record*, proposed to use photography to preserve successes, news, and important victories, whose traces "have been burnt and partially destroyed, have suffered wind and frost, and have been exposed to corrosion."[318]

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[314] Wu Hung has stressed ruins appeared in *huaigu* 懷古 literature, although there is little correspondence in visual materials. See Wu Hung, *A Story of Ruins: Presence and Absence in Chinese Art and Visual Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 13–50.

[315] Wu Hung, *A Story of Ruins*, 63.

[316] *The True Record* 1 (1912): n.p. [3].

[317] *The True Record* 1 (1912): n.p. [3].

[318] *The True Record* 1 (1912): n.p. [3].

Free of any sense of melancholia connected with an aestheticized vision, remnants from the present become symbols of victorious revolutionary action. Far from embodying destruction, defeat, and hopelessness, images of demolished buildings included in early revolutionary publications appear entangled with hopes for rebirth, progress, and the strength of the nation. This chapter differentiates between ruins as traces or partially destroyed artefacts that in a Chinese-centred narration carried a negative meaning, and remnants that the revolutionaries interpreted as useful artefacts for the construction of the republican nation. I use "remnants" to indicate both battlefields and scenes of destruction where ruination had recently occurred, as well as remnants of the ancient world such as Qing small-scale art objects that, despite being partially intact, personified a backwards past that nonetheless was useful to the newly established Republic.

Appropriation of the motif of ruins

Before I introduce the revolutionary interpretation of recent remnants as a sign of rebirth, I take a closer look at the composition of such images. Formal analysis and comparison with earlier works allow me to nuance the idea that revolutionary images were radically different from commercial photographs as well as images taken by late nineteenth century foreign visitors to China. Instead, an attentive reading of revolutionary images in parallel with nineteenth century photographs by Euro-American photographers enables me to show that Chinese revolutionaries appropriated not only the medium of photography but also some of the visual features and motifs introduced and widely reproduced by colonial as well as commercial photography. Specifically, I compare one image of remnants found in the revolutionary magazine *The True Record* to an earlier representation of China by the British photographer John Thomson (1837–1921). This comparison shows that the revolutionaries adopted the persuasive trope of ruins, as well as the compositional and framing elements, from foreign travellers' photographs. Chinese revolutionaries, however, reinterpreted the

medium and some of its established motifs and composition as channels for political emancipation from both the Euro-American imperial powers that had imported the camera in the first place, as well as the monarchical Qing. Comparison is one way to emphasize the connections between histories of photography by authors with different identities and cultural backgrounds, who observe visually similar phenomena but attribute to them divergent meanings.

Ruins and remnants became one such semantically flexible established motif. More specifically, images of demolished Qing quarters appeared in the revolutionary press during and after the revolution. Immediately after the 1911 Revolution, Qing garrisons became targets for destruction and assassination. In Nanjing, for example, revolutionaries destroyed the Qing casern despite the fact the Manchu showed no resistance to the Revolution.[319] The former Nanjing Qing *Yamen,* demolished in December 1911, became the subject of an image published in *The True Record* (**fig. 4.1**). Partially destroyed white walls that once constituted the Qing headquarters describe a fragmented line in the background. The line is interrupted by what appears to be the protagonist of the photograph, a stone lion guardian. The carefully framed photograph of remnants from the present enhances the towering figure of the roaring lion by capturing it on a white background. Furthermore, the photographer has positioned the camera so that the two wall fragments frame the lion on either sides, which enhances the lion's key role. The lion, it appears, is the only survivor of the demolition.

What meaning did photographs of remnants assume in the revolutionary press? The textual account attached to the photojournalistic reporting in *The True Record* provides some clues. The article specifies that the lion is "perfectly preserved outside the gate" and it

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[319] Although the Governor-General Zhang Renjun was ready to abandon the Qing and declare independence to avoid military confrontation with the revolutionaries, the commander of the Yangzi patrol forces Zhang Xun refused and launched a hunt of republicans that lasted four days and during which suspected revolutionaries' heads were hung on the doors of their own houses. See Rhoads, *Manchus and Han*, 196–8.

"stands high on its stone pedestal opening its mouth as to laugh."[320] By remarking on the lion

guardian's excellent state of preservation and its mocking sneer from an elevated position,

the article communicates that the Republic of China will be able to stand on a solid base and

laugh proudly, surrounded by the remnants of war left from the fight against the Qing. The

choral juxtaposition of the favourite image and textual symbol of a newly awakened China,

the lion, enacts a scene that embodies hope and the soldiers' power and pathos to carry on the

revolution to destroy the symbols of imperial and dynastic power. In addition, it is widely

accepted that the lion-related artistic production of the Lingnan school of painting,

responsible for editing the illustrated journal, carries revolutionary meaning. Both text and

images that use the trope of the lion in a revolutionary context refer to the Chinese nation,

and more specifically, the emergence of the Republic of China.[321]

A comparison to an earlier photograph by John Thomson illuminates a set of

similarities and differences. The photojournalistic image of the fierce lion guardian represents

a contemporary scene where destruction has just occurred, and the composition and light

were organised carefully to set the stage for the sculpture (**fig. 4.2**). The photograph captures

the Beijing Summer Palace, including a guardian lion in the foreground, the Longevity Hill

(*Wanshoushan* 萬壽山) in the background, and ruins scattered across the ground.[322]

Thomson's photograph resonates with foreign travellers' romanticizing visions of the

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[320] *The True Record* 3 (1912), n.p. [12]. The French scholar Fernand Farjenel reported on the same detail in 1912. See Fernand Farjenel, *Through the Chinese Revolution* (London: Duckworth and Company, 1915), 106. Cited in Rhoads, *Manchus and Han*, 198.

[321] According to Chen Yang, during this time of crisis, the lion passed from being an apotropaic and auspicious symbol to representing the Nation, specifically in the two variations of the sleeping and awake lion. See 陳陽, 真相的正-反-合:民初視覺文化研究, [Chen Yang, Tradition, anti-tradition and synthesis in The True Record, a study of visual culture in the early Republic era] (Shanghai), 242–243. On the depiction of lions in revolutionary paintings, see also Ralph Croizier, *Art and Revolution in Modern China: The Lingnan (Cantonese) School of Painting 1906–1951* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1988); and chapter seven of this dissertation.

[322] "Yuen Ming Yuen," literally the Garden of Perfect Brightness, is nowadays known as the Old Summer Palace

beautiful and mysterious China found in postcards and commercial photographs from the second half of the nineteenth century. The gardens of the Summer Palace became a favourite spot for tourist excursions and photographic tours decades after the British army sacked the palace and looted many of its treasures during the second Opium War in 1860.[323] I will return to the relationship between looted treasures, photography, and the birth of Chinese cultural nationalism in the second section of this chapter. For the moment, suffice it to say that Thomson was only one of many foreign photographers interested in the Summer Palace, and his works were conceived as part of his travelogue, *Illustrations of China and its People*, published in London in 1873. Similar images noting the ruinous state of China were widely circulated in treaty ports on the Chinese coast and among foreign collectors who acquired these images and took them back home, activating their wide circulation through inclusion in in archives, magazines, and travelogues. Foreign buyers as well as local commercial photographers and artists had access to ruin-landscapes, which were some of the earliest examples of photographs on the Chinese market, accessible in photographic studios on the coast.

The lion guardian image in *The True Record* and Thomson's photograph demonstrate significant formal similarities (**figs. 4.1–4.2**). Both photographs frame the guardian lion as their focus in the left-hand part of the rectangular space. Furthermore, both images provide full view of dispersed stones on the floor, complemented in Thomson's photograph by wild plants growing between them. Indeed, the plants had ten years between the sack of the summer palace by the Eight-Nation Alliance and Thomson's visit to the remnants. Thomson, then, stresses the prolonged natural process during which the plants overtook the scattered remnants. In contrast, the revolutionary photograph published in *The True Record* used the

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[323] Wu Hung, *A Story of Ruins*, 156–63.

remnants as witnesses of recent destruction, therefore the momentum, rather than the process, assumes a pressing priority. In other words, *The True Record*'s revolutionary photograph is a photojournalistic image concerned with depiction of a current event. Notwithstanding the distance between the two photographs' perception of time and space, and the disparate uses they make of the motif of ruins, both images use a similarly aestheticized composition.

The connections between the early photography of China and revolutionary accounts are not solely formal. Despite the divergent identities of the authors, both images credit the indigenous presence.[324] During the early stages of photography in China, foreigners' images of the Summer Palace were, on the one hand, an affirmation of the colonialists' strength and victory and, on the other hand, a romantic vision of beautiful ruins.[325] A foreign photographer working in China, Thomson reproduced the idealized figuration of ruins. Yet he appears to attempt to disentangle his image from the foreigners who intended to "teach a lesson" to China through the destruction of the Summer Palace. Rather, Thomson tends to distance himself from the actions of the 1860 Anglo-French army. He describes a "wilderness of ruin and devastation which it was piteous to behold."[326] Thomson further writes, "marble slabs and sculptured ornaments that had graced one of the finest scenes in China, now lay scattered

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[324] Elisabeth Edwards suggests the word "presence" better accounts for the actions of the indigenous when compared to "agency." Elisabeth Edwards, "A Problem with Categories: Some Thoughts on Colonial Photographs in Museums", Keynote presented at the *Seeing the 'Other'?,* online conference, German Maritime Museum Bremerhaven, April 8, 2021.

[325] Photographs of ruins were commonly found in Shanghai and Canton commercial studios starting from the 1860s. Gao Jianfu, Gao Qifeng, Chen Shuren, and other exponents of the Lingnan school of painting used to live in both cities and were daily exposed to these images. Foreign publications depicting ruins and battlefields were also available in shared reading rooms in Shanghai where they could be freely accessed. Not only foreign photographers were willing to sell romanticized vistas of China, but also local photography studios such as the Afong Studio and the Hing Tung Studio produced work representing ruins, whose main aim was commercial rather than photojournalistic/propagandistic. Ruins are abundantly represented in accounts of the fight following the Boxer Rebellion (1899–1901). In this context, ruins embody the weakness of China, while foreign soldiers standing on the ruins become a symbol of their semi-colonial power. Photos of the Second Opium War by Felice Beato are exemplary of such visual subjugation of China. Wu Hung, "Photography's Subjugation of China: A 'Magnificent Collection' of Second Opium War Images," in *Zooming In: Histories of Photography in China* (London: Reaktion Books, 2016)*,* 47–83.

[326] John Thomson, *Through China with a Camera* (Westminster: A. Constable, 1898; repr. San Francisco: Chinese Material Center, 1974), 263.

everywhere among the debris and weeds. But there were some of the monuments which had defied the hand of the invaders, or had been spared, let us hope, on account of their beauty."[327] His account deploys emotionally-charged language to comment on the European army's unconditional destruction of the exquisite monuments.[328] Thomson's photographs gave space and attributed value to the Chinese, and did not constantly reproduce the colonial gaze. More evidently, the revolutionaries' images of remnants served a local emancipatory agenda. Hence, the conceptualization and visual representation of remnants did not always demonstrate clear-cut differences based on the photographer's national identity. Rather, images of the remnants of buildings shared a common interest in the image's aesthetic experience and emphasized local actors' agency rather than passivity.[329]

To sum up, Chinese republican revolutionary movements appropriated an aesthetically pleasing photographic framing of ruins from images produced by foreigner visitors, yet they adapted such a motif to serve their agenda. Instead of emphasizing the melancholia and nostalgia symbolised by the passing of time, revolutionaries stressed momentum and inserted images of remnants into visual reportage of the revolution.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, images of war and other disasters in China started to provide concrete proof of foreign invasion and therefore accelerated nationalist sentiment.[330] Wu Hung has suggested that whereas the gaze of early European and

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[327] Thomson, *Through China with a Camera*, 263.

[328] In fact, Thomson was allowed to travel extensively in China only after the Opium War guaranteed foreigners that right. Nevertheless, his photographs and texts show an accurate analysis and sincere interest in local material culture that demonstrate his strong engagement with China.

[329] This hybridity raises a question about the image's authorship. Was the author a revolutionary who had become familiar with romanticized photographs sold in commercial studios (fig. 2), or was it a foreigner whose work was then appropriated by the republicans and enriched with revolutionary meaning through the attached text? Although the photographs' author is never specified in publications such as *The True Record* and *War Scenes of the Chinese Revolution* 大革命寫真畫, a close comparison with the works by Francis E. Stafford, an American citizen that managed the Commercial Press printing division from 1909 to 1915, suggest he is the author of some of the images of the revolution.

[330] Wu, *A Story of Ruins*, 139.

American travellers in China sought to create distance between photographer and subject, the revolutionary was willing to erase such distance to allow the audience to identify with the scene.[331] Although it is certainly true that many photographs of ruins in China stress the destructive power of the foreign presence, a comparison between photographs in *The True Record* and *Illustrations of China and its People* show that not all images of remnants published in the revolutionary context presented the actor behind the destruction in a negative light. Rather than exclusively use photos to point to the foreign powers' shameless devastation, revolutionaries photographed ruins to display remnants left after their successful battles against Qing authority. Those images of ruins empowered nationalist sentiment yet did not rely exclusively on hate against the foreign invader. Instead, representations of ruins crystallised Chinese nationalism via self-celebration. Revolutionaries realized that images of semi-destroyed artefacts were an effective medium to circulate political thought, and used the trope to affirm the Republic's new birth after the fight against the Qing. In this sense, revolutionary photographers reinterpreted negative "ruins" as positive "remnants." In what follows, I will provide further evidence of the revolutionaries' reading of remnants as signs of rebirth, specifically within a narrative of progress and urban development.

Walls as "obstructions to communication"

Chinese revolutionaries saw the productive aspect of images of destroyed buildings and read them as manifest signs of revolutionary agency. Although the images of remnants from the present described in the context of the revolution assume a strongly positive value, they came at the price of chaos and instability. One quote from the English-language newspaper *The China Republican* illustrates the ambivalence between the people's idealism and the

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[331] Wu, *A Story of Ruins*, 145.

unsettling reality of the years after the revolution. "The most confirmed optimist, accustomed, as confirmed optimists usually are, to look on the bright and cheerful side of things, is still susceptible in the present state of affairs in the country to that uncanny feeling of apprehension and alarm which pervades the political atmosphere at the present moment, although he will not willingly confess it."[332] The revolutionaries fighting to change the political system and to maintain its democratic organs were aware of the dangers of the revolution and the volatility of the newly established Republic. Yet, even when confronted with corruption and a lack of resources, they maintained an idealist attitude. Figures of remnants embodied the coexistence of destruction and hope: the half-destroyed artefacts speak of battles and destruction but also the promising opportunity to reform the status quo.

More generally, press photographs communicated the entanglement of remnants and rebirth. One image associated with revolutionary destruction and renaissance shows a man in a Western suit and hat seated atop a cannon resting on a pile of scattered bricks (**fig. 4.3**).[333] Although it is impossible to determine the identity of the sitter, the context suggests he is one of the revolutionaries involved in leading the demolition, and his presence prompts the reader to identify with his proud position and political ideas. The photograph was taken at the location of the former great north gate (*Dabeimen* 大北門) at the northern border of the city of Guangzhou (Canton). The Gongji fort (*Gongjitai* 拱極台), a fort situated on the Xianggang hill (*Xianggang shan* 象崗山) outside the city walls, is visible in the background. Two kinds of remnants constitute the subject of the photograph. First, the cannon and fort

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[332] "The Outlook in China," *The China Republican*, May 15th, 1913 n.p. column 3, Joshua B. Powers Subject file: China, Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

[333] Human figures regularly posed atop ruins. Broadly speaking, images of this kind on a global scale suggest the establishment of a relation of possession between the former building and its beholder and a sense of victory. Images of soldiers standing on ruins resonate with images of the victorious battlefield commercialized in Japanese and Chinese treaty ports in China and Japanese self-celebration photographs. The kind of cannon displayed was already obsolete in 1912 and might be a relic dating back to the Opium War.

were Qing garrisons established to protect the city-port from foreign attack during the Qing dynasty and especially during the Opium Wars and the late nineteenth century. Second, the scattered bricks indicate the revolutionary action of the destruction of the city walls. Such demolition signifies at once the opening to commerce with foreign powers and the elimination of Qing dynasty's reclusion through the physical destruction of its walls. The image, then, conflates two types of remnants that stress the agency of the republican party's push towards international openness in contrast to the Qing's warful resistance, which had attempted to prevent the full extension of foreign commerce in Canton as well as China.

The bricks on the ground were not the product of a fight. They are the result of the premeditated demolition of the ancient walls by the republican government, as the article attached to the photograph explains.[334] The article, "The Demolition of the City Walls in Kwangtung: actual work done," explains the reason for the action: "city walls are only a security in time of disturbances. But in a republican country these walls lose their utility."[335] The narration suggests that after the foundation of the Republic, all traces of the retrograde and corrupt past should be swept away to open space for a commercial, cultural, and ideological rebirth. Therefore, in a wider attempt to turn Canton into "one of the most flourishing ports in the world," the city walls should be demolished to leave space for wide roads.[336] It is significant, in this sense, that a full English translation of the text is provided. Although ruins as a subject matter recall picturesque commercial images of China, their meaning assumes, in the revolutionary narrative, an entirely different sense. The photographic description that supplements the photograph is intended to be a representation

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[334] The image of victory is part of a tripartite narration composed of one photograph of the Great North Gate (upper), the same location after the demolition has taken place (middle), and the well-preserved Small North Gate with the five-storied pagoda (bottom). *The True Record*, 5 (1912), n.p. [9]

[335] *The True Record*, 5 (1912), n.p. [10].

[336] *The True Record*, 5, n.p. [10].

of revolutionary action and of commercial progress. Destruction does not embody a scene of melancholia and romanticism, as was common in the European artistic tradition as well as nineteenth century photographic representations of China, but becomes rather the starting point for opening the city in favor of international commerce.

A series of images of the demolition of the Shanghai city walls followed a similar visual tactic. They relied on photojournalistic images of remnants from the present to suggest revolutionary rebirth, though in a more documentary-oriented style. Images were marshalled to narrate how the demolition changed the city from messy to accessible (**fig. 4.4**).[337] The photograph at the top displays a mass of stones, part of the demolished wall, standing between two-story houses; the second image, shot from above, shows a tidy path between the remnants; the third photo illustrates a larger street; and the final one displays a wide thoroughfare. One of the new visual tactics enabled by halftone reproduction was the juxtaposition of more than one image and related text on the same page. A consequence of such technological advancement is that editors were able to organise the audience's visual experience in a movie-like montage. The reader is visually transported from the "obstructions to communications" symbolised by the city walls to the wide, lean, and open streets that would allow Shanghai to become the "rendezvous of trade in the Far East."[338] It does not come as a surprise that the republicans relied on a dualistic contrast between closeness and openness, and therefore conceived the demolition of city walls as a boon to the full development of a Revolutionary conscience.

Pejorative perceptions of narrow streets in contrast to the appreciation of large avenues emerged as a consequence of transcultural contact. Once again it is useful to compare the revolutionaries' perspective with John Thomson's perception of Chinese urban settings.

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[337] Nevertheless, each image represents a different location.
[338] *The True Record*, issue 5 (1912) n.p. [12].

Thomson's description of Shanghai's Chinese city invoked "the fetid air of narrow polluted alleys." [339] In contrast to the wide and clean boulevards of the foreign settlement, he suggested that in the Chinese area was "exposed to the constant risk of fearful conflagration and the grim horrors of pestilence or famine."[340] Narrow streets become, both in Thomson's account and in republican propaganda, a synonym for uncleanliness and closure. In contrast, the demolition of those walls is turned into a metaphor for hygiene and openness to international markets. In line with such conceptions, *The True Record* proposes that the demolition of the walls would also help to solve "the question of sanitation." [341] Counterintuitively, anti-imperialist revolutionary nationalists partially shared their visual language with European photographers who observed China through a civilizational lens. In short, the revolutionaries appropriated photography from late nineteenth century photographers not only as a medium, but also in terms of motifs, compositions, and concepts. They reconfigured subjects and framing techniques adopted from a range of sources to fit their own political plan.

Interestingly, the Gao Brothers mention the Great Wall as one of the "useless" relicts of a past age (**fig. 4.5**). According to *The True Record*, the Great Wall belongs to another time. Designed to protect China from the Mongolians and Manchu, it has become futile "since the five races have united" under the republican flag.[342] Whereas foreign photographic discourse about China by perceived the Great Wall as a symbol of the Chinese Nation, and relied on its

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[339] Thomson, *Through China with a Camera*, 175.

[340] Thomson, *Through China with a Camera*, 175. Not all narrow streets were equally despised: when describing narrow streets in Canton, Thomson remarked on their picturesqueness and the protection they provided from the sun. See Thomson, *Through China with a Camera,* 68–70. Regarding the perception of hygiene in turn-of the century China, see Ruth Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity: Meanings of Health and Disease in Treaty-Port China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press), 2004.

[341] *The True Record*, issue 5 (1912) n.p. [12].

[342] When describing Beijing, John Thomson reports a similar vision that recognizes the value of the city walls as monuments stressing their uselessness in the present: "The old walls of the great city are truly wonderful monuments of human industry. Their base is sixty feet wide, their breath at the top about forty feet, and their height also averages forty feet. But alas! Time and the modern arts of warfare have rendered them practically nothing more than interesting relics of a bygone age." Thomson, *Through China with a Camera*, 238.

aestheticization to communicate an image of power and historical significance, *The True Record* does not mention its aesthetic or nationalist value.[343] While the former vision was embedded in Romanticism and the love for the picturesque common in European perceptions of ruins, *The True Record* states the Great Wall should be preserved only to avoid the waste of time, money, and labor.[344]

This section focused on the reinterpretation of remnants by Chinese revolutionaries. Recent remnants of demolished city walls in Canton and Shanghai came to embody conscious revolutionary action. In other words, images of remnants did not exclusively witness revolutionary praxis; they were reproduced to convince the reader that the practice of the revolution was possible and already relevant to the present. The image-text relation within the context of the revolutionary magazine *The True Record* strengthened the idea that China needed to embrace radical change to adapt to the coming age. In revolutionary propaganda, photographs of remnants partially rely on aestheticized visions of ruins by nineteenth century foreigners travelling in China. Yet, the motif underwent significant changes once the photographs of remnants came to serve the republican revolutionary agenda. On closer examination, it becomes evident that in the context of the Chinese Revolution, ruined buildings did not mirror the romantic or melancholic sentiments inspired by Euro-American visions of a semi-ruined and semi-colonized China. Instead, remnants become one of the symbols that stood for the renewal of the Chinese nation, exclusively possible through the end of the monarchy and the establishment of the Republic.

Another kind of remnant acquired importance during and after the foundation of the Republic of China, namely, historical remnants were invested with newly acquired artistic,

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[343] The Great Wall was used as a symbol of China in internationally circulated visual material, for example the eighteenth-century watercolor by William Alexander in footnote 5, as well as a range of printed publications including postcards, magazines, as well as scientific books.
[344] *The True Record* 5 (1912), n. p. [13].

cultural, and nationalist value. As the images and conceptual shift analyzed in the next section emphasize, the reconceptualization of imperial heritage as valuable public property strikingly diverged from the useless quality attributed to the Great Wall. Rather than embodying useless artefacts, former Qing-owned objects and buildings became shared patrimony with the power to construct the Republic.

Reinterpreting Ancient Remnants as Heritage

Chinese activists who fought to undermine the Qing used photographs in revolutionary pictorials to incite, report, and celebrate change via images of remnants. In the second section of this chapter, I introduce images of "ancient remnants," which indicate monuments and objects that belong to times past and do not serve any functional use in the present. Examples are monuments and buildings of a religion no longer practiced, vessels and sculptures no longer in use, as well as ritual objects that have lost their ritual function. After groundbreaking political and social revolutions, these objects are still extant yet their meaning has changed. This section zooms in the 1911 Republican Revolution in China and investigates how the revolutionaries used images of remnants of the past to serve their political agenda. Images of "ancient remnants" stand in contrast with what I have called "remnants from the present" in that the objects involved have an older provenance. The loss of one of their components, or their loss of meaning, has occurred in the relatively distant past. In terms of the function of photography in relation to these ancient remnants, photographers are less concerned with the instant of the current event; rather they focus on the object's survival into the present. The revolutionary must have asked himself what these images of the past could achieve in and for the tumultuous present.

I illustrate the process of the glorification of political change though reference to photos of ancient remnants in two steps: first, I show how the histories of remnants of other

colonized or semi-colonized countries were used as positive or negatives examples for the Chinese reader to reflect on the Chinese past, present, and future. Specifically, I consider the 1907 case of a representation of an Egyptian monument in the Sinophone anarchist magazine *Le Monde*. Depicted as a millenary civilization that had lost its dignity and much of its artistic heritage following colonization, Egypt is established as a negative example the Chinese should avoid imitating. After a close analysis of the Egyptian example, I move on to consider the complex relationship between a newly emerging consciousness of public heritage imbued with republican values and the early Chinese art market in Europe, and how the sale of artefacts helped to support the revolutionary struggle. I refer to the two parallel and conceptually distinct cases of the Tonying company, established by anarchist Zhang Jingjiang in Paris, which sponsored Sun Yat-sen through commerce in Chinese art both before and after the 1911 Revolution, and to "going public" of the imperial collection in the Forbidden City in the 1920s. Both cases, in different ways, elucidate a tendency to use objects from the Chinese past to shape the Republic, either in a material sense with Zhang's art sales funding revolutionary activism, or in a conceptual sense, with the opening of the imperial collection to public view in 1925 as a means to contribute to a national imagined community.[345]

Approached as telling historical sources, visual representations of ancient remnants and artefacts are not simply repositories of memories but rather function as the cultural foundations for the Republic. A close analysis of photographs in the context of the revolutionary illustrated magazines supports this dissertation's wider argument that photographs used in the revolutionary context emancipated photography from the colonial gaze. Although the camera was one medium imported during colonial encounters beginning with the Opium wars, then, local political movements found numerous ways to rethink its

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[345] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spreading of Nationalism*, London: Verso, 2006.

potentiality as an agent of change, as a tactic, to further their own emancipatory agenda.[346] The revolutionary leader Sun Yat-sen conceptualized three principles as the base of the Republic of China: nationalism, democracy, and people's livelihood.[347] The camera, despite maintaining its hard features as a Western technology, evaded its colonial uses and was transformed into a tactic the revolutionary movement harnessed to foreshadow change. In what follows, I analyze how photography came to endorse the revolutionary and republican program, specifically in the depiction, circulation, and appropriation of ancient remnants.

Egypt's Looted National Heritage as a Negative Example

What could a photograph of British soldiers sitting and standing on the Sphinx of Giza achieve in a socially chaotic 1907 China and in the Sinophone diaspora (**Fig. 4.6**)? This section builds on Rebecca Karl's insight that the formation of nationalism in early twentieth-century China developed in relation to other anti-colonial consciousnesses developed in subaltern contexts and not exclusively as a replica of the European nation-state model.[348] Reformers attempting to radically change their countries looked for positive and negative examples on the international scene, and assumed them as models or antimodels for their cause.[349] Building on Karl's conceptualization, evidence from the revolutionary journals show that Egypt was featured as a negative example that China should avoid imitating.[350]

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[346] "Tactic" contrasts with "Strategy," as used by De Certeau. See Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1984). On my use of the term, see the introduction and chapter 1.

[347] The concept first appeared in the newspaper *Min Bao* 民報 in 1905 as "Three Major Principles" (三大主義). See Li Chien-Nung, *The Political History of China, 1840–1928*, translated by Ssu-yu Teng and Jeremy Ingalls (Princeton, NJ: Van Nostrand, 1956), 203–206.

[348] Karl points, for example, to the manipulation of the experience of "Poland," used as both a noun and verb by late Qing reformers to indicate a status of precariousness and imminent partition if the elite failed to efficiently reform institutions. Rebecca E. Karl, *Staging the World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2002), 33–38.

[349] Karl, *Staging the World*, 3–52.

[350] *Le Monde* 1 (1907): A13

Egypt's cultural heritage was central to the nineteenth century archaeological enterprise. French, German, and British archaeologists, and their invention and development of the disciplines of archaeology and art history in Europe, crystallized the Egyptian heritage as "Egyptian" and as "heritage." Idealized as the birthplace of European civilization and art, during the nineteenth century Egypt became a favorite object of early archaeological studies, orientalist photography, and grand tours.[351] The British, who controlled Egypt after they defeated local military forces with the French army at Tel El Kebir (1882), assumed the local management of monuments and remnants was inappropriate or altogether absent, and that it was the civilizational mission of the European scholar to "uncover" and "recover" local tombs. Artefacts unearthed during archaeological expeditions were transported back to the imperial capitals, where the newly established ethnographic museums were ready to store and display them.[352]

Photographs bore witness to the process of finding, transporting, and exhibiting heritage. The images of monuments, objects, and ruins, just like the artefacts themselves, travelled through various routes and lived a number of different lives. The photograph of the British soldiers on the Sphinx introduced was an example of the variety of such routes. The illustration was published in the Sinophone illustrated *Le Monde*. The attached explanatory essay establishes a direct connection between China and Egypt based on a common ground of a long history, rich civilization, and pictogram-based ancient language.[353] The young Chinese

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[351] Ali Behad has shown that early photographs of Egypt isolate architectural elements to create an aura of "sacredness" and erase the presence of local people. See Ali Behad, "The Orientalist Photograph," in *Photography's Orientalism: New Essays on Colonial Representation*, edited by Ali Behad and Luke Gartlan (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2013), 11–32, esp. 22–24.

[352] On the interconnection between the preservation and cataloging of archeological findings and colonial modes of thinking see Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); and Michael Falser, ed., *Cultural Heritage as Civilizing Mission: From Decay to Recovery* (Heidelberg; New York; Dordrecht; London: Springer, 2015).

[353] Both Egyptian hieroglyphics and Chinese characters are described as pictographic languages [Xiangxing 象形]. *Le Monde* (1907): A13.

anarchists who published the image and article suggested that Egypt was the most ancient land (*guo* 國) in the world and the origin of both Chinese and European civilizations.[354] Nevertheless, starting from the Qin/Han period (221 BCE–220 CE), the Egyptian nation/people (*minzu* 民族) had fallen in a retrograde status, which resulted in the underdevelopment of its race (*zhongren* 種人).[355] Establishing a clear resonance with China's semi-colonial status, the author asserts that Egypt was "not strong enough to establish itself as an independent country." Therefore, Egypt was still dominated by the Turks, "nephews of western European Arian race." In its final criticism of foreign power over local heritage, the essay condemns the theft perpetrated by the numerous forces on its land. Due to the sale of Egyptian heritage to British governors, "many of its artefacts are now preserved in museums in big cities of all countries, while here remains nothing but its monumental buildings."[356]

Although the British administrators of Egypt at the turn of the twentieth century did not achieve the transplantation of Egypt's massive buildings to the British Museum and other colonial archives, those monuments became favorite subjects of their easily portable photographs. Images expressed the power of the conqueror and the possession of monuments despite the impossibility of their physical appropriation. Or, as Susan Sontag expressed it,

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[354] Various theories on the origin of humanity and the "Chinese race" are further analyzed in Chapter 1. The conception presented here that European and Chinese civilization both originated in Egypt is unusual, as related sources usually mention Babylonia or Lemuria as the point of origin of the human race.

[355] The authors use Chinese dynastic-based historical periodization to describe the history of Egypt. The Qin-Han period stretched from 221 BCE to 220 CE.

[356] The text is summarized as follows. The foundation (*jianguo* 建國) of Egypt goes back to before Tang Yu. The Europeans believed it was the most ancient nation (*guo* 國) in the world. Civilization itself originated in Egypt, then moved to Babylonia, and later reached China. The characters on Egyptian ancient steles are pictograms (*xiangxing* 象形), which demonstrate Eastern and Western civilizations are in fact related, although there is no trace of this connection in Chinese classics. The origin of European civilization is in Egypt. But starting from the Qin/Han period, its race (*minzu* 民族) was in a retrograde status and its culture didn't develop further. Up to the early twentieth century, its race (*zhongren* 種人) was underdeveloped. It was not strong enough to establish itself as an independent country, and is still dominated by the Turks, nephews of Western European Aryan race. Powerful countries have stolen and conquered all around it, and the Turks have sold much of its heritage to the English. (…) Many of its artefacts are now preserved in museums in big cities of all countries, while its monumental buildings are still there. Follows an historical contextualization on the Sfinge (in photo with English guardians).

photography allowed people to assert "an imaginary possession of a past that is unreal."[357] Photographs of the colonial period depict the colonizer atop local heritage. British soldiers standing on the Sphinx of Giza express precisely this kind of power relationship. By stealing the heritage and appropriating ruins that could not be stolen via photography, the British Empire completed its civilizational mission. Conceived in a quasi-postcolonial language, the essay published in the Chinese periodical in France recycled the colonial photograph of proud English soldiers on the Sphinx for a message of resistance. By providing the example of a powerful civilization that had fallen under foreign control, the image demanded that Chinese citizens-to-be to resist similar forms of coercion.

Egypt's experiences of epistemic and physical violence reported in *Le Monde* in 1907 resonated with events in recent Chinese history. Less than fifty years earlier, in the context of the Second Opium War in 1860, French and British soldiers destroyed many of the eclectic-style buildings designed by former European missionaries in Beijing's Summer Palace (**fig. 4.7**). During the sack of the Summer Palace, many of the artefacts stored in the imperial buildings were looted and sold abroad, leaving a deep wound in the Chinese historical patrimony. The trauma left by punitive civilizational missions became a nightmare for the Chinese in the following decades. Fear and anger over foreign invasion grew stronger after the Eight-Nation Alliance following the Boxer Rebellion, which placed part of Beijing under foreign authority and forced the Empress Dowager Cixi's escape to Xi'an.[358] It does not come as a surprise, then, that remnants of historical and artistic value, such as items from the imperial collection and archaeological objects, assumed a key role in the Republic of China's

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[357] Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (London: Penguin Books, 2019), 8.
[358] Similar sentiments of hate would grow stronger during Japanese control of Manchuria in the 30s and consequent Japanese invasion of central China.

cultural nationalism. Photographs that promoted the conception of heritage to constitute the Republic form the core of the next section.

Chinese Heritage for sale in Paris

The Second Opium War (1856–1860) was triggered by Britain's attempts to further open Chinese cities to international commercial activities and resulted in the imposition of a series of unequal treaties on the Qing court. Towards the end of the four-year long conflict, the Anglo-French expedition approached Beijing in 1860 and two escorted British envoys met with Prince Yi to negotiate the terms of the Qing surrender. At the same time, the French and British military were directed towards the northeast part of the city to the Summer Palace. Upon receiving information that the negotiations had been impeded by the Qing, the British High Commissioner to China, James Bruce, 8th Earl of Elgin, ordered British troops to destroy completely the palace's numerous buildings. As John Thomson remarked, many gorgeous buildings that eclectically intertwined European Baroque and Chinese styles were destroyed during three days of assault.[359] What Thomson does not make entirely clear is the incredible number of artefacts that were stolen during the looting and later found their way into major European collections and museums.[360]

The process of the looting, staging, selling, and storing of the treasures that were collected in the Summer Palace is progressively being discovered through provenance research in museums all over the world, although the routes were twisted and hard to trace because the objects passed through different hands before reaching museums. Photographs survive that show that objects looted during the attack were exhibited publicly in France. One

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[359] See section one in this chapter.

photograph, taken between 1861 and 1863 by André-Adolphe-Eugène Disdéri's studio in

Paris, in particular illustrates the historical events narrated by Thomson (**fig. 4.7**).[361] Objects

in the image include a range of jade sculptures and vases as well as a bronze Buddha. The

photograph was possibly taken at the Tuileries Palace, where robbed items were put on show

in 1861, or at Empress Eugénie's Musée Chinois at Fontainebleau, opened in 1863.[362] The

objects are situated on three levels on an exhibition pedestal, and fully exhibited to the

camera in a museum-like show, although the central Buddha, vases, and jade objects are

arranged in a rather accidental way. The light source from the upper left produces shadows

on the objects that enhance the exquisite carving details on the jade sculptures, as well as the

masterful rendering of human features on the seated Buddha. From a contemporary

perspective, the albumen print reproduces the violence of their acquisition and therefore

effectively works as colonial photography. This image, then, exemplifies precisely the kind

of photography that "dissects" reality and works together with European museums as one of

the media of colonial power as described by Ariella Azoulay.[363] The photograph fully

manifests the relations of power between the colonizer and the colonized through the lens of

looted heritage.

At the level of the communicated message, the image is close to the photograph of the

British army on the remnants of the Sphinx: both historical heritages were appropriated by

the European colonial power, which in turn transformed them into valuable objects to be

exhibited and protected in museums at the center of their empires. Yet relevant formal and

conceptual differences distinguish the two images: the first depicts men over cultural

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[361] André-Adolphe-Eugène Disdéri (1819–1889) was an influential Parisian photographer, especially famous for inventing the carte-de-visite in 1854.
[362] See notes attached to the image on the Getty Library Catalogue. https://primo.getty.edu/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=GETTY_ROSETTAIE3303851&context=L&vid=GRI&lang=en_US&search_scope=DIGITAL&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=all_gri&query=any,contains,spoils%20summer%20palace&offset=0 Accessed 21.12.2021.
[363] Azoulay, *Potential History*, 2–3. See also introduction.

remnants *in situ* in Egypt, whereas the second depicts an interior space and focuses on the objects rather than on the human possession. Objects looted from colonies and semi-colonies including China had a strong presence in European collections in the late nineteenth century. Considering the Sinophone Parisian anarchists' quasi post-colonial reaction to the image of the Egyptian Sphinx, and their comparison with the situation in China, it would seem intuitive that their visit to looted or low-price collections did nothing but strengthen their resistance to the colonial conquest of indigenous heritage. They knew the collections of Asian and Middle Eastern art preserved in Europe because they had direct access to those collections via newly opened public museums. Their relationships with figures influential in the cultural, artistic, and political sphere such as Cai Yuanpei and Sun Yat-sen, as well as with the French intellectual elites, was also important. The relationship between Chinese anarchists, museums, and galleries dealing with Asian art in Europe was not always one of absolute condemnation. In fact, the main sponsor of *Le Monde*, as well as an important sustainer of Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary enterprise, was Zhang Jingjiang, who actively participated in the lucrative export of Chinese art objects to France.

Zhang Jingjiang profited from his network of personal relationships in China to sell Chinese artefacts to French museums as well as private collectors. The Tonying Company (*Tongyun gongsi* 通運公司) he established in Paris with financial support from his father Zhang Baoshan 張寶善 (1856 – 1926) at first exported tea and silk, and only later engaged in the much more lucrative business of selling Chinese artworks.[364] C. T. Loo (盧芹齋 Lu Qinzhai, also spelled Cheng-Tsai Loo, 1880–1957), the well-known Paris-based collector who brokered the sale of incredible amounts of Chinese artwork to French and American

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[364] According to Zhang, the company was based at Place de la Madeleine 4. See Zhang, Chang, and Song, *The Zhangs from Nanxun*, 162. The 1914 memorandum reports a different address: Rue Lafitte 1, where the company might have moved.

collections in the first half of the twentieth century, worked at first for Zhang Jingjiang and before he moved on to establish his own gallery in 1908.[365] In Paris, Zhang not only sold Chinese objects to private buyers and galleries, but also donated objects to the Cernuschi Museum. Even after moving back to China in 1911, Zhang continued to curate his relationship with European collectors and museums. In 1912, for example, he bestowed to the museum a Tang dynasty terracotta sculpture with a human subject.[366] In 1914, the Tonying Company donated two "green iridescent glazed terracotta torch holder statuettes," which probably refers to two celadon pieces (**fig. 4.8**).[367] Before this donation, Zhang's company engaged in the massively profitable sale of Chinese objects to the French elite, whose taste was further refined through the actions of C. T. Loo. Despite attempts initiated by the Beiyang government to protect Chinese heritage from being sold abroad through presidential laws to limit the export of antiquities (*da zongtong fabu xianzhi guwu chukou ling* 大總統發佈限制古物出口令) and the provisional law for the protection of antiquities (*baocun guwu zanxing bianfa* 保存古物暫行辦法), issued in 1914 and 1916 respectively, the export of Chinese objects into Europe continued via the mediation of personal and business relations.[368]

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[365] Géraldine Lenain, *Monsieur Loo: Le roman d'un marchand d'art asiatique* (Arles: Éditions Philippe Picquier, 2013), 39. On Loo's career in France and beyond, see Lenain, *Monsieur Loo*; on the career and relevance of C. T. Loo's trading work in the USA, see Yiyou Wang, "The Loouvre from China: A Critical Study of C. T. Loo and the Framing of Chinese Art in the United States, 1915–1950" (Ph.D. diss., Ohio University, 2007).

[366] The letter of the curator to the director of the Cernuschi Museum, dated 17 November 1912, suggests accepting the donation of the Tang piece (dimensions 45 cm x 30 cm). Zhang Jingjiang is spelled as Tsang Jen-tsié, transcription of his name Zhang Renjie.

[367] The memorandum is dated March 11, 1914. The sender is the Cie Chinoise Tonying (Chinese Tonying Company), based at Rue Lafitte 1, and the document directly addresses the curator of the Cernuschi Museum, Monsieur d'Ardennes de Tizac.

[368] Huang Xiangyu 黃翔瑜, "*Minguo yilai guwu baocun fazhi zhi yansheng beijing shixi* (1911–1930) 民國以來古物保存法制之誕生背景試析（1911–1930）[An analysis of the background of the birth of the legal system for the preservation of antiquities since the Republic of China]," *Bulletin of Academia Historica* 34 (December 2012), 17.

Zhang Jingjiang's company contributed to the establishment of a market for Chinese artefacts in Europe, which was growing since the acquisition of artefacts during the repression of the Boxer Rebellion as well as through archaeological enterprises in Western China by scholars Paul Pelliot (1878–1945) and Marc Aurel Stein (1862–1943). How can Zhang's sale of Chinese heritage abroad be reconciled with the quasi post-colonial conception of national treasures elucidated by *Le Monde*? In other words, if it was not acceptable for the British administration to acquire Egyptian heritage and place it on display in the British Museum, how could it be acceptable for Zhang to sell Chinese treasures to Parisian collectors and institutions? The difference between the British and Zhang lies in the former's status as a colonial power, while the latter belonged to the indigenous elite. Furthermore, Zhang reinvested part of his earnings into the revolutionary cause. This included, on the republican side of the game, the transfer of consistent sums of money to Sun Yat-sen and, on the anarchist side, the funding of the magazines *Le Monde* and *La Novaj Tempoj*. Sun Yat-sen noted in his memories that Zhang was one of the main financial powers behind revolutionary action between 1905 and 1911.[369] On the anarchist side, the illustrated magazine published with his support, *Le Monde*, clearly condemned the transfer of looted objects from the colonies to grand global museums in Europe. Yet it was not a scandal that Chinese art objects including jades and ceramics were sold in Europe, assuming the profit would end up in the hands of a Chinese businessman and at least part of the revenue could be used for the revolution. Zhang Jingjiang, then, embodied the contradictions and compromises that characterized the experiences of Chinese art dealers, businessmen, and revolutionaries in an age of great social and political change.

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[369] Sun Yat-Sen, *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary* (Taipei: Sino-American Publishing Co., 1953), 166; cited in Nanchen Zhang, Laurence Chang, and Song Luxia, *The Zhangs from Nanxun: A One Hundred and Fifty Year Chronicle of a Chinese Family* (Palo Alto; Denver: CF Press, 2010), 137.
Nanchen Zhang, Laurence Chang, and Song Luxia suggest that Zhang's financial contribution to the Revolutionary Alliance substantially surpassed sixty to seventy thousand silver dollars. See Zhang, Chang, and Song, *The Zhangs from Nanxun,* 140–1.

The interconnection between revolutionary ideals and the commerce in Asian art goes beyond the individual interests of Zhang Jingjiang. Rather, it occasionally drove the actions of Europeans collector-revolutionaries as well. The dual pursuit characterized the life of other key figures in the making of East Asian Art in Europe. For example, the founder of the Cernuschi Museum, Henri Cernuschi (1821–1896) came from a wealthy Italian family and participated in the revolutionary movements of 1848 that eventually led to the first Italian War of Independence against Austrian control.[370] As a consequence, he was arrested and escaped to go into exile in France. in Paris, Cernuschi became a wealthy economist while promoting his republican ideals. He subscribed a sum to a committee formed to combat the Napoleonic plebiscite, which prompted him to leave France, only returning with the foundation of the Third Republic in 1870.[371] Later, he travelled widely during which he assembled around 5,000 Asian artefacts. Back in Paris in 1873, he exhibited his collection at the *Exposition Orientaliste* (August 1873–January 1874) at the Palais de l'Industrie and built a house-museum open to visitors willing to study the collection that resembled a *Kunstkammer*.[372] A Japanese bronze Amida Nyorai from the Banryu-ji towered at the center of the monumental room of the museum-house, illuminated by natural light that filtered through a top window and surrounded by an impressive amount of bronzes sculptures and wood engravings (**fig. 4.9**).[373] Rather than a set reflecting a pure aesthetic or orientalist interest, an altar-like table decorated with a plant positioned before the sculpture suggests an

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[370] Introductory text on the wall and the introductory cards at the Musée Cernuschi, read by the author *in situ* on September 12, 2021. See also Cernuschi's biography on the museum's website https://www.cernuschi.paris.fr/en/museum/henri-cernuschi. Last accessed: December 16, 2021.

[371] Profoundly shocked by the dramatic events of the Paris Commune, Cernuschi embarked on a world tour from September 1871 to January 1873 in the company of a young art critic, Théodore Duret (1838–1927).

[372] Also called *Wunderkammer*, this kind of space was used to exhibit a diverse assemblage of objects collected by private wealthy individuals. See Oliver Impey and Arthur MacGregor, *The Origins of Museums: The Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth-and-Seventeenth-Century Europe* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).

[373] The Banryu-ji is a Jodo 'Pure Land' sect temple. The Buddha is still there in the current permanent exhibition of the Museum, although the pedestal has been substituted with a concave space to exhibit Chinese artefact, and that leads to the elevated floor to Buddhist art (Dec. 2021).

atmosphere of veneration. Furthermore, two roundtables, books, and several chairs reveal a space that was open to a range of uses including scholarship, spiritual respect, and attentive observation of the objects. Upon Cernuschi's death in 1896, the house and the collection were passed to the city of Paris, which initiated a series of regular exhibitions based on the permanent collection as well as items borrowed and acquired from Parisian, German, and British collections.[374] Cernuschi, then, was not only a wealthy merchant fascinated by Asian art. Rather, he was a prominent intellectual figure able to combine his passion for Asian art with his republican ideals in a mode that paralleled the combination of financial success, art dealing, and political engagement in anarchism and republicanism exemplified by Zhang Jingjiang.

To conclude, this section has problematized the apparently dichotomous association of the anarchists' condemnation of the transfer of heritage from its land of origin to European collections and Zhang Jingjiang's involvement in the development of such commercial network to sustain the revolutionary cause. In what follows, I switch the focus to the Chinese context during a slightly later period, after the foundation of the Republic. In the context of the young Republic of China after the 1911 revolution, I ask: besides using the material profit to buy guns for the revolution, how could and did historical remnants related to China's dynastic past become productive in the newly established Republic?

Imperial Heritage for show in China

National heritage and its definition, preservation, and display, assumed an increasingly relevant role in the political agenda of the Republic of China in the decades after its

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[374] Many dealers, collectors, and galleries include L. Wannieck 公義洋行 (Paris and Peking. Photographed items are collected in the Cernuschi Photo collection. some objects are now in the Cernuschi collection, some have been sold to other buyers), M. Bing (Paris), Yokohama Trading C (Paris), Bernard Sancholle-Henraux (Paris and Seravezza), Madame F. Langweil (Paris), Onno Behrends (Berlin), Coomaraswamy (London), et cetera.

foundation. It was only a few years after the publication of the Sphinx photograph, the 1911

Xinhai Revolution, and the establishment of the Republic of China in 1912 that the first

national museum, the Institute for Antiquities Exhibition (*guwu chenliesuo* 古物陳列所),

opened in 1914.[375] A photograph shows a crowd of women, children, and men walking

toward the entrance to the Forbidden City, which in turn is framed by two republican flags

and numerous inscriptions, in October 1913 (**fig. 4.10**). As soon as 1914 the audience halls of

the Forbidden City were open for exhibition and some objects were transferred to the summer

palace at Jehol (Chengde 承德) for display.[376] These exhibitions started a trend to display

heritage in museums, which were a new educational tool favored by modern nations. Rather

than constituting isolated cases, these steps contributed to a discourse that claimed Chinese

heritage as belonging to the entire Republic and not just the Imperial family's private

collection. Reinterpreting such objects, spanning prehistory to the Qing dynasty, as public

national heritage went a long way to conceptualizing national treasures and museum displays

as a didactic platform in twentieth century China.

Cultural nationalism led to the earliest Chinese-government sponsored archaeological

discoveries in China. Foreigners had explored and acquired Chinese archaeological materials

for European collections since the first years of the twentieth century. Albert Grünwedel

(1856–1935), for example, was one of the earliest foreign archaeologists to work in China,

specifically in Turfan, where he acquired murals from Kyzil in 1902. The French Paul Pelliot

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[375] On the history of the Palace Museum and of the museum as modern institution in China, see Xu Wanling 徐婉玲, "*Bowuguan yu guojia renting zhi jiangou: yi Gugong bowuyuan wei zhongxin* 博物馆与国家认同之建构——以故宫博物院开院为中心 [the museum and the construction of a common sense of the nation: the case of the opening of the Palace Museum]," *gugong xuekan* 10 (2013). See also Xu Jian 徐坚, *Mingshan: zuowei sixiangshi de zaoqi Zhongguo bowuguan shi* 名山：作为思想史的早期中国博物馆史 [Famous mountains: an intellectual history of museums in China] (Beijing: Science Press, 2016). Influential private institutions included the Nantong Museum (*Nantong bowuguan* 南通博物院), established by Zhang Jian. See Qin Shao, "Exhibiting the Modern: The Creation of the First Chinese Museum, 1905–1930*," The China Quarterly* 179 (Sep. 2004): 684–702.
[376] Rubie Watson, "Palaces, museums, and squares: Chinese national spaces," *Museum Anthropology* 19, no. 2 (1995), 7.

led an expedition to Central Asia between 1906 and 1909; during his visits to the Kyzil and

the Mogao caves, he acquired extensive manuscripts that had survived the previous visit by

the British Aurel Stein. Japanese archaeologist Torii Ryuzo (1870–1953) discovered the

prehistoric site of Hongshan in occupied Manchuria in 1908. Starting from 1916, the British-

educated Ding Wenjiang 丁文江 (1887–1936) cooperated with the newly appointed Mining

Adviser to the Chinese government, Johan Gunnar Andersson (1874–1960), on the

excavation of prehistoric archaeological sites in Northern China, prominently in the village of

Yangshao.[377] Consequently, in 1925, Li Ji 李濟 (1896–1979) expanded research on the

Yangshao culture in Shanxi province.[378] In 1928, the director of the new Institute of History

and Philology, Fu Sinian (1896–1950), asked Li Ji to organize an excavation at the former

Shang capital in Anyang (Henan province).[379] Archaeological excavations backed by the

Nationalist government continued during the 1920s and 1930s until the outbreak of the

Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937.

The global appropriation and exhibition of archaeological remnants as sites of cultural

identity spread to Chinese intellectual debates. The interest in antiquarianism, previously

reserved to the elite, acquired popular visibility in photographic reproductions published in

books and magazines. Han-period stone reliefs, for example, were made available to the

reader through photographic reproductions of rubbings. Examples in *The True Record*

include rubbings of Han-period tomb low reliefs from Qufu (Shandong province) with

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[377] Despite recognizing the presence of Neolithic remnants in China, Andersson aimed to reconnect them with greater Asia to corroborate the then widespread belief that Chinese culture had originated from the west. On Andersson's expedition, see Magnus Fiskesjö and Chen Xingcan, *China Before China: Johan Gunnar Andersson, Ding Wenjiang, and the Discovery of China's Prehistory* (Stockholm, Sweden: Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, 2004), esp. 104.

[378] Clayton D. Brown, "Li Ji: the Father of Chinese Archeology," *Orientations* 39, no. 3 (April 2008): 61–2.

[379] Sarah E. Fraser, "Buddhist Archaeology in Republican China: A New Relationship to the Past," The Elsley Zeitlyn Lecture on Chinese Archaeology and Culture, *Proceedings of the British Academy* no. 167 (London: Oxford University Press, 2011), 155.

conventional themes such as funerary processions.[380] Understood in the broader context of the journal's revolutionary scope, these kinds of images were circulated to a wide audience as a historical education tool and, at the same time, indexed the burgeoning interest in Chinese archaeology and the ongoing search for the idealized origins of Han Chinese civilization. The discourse on indigenous heritage as an embodiment of cultural nationalism, which had developed and was developing on a global scale, included in China elements of racial supremacy. The historical rupture with corrupt Manchu rule coincided with a renewed interest in forms of culture and history that appeared to be essentially Chinese. Within the nationalist narration established after the foundation of the Republic of China, objects and treasures that had been stolen by non-Han communities had to be returned for the good of the nation. Therefore, objects that had been owned by the foreign Qing dynasty should be returned to Han republican control.

Although numerous objects had already been removed from the Forbidden City during the suppression of the Boxer Rebellion, by court eunuchs or via private relationships with palace officials, it was not until the 1920s that the imperial family moved out of the center of Beijing. The definitive expulsion of the last emperor Pu Yi from the Forbidden City was decided by the warlord Feng Yuxiang 馮玉祥, who seized control of Beijing on October 23, 1924.[381] The chief of the Beijing police Lu Zhonglin 鹿鍾麟, commanded forces that sought to prevent court eunuchs and concubines from stealing imperial treasures.[382] Shao Yi, the head of Pu Yi's cabinet, initially refused to surrender the imperial family's belongings but was forced to capitulate and the imperial family left the Forbidden City that very day.[383] Li

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[380] *The True Record* 13 (1912): n.p. [68].
[381] Mark O'Neill, *The Miraculous History of China's Two Palaces Museums* (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing, 2015), 27.
[382] O'Neill, *The Miraculous History*, 29.
[383] O'Neill, *The Miraculous History*, 29–32.

Shizeng, a former contributor to *Le Monde*, was the civilian representative who oversaw the removal of the imperial treasures and eventually became director general of the Palace Museum. By 1925, following an endorsement from the dying Sun Yat-sen, the Palace Museum opened its doors to all citizens. Exhibitions of imperial objects changed the perception of those artefacts. The remnants were no longer the sole preserve of the imperial family but were now "national heritage," belonging to all citizens of the Republic. Two images, published in 1925 after the definitive expulsion of Emperor Pu Yi and his retinue from the Forbidden City, provide a poignant case of the public appropriation of goods that had been considered the private possessions of the imperial family (**fig. 4.13**).[384] Both images show signs of manual retouching, especially in the lower part. The image on the right features a fierce republican soldier standing on two silver ingots, while Forbidden City eunuchs hopelessly gaze at the lost imperial treasures. The left image prominently displays the eunuchs' queues and long beards, striking a visual contrast with the frontal figure of the republican soldier.[385] The image bears witness to the physical reappropriation of treasures kept in the palace and demands the reader subscribe to its agenda of requisitioning heritage from the hands of the Manchu.

The visual and conceptual connections between the images of republican soldiers literally standing over national treasures under the sad look of court workers (**fig. 4.11**) and the photograph of Egypt's exploited heritage (**fig. 4.6**) become evident. Both images use historical heritage to call for independence and empowerment at the expense of the coercive external power, be it the English colonizer or the Manchu emperor. On a global scale, photography contributed to the canonization of national categories that would contain

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[384] Pu Yi was expelled on November 4, 1924. The Forbidden City officially became a public museum on October 10, 1925. Watson, "Palaces, museums, and squares," 7.

[385] The essay attached to the photos stresses the significance of the final expulsion of Emperor Pu Yi and his entourage from the Forbidden City.

different heritages, whether "Chinese," or "Egyptian." At the same time, the camera catalogued such material inheritance under the colonial lens. Yet, images conceived following the same rationale could also empower the relation between national heritage and the beholder, displaying the legacy of colonial power and undermining its legitimacy.

The revolutionary reinterpretation of art objects as well as images of cultural heritage demanded that remnants from the past serve the Chinese nationalist revolutionary present. It comes as little surprise, therefore, that Chinese anarchists and later republicans accepted the idea that national heritage could be sold abroad if the profits were reinvested for the good of the Republic. In the case of Zhang Jingjiang, for example, the commercial exchange of Chinese art in Europe did not constitute a conundrum, and both the Parisian anarchists and Sun Yat-sen did not hesitate to accept his sponsorship for their own political aims. Finally, I introduced the international spread of national heritage as a sublimated site for the construction and strengthening of cultural nationalism. Museums in China, established from 1912 onwards, promoted the display of Chinese heritage to a wide audience with the aim of reinforcing a sense of cultural belonging and creating a perception of a progressive history that culminated in the foundation of the Republic of China. This "Chinese heritage" included not only objects produced during dynasties traditionally considered to be ethnically Chinese, but also incorporated artefacts from the Yuan (Mongolian) and Qing (Manchu) dynasties. Framed as treasures of rulers of foreign descent, these objects should be restituted to the Chinese Han, not only to the elite but to the entire population.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has visualized the radical historical shift that revolutionary narratives of various kinds aimed to project on an idealized and renewed Chinese society, particularly through the use of images of remnants to embody national rebirth. I distinguished two kinds of remnants: the first kind includes remnants of recent making, purposely

perpetrated by revolutionary and republican forces; the second designates artefacts of historical and artistic value that I have called national heritage.

First, revolutionaries understood a certain amount of destruction as necessary because a violent uprising was the only means to attain rebirth. Destruction not only attacked physical buildings, but symbolically meant the elimination of coercive power exercised by both the Manchu and the Euro-American powers over Chinese territory, both of which the revolutionaries conceptualized as "foreign." Second, parallels with the situation in colonized countries such as Egypt provided negative examples that were used to instruct the reader about China's problems and possible solutions. In this context, the Chinese revolutionaries aimed to reappropriate national treasures that had fallen into the hands of the Manchu, provide them with a suitable venue for exhibition, and move toward the progress promised by the paradigm of the modern nation. It is in this sense that even photographs of colonial conquest, images that explicitly stated the inequality between the European and the "Oriental," can and did become sites of resistance and agents for social change. Chinese anarchists used the image of the Sphinx precisely to make a larger point about the injustice of national heritages being systematically plundered and expatriated for exhibition in European institutions. They reinvented, in this sense, not only the medium of photography but also single photographs to fulfil their political reformative program.

Finally, historical Chinese artefacts were reinterpreted as art to serve the cause of the revolution. Heritage served the revolutionary cause in two ways: Zhang Jingjiang was representative of the practice of selling ancient art abroad to fund the revolution before 1911. On the other hand, after 1911 heritage within China became a site of signification for Chinese nationalism, which was defined in contrast to both the foreign powers and the Manchu ethnic group in the new public space of the museum.

CHAPTER FIVE

PLACES SIGNIFY THE REPUBLIC

Introduction

Before the foundation of the Republic of China, the ruling elites of the court in Beijing and privileged subjects in the provinces had exclusive access to the places where decisions were made, as well as the visual representation of such places. As the name "Forbidden City" suggests, the non-elite did not have access to the Qing court's power center. Nor did the Yamen offices, where Qing functionaries resided in cities across China, open their doors to the public. Until her death in 1908, the Empress Dowager Cixi held executive power in Beijing. She was followed by Zaifeng (載灃, also known as Prince Chun, 1883–1951), who took over the regency for the child emperor Pu Yi 溥儀 (1906–1967). During the period of transition prior to the 1911 Republican Revolution, the Qing court gave in to the pressure from reform movements and agreed to establish assemblies. As a consequence, Provincial Assemblies (*shen ziyihui* 省諮議局) and the National Assembly (*zizheng yuan* 資政院) were established in 1909 and in 1910 respectively. Although their role was mainly consultative, the two organs acted as precursors to provincial legislature and the national parliament and took the first steps towards including public opinion in the government's agenda.[386] In 1912, the National Assembly (*guohui* 國會) organized the Chinese National Assembly election

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[386] Chuzo Ichiko, "Political and Institutional Reform, 1901–1911," in *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 11: Late Ch'ing, 1800–1911, part 2*, edited by Denis Twitchett and John Fairbank (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 398–401.

(*Zhonghua Minguo diyiju Guohui yiyuan xuanju* 中華民國第一屆國會議員選舉) to designate the first elected president, Song Jiaoren, who nonetheless was assassinated only a few months later by emissaries sent by Provisional President Yuan Shikai, who had facilitated the abdication of the Qing.[387]

Illustrated pamphlets from the revolutionary context show that political places that were largely invisible in the late nineteenth century acquired public prominence through illustrated magazines and postcards associated with republican values. How did the visual representation of public and republican places in revolutionary magazines correlate with the profound political changes that led from dynastic empire to republic?

The ideals of democracy and the Republic furthered by the intellectuals of the May Fourth Movement in 1919 started to develop during the late Qing dynasty in both reformist and revolutionary forms.[388] Yet, studies on the intellectual life of early twentieth century China generally rely on textual sources as the primary sites of signification for the idea of a Republic.[389] As elucidated in previous chapters, my method considers the presence and agency of images not as mere illustrations of a known reality but as constitutive of China's profound social transformations. In revolutionary China, images were channels for communicating the values of openness and transparency that formed the cornerstone of the republican system. Such communicated intelligibility and candidness stood in contrast to the turbid, inaccessible, and occasionally irrational processes of decision-making carried out at

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[387] See also chapter three.

[388] Chow Kai-wing, Tze-ki Hon, Hung-yok Ip, and Don C. Price, eds., *Beyond the May Fourth Paradigm: In Search of Chinese Modernity* (Plymouth, United Kingdom: Lexington Books, 2008).

[389] See, for example, *Xinhai geming yantaohui lunwenji* 辛亥革命研討會論文集 [Proceedings of the conference on the Xinhai Revolution] (Taibei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo, 1983); Chang Hao, *Chinese Intellectuals in Crisis: Search for Order and Meaning (1890–1911)*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); Peter Zarrow, *China in War and Revolution, 1895–1949* (London; New York: Routledge, 2005); David Strand, *An Unfinished Republic: Leading by Word and Deed in Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Zheng Xiaowei, *The Politics of Rights and the 1911 Revolution in China* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2018).

court. To understand the differences in representation, I investigate images of places of power in revolutionary journals, offering an integrated and situated reading that positions the images in the wider context of their publishing history and historical and political background.[390]

Visual political propaganda intertwined with photojournalism characterized, and to a certain degree still characterizes, Chinese newspapers and magazines, and appears in the earliest Chinese-language revolutionary photo-magazines. Reformist and revolutionary groups used the most advanced technologies available to maximize the circulation and impact of their publications and to surprise the reader with unexpected illustrations of unfamiliar places. Photozyncography and halftone printing enabled *Le Monde* and *The True Record* to become the earliest Sinophone magazines to feature photographs as a leading form of political expression.

This dissertation argues that the material visibility of racial, national, and historical boundaries was key to establishing and crystallizing a culture in the revolution and the Republic of China. The concept of nation and its relation to the press is therefore important. How is the culture of a "renewed nation" shaped and circulated when its political system undergoes a radical change? How is a nation's frame established and its frontiers solidified in the popular imagination? Public display was achieved through the production and circulation of press images including photographs, drawings, and maps, which spoke to both literate and illiterate viewers. These images communicated on a parallel, directly emotional level compared to text. Far from being mere "illustrations" of the textual content, images communicated the possibilities offered by a republican system in their own language. To understand the role of press images in the conception of the modern Chinese republican

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[390] These methodologies are introduced in Michel Hockx, Joan Judge, and Barbara Mittler, eds. *Women and the Periodical Press in China's Long Twentieth Century: A Space of their Own?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 1–18. See also chapter one of this dissertation.

nation, it is useful to consider how cultural Nationalism, print capitalism, and propaganda images intersected. After briefly introducing Benedict Anderson's concept of "imagined communities" and Ernest Gellner's articulated definition of nation, I suggest that their proposed structures are useful in part for analyzing printed materials that were conceived with the explicit aim to produce a Revolution and a Republic.

Anderson defined the nation as an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.[391] The postcolonial scholar Partha Chatterjee has pointed out that Anderson's study assumes the European Nation is the basic model that was invariably transferred and applied, with few changes, to the colonial and semi-colonial context.[392] Following Chatterjee's criticism of the "model" conception, my approach emphasizes the particularities of Chinese republican nationalism as anti-colonial, anti-Manchu, multi-ethnic, and embedded within a national cultural pride that preceded the advent of the modern nation-state. In this sense, I rely on the historian Prasenjit Duara's argument that nations and nationalisms are constituted by global circulations that are mediated by local historical and cultural interactions.[393]

In Anderson's account of modern nationalism, the press plays an important role in shaping and propagating ideas of newness. Leo Ou-fan Lee also remarks on this phenomenon, seeing printed materials as one of the many commodities that constituted "Chinese modernity."[394] In his account, the press was the main catalyst for the idea of the nation as

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[391] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 2016), 6.

[392] For a discussion of Anderson's theory in a postcolonial perspective, see Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse* (Tokyo: Zen Books, 1986), 17–23.

[393] Prasenjit Duara, "The Global and Regional Constitution of Nations: The View from East Asia," in *Nations and Nationalism* 14, no. 2 (2008): 323.

[394] Leo Ou-fan Lee, "The Cultural Construction of Modernity in Urban Shanghai: Some Preliminary Explorations," in *Becoming Chinese: Passages to Modernity and Beyond*, ed. Wen-Hsin Yeh (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 31–61.

understood in Anderson's terms.[395] Lee refers to Anderson's argument on the as prominent role of the press in shaping the nation, but fails to recognise the ways in which Anderson's theory lacks transferability. Bryna Goodman, in contrast, suggests that the imagined communities concept comes up short when applied to the Chinese context. She argues the term places excessive emphasis on a supposed rupture in modern nationalism and on print capitalism. In contrast, she proposes the focus should shift towards the coexistence of multiple layers of imagined communities that act both in accordance with and in contrast to nationalism.[396] Taking up Goodman's challenge, I analyze one specific form of community within the nationalist spectrum: the revolutionary republican community. I use "revolutionary" in reference to anarchist and republican intellectuals before 1912, and "republican" for the same intellectuals after the establishment of the Republic of China in 1912.

Ernest Gellner's cultural definition, which emphasizes the power of symbols in nation building, develops two definitions pertaining to the relationship between images and the nation. First, the cultural definition assumes that two people belong to the same nation when they share the same culture, understood as a system of ideas, signs, associations, and ways of behaving and communicating. Second, the voluntarist definition states that two people belong to the same nation when they recognize each other as part of that nation. To establish a shared acceptance on both levels, nation-builders must convince the citizens of its rightness. They do so through various media including texts, symbols, ceremonies, exaltations or inventions of traditions, and images.[397] According to Gellner, nationalist ideology shapes

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[395] Leo Ou-fan Lee, "The Cultural Construction of Modernity," 33.

[396] Bryna Goodman, "Networks of News: Power, Language and Transnational Dimensions of the Chinese Press, 1850—1949," in "Transnationalism and the Chinese Press," ed. Bryna Goodman, special issue, *China Review* 4, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 3.

[397] The terminology "invention of tradition" is derived from Hobsbawm and Ranger's seminal book. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

myths that do not mirror reality but instead attempt to invent it.[398] Aijaz Ahmad further argues that the nation is not based on an already-existing community of horizontal comradeship that exists despite material inequalities, but on a project of an equal community that has yet to come.[399] For the purpose of this study, I emphasize the role of images in the press as contributing to the realisation of such a project without arguing for the priority of images in the formation of the Chinese nation.

Instead of relying on the concept of the nation as a superimposed paradigm, I attempt to read the interactions of local and external elements in their constitution and formation. The nation is presented not as a modular entity based on European standards, but rather as the only mode of organization that allowed the Chinese to resist semi-colonialism on the Chinese coasts and the Qing monarchy, and expand the Republic and a commercial empire. I understand the republican nation as one example of the hybrid cultural forms developed by local societies as defences against both external and internal oppression. Only by assuming the form of a nation, imposed on the international scene by the European colonial powers, would China be able to resist Western colonial power and establish diplomatic relations. Nonetheless it makes little sense to assume that previous social networks completely disappeared with the advent of the nation. Instead, many of the people who had served the Qing state remained and served in the institutions of the Republic. In other words, the revolutionary change was radical but it did not eliminate social relationships, the basis of the Chinese social structure.

The boundary between political and cultural nationalism is here purposely blurred, as the material suggest the two cannot be clearly distinguished. Elite reformers located in

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[398] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), 124–125.
[399] Aijaz Ahmad, "Nationalism and Peculiarities of the Indian," in *Nation and Imagination*, eds. C. Vijayasree, Meenakshi Mukherjee, Harish Trivedi, and T. Vijay Kumar (Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2007), 40–41.

different parts of the world and with different political positions such as Wu Zhihui, Li

Shizeng, and Sun Yat-sen all contributed to the construction of modern China through their

speeches and publications. Yet such politically advanced figures came together around a set

of notions that shaped cultural nationalism. Writers, artists, photographers, and editors

actively undertook and adapted elite claims to their own commercial and political agendas.

The use of illustrated magazines and posters is especially significant in this sense because it

contributed to building a visual national consciousness that was accessible not only to the

literate but could also be read by the illiterate. By making conscious choices in terms of

framing, the Sinophone revolutionary editorial community relied on popular media including

newspapers and magazines to open up a space for dialogue in the public sphere that exceeded

the reformist elite and communicated the relevance and urgency of political and cultural

nationalism to the wider population.

Anderson and Gellner's theoretical tools provide a lens that allows historians to

understand the visual materials published in the press. Anderson's paradigm cannot be

uncritically applied to all loosely defined nationalist groups, but it is useful for reading the

journals that openly advertised their revolutionary aims and whose authors helped to form the

Republic. In other words, I argue that although not all imagined communities were conceived

primarily via the press, *Le Monde* and *The True Record* provided Chinese intellectuals with a

language of revolution, citizenship, and republic via the printed page and its pragmatic use of

text and images.

Freedom of opinion, speech, and press are attributes belonging to the republican citizen,

in contrast to imperial subjects under constant threat of violence. Especially after the

abolition of the Imperial Examinations in 1905, editors and presses changed their production

from manuals to prepare young examinees in the classics to didactic books focused on new

disciplines, translations from Japanese and other languages, and commercial and political

magazines. It is not a surprise that the brush was conceived as an effective weapon for creating social change (**fig. 5.1**).[400] Mary Rankin's seminal work on the Early Chinese Revolutionaries highlighted the young students at the core of the revolutionary process. Student revolutionaries exploited both the popular press, in particular *Subao*, and educational institutions to conceive and spread their ideas.[401] The *Subao* case is exemplary of the power struggles between the foreign settlements and the Manchu court. Following published calls for a violent uprising against the Manchus by Chen Fan 陳範 (1859–1913), Zhang Binglin, and others in 1903, the court issued an imperial edict demanding the prisoners be decapitated.[402] The Shanghai Municipal Council rejected the court's suggested sentence with the praise of external observers, and only two prisoners were sentenced to two years in jail, while the others were released.[403] The Shanghai Municipal Council, elected by foreign land-renters and representing business interests, had become the most important governing body in the International Settlement by the first years of the twentieth century. Although its jurisdiction was never officially accepted by the Qing court, the Mixed Court allowed the Council to exercise a de-facto control over laws and censorship.[404] The *Subao* incident provided precedent for similar cases in which Chinese citizens who broke Chinese law would be judged by the Shanghai Municipal Council. This context allowed revolutionary publications to survive in the city.[405] Only a few years later in 1914, Yuan Shikai issued new publication laws that shut down all the revolutionary journals and applied robust censorship

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[400] Minquan huabao 民权画报 [Citizens' Rights Illustrated], 7: 3 (April 1912), n. p. [1].

[401] Mary Rankin, *Early Chinese Revolutionaries: Radical Intellectuals in Shanghai and Chekiang, 1902–1911* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 1–125. See also Mary Rankin, "The Origins of a Chinese Public Sphere: Local Elites and Community Affairs in the Late Imperial Period," *Étude Chinois* 9, no. 2 (Autumn 1990): 13–60.

[402] Rankin, *Early Chinese Revolutionaries*, 33–35.

[403] Rankin, *Early Chinese Revolutionaries*, 33–35.

[404] Lee-hsia Hsu Ting, *Government Control of the Press*, 33–44.

[405] For example, in 1905 Chen Chunxuan forbad the newspaper Zhongguo ribao 中國日報 [China daily] aligned with the Revolutionary Alliance. Established in Hong Kong and imported through Canton, it was censored not much because of its revolutionary ideas, but because of a dispute on the nationalization of the Canton-Hankou Railway. See Lee-hsia Hsu Ting, *Government Control of the Press*, 31.

to other publications. *The True Record* was probably one of the journals that was forced to close due to the difficult political conjunction. With Yuan's death in 1916, spaces for free discussion eventually opened up again in the press.

At that end of the 1910s, the influential intellectuals Cai Yuanpei, Chen Duxiu (陳獨秀 1879–1942), and Hu Shi (胡適 1891–1962) at Peking University created new platforms for intellectual discussion, including the well-known *La Jeunesse* (Xin qingnian 新青年). Intellectual exchange, together with widespread indignation over the cession of Shandong to the Japanese, eventually led to the May Fourth Movement and to a renewed golden age in the vernacular Chinese periodical press.[406] Although the 1911 revolutionaries and the intellectuals of the May Fourth Movement belonged to different currents, movements, and orientations, and lived in slightly different historical moments, they all shared the demand that a nation be established that would be populated by citizens with voices instead of invisible subjects.

Who were those citizens? Was the revolution fundamentally an elite affair that barely even touched on most of people's lives? Politically and financially powerful elites certainly were the main figures responsible for the foundation of political associations and funding revolutionary and reformist activities. First, they had the cultural and linguistic tools to approach and integrate new concepts. Many had also had the chance to study and live abroad and devote themselves to political activities. Yet, their reforms did not exclusively serve the elite as they brought about real changes to people's lives. Women, for example, could attend

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[406] Studies on the May Fourth Movement include: Chow Tse-Tsung, *The May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960); Peng Ming 彭明 *Wusi yundong shi* 五四运动史 [The History of May Fourth Movement] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1984); Chow Kai-wing ed., *Beyond the May Fourth Paradigm: In Search of Chinese Modernity* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2008); and Chen Pingyuan, *Touches of History: An Entry Into "May Fourth" China* (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

public schools from the 1890s and in more consistent numbers in the 1910s.[407] Since the dawn of the twentieth century, it was increasingly common to hire women in factories.

A lack of sources prevents defining the precise circulation figure for the magazines and posters. Nevertheless, it is certain that the images and magazines appeared on the streets and houses in the form of posters and in public reading rooms (**figs. 5.2 and 5.3**). Publications and images thus were made accessible in the public sphere not only for the literate public but also for the casual passer-by. Leo Li Ou-fan has argued that the construction of the Chinese nation as an imagined community happened not just in the work of intellectuals, but more importantly in the Shanghai popular press.[408] Shanghai was protected by the special status of the Shanghai Municipal Council. Although court censorship attempted to stop their influence by forbidding the circulation in China, revolutionaries found ever-new ways to distribute their publications through public reading clubs, libraries, and private circles.[409] Therefore, the republican nationalist project started by the elites to counter Qing corruption and foreign imperialist powers became accessible to a wider audience via oral and visual languages in what might be called the Chinese public sphere.

Yet, a new question of terminology naturally emerges. Is there such a thing as a Chinese public sphere? Does Jürgen Habermas' concept apply exclusively to Europe or can it be transplanted to China?[410] According to Rudolf Wagner, the concept of a public sphere

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[407] On women's education, see Paul J. Bailey, *Gender and Education in China: Gender Discourses and Women's Schooling in the Early Twentieth Century* (London: Routledge, 2007). Although they were still taught domestic managements and other subjects connected with house-life, women in schools had access to different subject as geography, history, and foreign languages. Such subjects and forms of modern knowledge would be inaccessible to them in traditional women education within the household. In Qiu Jin's (秋瑾 1875–1907) revolutionary journal China Women's News (*Zhongguo nübao* 中國女報), women were taught the principles of the Revolution and anti-Manchu thought.

[408] Leo Ou-Fan Lee, *Shanghai Modern*, 43–47.

[409] Lee-hsia Hsu Ting, *Government Control of the Press*, 44–48.

[410] Jürgen Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit: Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* (Darmstadt and Neuwied: Hermann Luchterhand Verlag, 1962). Translated by Thomas Burger as *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1991).

"conceptualizes the space in which state and society as well as different segments of society articulate their interests and opinions within culturally and historically defined rules of rationality and propriety."[411] Three aspects differentiate Shanghai's late nineteenth and early twentieth century context from the European Habermasian public sphere. First, the public sphere in Shanghai was essentially transnational and international; second, it was not homogenous, but showed marked spatial differences in the degree of openness; and third, it did not restrict articulation to only the high and rational range of discourse and the segments of society able to generate it. It made use of the entire span of forms of articulation and behaviour at the disposal of different segments of society.[412] Wagner suggests scholars may speak of a dual public sphere in China from the 1870s onwards: one was characterized by a vertical structure composed of the traditional sector of the elite attached to the court. Between members of this sphere, communication media were oral, private, or bureaucratic. The second was modern and composed of foreign executives, missionaries, and a growing class of Chinese urbanites, intellectuals, and businesspersons in the new sectors. Its communication media were horizontally distributed through the market and included the press, nationally distributed books, and, later, radio and film.[413] The illustrated magazines addressed in this dissertation formed part of this horizontal structure. They were the principal vehicle for the transmission of images to the people on a mass scale, just as modern newspapers were responsible for creating a communication channel across intellectuals and the court.[414]

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[411] Wagner, *Joining the Global Public*, 3.

[412] Wagner, *Joining the Global Public*, 3–4.

[413] Rudolf G Wagner, "The Early Chinese Newspapers and the Chinese Public Sphere," *European Journal of East Asian Studies* 1, no. 1 (2001): 14.

[414] Barbara Mittler uses the idea of domestication to discuss the adaptation of the modern newspaper to Chinese aesthetic and social habits in the *Shenbao* 申報. Barbara Mittler, *A Newspaper for China?: Power, Identity, and Change in Shanghai's News Media, 1872–1912* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2004), esp. 26–33. On the concept of the public sphere, see also David Strand, *"Civil Society" and "Public Sphere" in Modern China: A Perspective in Popular Movements in Beijing, 1919–1989* (Durham: Asian/Pacific Studies Institute, Duke University, 1990).

Elisabeth Kaske, in her book *The politics of language in Chinese education, 1895 – 1919,* reconstructs the strong emphasis attributed to education and language in the era of reform and the formation of nationalist thought preceding the May Fourth Movement of 1919. Taking into account the role of power in defining and modifying language for educative purposes, her study explores the political meanings of the classical (*wenyan* 文言) and vernacular languages (*baihua* 白話).[415] In a chapter focused on the revolutionary movement and vernacular journalism, she describes radical vernacular publishing connected with revolutionaries such as Cai Yuanpei, Huang Xing (黃興 1874–1916), and Qiu Jin. It reached a peak in 1904 but collapsed after radicals started to take direct action, including teaching but also assassinations and planning revolts.[416] The *China vernacular language journal* (*Zhongguo baihua bao* 中國白話報), founded by Lin Xie 林獬 (1873–1926), is representative of this apex phase in its combination of old-fashioned vernacular language and a new design inspired by Japanese publications and printed on imported white paper.[417] Assassinations and education became strong components of revolutionary action, but I maintain that many intellectuals in fact maintained a close relationship with the press world. In fact, images became much more influential in those publications as they were able to reach not just audiences that could read *baihua* and were unfamiliar with *wenyan*, but also were able to reach the much more extensive illiterate population. Publications calling for the overthrow of the Qing dynasty were still published after 1904 both as critical newspapers and magazines mainly composed of texts aimed at intellectuals, and as pictorials that, combining visual immediacy and aesthetic appeal, could easily talk to any reader. The *Current events illustrated* (*Shishi huabao* 時事畫報), for example, was a revolutionary magazine published

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[415] Elisabeth Kaske. *The Politics of Language in Chinese Education, 1895–1919,* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), xi–xvi.

[416] Kaske. *The Politics of Language,* 178–180.
[417] Kaske. *The Politics of Language*, 201.

between 1905 and 1913. Renamed *Canton current events illustrated* (*Guangzhou shishi huabao* 廣州時事畫報) in 1912, the journal featured refined drawings and paintings by Pan Dawei, Gao Jianfu, Chen Yuan 陳垣 (1880–1971), and He Jianshi 何劍士 (1877–1915). *Le Monde* and *The True Record* belong to the same category of revolutionary publications, although their main visual medium shifted from drawn illustration to photography.

In sum, this chapter introduced the secondary literature that shaped my argument. I located my study within the fields of photo-historiography, Chinese visual culture, sinology, and, more broadly, within a growing literature concerned with transcultural encounters in Asia. I also provided an introduction to the two principal sources that constitute the basis of my research, *Le Monde* and *The True Record*. Finally, I have introduced my methodology and discussed the key concepts and terms used throughout this dissertation. Chapter two begins with an introduction to the tactic use of photography as photojournalism in the revolutionary narrative, specifically to the conceptual understanding of photography as a medium of truth and science.

In my analysis in this chapter I make use of Cresswell's distinction between place and space. "Place" is used to indicate locations with a precise meaning, yet they are dynamic and therefore their meanings can be transgressed and resisted.[418] People, in other words, are able to shape a place by attributing meaning to it. In contrast to such embodied and flexible "places," "space" refers to geographical points on the planet's surface that do not possess an independent meaning. Whereas the term "place" underscores human agency in its making and transformation, "space" refers to a generic and objective geographic location. In the context of my research, squares, assemblies, and parks are places because revolutionary action used them to embody and perform Chinese republican ideals. The "space" where

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[418] Tim Cresswell, *Place: An Introduction* 2nd ed. (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2015), 6–17.

photographed events actually happened, say the British Parliament physically located on the Thames' bank, are irrelevant. Rather it is the meanings Chinese revolutionaries attributed to such "places" as incarnations of their aspirations and political activism that interest me.

Photographs of public places were sites of contestation and public debate in the context of late nineteenth and early twentieth century metropolitan China. Here, de Certeau's reading of "spatial practices" as determinants of the conditions of social life is relevant.[419] As he put it, places are produced in the constant struggle between "the collective mode of administration," the Qing and foreign imperial power, and "an individual mode of reappropriation," that is the new tactical use of places realized by revolutionaries as well as committed individuals.[420] Following reappropriation and a conscious political campaign calling for democracy, locations formerly restricted to the few were opened to the public eye.

However, Chinese citizens first "entered" political assemblies, the Palace Museum, public parks, and places of power through photographic images rather by visiting them. In other words, illustrated magazines allowed visual access to formerly inaccessible places, though the places themselves were still impenetrable to most population due to physical distance or segregation. I show that images of newly conceived public places that were published in popular magazines projected ideas of openness, self-determination, and transparency that attempted to convince the reader of the republican program's viability. As a consequence, new public places, for example large assembly halls and public parks, were constructed or reappropriated and in turn became the subject of photojournalism and republican propaganda.

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[419] Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1984), 96.
[420] De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 96.

In the first section, I explore the use of images of foreign parliaments and assemblies in the Paris-based *Le Monde*. I move then to an analysis of the tactical use of photographs of public places in the Shanghai-based press. I refer in particular to one photograph of a "public" park. The garden had been exclusively reserved to foreigners before the revolutionaries renewed the public square as a site of protest. In the Chinese press, parks and squares became sites for the interrogation, contestation, and, eventually, expulsion of imperial power. In the second section of this chapter, I introduce the idea that place played a primary role in producing a new kind of leader's portrait that radically differed from imperial images, specifically in images of the leader of the Xinhai Revolution, Sun Yat-sen.

Photographic Access to Places of Decision Making

Photographs of foreign parliaments, public parks, and public squares all communicated to the early 20th century Chinese reader a sense of change. These public sites projected the sensation that a democratic system was not only possible but had already been realized in other countries. Such a republican system appealed to young intellectuals because it promised leaders would be voted in freely rather than assigned through the mandate of heaven. The opening of public places suggested to the Chinese people that they would no longer be subject to the emperor but would become rightful citizens.[421] Furthermore, corruption would be combatted and society modernized, eventually resulting in the improvement of the average citizen's life. Although these and other utopian promises were not realized in the Yuan Shikai period and the warlord era that persisted in some regions well after 1929, they were the

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[421] On the interconnection between the promise of new rights and the foundation of the Republic of China, see Zheng Xiaowei, *The Politics of Rights and the 1911 Revolution*.

assurances that supported revolutionary struggles throughout the first half of the twentieth century.

Foreign Parliaments in Le Monde

Much like other foundational ideas behind the 1911 Revolution and the Republic of China, the visual narrative of the democratic state was the product of transcultural encounter. New ideas appropriated in the Chinese context by politicians and artist trained abroad provided the possibility to start processes of change and reform. Overseas magazines in the Chinese language pioneered the publication of images of republican institutions and global revolution before 1911, with the hope that China too would undergo a democratization process. The Chinese public sphere was, since its very beginning, transnational and international.[422] A range of factors, including the formation of reformists abroad, the use of imported technologies, and the appropriation of external ideas in metropolitan China, all contributed to the formation of a place for the public discussion of political and social matters.

Le Monde embodied such transcultural exchanges, especially in the visual sphere. Written debates and translations provided intellectual access to foreign institutions connected with the Republic, but such documents did not allow readers to visualize where decision-making was carried out. For the first time, through postcards and photographic reproductions in magazines, images of places for public discussion and democratic decision-making, most prominently visual reproductions of foreign parliaments, provided the Chinese reader with visual access to the institutions of republican government. A series of photographs issued by *Le Monde*, for example, show the interior of the Palace of Westminster. One depicts the House of Commons, the lower house and primary chamber of the Parliament of the United

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[422] Rudolf G. Wagner, ed., *Joining the Global Public: Word, Image, and City in Early Chinese Newspapers, 1870–1910* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2007), 3–4.

Kingdom (**fig. 5.4**). The photographer captures the visual experience of a profound perspectival distance, allowing close observation of the architecture. External light filtered by the upper windows illuminates the Gothic wooden structure designed by Charles Barry. The interior arrangement preserved the original St. Stephen's Chapel in the Palace of Westminster, and embodied the mode of equal, oppositional, and non-hierarchical discussion typical of a parliament.

Although the unpeopled photograph appears customary to the contemporary reader, the image and its explanation would materialize as fresh and innovative for 1907 Chinese readers in at least two aspects. First, the parliament as a place was unseen in China in 1907 when the photo was published. The image's empty seats suggest a group of politicians will come together to discuss and reach a decision. The attached essay on the system of the two chambers, furthermore, provided the onlooker an innovative perspective on how to organize political power beyond the monarchy. Second, the image's sharpness demonstrates a degree of printing quality that was still unseen in magazines and books published in Shanghai as well as in the rest of China.[423] New technology magnified the spread of the message, as *Le Monde*'s sponsor Zhang Jingjiang certainly knew when he decided to purchase advanced printing machines to support his political enterprises.[424] Images of European parliaments, then, introduced the Chinese reader to both innovative political views and a stunning visual experience. Whereas the text explained the experience of democratic forms of government at a conceptual level, and therefore confined comprehension of republican ideals to the alphabetized, literate reader, the images communicated to viewers in a more immediate way.

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[423] The image was possibly copied from a postcard. Numerous images published in *Le Monde* carry the imprint of the postcard issuer or caption from which they were reproduced.
[424] See chapter one.

Yet, *Le Monde* was an anarchist magazine and was not uncritical of republican forms of power. An extensive essay on the current political situation in Russia provides an insight into *Le Monde*'s political imagination. Photographs of the Duma, the Russian Legislative Assembly, established in a former royal villa in Saint Petersburg following popular protests in 1905 (**fig. 5.5**) stand in contrast to the images of the empty British parliament. Here, crowds populate the building. The politicians closest to the viewer are shown from behind, their faces obscured, thus allowing for cross-cultural identification and the observer's entrance into the scene as one of the delegates. The photographer's point of view is located amongst two rows of higher-ranking politicians who command a full view of the entire hall, suggesting an extant hierarchy between the speakers/photographer and the audience. Whereas such hierarchy is apparent in the photograph of the Duma, it does not become apparent in the image of the British parliament. Both photographs incorporate and stress the wide profundity of the room, yet the first calls attention to equality whereas the second points to the existence of hierarchical differentiations within parliamentary institutions. Furthermore, the photo of the Duma was heavily retouched in the detail of the seated figures in the foreground, possibly due to the camera's focus on the politicians in the background. The men's suits and heads on the lower-right side show significant signs of overdrawing, possibly executed on the negative. The blurred figure in the foreground transports the reader's gaze towards the main subject: the animated discussion between politicians. The attached article specifies the first meeting of the Duma was held in 1906, before strong political contrasts between the Tsar and the intellectuals in the assembly became unsustainable.[425] Forces loyal to Tsar Nicholas II dispersed the assembly the same year. *Le Monde* suggests the Russian members of the council were poor and not highly educated, and positions them at an "earlier civilizational stage" in the evolutionary scale when compared to European countries. The anarchist editors

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[425] *Le Monde* 1 (1907): C3.

of *Le Monde*, then, maintained a critical approach to any form of organized power. The chaotic status of Russian society was attributed to the government's exaggerated strictness.[426]

Notwithstanding its adherence to anarchism, *Le Monde*'s choice to publish extensive visual reportage on parliaments throughout the world was representative of its authors' interest in parliamentary democratic (and colonial) institutions. Images provided authors Wu Hui, Wu Zhihui, Li Shizeng, and Zhang Jingjiang with possible alternative ways of governing a future China. It is relevant to remember that Chinese anarchists themselves recognized that anarchism could not be implemented easily in contemporary China. Rather, the establishment of a republic was more appropriate to the current Chinese situation and might eventually result in an intermediate step on the way towards the triumph of anarchism. Consequently, all early anarchists active in Paris later joined Sun Yat-sen's republican revolutionary efforts. Images of foreign republican establishments in illustrated magazines showed alternative ways of organizing transparent and open political institutions outside the walls of the Qing court. By sharing images as a form of knowledge about different political systems, the anarchist editors fed the reader's trust in the possibility of radical, revolutionary change.

Reappropriating Chinese Public Places in the Shanghai-based Press

If the diaspora revolutionary press pioneered the display of places for political dialogue, the Shanghai-based press immediately picked up the trend. Editors at Shanghai-based journals certainly had access to the anarchist magazine *Le Monde* as well as other transnationally operating magazines based in Europe and Japan. Following in their footsteps

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[426] The articles goes on to provide a detailed historical reconstruction of the "Russian Revolution" 革命. After the last war in Crimea, the revolutionary party organized political assassinations including the murder of Tsar Alexander the first in 1881. Political disorder and assassinations led to the foundation of the assembly, divided into an upper assembly for the nobility, professors, and rich, and a lower for representatives of each region.

and documenting the political and social change in China, the visual agenda of the Shanghai photographic magazines undertook to represent meaningful public places. After foreign parliaments appeared in the Sinophone *Le Monde*, Chinese journals based in Shanghai experienced a boom in visual representations of reappropriated public places within the Chinese cultural sphere. In the early 1910s, photographs published in the press opened up Chinese decision-making places to the reader's view. Images of assemblies, debating leaders, and other public places displayed the basic republican notion of openness and the transparent administration of things public. Sun Yat-sen masterfully used these kind of images of himself surrounded by his sustainers (**fig. 5.6**). I will return to the innovations of Sun's representation in the second section of this chapter; for now it suffices to clarify that revolutionary pamphlets in the years before and after the revolution issued images of public places. If before 1911 images of foreign parliaments communicated to the Chinese reader the possibility of a republican government or of a parliamentary monarchy, after 1911 photographs of new places of debate and public life in China showed the reader that the Republic was not only possible in a distant world but could also become real and effective in China.

Public assemblies were not the only subject of press photographs. Public parks and squares embodied other sites of political activism. Particularly in Shanghai, where the foreign settlements had imposed boundaries between the Chinese and the foreign districts, the Chinese population realized the unjust treatment foreigners reserved for them and attempted to contrast it in remonstrations.[427] Many newly established parks did not allow the Chinese access. In other words, expatriates in Shanghai acquired a piece of land and opened green areas controlled by racist discrimination against the local population. One photograph of a

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[427] See for example the boycott of foreign goods in 1905, analyzed in Chapter two.

Shanghai green area, possibly Waitan Park (*Waitan gongyuan* 外灘公園), exemplifies the sense of dissatisfaction Chinese reformers and revolutionaries harbored against the city's semi-colonial status (**fig. 5.7**).[428] Circulated by *Women's Newspaper* (Nübao 女報), the image inscribes three foreigners, including a police officer, in the frame of an orderly British-style public park complete with pavilions and wide meadows. Possibly extracted from a foreigner resident's personal collection, the image assumes an explicit anti-colonial stance with its caption: "What does it mean to say that Chinese people cannot enter this Shanghai Park?"[429] The magazine asks why Chinese people are not allowed to access foreigner-established public parks in Shanghai. The image was used by the polemic journalist to foment the power struggle between the Chinese citizen and the imperialist foreigner by remarking on the evident contradiction of the foreigners' usurped, delimited, and appropriated bubbles of Chinese land that were forbidden to the Chinese people.

More prominently, the public square came to embody a sense of reappropriation of "Chinese" places from the control of the foreign imperialist powers. The practice of protesting in the public square became especially relevant – and visually documented – during protests connected with the 1919 May Fourth movement, which advocated Chinese sovereignty on the Shandong peninsula in opposition to the decisions of the Treaty of Versailles. Chinese citizens subsequently rose in protest in Tiananmen Square. One photograph by Charles Gamble captures a moment of pacific protest directly opposite the Forbidden City, where the wide place was transformed into a site of resistance rather than a symbol of superimposed power (**fig. 5.8**). Men carry banners of various sizes and shapes to voice their concerns for the current political situation. The square, together with other public

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[428] Other parks where Chinese were not allowed until the 1920s included the *Gujia zhai gongyuan* 顧家宅公園 [Park of the Gu family].
[429] Nübao 女報 [Women's Journal] 1 (1909) n.p. [17].

venues, was established as one accessible places to express one's political stance in the early years of the twentieth century. Furthermore, the practice of taking images of such public protests and publishing them in the press amplified the circulation of the news as well as expressed political values.

Public squares were signified as a Chinese place of political protest, activism, and protest, linked to the spread of values and visual material related to the French Revolution and the role the square played during the violent uprising against Louis XVI. Anarchists notoriously championed the idea that murder was useful and necessary and the Paris-based Chinese anarchists were no exception. One etching of the Place de la Révolution (formerly Place Louis XV, renamed Place de la Concorde in 1795) in Paris epitomized three ideals held by *Le Monde*'s editors: violence, the eradication of authoritative power, and the participation of the people (**fig. 5.9**). The scene captures the moment immediately after Louis XVI's execution by guillotine in January 1793. One man holds the king's head aloft to the soldiers behind him. Common individuals, including enthusiastic men at the left and a family to the right, participate in the performance, displaying that the execution was for and supported by the people. Two groups of citizens observing the execution in the foreground invite the viewer to enter the visual field and participate in the event. A stone pedestal on the right-hand-side of the figure balances the vertical line defined by the guillotine. The square, in the French etching, is a place that signified resistance, protest, and the people's demand to reclaim its land and administer it with a republican system.

Chinese revolutionaries and intellectuals, and not only the French-trained Wu Zhihui and Li Shizeng, understood the Chinese experience through the lens of French history. Ruled by a hegemonic power deposed through violence and later governed by a collective, France embodied an exemplary model of successful revolution in the first decade of twentieth

century-China.[430] Whereas Chinese reformers tended to condemn the barbarity embedded in the ruler's decapitation as exemplified by the French Revolution, revolutionaries expanded on the parallels between the French and Chinese political situation to strengthen the idea that the only viable way to solve problems was through a violent uprising. The reappropriation of public spaces such as squares and gardens in China emulated a similar aspiration in which Chinese revolutionaries aimed to take back open spaces from the hands of the Qing and foreign imperial powers to make them the property of all.

What does this image achieve in the context of a Sinophone anarchist journal? The historical article included with the print points out that the pedestal surmounted by the Obelisk of Luxor, found today in Place de La Concorde, originally held a statue of Louis XV.[431] By marking the statue's absence, the writer emphasized the anarchist position advocating the overthrow of all authoritative forms of rule. One of the few color halftone prints printed in *Le Monde*, the image held special significance for anarchists because it illustrated the death of the most powerful figure in the French state, or accepting the logic of monarchies, the death of the state itself. Significantly, the beheading occurred in a public place, which for years after was a symbol of republican values, and it was witnessed by a massive crowd. It is evident, then, that the investment of the square and other public venues as places in which to assert political engagement was inspired by transcultural figurations and idealized foreign models, particularly the experience of the French Revolution.

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[430] Zhang Zhilian points to the 1871 book, *Brief History of France* by Wang Tao, as the earliest example of a Chinese interest in the French Revolution. Translated and adapted from the Japanese, the book should be understood in the context of the broader renewed attention in things foreign that permeated the late decades of the Qing. Subsequently, 1900 saw the first Japanese text specifically focused on the French Revolution (*History of the French Revolution* by Shibue Tamotsu), which was soon translated to Chinese, published in the periodical *Enlightenment*, and read by Chinese Revolutionaries in Japan. More related publications followed. Zhang Zhilian, "A Century of Chinese Historiography of the French Revolution 1889–1989," in *China and the French Revolution: Proceedings of the International Conference Shanghai, 18–21 March 1989*, edited by Zhang Zhilian (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1990), 67–68.
[431] *Le Monde* 1 (1907): D3.

Let me briefly restate this section's argument about public places. The display of places of decision making via press photography was a new phenomenon intended to provide readers with visual knowledge about new political possibilities. The Republic, displayed as an ideal based on European models, communicated to the reader the possibility of changing the status quo. Furthermore, republican intellectuals used images of places such as public parks and public squares to question and contest imperial and dynastic power, including both images of historically relevant events such as the beheading of Louis XVI as well as images of public places in China that newly signified resistance and opposition. The visual material analyzed in this section, in other words, transformed magazine readers into new citizens free to access public life and rights, in contrast to submissive imperial or colonial subjects whose range of action was restricted to the private sphere.

If these ideals were not fully realized, they certainly were leading forces that drove revolutionary journalism and propaganda. The analysis of images of places that were transformed from private property to public goods has uncovered the intention of revolutionary forces to establish the ideal of the *res publica*. Furthermore, the use of photographs of political venues and public places inscribed in the revolutionary discourse support the argument that revolutionary movements appropriated the camera as one tactical instrument in service of their agenda to contrast dynastic and imperial power and to establish the Republic of China.

Portraits in Private and Public Places Signal Different Forms of Power

The first section of this chapter proceeded in loose chronological order to consider the depiction of foreign parliaments and public places in the Sinophone illustrated press. This section considers the relationship between newly introduced visualizations of places of public debate and leaders' portraits. My analysis builds on Peter Burke's suggestion to "study a

series of portraits over the long term and so to note changes in the manner of representing the same kinds of people." [432] I suggest that the republican leader Sun Yat-sen and photojournalists affiliated with him used visual configurations of the Cantonese revolutionary to communicate information about his role in society and his power to fellow Chinese citizens. In order to make the novelty of Sun Yat-sen's visual configuration in the revolutionary press evident, I compare his portraits with a slightly earlier portrait of the Empress Dowager Cixi and with other photographic or hybrid portraits from the same period. The first comparison shows that Qing rulers, who founded their legitimacy in dynastic power derived from the mandate of heaven, did not situate their portraits in public places. In contrast, the model republican leader, who aimed to persuade his audience of his equality and the legitimacy of his power, was constantly depicted in open public venues. Towards the end of the chapter, I compare the portraits under discussion with half-photographic and half-painted portraits from other social and geographical contexts. Such cross-class and cross-cultural comparison makes the peculiarity of photography emerge and shows that the interconnection between pictorial and photographic practices for depicting political and social power were not limited to the Qing court or China. Rather, representational images from the Chinese press depicted the Chinese aristocracy as well as royalty from other geographical contexts, Japan in particular.

Qing emperors and their consorts had been represented in paintings since the beginning of the dynasty. In addition, the commercial and administrative elite also used portraits as a means to celebrate relatives or remember ancestors. Viewing court paintings of the Manchu royal family was restricted only to people granted access to the Forbidden City or to an even smaller group of selected viewers if the paintings were rolled handscrolls rather than hung

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[432] Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (London: Reaktion Books, 2001), 28.

paintings. Numerous eighteenth-century portraits and images of recreational activities (*xingle tu* 行樂圖) of Emperor Qianlong and his consorts, for example, were kept in the Palace. At the beginning of the twentieth century, following the trend of rulers and politicians on the international stage, Empress Dowager Cixi and Emperor Pu Yi permitted the circulation of their portraits in the public sphere.[433] Cixi, in particular, grasped the political function of portraiture. She asked two foreign painters to capture her appearance in oil artworks, and had photographer Yu Xunling 裕勳齡 photograph her in a variety of celebratory images and Buddhist tableau vivant.[434] Enthusiastic about realistic portraiture, Cixi exposed her oil portraits at international exhibitions and distributed the photos as *cartes de visite*, postcards, and press illustrations. One of her classic portraits captures her in a frontal position surrounded by auspicious and Buddhist elements such as an inscription wishing longevity, two apple cumuli, and a peacock inscribed on a background screen (**Fig. 5.10**). Photographs of Pu Yi were circulated less systematically, and his interest in photography remained only one of his many international hobbies. Regardless the difference in the circulation of photographs of the two Qing emperors, the photographic images' focus on both resided in the central and singular figure of the rulers themselves, while the background and accompanying objects existed solely to complement the sitter's regal stature. The images, furthermore, depict the rulers in inaccessible private settings, specifically within the closed walls of the palace. The viewer understands that, by looking at their photographs, the nation is governed by one ruler and that the power with which the ruler is invested cannot be questioned or accessed by others because it is dictated by the mandate of heaven.

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[433] Cheng-Hua Wang, "'Going Public': Portraits of the Empress Dowager Cixi, Circa 1904," *Nan Nü* 14 (2012): 119–176.
[434] Li Yuhang, "Rethinking Empress Dowager Cixi through the Production of Art," *Nan Nü* 14 (2012): 1–20.

Portraits of the Manchu ruling family were conceived for a very restricted audience, and access to ruler's portraits was only first granted to a wide audience in the early twentieth century through photographic reproduction. Yet, although the rulers' appearances became more familiar, places and processes of decision-making remained largely unrepresented in visual artefacts intended for both private and public display. In the publicly distributed portrait of Cixi, she appears alone in an exquisite dress decorated with flowers and butterflies, her towering figure framed by a refined screen with a plant motif (**fig. 5.10**). The composition is derived from royal portraits of the Qing family on a rather plain background, where the focal object is the central figure, and the background is either absent or simplified with a carpet and a throne. By erasing the place where the ruler engaged in discussions with high-ranking officials, and by showing her on a bamboo-decorated ground rather than revealing the appearance of the room where she actually was seated, the photographer suggested through a highly staged pose that the subject is detached from the rest of the world. Rather than belonging to a complex political system, Cixi appears as a semi-divine presence floating in a luxurious palace surrounded by nature. The shutter captured, in other words, the royalty of the sitter rather than establishing any sort of relationship between the Empress Dowager and the subjects of her empire. A similar structure and position can be found in portraits of the last emperor, Pu Yi 溥儀 (1906–1967), who was not allowed to interact with society outside the Forbidden City until his expulsion in 1925. His portraits, too – disregarding whether he wore royal costume or the Western suits he grew fond of in his youth. – depict a self-standing ruler against a plain background, completely detached from daily-life or public elements. After all, the authority of the ruling class and the status of the government were not matters to be discussed publicly.

Qing rulers preferred portraits set in domestic, private places where the sitter was the exclusive focus of attention. In contrast, by setting their portraits in public places, images of

republican Chinese leaders embodied a new form of performative politics that focused on the relation and proximity of the politician to his fellow citizens. As a consequence, public places, such as assembly halls, squares, and even railway stations, appeared in Revolutionary and republican propaganda and photojournalistic images, striking a stark contrast with the timeless portraits of Qing rulers. A colored lithographic print, translated from a widely circulated press photograph, shows Sun surrounded by his loyal soldiers as he departs from the Shanghai railway station to travel to Nanjing to assume the role of provisional president (**fig. 5.11**), offers an insightful example.[435] The image is part of the series "Battles for the Liberation of the Republic of China" (*Zhonghua Minguo Guangfu zhanshitu* 中華民國光復戰事圖), issued by the Commercial Press in 1912. The scenes speak of modern machines and growing nationalism in that a train and revolutionary flags frame the leader. Three kinds of flags are visible: First, the national flag of the Republic of China with five horizontal stripes in red, yellow, blue, white, and black, which refer to China's five major ethnicities: Han, Manchu, Mongol, Hui, and Tibetan; Second, the banner of the Wuchang revolutionaries; and Third, Sun Yat-sen's shining sun flag. Sun is captured in a public station surrounded by onlookers, although it is clear he is the leader. The focus rests, therefore, on the relationship between the leader and the people. The railway station embodies not only the publicness of Sun Yat-sen's presence as opposed to the private and limited visual insight found in Qing portraits. The place also suggests Sun's commitment to modernize China through improving modern technology (the railway line) and his constant travel to build and maintain networks and raise funds.

Another photograph of an open assembly supported by the Revolutionary Alliance depicts a speech delivered by Sun Yat-sen at the Zhong Hua Theater, where he spoke at the

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[435] The photograph, widely circulated in the press, is found in an original print in the Frances E. Stafford albums (Hoover Institution, Stanford University).

invitation of the Shanghai Socialist Party (**fig. 5.6**).[436] The image embodies an idealized vision open political discussion, where rather than imparting orders the charismatic leader argues with his electors and opens discussion to the international community (suggested by the numerous flags). In parallel to the beheading of Louis XVI in Paris, the support of the crowds was key to overthrowing the monarchy and establishing the Republic (**fig. 5.9**). In both images of Sun Yat-sen, onlookers are invited to participate in the political performance. The image's perspective and the audience members in the photograph's foreground erase the distance between the represented political act and its viewers to draw them into the event. Compared to Cixi's portrait, in these images the leader is removed from the center of the scene to leave space for his relationship with his followers to unfold. Furthermore, Sun appears physically close to his fellow citizens, which suggests equality and the centrality of the Republic's citizens rather than a regality detached from the Empire's subjects.

A comparison of Cixi's sacred appearance with a portrait of the Japanese Emperor from the same years highlights the similarities in regal portraiture. Japan, which served as one of the greatest sources of inspiration for Chinese modernization, maintained the emperor after parliamentary institutions were established. During the Meiji period (1868–1912), the state adopted political, judicial, and military institutions from Europe, establishing the Privy Council, the Meiji Constitution, and the Imperial Diet, which limited the power of the emperor in favor of a parliamentary system. Notably, portraits of the Emperor Meiji (Meiji-tennō 明治天皇, 1852–1912) follow a set of pictorial conventions that closely resemble the royal portraits of Cixi and late nineteenth century ancestor portraits (confront **fig. 5.14** and **figs. 5.10, 5.15, 5.16**). Both portraits include an explanatory banner and calligraphic works at

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[436] Sun was invited to lecture there for three days and had an audience of approximately two thousand people. In his lecture on socialism, he stressed the issue of the nationalization of railways, which had also been key to the beginning of the Xinhai Revolution. *The True Record* 9 (1912): n.p [6].

their top, which is complemented in the Japanese icon by a god/ancestor over a rising sun (**figs. 5.10 and 5.14**). Both images figure the rulers alone on a plain background, which suggests the illustrations were not aimed to legitimate their power but rather to celebrate it. The ruler fluctuates on a void, a quasi-celestial milieu, which in turn creates a wide distance between the onlooker and the subject. Further commonalities between the two paintings are the floral and vegetal decorations, found on both Cixi's clothes and her background and around the calligraphy that accompanies the Japanese emperor. Even more striking is the closeness in terms of applied techniques: both images show a direct connection to photography in which indexical quality adds a naturalistic layer to rather conventional elite portraits. Whereas Cixi's image was a direct print from a negative, the Japanese Emperor's icon and the ancestor portrait were transposed on silk through lithography. If on the one hand the military suit and three-quarter view of the Japanese emperor models a more modern appearance, the format of the vertical hanging scroll connects the image to the East Asian painting tradition. Without attempting to establish which portrait was more or less original or shaped by imported media, it suffices to note that the connected histories of modern East Asian portraiture testifies to the transnational dimension of Chinese visual culture at the turn of the twentieth century.

The practice of using photography in official portraiture was not limited to the Qing and Meiji courts; rather, it cut through different classes. Overlapping the visual conventions of painting and photographic images was common in other contemporary portraits executed outside the court. The Manchu elite outside the court also adopted photography to add a personal and realistic touch to their portraits. The camera provided quick and inexpensive representations. Furthermore, photographs could be cut, retouched, and combined with the conventions and colors of painting. Portraits realized in the photographic studio, for example, were used to produce lithographs that could be printed directly on silk and complemented

with colored garments by a skilled portrait artist. An example of the combination of painting, photography, and lithography in ancestor portrait of a woman wearing a Manchu crown (**fig. 5.15**). The subject, although unidentified, might have been the wife of an important functionary or merchant. Her body and the background that surrounds her figure is painted with ink and in the colors traditionally used in the ruler's portrait, which in turn inspired the wider production of ancestor portraits to remember and celebrate the forefathers of rich and influential families. The lack of color as well as the accurate naturalism, marked by the asymmetrical shape of the subject's eyes, the evident circles underneath, the realistic wrinkles around her mouth, as well as the unidealized shape of her chin, reveal that her visage, transposed to silk via lithography, was etched from a photograph (**fig. 5.16**). The woman sits in a frontal position and against a plain background, which both literally retrace the conventions of court painting as well as the composition of Cixi's photograph described above. The protagonist is seated on a throne covered with tiger fur, which in turn rests on a multicolored carpet executed with collapsed small dots of different tints.

How do the icon of the Japanese Emperor and the ancestor portrait relate to Cixi's royal figure? In mixed-media portraits, such as the Meiji artwork and the painting preserved in Cologne, the background is left empty and the place surrounding the sitter white. The background is inaccessible, that is to say, it is type of generic space that does not reveal any specific social role of the sitter. Rather, the subject remains the exclusive focus. In portraits of officials and their wives that are similar to the Cologne ancestor portrait, as well as in early photographic studio images, the floor is resolved with a colorful carpet featuring geometric motifs, which further stresses a sense of spatial planeness. In the case of the photographic studio, the room is generally equipped with a backdrop representing either a European landscape with small columns or a garden element, or a bamboo forest (as seen in Cixi's portrait). The spaces featured in the portraits of Cixi, the Japanese Emperor, and the Manchu

noble woman are not recognizable places that correspond with reality. The blankness does not give the viewer any ability to resonate with the depicted space, which produces a sense of profound distance.

The creation of such distance strongly differed from the tactics adopted by republican leaders in the making of their public images. Revolutionary leader Sun Yat-sen was the first to heavily rely on performative portraits and news-images to stress his public presence (**fig. 5.6, 5.11, 5.13**). Rather than being pictured against a blank backdrop, he placed himself in the midst of large groups and crowds, visually inviting the images' viewers to join the group. Whereas the Qing nobility represented themselves as abstracted from others, the republican leader staged himself in relation to fellow citizens to suggest visually that his power depended on the people's support. If the Qing ruler and high officials positioned themselves in a timeless space with no reference to the present, the republican politician was regularly captured on the occasion of a unique political event and therefore his image conveys a direct connection to the shared present. Although both Cixi and Sun Yat-sen used photography as a means of political propaganda, the first used the medium to imitate painting and celebrate the concept of the ruler, whereas the second grasped the immediacy and indexicality of photography to represent meaningful and concrete political events.

Conclusion

Photographs of new places participate in the formation and crystallization of political ideals. Images drawn from Chinese journals affiliated with anarchist and republican revolutionary movements operated within the historical context of the late Qing empire and the months immediately following the 1911 Revolution. Due to the situation in China, images of foreign parliaments published in the Chinese magazine *Le Monde* in 1907 appear as novelties in terms of both the place represented and the high-quality technology of the prints.

Images and narratives distributed in the press provided visual evidence that a republican form of government was possible and pushed readers to reflect on the *status quo* and their ability to change it. Public parks and squares similarly acquired symbolic meaning as places of public debate following transcultural contact with France and the idealization of the French Revolution, as well as dissatisfaction with the systematic segregation of the Chinese in the city port of Shanghai. Finally, canonized pictorial representations of leaders, specifically two examples of the Empress Dowager Cixi and the republican leader Sun Yat-sen, show the differences in political outlook. Whereas Cixi appeared in a blank royal place detached from the present, republican propaganda tended to produce images of Sun in the midst of wide public places inhabited by the masses. Such contrasting compositions suggested the different relationship the two leaders had with their fellow Chinese. If Cixi's position at court was dictated by her familial relationship with the Qing dynasty, in Sun's case the images of the leader in public places surrounded by fellow citizens showed that he was open to dialogue and that his mission was legitimized by the support of his fellow citizens.

Within the wider argument of this dissertation, this chapter has demonstrated that the sense of community and political engagement that characterizes modern nations and is bolstered by the national press was also manifested via subtle transformations to images and portraits.[437] A close reading of illustrations in revolutionary magazines, with a focus on the configuration of place in relation to the change in political system, established that images bear witness to conscious and unconscious expressions of their users' approaches towards the role of the leader. It is evident that photographic representations provide a privileged entry point into their user's world-vision.

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[437] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London; New York: Verso, 2016). For a discussion of Anderson's work in relation to China, see chapter one.

CONCLUSION

The materials examined in this study shaped the quotidian life of the Chinese revolutionary between the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. Analyzed visual artefacts were consistently present in the life of the Chinese, but due to their fragility, ephemeral commercial value, and scarce aesthetic interest have been largely been lost and seldom been made the objects of art historical or visual studies research. Despite their virtual absence from histories of photography in China, images of the period 1905–1914 marked a turning point in many senses, prominently visual and political; they are, in this sense, revolutionary photographs. Both turns, from staged to photojournalistic photography and from monarchical to republican political system, have been approached in the present study through a common frame: the identification of the tactical reuse of superimposed structures. Tactical reinterpretation simultaneously refers to the adaptation of the originally coercive rectangular frame of the camera and the "imported" idea of the republic to the visual and political culture of early twentieth century China.

The principal aim of this research has been to demonstrate that photography can work as both a strategy and a tactic. That is to say, photography is not a colonial medium per se; rather, it can serve different agendas and become a means of social change and revolution. Revolutionary Alliance-affiliated intellectuals Gao Qifeng and Gao Jianfu, for example, commissioned photojournalistic images that supported their republican ideals and circulated them via the pages of *The True Record*. One iconic example is the dramatic image of Sun Yat-sen walking towards the camera with the Ming tombs in Nanjing in the background (**fig. 2.14**). In the most surprising and telling examples, anarchist revolutionaries recycled photographs originally conceived as aestheticized postcard-souvenirs to express indignation and inspire revolt. The photograph of opium smokers by Lai Afong and the postcard of

British soldiers on the Sphinx, both published in the Sinophone periodical *Le Monde*, are examples of the reinterpretation of imperialistic images as a means of potential social change (**figs. 2.13 and 4.6**).

One of the ambitions is to redirect scholarly attention from examples of colonial photography that illuminate the relevance of photography's strategic voice to the tactical uses of the camera. Language barriers, a focus on colonial collections in Europe and the USA, and the inaccessibility of local archives have prevented studies of this kind in the past. However, overcoming such barriers through digitized materials and online databases can illuminate the tactical uses of photography that significantly enrich the understanding of the photography of China, the photography of Asia, and photography in general. Instead of thinking of photography as a French or British lens looking at the rest of the world, revolutionary uses of the photographic image in other parts of the world can prompt the reconception o photography as a palimpsest of practices, a fluid medium that is pragmatically adapted to a vast range of needs.

Building on the idea that "other photo histories" are useful for expanding the panorama of histories of photography, I have aimed not to reconstruct the history of Chinese photography exclusively based on archives situated in Europe and America or on the institutionalized archives of the PRC, but to take seriously the pages of ephemeral illustrated magazines, collections in China, and archives put together by Chinese students (Lyon) as bodies of material that tell different photo-histories.[438] I thereby provided one of the countless cases that complicate the perception of photography as an internationally distributed medium adapted to local needs. Each of the myriad of photo-histories that such an approach produces

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[438] Christopher Pinney and Nicolas Peterson, eds., *Photography's Other Histories* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).

contributes to a more multifaceted, and therefore more realistic, perception of photography and its incredibly varied languages.

By tightly connecting the medium of photography to the Chinese revolutionary republican agenda, specifically within the multimedia context of the illustrated magazine, the present study has aimed to widen the horizon of so-called "Chinese Photography." In the introduction, the overarching question of this research asks what kind of photograph is a "Chinese historical photograph." Two options are proposed: a stereographic tourist image of a beautiful Suzhou riverbank and a blurred newspaper print of Wuhan revolutionary soldiers (**figs. 0.1, 0.2**). Whereas iconic elements such as the round bridge immediately identify the first image as a picturesque visualization of China, nothing in the second photograph reminds the viewer of a stereotypical vision of China. Nor does the second image satisfy modern aesthetic taste in that it is blurry and not harmoniously composed. Yet, in my study I have shown that the second image became key to the construction of a revolutionary Chinese identity, and consequently, to the shaping of the visual culture of the Republic of China. Why, then, should this image be excluded from histories of Chinese photography in favor of pleasant photos constructed on what can be called photography's orientalism?[439] A profound dig into press images published in the Chinese revolutionary press has shown that before attempting to answer the question: "which of the two images is Chinese?," one should ask: "what does Chinese mean?," and, more importantly, "which of the two images is Chinese and to whom?" In other words, the image of Suzhou is certainly "Chinese" to the contemporary reader working on database research and Euroamerican archival consultations of photographs of China. In contrast, the image of soldiers moving artillery would certainly have looked

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[439] Ali Behdad and Luke Gartlan, eds., *Photography's Orientalism: New Essays on Colonial Representation* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2013).

extremely nationalist and Chinese to the republican revolutionary who saw it reproduced on a colorful calendar poster (**fig. 0.3**). It has become clear that a close reading of images in the Sinophone revolutionary press accounts for the malleability of photography as a medium and contributes to exposing the positionality of any statement on "Chinese Photography."

Chapters one to five have addressed a set of visual and conceptual tactics that allowed the revolutionary editors of *Le Monde* and *The True Record* to argue for the establishment and maintenance of a new nationalist and republican China. Images selected from the two magazines and beyond are read through the lest of photojournalism. Photojournalism became possible with the introduction of dry plates and celluloid films with a high light sensitivity, which in turn allowed the photographer to capture subjects in movement, outside the photo studio, and to develop the image in a second phase, after the shooting. The proliferation of images of significant current events and momentous actions, together with new compositions that visually involve the viewer, suggested that the onlooker could participate in the scene. The images' subjects assumed increasing proximity with the viewers and therefore became relevant to their understanding of the present. In this sense, photojournalism established a new function for photography, where the subject and the viewer are involved in the same reality and partake in the same temporal space. Compositional elements in photojournalistic images provide the impression that the person looking at the photograph is also able to witness the moment happening in the image.

Chapters two to five individuated different subject matters and framing strategies in the performance of photojournalism as a "witness to reality" within the revolutionary narrative. Favorite subjects were violence and death, which were for the most part absent from Chinese visual culture before the introduction of illustrated magazines. Such violence directed towards human bodies was, for the first time, explicitly displayed in photographs of dead revolutionaries (Huang Shisong and Zhang Zhengwu), Qing representatives, or Nationalist

politicians (Song Jiaoren) (chapter three). Violence assumed a positive connotation in images of remnants as synonymous with rebirth, which reinterpreted the trope of ruins found in Westerners' romanticized accounts of China, and reinvested it with a constructive nationalist meaning (chapter four). Depictions of demolished Qing headquarters, for example, embodied the destruction of the obsolete Qing imperial system governed by the Manchu in favor of the renaissance of the Chinese nation under a Republic administered by the Han Chinese (**fig. 4.1**). Within the realm of photojournalism the photographic representation of a current event, the novel relation of the political leader to place and to his fellow citizens, becomes apparent (chapter five). If the Qing royalty asserted its legitimacy through the mandate of heaven, republican politicians needed to establish their closeness to the people and to the places where fellow citizens lived not only via propagandistic texts but also in a subtle and effective manner through carefully framed photographs. Sun Yat-sen, therefore, was regularly photographed accompanied by his colleagues and companions or in front of large audiences, which he used to persuade people of the advantages of the republican system (**figs. 5.6, 5.11, 5.13**).

How then did photography contribute to the political events of the 1911 Republican Revolution and the foundation of the Republic of China? First, cameras capable of translating momentum into material images that were printed in newspapers illustrated with photographs constituted an innovative platform, unseen in the 1890s, which boomed in the 1930s. It is not a surprise that political propaganda and politically progressive movements embraced both media to ensure the maximization of the circulation and impact of its ideals. Not unlike extremist political movements that today use social media as a favorite channel to exchange information and create an emotional response, revolutionaries in the early twentieth century opted for the most advanced and impactful media of the time – photography – to serve the needs of their political propaganda. Photographs were popular, easy to read compared to text

in either literary or vernacular Chinese, worked on the reader's emotions, shocked viewers with previously unseen compositions and motifs, and created a firm impression in their minds.

Second, novel subjects of photography at the dawn of the twentieth century strengthened the entanglement of war, revolution, and the photographic image. Photographs of the nineteenth century had focused on landscapes, architecture, still studio-portraits, and generic types taken in pose. By the early twentieth century, the increased velocity of the shutter for capturing light, lighter cameras, and the development of portable films enabled photographers to capture new subjects such as current events, the dead, images of war and battlefields, social change and social movements, as well as scientific instruments on display in exhibition halls. These photojournalistic semantically and graphically differed from former photographs of landscapes and portraits, specifically in that they did not bear a consistent connection with paintings and drawn illustrations. Rather, they exalted the photograph's rapidity and indexicality.

This study presents some implications for the broader field of visual culture studies. I have aimed to show that it is useful to shift the focus from classic author-based or aesthetically driven research towards a renewed attention to the empirical use of images. The analysis of the material has suggested that questions such as "how were photographs valuable to the person who produced them, used them, or reused them? How can they be constructive to the field today?" can be more productive than questions such as "who created these images? Why are they aesthetically valuable?" The first two questions illuminate new facets of "Photography's Other Histories."[440] Such questions are clearly too large to elaborate in any complete form here. Yet, the case study of 1905–1914 China is one of the many episodes that

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[440] Pinney and Peterson, eds., *Photography's Other Histories*.

illuminate the flexibility of photography and is therefore relevant to scholars aiming to investigate decentered photo histories, both in terms of the subject of the images and in terms of the consulted archives.

The approach followed in the present study has attempted to bring imperial images, for example by the British traveler John Thomson, into dialogue with Sinophone sources such as illustrated magazines, political posters, and other media that is too easily dismissed under the category of propaganda. Such a juxtaposition of Sinophone and Anglophone sources has already inspired the work of exhibitions and catalogues in the increasingly self-critical museum. Yet, the addition of "local" sources such as illustrated magazines, posters, and journals to collections and to exhibition catalogues in the contemporary world is not always a priority. By undertaking the work of bringing different kind of sources to the table and discussing them together, this study has advanced the claim that one solution for producing a more nuanced representation of photography as a media and single photographs in the museum is to juxtapose them with sources that speak another semantic, political, and aesthetic language. This would allow institutions with a colonial background to multiply the voices in their exhibitions and catalogues, to account for diversity, to provide visitors with elements that redirect their attention to different questions and different answers, and to show that the camera is never an exclusively colonial medium. Rather, an exhibition or a research project composed of different opinions on the same subject would account for the plurality of voices that, at one point in time, spoke a similar visual language but with different aims and aspirations.

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TABLES

Table 1

Publication's title	Editors	Publication's kind, Themes and Focus	Location	Year
外交報 [Waijiao bao, *The International Relations Journal*]	Zhang Yuanji 張元濟 (1867-1959)	Newspaper on International Relations	Shanghai	1902 (Est.)
新民叢報 [Xinmin congbao, *The New Citizen Journal*]	Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873–1929)	Magazine on Politics, Current Events, etc.	Yokohama	1902 (Est.)
新小説 [Xin xiaoshuo, *The New Novel Journal*]	Liang Qichao	Magazine on Literature	Yokohama	1902 (Est.)
大陸報 [Dalu bao, *The China Journal*]	元丞 Yuan Cheng, 楊廷棟 Yang Tingdong	Translations, Local and International News, etc.	Shanghai	1902 (Est.)
游學譯編 [Youxue yipian, Texts Edited and Translated while *Studying Abroad*]	熊野萃 Xiong Yecui	Translations, Miscellanaous	Tokyo	1903 (Est.)
東方雜志 [Dongfang zazhi, *The Eastern Miscellany*]	徐柯 Xu Ke, 孟森 Meng Sen (1869-1938), 杜亞泉 Du Yaquan (1873-1933)	Magazine on misc. Themes	Shanghai	1904 (Est.)
二十世紀大舞臺 [Ershi shiji da wutai, *The great stage of the twentieth century*]	陳去病 Chen Qubing (1874-1933)	Theater, Revolutionary Thought	Shanghai	1904 (Est.)
女子世界 [Nüzi shijie, *The World of Women*]	丁初我 Ding Chuwo (1871-1930)	Society, Education, Science, Women	Shanghai	1904 (Est.)
教育世界	王國維 (1877-1927)	Education	Shanghai	1904 (Est.)

[Jiaoyu shijie, *The World of Education*]				
京 話 日 報 [Jinghua ribao, *Daily Journal in Beijing Dialect*]	Unknown	Newspaper	Beijing	1906 (Introduction of Photos)
國 事 報 [Guoshi bao, *Journal of National Affairs*]	徐勤 Xu Qin (1873-1945)	Newspaper, Republican Propaganda	Guangzhou	1907 (Introduction of Photos)
時 事 畫 報 [Shishi huabao, *Current Events Illustrated*]	潘達微 Pan Dawei (1881-1929), 高劍父 Gao Jianfu (1879-1951), 何 劍 士 He Jianshi (1877-1915), 陳 垣 Chen Yuan (1880-1971)	Illustrated Magazine, Current Events, Revolutionary Content	Hong Kong (Formerly Guangzhou 1905-8, edition with no photos)	1909 (Est. and Introduction of Photos)
世界 [Shijie, *Le Monde*]	Li Shizeng 李石曾 (1881–1973), Wu Zhihui 吳稚暉 (1865–1953), Yao Hui 姚惠 (?–1919), Zhang Jinjiang 張靜江 (1877–1950)	Photographic magazines on Scientific Theories, Darwinism, European cities and Scenery, Political Change	Paris	1907 (Est. and Introdction of Photos)
真 相 畫 報 [Zhenxiang huabao, *The True Record*]	Gao Qifeng 高奇峰 (1889–1933), Gao Jianfu 高劍父 (1879–1951), Chen Shuren 陈树人 (1884–1948)	Illustrated (drawings and photographs) on Social Change, Current Events, Novels, art, etc.	Shanghai	1912 (Est. and Introduction of Photos)
誠 報 [Chengbao, *The Truthful Newspaper*]	Unknown	Newspaper, War news	London	1916 (Est. and Introduction of Photos)

Table 1. Selected Sinophone Journal and Newspaper with on-page photographs before the May Fourth Movement.

Title	Years	Number of Issues	Printing Location	Political Affiliation	Number of photographs per issue

Le Monde	1907	2 issues	Paris	Anarchism	Ca. 167 (Issue 1) Ca. 230 (Issue 2)

The True Record	April 1913– June 1913	17 issues	Shanghai	Republican (Revolutionary Alliance and from 1912 Nationalist Party)	19 (Issue 1) 47 (Issue 8) 33 (Issue 17)

Table 2. Data on the two Illustrated Magazines *Le Monde* and *The True Record*.