Western Influences on Contemporary Chinese Art Education

Two Case Studies of Responses from Chinese Academics and

College Students to Modern Western Art Theory

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A Thesis

In the Department

of

Art Education

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at

Concordia University

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

January 2012

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

This is to certify that the thesis prepared

By: **Lian Duan**

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          Two Case Studies of Responses from Chinese Academics and
          College Students to Modern Western Art Theory

and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (Art Education)

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Abstract

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Concordia University, 2012

This study examines the question of how 20th-century Western art theory has influenced contemporary Chinese art education at the college level, focusing specifically on the problems of misreading, namely, mistranslation and misinterpretation. For this purpose, I offer two case studies: an analysis of my interviews with some Chinese academics, including art theorists and translators, and an analysis of Chinese college students' essays responding to my lectures on visual culture.

The two case studies shed light on some basic questions: (1) What are the misreadings due to the cultural differences between China and the West? (2) Why and how have these misreadings happened? (3) Are there purposeful misreadings? (4) If yes, why and how? (5) And what is the possible significance of such misreadings to Chinese and Western art education?

Answering the above questions, two types of misreadings are identified. One is unintentional, such as mistranslation due to language and cultural barriers, while the other one is intentional or purposeful manipulation. In the two case studies, I examine the purposeful misreading of Western art theory, and demonstrate that it is the Chinese

way to localize Western art theory for Chinese use. This claim is supported by the findings from my analyses of the interviews and Chinese students' essays.

In this dissertation I suggest that the problem of purposeful misreading of modern Western art theory is caused by the traditional Chinese culture of respect for senior academics and the contemporary Chinese practice of localizing Western theory. The ingrained culture of respect for senior academics makes it difficult for junior academics to question and challenge the works of their superiors. Additionally, the Chinese academics tend to appropriate Western concepts and theories by making them accommodate Chinese values and the grand narrative of Chinese culture.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. David Pariser for his guidance to my writing of this dissertation, and his particular help with choosing the topic, preparing for the research, conceptualizing the thesis, and revising the writing. Without his guidance and help, the completion of this dissertation would not be possible. Furthermore, I truly appreciate his 20-year-long encouragement and inspiration for my scholarly career.

I would also like to thank the professors in my committee, Dr. Paul Langdon and Dr. Lorie Blair, who offered constructive suggestions for revising this dissertation. My thanks go to other professors as well, Dr. Cathy Mullen, Dr. Elizabeth Sacca, Dr. Linda Smyth, and Dr. Richard Lachapelle, with whom I have taken courses in both master's and Ph.D. programs, and gained great experiences in research.

In addition, I would like to thank the interviewees in China, Dr. Wang Chunchen of Central Academy of Fine Arts, Dr. He Guiyan of Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts, Mr. Lu Mingjun of Sichuan University, Mr. Duan Jun of Qinghua University, among other interviewees, and the students in China who attended my lectures and contributed written responses to my research.

Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Lu Peng, professor of art history from the China Academy of Fine Arts in Hangzhou, who has provided me with images and given me permission to reproduce images from his books on contemporary Chinese art, which are listed in the bibliography. Last but not least, I wish to thank those artists who have also given me permission to reproduce the images of their works.

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Chapter 1   Introduction

1.1 Defining the Study

This dissertation aims to examine the influences of 20th-century Western art theory on contemporary Chinese art education at the college level by exploring the Chinese misreading of modern Western art theories about the image. With two case studies of interviewing Chinese academics and analyzing Chinese students' responses to my lectures in China, this dissertation focuses on the key critical concepts of "gaze" and "representation," and concludes with an examination of the issue of localization.

This dissertation was initiated by my personal experience, namely, my translation of modern Western art theory into Chinese, my study of art education at Concordia University in Canada, and my teaching of visual culture in China.

In this dissertation, the term "Western" in the context of Western influence refers to the influence of modern art theories from the major Western countries, such as the United States, Britain, France, and Germany. During the 20th century Western art theories influenced Chinese art education in three ways: (1) translations of Western publications, such as the Chinese translations of Rudolf Arnheim's *Art and Visual*

Perception (R. Arnheim, 1971), translated by Teng Shouyao and published in China in 1984, and Erwin Panofsky's *Meaning in the Visual Art* (E. Panofsky, 1982), translated by Fu Zhiqiang and published in China in 1987; (2) teaching by visiting Western artists in China, such as Mark Tobey (1890-1976), an American artist who taught at the National Academy of Fine Arts in Hangzhou in the 1930s, and (3) study by Chinese students in the West who then brought Western art theories to China (S. Zhang and X. Li, 1986). In the first decade of the 21st century, all three ways remain unchanged.

In the context of my research, the term "contemporary Chinese art education" refers to today's general education in visual art and visual culture at the college level in China, in addition to studio practice. Correspondingly, when I use the term "art educator," I am referring to college professors teaching art history, art theory, and visual culture, not just studio instructors.

An important theoretical and cultural issue informing my study is the question of "localization" in relation to, and in the context of globalization. In my examination of the Chinese education system at the college level, I stress the importance of localization of Western theories as this plays a key role in the integration of Western art theory in the Chinese art education system. In this sense, the notion "Chinese context" refers to the cultural currency in China today, such as globalization and localization, which conditions contemporary Chinese art education, and the Chinese understanding of Western concepts about art and education. Localization also refers to philosophical traditions in Chinese culture, such as Confucian morality and Taoist

philosophy. Needless to say, in this context, the social and political setting in China today, such as Nationalism and Confucianism, both promoted by the government, plays an important role in framing Chinese reception of and responses to modern Western art theory.

In this dissertation, the examination of Western influences on Chinese art education raises 5 key questions: (1) What are the misreadings due to the cultural differences between China and the West? (2) Why and how have these misreadings happened? (3) Are there purposeful misreadings? (4) If yes, why and how? (5) And what is the possible significance of such misreadings to Chinese art education?

On the one hand, under the influences of Western theories, such as the influence of Herbert Read on education through art (H. Read, 1974) and the influence of Ernst Gombrich on the theoretical study of visual representation (E. Gombrich, 1972), Chinese art educators have made improvements in curriculum reform. They have given up the ideologically driven Soviet curriculum at the college level and have integrated Western educational concepts of individuality, originality, and creativity with traditional Chinese concepts of aesthetic education. They have also adopted Disciplined-Based Art Education for pre-college education (K. Wang, 2006). The DBAE theory has been an example of an undistorted assimilation of Western theory into the Chinese education system. However, not all Western art theory is read and absorbed without distortion. For instance, in discussing W.J.T. Mitchell's concept of the "pictorial turn," some scholars and students in China regard it as a theoretical approval for the appropriation and abuse of the images of old masters for commercial

or self-promotion purposes (G. He, 2007). For example, a parodic multiple-self-portrait titled *Liberty Leading the People* (Figure 1-1), made by a high-profile popular artist Yue Minjun, is a cynical appropriation of Delacroix's painting with the same title. Although Duchamp's treatment of the *Mona Lisa* may have been seen as a challenge to established cultural conventions of his period, Yue's parody does not really challenge any thing, but is simply shelf-promotion for commercial purpose, sanctioned by misreading of W.J.T Mitchell.
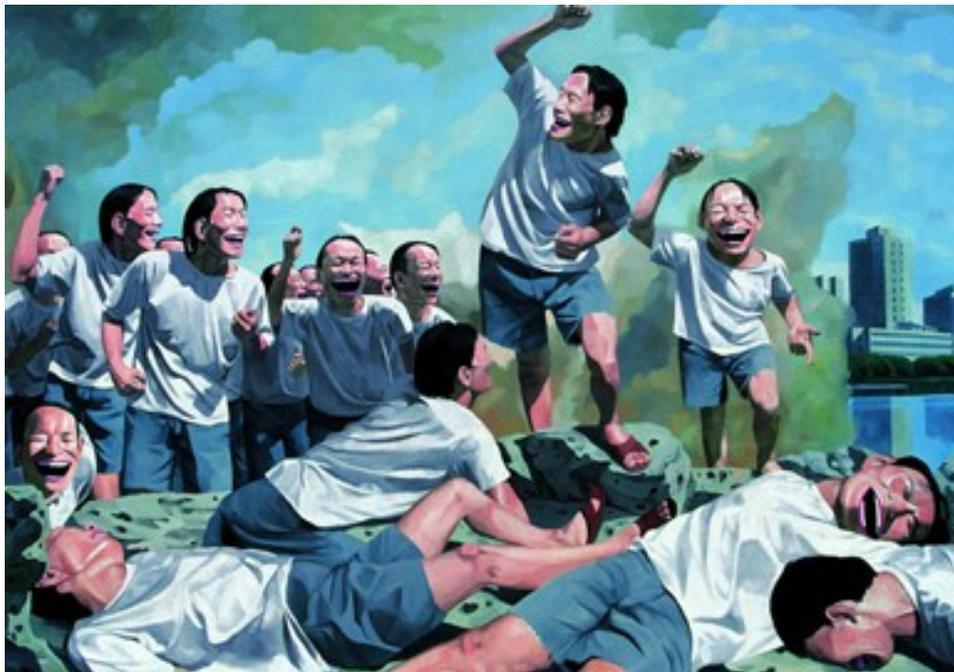
Figure 1-1   Yue Minjun, *Liberty Leading the People*, 1995. Reproduced

courtesy of Lu Peng.

How is Mitchell misread? In his *Pictorial Theory*, Mitchell distinguished the term "picture" from "image" (W.J.T. Mitchell, 1994, p.4n), but in Chinese translation, the term "tuxiang" is used for both "picture" and "image." Thus, the Chinese readers who

do not understand English are confused when reading Mitchell's discussion of the issues of "pictorial turn" and "representation," and think the use of the picture is no different from the abuse of images of the old masters (G. He, 2007).

Based on such misreading of Mitchell, some Chinese students are fascinated with duplicating and mocking masterpieces. They reproduce Warhol-like images of Goya and Manet, and consider this to be a trend in making art in the image-dominated commercial age. In this regard, misreading of modern Western art theory has played an important role, both constructive and negative, or even destructive, in the change in contemporary Chinese art education, involving not only the shift in critical methodology or interpretative approach to visual art, such as dropping the Soviet Marxist art theory, but also the change in cultural, social, and political reform for a more democratic educational environment in China.

1.2 Proposing the Thesis

For Chinese scholars, broadly speaking, understanding modern art theory from a different culture is difficult, because the context is different, and so is the mentality. A Chinese American fiction writer, Ha Jin (J. Ha, 2009), professor of English at Boston University, tells a story about a Chinese scholar, which illustrates this difficulty. In the short story *Shame*, Mr. Meng, a professor of American literature from China, brought his papers on Ernest Hemingway to the United States, hoping to translate them into

English and publish them in the US. In the voice of a character of the story, Ha Jin talked about the difference between Hemingway in English and in the Chinese translation: "Before I read *The Sun Also Rises* in the original, it had never occurred to me that Hemingway was funny, because the wordplay and the jokes were lost in translation" (J. Ha, 2009, p.136). How could a poor translation make scholarly research even worse? Ha Jin used Mr. Meng's papers on Hemingway as an example, and remarked in the story, "I was familiar with most of those articles published in the professional journals over the years and knew they were poorly written and ill-informed. Few of them could be called scholarly papers. Had Mr. Meng rendered them into English, they'd have amounted to an embarrassment to those so-called scholars, some of whom had never read Hemingway in the English, …… They'd written about his fiction mainly in accordance with reviews and summaries provided by official periodicals. Few of them really understood Hemingway" (J. Ha, 2009, p.135).

Although the story Ha Jin told is supposed to have happened in the 1980s, and scholarly improvements have been made in China in the recent decades, mistranslation and misreading have remained. Thus the question remains: Why and how do the Chinese academics misread modern Western art theory?

In order to avoid broad and superficial discussion, this dissertation focuses on two critical concepts, "gaze" and "representation" in the context of contemporary Western critical theory about the image. The two concepts are closely related to each other and play a central role in my study. While "gaze" is a contemporary critical concept about

visual communication (M. Foucault, 1970), with a strong sense of sexuality and power play in Lacanian terminology (J. Lacan, 1981), "representation" is a critical concept about image making and reading, in Platonic and Foucauldian terminology (M. Foucault, 1970).

There are two types of misreading. One is unintentional, such as mistranslation, and the other one is intentional. The unintentional misreading caused by barriers of language, culture, and so forth, is understandable, whereas intentional misreading is a purposeful manipulation, a deliberately misinterpretation and misleading. This is often done by those seeking to create a modern Chinese identity in art education by adopting the appearance of modern Western art theory. In this dissertation I propose that the main purpose of intentional misreading of modern Western art theory is to construct a Chinese approach to art as a part of the search for China identity in art education.

The process of constructing such a Chinese art education system starts with imitation, or learning from the West; then, continues by going beyond imitation; and ends with innovation. The key to this process is the struggle to go beyond imitation. This is to say that while the unintentional misreading of Western art theory goes with imitation, purposeful misreading is a first step towards transcendence and innovation.

In its simple form, mistranslation is a technical issue, related to the translator's professional knowledge and cultural preparation. However, even simple mistranslation distorts Western art theory when the West is imitated in China. For instance, a translator of Foucault translated "gaze" as "look" in the Chinese

translation of *Manet and the Object of Painting* (M. Foucault, 2009), and thus made it impossible for the Chinese readers to comprehend the Foucauldian concept of gaze, which is a critical issue contextualized in modern Western art theory.

At this point, misreading is explained by traditional Chinese culture of respect for senior academic authorities and Chinese art educators' anxiety for localizing modern Western art theory. The two explanations form the main thesis of this dissertation, which will be supported by the two case studies of interviews and student essays, and will be elaborated in the concluding chapter.

A recent case demonstrates how some Chinese artists have projected their purposeful interpretation on *Avatar*. Although this is not a case of misreading, it does show a particular way the Chinese artists regarded the block buster Western movie as a tool that could help them deal with a crucial social problem in China today.

Since the second half of 2009, a big issue disturbing the art community in Beijing was the demolition of the old buildings that had been occupied as studios by artists in some art districts, such as the old industrial compounds, 798 and Jiuchang, as well as the country villages Songzhuang and Chaochangdi, areas artists have colonized. In order to demolish the old buildings for new construction projects, real estate developers and the owners of those old buildings worked together with local government officials to drive artists away from their studios. Towards the end of 2009 and the beginning of 2010, with official endorsement, developers and building owners cut off heating, electricity, and water supplies to the old buildings, and even vandalized, sabotaged, and robbed some studios. Resisting the demolition, in the

winter of 2009-2010, some Beijing artists started an action called "Warming-up the Winter" in the form of performance art (Jiujiu Yishu, 2010).

At this very moment, *Avatar* was shown in theatres in China starting from January 4, 2010 and became an instant success at the box office. Those artists resisting the demolition have drawn inspiration and courage from the movie, and interpreted the movie in their own way: *Avatar* was about the conflict between the developers and the artists, about demolition and resistance. On many art websites in China, artists have posted movie reviews, elaborating that *Avatar* was a story of struggle against the developers and landlords. Artists projected their concerns on the movie and even called on fellow artists to stand up and resist the developers and demolition, just like the native people in *Avatar*. In one of the most popular art websites based in Beijing, Art International (www.artintern.net), more than 20 movie reviews and articles have been posted within a month, favouring the above interpretation (C. Li, 2010). On average, each post has received more than 30 supporting comments, and there are almost no negative comments to such an interpretation.

This is how artworks help to give form to people's immediate concerns, and so this is an example of a legitimate interpretation of a Western art work. Against the background of the fast economic and urban development, the tension between demolition and resistance has become one of the most critical social issues in today's China, far beyond the art community in Beijing. Ironically, the English pronunciation of "China" sounds almost identical to the pronunciation of the word "demolition" in

Chinese, "chaina." Using the pun along with the images from *Avatar*, some artists have made paintings, sculptures, as well as works of installation, video, digital animation, and performance to express their anger towards the demolition and to state their stance, such as the performance, and real action as well, of Heiyang. During his performance, the artist had been lying down almost naked in front of a bulldozer on the cold day of February 3, 2010 in Beijing, calling for resistance against demolition. The Chinese words written on his body read "Die-Hard" (Figure 1-2), another western movie reference.

Although the above performance is not a case of misreading *Avatar*, I would say that it demonstrates how the Chinese project their concerns onto Western pop culture in a positive way. The use of *Avatar* is an example of legitimate interpretation of an art work in relation to a local Chinese issue. *Avatar* is not a highly theoretical work, so it is not surprising to find that when one is dealing with more subtle and complex theoretical work, there are more opportunities for misinterpretation, driven by local concerns, and this will be the main focus of my study.

Figure 1-2   Heiyang, *Die-Hard*, performance and real action resisting demolition, February 3, 2010, Beijing. Reproduced courtesy of Lu Peng.

1.3 Value of the Study

The value of this study is twofold. Firstly, in Western academia, the study of Western influences on contemporary Chinese art education is inadequate. In the academic world in the West, some studies are either general or limited to certain specific topics that do not address this issue directly. For instance, Philip Perry's article "Art in a Million Schools: Art Education in China" (P. Perry, 2002) is about teaching art to children in China, not to college students. Similarly, in the academic world in China, some scholars have explored the topic of Western influence as well, but their studies are either general or limited to certain aspects that are not relevant to my topic, such as Fu Nianping's "Aesthetic Ideal in Contemporary Chinese Art and Modernism, Postmodernism from the West" (N. Fu, 2004), which sounds like a study of Western influence, but actually has little to do with art education in China. My study looks at Western influences on contemporary Chinese art education at college level, which brings to the Western academic world a newer, wider, and deeper knowledge about this subject, and a further understanding of how the Chinese art educators adopted and localized Western art theories in teaching practice. From this point of view, scholars in the West can learn about Western influences on the educational and cultural reform in China today, and thus develop a better sense of how to help the Chinese art educators in envisioning and even re-shaping their

education in the future.

Secondly, the value of this study is also found in the originality of my exploration of the Chinese misreading of the West in art theory, such as the exploration of the interaction among mistranslation, interpretation and misinterpretation, and teaching of Western art theory. My study is a contribution to the knowledge of Western academia by offering more in-depth and updated information, and helps scholars in the West to rethink what they could do to meet the theoretical needs in art education in China. Meanwhile, this study also offers a chance for Chinese art educators to rethink their acceptance of Western influence, to look back at the path of the development of contemporary Chinese art education, and to think about what they still need to learn from the West for a necessary change in art education in the future, particularly, in the area of curriculum development. My personal vision for the change is to further emphasize the aesthetic value, not only the traditional Western aesthetics before modernism but also contemporary Western aesthetics that reflect the concept of democracy in art education.

Chapter 2   Academic Background

The subject of this study has attracted me since I arrived in Canada in 1990. Now 20 years have passed, the connection between my interest in study of visual art before and my experience of study in the last two decades has become more important to me. In order to contextualize my study, I offer a description of my academic career as and research background, as they are relevant to the topic of mistranslation and misreading.

2.1   Personal Interest in Studying Visual Art

I was born and grew up in Chengdu, the capital city of Sichuan Province in southwestern China. In my early teens I fell in love with art and copied drawings and paintings from picture books, magazines, and newspapers, and also sketched landscapes from nature. Then I followed private teachers to learn drawing techniques when I was 12 or 13. In a teacher's studio, I saw his collections of some reproductions of Western paintings, mostly academic and realistic art, and thus became fascinated by Western art. I practiced European academic style drawing and painting at that time. Then, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, like many young artists of my generation in China, I first saw Western modern art reproduced in art magazines and books, and was attracted by new ideas about art, such as individualism and originality, notions

that were severely condemned in China during and before the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) because, as it was said, such Western ideas threatened communist ideology.

In the 1980s, modern Western art theories were introduced to China, such as the formalist theories of Clive Bell (1881-1964), Ernst Gombrich (1909-2001), and Rudolf Arnheim (1904-2004). These theories were embraced enthusiastically by art educators and art students alike in China. For instance, Arnheim's *Art and Visual Perception* was first translated into Chinese by a well-known scholar Teng Shouyao and published in China in 1984. The translation has been re-printed many times ever since. In such a cultural environment, I also began translating modern Western art theories in the late 1980s, such as Peter Fuller's *Art and Psychoanalysis* (1979).

However, that was not enough for me. I dreamed of studying art in the West. In 1990 I came to Canada as an international student enrolled in the MA program in Art Education at Concordia University. Due to my interest in the subject of Western influence on Chinese art education, I wrote my MA thesis (L. Duan, 1995) on the issue of how Chinese art educators borrowed the curriculum of teaching drawing from the West. In that historical study of curriculum development, I examined three sources of influence: 1) Russian-Soviet realist drawings of the early 20th century, 2) French academic drawings of the 17th through 19th centuries, and 3) Italian classical drawings of the Renaissance period. In that thesis, I also discussed the challenge posed by the Western modernist art education, and discussed Chinese art educators' responses to the challenge. For my MA thesis, I interviewed a New York-based Chinese artist, Xu

Bing, in 1993, who in 1999, received a McArthur Fellowship, and now is the vice-president of the Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA) in Beijing. The interview provided first-hand data for a discussion in my thesis of Xu's experimental teaching of drawing at CAFA in China in the late 1980s, which aimed at deconstructing Russian-Soviet realism in teaching drawing and exploring personal ways to approach art education in studio practice.

However, the topic of my master's thesis was limited to the Western influence on teaching drawing in China from the early 1950s through the late 1980s. Although my thesis was completed in 1994, I did not stop writing on the subject of Western influence. I extended my writing to much wider topics, ranging from art theory to art work, from modernist to postmodernist and conceptual art, from visual art to visual culture. My writings in the recent years include articles "Between Form and Concept: a review of a Dia Beacon exhibition in New York" (Beijing: *Art Observation*, No. 3, 2005), "After Postmodern Cynicism, What Else Fun Could We Have? A Critique on Contemporary Chinese Art in Comparison with Contemporary Western Art" (Beijing: *Art Observation* monthly, no. 1, 2008), "*Les Fleurs du Mal* in *Manufactured Landscape*: Reading Burtinsky's Photography" (Beijing: *Art Time* monthly, no. 1, 2009), "Shallowness, a Keyword in the Age of Pictorial Turn" (Chongqing: *Contemporary Artists* bimonthly, no. 1, 2010), "Ten Years of Observation on Contemporary Art in the United States" (Shanghai: *Art China* monthly, no. 6, 2010), and "Gaze, Representation, and Foucault on Manet" (Beijing: *Art Observation* monthly, no. 4, 2011).

In addition to my writing on art, I have also been teaching Chinese visual culture at Concordia University since 2005, focusing on the development of Chinese painting and visual aesthetics. In recent years, I have also given talks and lectures on contemporary art and visual culture in China to college students majoring in both fine arts and other disciplines in the humanities. In my teaching practice, I have employed Western art theories, such as the image theories of Panofsky and W.J.T. Mitchell.

My personal experience and background have paved a road for me to go further in exploring Western influence on contemporary Chinese art education. This study serves to extend the research in my master's thesis, and this study goes beyond the scope of teaching drawing and develops into the wider field of art education, through focusing on the issue of the Chinese misreading of the West in art theory.

2.2 Personal Experience with Translation and Mistranslation

From 1983 to 1986 I was a graduate student studying Western literature at Shaanxi Normal University in Xi'an, China, and was fascinated with structuralist and Freudian theories. During those years, reading Western critical theories in the library was part of my routine. One day when I was browsing the bookshelves in the reading room, Peter Fuller's book *Art and Psychoanalysis* (P. Fuller, 1979) attracted my attention. In this book the author criticized the inadequacy of Marxist art theory and adopted a post-Freudian psychoanalytic approach for interpreting the aesthetic quality

of art, works ranging from the ancient Greek statue *Venus de Milos* and Michelangelo's sculpture *Moses* to Cézanne's landscape painting and Rothko's abstract art. I read the introduction to the author, and found that, in terms of academic training, the author was not a professional art critic at the beginning. Instead, he studied literature at Cambridge, and then turned to write on art because of his passion for it.

I was amazed by what I found, and thought: having been trained in literature and having a love for art, I too should be able to make a turn from literature to art.

Peter Fuller was a writer. He started writing art reviews with a critical tone and advocated controversial ideas. He debated and argued with some big names, such as the American art critic Clement Greenberg (1909-1994). Fuller was also backed by the British art critic John Berger (1926-). Interestingly, both Greenberg and Berger made similar turns from literature to art.

After graduating with a master's degree in comparative literature and Western literature, I acquired a job in 1986 teaching world literature in the Department of Chinese Language and Literature at Sichuan University in my hometown, Chengdu, in China. While teaching, I also read and wrote on critical theories, mostly the 20th-century Western theories about literature, such as the archetypal criticism of the Canadian literary critic Northrop Frye (1912-1991), as well as structuralist and Freudian theories. At that time a question came to my mind: "what is the difference between the critical theories of literature and that of art?" Although there is a big difference between the literary and art media, namely, text/language and

image/imagery, as discussed by Foucault in his book *This Is Not a Pipe* (M. Foucault, 1982), the philosophy behind them is the same and the difference in critical methodology is not big. Freudian and post-Freudian theories are good for the studies of both literature and art, and therefore there should be no such issue turning from literature to art, I should then have no problem making the change.

So, I chose to translate Peter Fuller's *Art and Psychoanalysis* into Chinese. I spoke to an editor in the Sichuan Fine Arts Publishing House, who was my age, having just graduated from CAFA in Beijing with a degree in art history. Very lucky was I to learn that the editor had a project to organize a translation series of modern Western art theories. I told him how valuable Fuller's book was and convinced him that the translation should be similarly valuable to Chinese readers in the field of visual art and beyond.

Then, I spent two months translating the book of more than 200 pages, and spent another month revising the translation. The editing of the translation was finalized in December 1987, and the book was published in January 1988.

The significance of translating Peter Fuller is twofold for me: I not only exposed myself to a new Western art theory, the post-Freudian theory, but also learned how to employ a certain theory in critical writing on art. With the publication of this translation, I became involved with some avant-garde groups in China, and started writing critical reviews about contemporary Chinese art. I employed the Kleinian concept "internal object" and the theory about "mother-love / mother-hate" (P. Fuller, 1988, p.113) in my discussion of a contemporary Chinese artist, He Duoling,

exploring the interaction of sentimentalism and eroticism in his paintings. I also employed the Jungian concept "archetype" and the theory about "collective unconsciousness" in my study of Western influence on Chinese art of the late 1980s, arguing that the "archetype" of Chinese avant-garde is Western modernism, such as Dali's surrealism. In the meantime, I also taught a course on Western and Chinese modern art at Sichuan University. In this teaching practice, I touched on the issue of Western influence on Chinese art as well.

The translation of Peter Fuller was the first one of the "Translation Series of Modern Western Art Theory" published by Sichuan Fine Arts Publishing House. Right after the book, I wrote an analytical review, "Peter Fuller and His *Art and Psychoanalysis*" (L. Duan, 1988), and had it published in a leading art magazine in Beijing, *Studies of Literature and Arts*. The book and the book review, as well as my critical writings on art, symbolized my turn, if there was one, from literature to art.

At that time, there were not too many translations of Western art theory available for art students. Soon after its publication, my translation was put on the selective reading list by almost all the art institutes and some major comprehensive universities in China for art students and the students in relevant disciplines in humanities and social science.

After the translation was put on shelves in bookstores and libraries, I had a chance to recollect and contemplate my work.

Before I set my fingers on translating *Art and Psychoanalysis*, although I read some major writings by Freud (1856-1939), especially translations of his writings

about literature and art, I had no idea about the post-Freudian psychoanalysis, except for Gustav Carl Jung (1875-1961), I had no idea about Melanie Kline (1882-1960), D.W. Winnicott (1896-1971), and no idea about the development of psychoanalysis in Europe in the early 20th century and the internal fight among the psychoanalysts, for and against Freud. To the best of my knowledge, I was the first person in China who translated the British school of psychoanalytic art theory into Chinese, the so-called "Object-Relations School." In other words, when I worked on the translation, there was no reference material available in Chinese to help me. For instance, when I tried to figure out the equivalent terms in Chinese for "internal objects," "object relations" and "potential space," etc., I tried very hard to go back and forth between the text and its context, translating and re-translating, correcting and re-correcting, to find proper Chinese equivalents. I understood some of the terms in English but did not know the equivalents in Chinese, because there were none. As for some other terms, I did not even understand in English, such as the word with a Greek root, "gnosis." In this case, although I checked all the big and small dictionaries that I had, and borrowed professional dictionaries from friends and libraries, I still did not know the exact meaning of it, and could not find the existing Chinese translation either. Thus, I had to guess the meaning of the word based on the topic and context of Fuller's book, and created a Chinese translation "ling-zhi" for it. In my translation of the word, "ling-" refers to divine, spiritual, and mysterious nature, while "-zhi" refers to perception, knowledge, and sudden realization. Many years after my translation was published, I found a good explanation of this very word in English, which reads "esoteric

knowledge of spiritual truth held by the ancient Gnostics to be essential to salvation"

(Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, 1990). Although my translation

"ling-zhi" was basically correct according to Webster's dictionary, some other terms

were not that easy to find. For instance, I translated a simple one, "mechanism" into

Chinese as "jixie zhuyi," meaning "machinery mechanism" or "the –ism of industrial

mechanization," although it should be "jizhilun," referring to the interactive functions

of the human body and nerve system.

From the above difficulties that I personally experienced and the mistakes that I

made in my translation practice more than 20 years ago, I realized the possibility of

mistranslation and realized that mistranslation is not a language problem alone, but a

problem of misunderstanding the theory and culture, out of which the text arises.

Hence, the problem of misreading is raised, which is crucial to Chinese art education

and to the exploration of Western influences on contemporary Chinese art education.

2.3 The Problem of Mistranslation

From the topic of my personal experience of mistranslation of more than 20 years

ago, I now turn to the topic of more widespread mistranslation. In the past 30 years

translating modern and contemporary Western theories on art and art education has

been booming in China. One example from the 1990s is a single publisher in my

hometown, Chengdu, the Sichuan People's Publishing House. They have published all the translations of the entire series of the scholarly monographs elaborating the DBAE theory which was sponsored by the J. Paul Getty Trust and originally published by the University of Illinois Press, as well as some other important publications on art education, such as Arthur Efland's *A History of Art Education* (A. Efland, 1990), translated by Xing Li and Chang Ningsheng and published in China in 2000, among other major writings on this subject. The reason for this boom, in short, is due to the fact that after the Cultural Revolution Chinese intellectuals, and Chinese people in general, recognized the slow pace of Chinese social development, particularly, in education and thus wanted to catch up with the West. For this reason, translating Western publications became crucial.

However, as I have mentioned, there are problems in translating Western art theory. In March 2009 I wrote an article probing the problems, titled "The Victimization of Western Art Theory: Are the Translators Qualified?" and posted it on some popular art websites in China, including Art International. In that article, I pointed out the fact that some of the recent Chinese translations of Western art theories were done by non-professional translators who did not understand art and mistranslated Western concepts of art. The translations of poor quality caused misunderstanding among scholars, students, and general readers. One of the examples that I analyzed in that article was the translation of W.J.T Mitchell's *Picture Theory* (W. Mitchell, 1994), translated by Chen Yongguo and published by Peking University Press in 2006. The translator did not understand the professional and technical term

"perspective" in the historical and cultural context of Renaissance art, and thus translated it as "angle" in Chinese, and made Mitchell's discussion of Panofsky's study of Renaissance perspective incomprehensible (W. Mitchell, 1994, p.18).

Another low-level mistake in the same translation causes problem as well, that is the translation of "swain" as "swan." Discussing voyeurism in poetry and painting, Mitchell writes, "…… Fragonard's *The Swing*, a sensuous rococo pastoral depicting a young swain delightedly looking up the dress of a young woman on a swing" (W. Mitchell, 1994, p.169). In the Chinese translation it is not the young man who is a voyeur but a young swan.

Needless to say, reading the Chinese translation of Arnheim, for instance, his Visual Thinking (1972), with regard to the topic of Western influence, the simple problem of mistranslation is no longer simple, but becomes serious, which is misleading, and causes misreading and misunderstanding. In other words, the translator's misreading causes reader's misreading.

When I first read Teng Shouyao's Chinese translation of *Visual Thinking* (1998, 2005), I encountered two unknown names of famous artists on page 80, "Chagai'er" and "Motige Liani" in Chinese Romanization. I was puzzled by the two unheard names in Chinese characters, and at first I could not figure out which artists Arnheim was talking about. Fortunately, the translator offered the originals in parentheses after the characters, (Chagell) and (Modig Liani). Although, with the bracketed originals, I could easily guess who the two famous artists should be, I still checked Arnheim's original version in English, and found the two artists are Chagall and Modigliani (R.

Arnheim, 1972, p.60). Speaking at a technical level, there are typos in the bracketed original names in the Chinese translation, (Chagell) and (Modig Liani). Speaking at a professional level, the translator should follow the accepted way in translating foreign names, and use "Xiajia'er" for Chagall, and "Modili'ani" for Modigliani. Otherwise, the readers of the translation would not know whom Arnheim is talking about. Here, the "accepted way" refers to the conventionally fixed translations of foreign names that have been accepted by scholars and readers in the world of art in China, and the readers in this world know which artist a particular translated name refers to. Since the translator of Arnheim did not follow the accepted way and created new translations, I assume that the translator did not know how other translators translated the two names. Moreover, the translator may not have read Western art history in Chinese, and may have no adequate knowledge about Western art either.

This lack of professional knowledge is a serious problem for a translator of scholarly works. In the very context in which the above two names are situated, Arnheim described and discussed some paintings: "When the Dubuffet was replaced with a large running chicken by Chagall, there was a sudden emphasis on the movement of the trotting horse in the Rembrandt and a corresponding fading out of the backdrop" (R. Arnheim, 1972, p.60). At this point, Arnheim is comparing two pictures, one by Chagall and one by Rembrandt, and he is talking about the interaction of the two pictures. Unfortunately, in the Chinese translation an important element is left out, the viewer. The sentence in Chinese reads: "the painting of Chagall depicts a large running chicken, and the appearance of the chicken directly influenced

Rembrandt's horse" (S. Teng, 2005, p.81). This translation does not acknowledge the importance of the viewer and creates the impression that Chagall has influenced Rembrandt's art. To the reader of the Chinese translation, the confusion could be stated as follows: did Chagall have an influence on Rembrandt's art, the artist who is 281 years older than Chagall, or did the Chagall chicken influence a viewer in viewing Rembrandt's horse? According to the Chinese translation the answer is "yes" to the first question, but according to Arnheim's original writing in English, the "yes" answer goes to the second (R. Arnheim, 1972, p. 60).

Of course, such a problem of professional knowledge could be regarded as a mere linguistic and language problem. However, mistranslation goes beyond this, as Rembrandt's dates (1606-1669) and Chagall's dates (1887-1985) make the sentence in Chinese translation completely illogical. Mistranslation indeed mis-informs readers, because not all the readers are able to read the English original comparatively at the same time they read the translation. Regarding Western influence through translation, what serious problem could we uncover from mistranslation, behind the problem of professional knowledge? How should we think about the issue of misreading and misleading? These questions and problems were the origin of this thesis study.

Due to its critical nature, my article "The Victimization of Western Art Theory: Are the Translators Qualified?" (L. Duan, 2009b) caused controversy among art critics and translators in China. Furthermore, it was controversial because I also proposed four basic qualifications in the article for translators of art theory, which were not easy to meet. The qualifications are (1) sufficient knowledge of reading in

foreign languages, (2) sufficient knowledge of writing in Chinese, (3) sufficient understanding of visual art, and (4) sufficient knowledge of Western culture. According to the four qualifications, when I translated Peter Fuller's *Art and Psychoanalysis* about 25 years ago, I was barely qualified due to a lack of sufficient knowledge of psychoanalysis and English. The controversy came from the fact that, as some readers of my article pointed out on the internet, the four qualifications that I proposed actually questioned the qualification of many translators whose professional background was only English language and not art or critical theory. Regardless, I revised that article by enhancing the defense for my argument about the qualifications and offered more discussions of mistranslation. A new case for the discussion was the mistranslation of Foucault's *The Order of Things* (M. Foucault, 1970). For instance, translating Foucault's first chapter on Velasquez's *Las Meninas*, the translator, Mo Weiwen, translated "gaze" as "look" and "representation" as "appearance." He took the two Foucauldian concepts out of their scholarly context, and did not offer an adequate Chinese translation. This confused the readers totally. In that article, I offered an historical survey of the two concepts in relation to Jacques Lacan (J. Lacan, 1981) and Plato (Plato, 1991), contextualized the concepts in contemporary Western critical theory, and pointed out that the mistranslations cut off Foucault from the late 20th-century scholarly development of art theory in the West.

My article was published by a leading art magazine in Shanghai, *Art China Monthly*, in July 2009 (L. Duan, 2009a). Soon after the publication, at a conference on contemporary art in Chengdu, China, in late July, an art critic asked me, in a worried

tone, if I knew who the translator of Foucault was, and, with my answer being "no," he told me that the translator was a renowned scholar and professor of philosophy from a prestigious university in Shanghai. To my best understanding, the message behind this remark was that the translation must be a good one since the translator was a renowned scholar, and therefore I should be careful about what I said in criticizing the translation. I responded that it was even worse for a renowned scholar to publish a mistranslation since it could mislead other scholars, students, and readers alike.

The controversy raised about the above article convinced me that I needed to go further to support my criticism of mistranslation. Therefore, I wrote a follow-up article, "Misreading Foucault on *Las Meninas*." In it, I further developed my discussion on the issue of misreading, and had it published in the journal *Art Critics* quarterly in Beijing in the September issue of 2009 (L. Duan, 2009b). In that article, I interpreted some Western theorists' readings of Foucault and Velázquez, such as Arthur Danto on *Las Meninas* (A. Danto, 1992, p.10) and W.J.T. Mitchell's readings of the meta-metapicture of *Las Meninas* (W. Mitchell, 1994, p.58). Along with both Western scholars' readings and the Chinese misreading of Foucault on Velázquez, I offered my discussion of the Chinese misreading, which focused on my analytical interpretation of the two key concepts in Foucault, "gaze" and "representation," and pointed out that the mistranslation of the two concepts was not only a technical mistake at a linguistic level, but a misreading of modern Western art theory at a higher level of cultural misunderstanding, namely, missing the point of two critical issues in

contemporary Western art theory.

2.4 Misreading "Gaze" and "Representation"

As indicated before, the Chinese translations of the two concepts "gaze" and "representation" from Foucault are problematic. In the Chinese translation of Foucault, firstly, the key concept "gaze" ("ningshi" in Chinese romanization) is completely missing, replaced by a common word "look" ("muguang" in Chinese romanization). As a result, the Chinese readers simply do not know that Foucault discussed the important issue of gaze, and consequently miss the critical point in Foucault's discussion of representation. In the beginning of Foucault's original French, the first paragraph of the first chapter "Les suivantes," the French word "regard" is used three times (M. Foucault, 1966, p.20), and in the English translation, correspondingly, "gaze" is used three times as well (M. Foucault, 1970, p.3). However, as pointed out, gaze is replaced by "look" in the Chinese translation (M. Foucault, 2001, p.3), and this key critical concept of Foucault is completely left out. The concept "gaze" in Foucault's reading of *Las Meninas* is crucial to contemporary critical theory. In Foucault, it refers to the interactive relationship between a viewer and the viewed, refers to the spatial position of the viewer in relation to the action of viewing, and also to the spatial position of the artist Velázquez in relation to representation. However, all such significance of the concept of "gaze" is entirely missing from the Chinese

translation.

Secondly, regarding the other key concept "representation," half of its connotation is missing in the Chinese translation. In the art world in China, the accepted translation of "representation" is "zaixian," referring to both representation and the action of representing the represented. The mistranslation is "biaoxiang" (appearance, superficial phenomenon), which is a noun, referring to the result of representation only, not the action of representing something. While in Foucault's writing both the noun "representation" and the verb "to represent," including the passive form of the verb "to be represented," are used, and the three aspects of representation, representing, and been represented are discussed, in the Chinese version of Foucault the mistranslation "biaoxiang" covers the noun only, not the verb and action, not to mention the passive form of the verb. As a result, Foucault's discussion of the actions of representing and being represented is distorted, which becomes incomprehensible in the Chinese translation.

In early 2009 when collecting data on the internet for this thesis study I encountered an article about Foucault's discussion of *Las Meninas* (X. Ke, 2007). The author, Dr. Ke Xiaogang, based his writing on the Chinese translation of Foucault's *Les Mots et les Choses*, and in it the translator mistranslated "gaze" and "representation." Therefore, I assumed that Foucault and his discussion of *Las Meninas* were misread by the Chinese scholar. In order to uncover the problems of and beyond mistranslation, I contacted Dr. Ke, a professor of philosophy in Shanghai. I also contacted a student of art history in Chongqing, Mr. Wang Wenbin who cited

Foucault's method of reading *Las Meninas* in his paper.

In the e-mail to Dr. Ke on March 7, 2009, I asked him to verify my assumptions that (1) his article was based on his reading of the Chinese translation and not the original Foucault in French or English; and (2) his use of the Chinese word "biaoxiang" for "representation" also came from the standard Chinese translation, was not his own translation. When he confirmed my assumptions in his e-mail reply, I understood that, since Dr. Ke did not read Foucault in the original French nor English, he had to use the mistranslation, not only in his writing, but also in his teaching. From the same internet source, I acquired Dr. Ke's course outline for his teaching of Foucault on *Las Meninas* and found that his teaching was indeed based on this mistranslation.

Dr. Ke's writing on Foucault's reading of *Las Meninas* is not only listed at the top of the Chinese internet source on this subject, but also posted on many Chinese websites by users. In other words, Ke's misreading has been dispersed among the Foucault readers in China. Ironically, because of the Chinese translator's inadequate command of Chinese grammar, the translation of Foucault's *Les Mots et les Choses* is very difficult to read. Since this poor-quality translation is the only translation of that book available in China, and since not many readers in China are able to read Foucault in French or English, it is obvious that Chinese readers are stuck with the mistranslation. It is also significant that Dr. Ke's article about Foucault on *Las Meninas* is widely read and cited by students in China. In this case, I would say that Foucault on *Las Meninas* is misrepresented by the poor Chinese translation and also

misrepresented by the misinterpretations in the writings of certain Chinese scholars like Dr. Ke Xiaogang.

I have seen how mistranslation has ripple effects that spread misinformation and lead to the distortion of key Western art theory. As a case in point here is my own first-hand experience with the Foucauldian concepts of "gaze" and "representation." In what follows I trace the path of misinformation from professor to student.

In order to see if the problem of such misrepresentations is reflected in student work, I looked for a student of Dr. Ke's. However, I did not have an access to his students and I did not find any work on the internet done by his students on the topic of Foucault. Fortunately, I found a term paper by Wang Wenbin (W. Wang, 2008), then an undergraduate student majoring in art history at Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts, Chongqing (now an art critic and editor of an art magazine). Wang's paper was about a popular contemporary artist in China, Zhang Xiaogang. In the paper Wang Wenbin tried to use the Foucauldian approach to *Las Meninas*, and discussed why and how Zhang Xiaogang repeated the same motif of "family photo" in a series of paintings "Bloodline" (Figure 2-1).
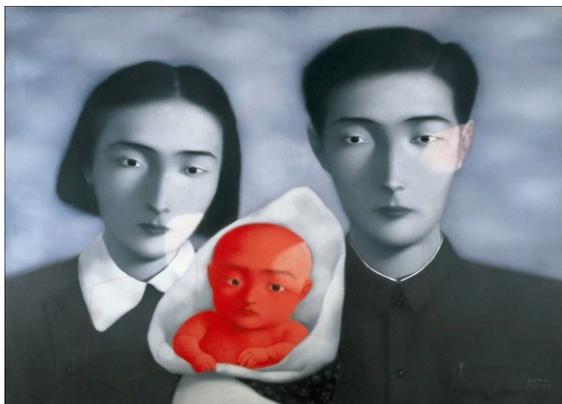
Figure 2-1   Zhang Xiaogang, *Bloodline*, 1996. Reproduced courtesy of Lu Peng.

In Wang's paper, I found a similar problem as I found in Dr. Ke's article, namely, the omission of "gaze," which was replaced by "look," and the missing of half of the "representation" connotation, namely, no mention of the actions of representing and being represented. When I read Wang's paper the second time, I found further problems: to a certain degree, the first part of Wang's writing was a paraphrase of Dr. Ke's article which confirms that Wang's reading of Foucault largely came from Dr. Ke. As has been pointed out, Ke's reading of Foucault was based on mistranslation. However, for an unknown reason, Wang offered no reference in his article indicating his paraphrase of Dr. Ke.

The case of Mr. Wang Wenbin's paper demonstrates that, as a student of art history in China, he reads modern Western art theory through translation, therefore his understanding of Western art theory is limited by the mistranslations and misinterpretations of other scholars, such as Dr. Ke Xiaogang's misinterpretation of Foucault. Moreover, this case also demonstrates that misreading goes hand in hand with mistranslation, and the two make each other worse. Beyond the individual case of Mr. Wang Wenbin, I note that, since not every art student in China is able to read Western art theory in its original language, therefore, in addition to purposeful misreading, mistranslation also makes misreading possible. In this sense, Mr. Wang Wenbin's use of the Foucauldian terminology can be attributed to the poor quality of the material he used as his source of information.

Chapter 3   Review of Literature

3.1 Introduction

As scholars in both the West and China have made contributions to the study of Western influence on Chinese art education, the review of literature in this chapter covers sources in both English and Chinese. Among the sources, although none deals exactly with the same subject as my study, some are relevant to the theoretical foundation and methodological approach, while others are relevant to the context of my study. Thus this review of literature focuses on theoretical, contextual, and other relevant aspects of the sources.

Historical Background

The influence of modern Western art and art theory first reached China in the early 20th century. In the early decades of the past century, Chinese intellectuals considered Confucianism to be the cultural and ideological source that made China weak. This consideration came from the fact that although China was on the side of Britain, France, and their allies in the First World War, China did not really win the war but actually lost its once German occupied territory, Shandong Province and more, to Japan under the request of the Western powers. Chinese intellectuals considered that technological advancements, along with democracy, made the Western powers

strong and dominating, while the technological backwardness, along with Confucian ideology, made China weak. Therefore, in order to make a change in all aspects, Chinese intellectuals advocated Western democracy and technology. This consideration became a major advocacy of the May Fourth Movement in 1919.

Against this historical background, Chinese education experienced a dramatic change, which was to adopt Western concepts and curriculum in order to build a new system. In terms of education in visual art, the ideology and artistic style of 19th-century French realism and turn-of-the-century Western modernism formed the mainstream in China. However, the Second World War interrupted the process of Westernizing Chinese education and art education. After the war, because of the Communist ideology, Western influence did not return to China in the mid 20th century. Instead, Soviet influence prevailed China, and thus socialist realism became the only theory and ideology in the Chinese art world, dominating Chinese art education until the late 1970s and early 1980s.

The Cultural Revolution of China was put to an end after the death of Mao in 1976 and the realist ideology in art remained unchallenged until three years later when a group of underground young avant-garde artists held the exhibition "Stars" in Beijing in 1979. The "Stars" artists exhibited their works outside the National Gallery of China, hanging paintings on the fence of the gallery. At that time, inside the National Gallery there was an official art exhibition, which was ridiculed and offended by the unofficial exhibition outside. Although challenging, the styles of the outside works were merely an imitation of Western modernist art. Since the "Stars"

exhibition was not approved by the government, it was banned soon after its opening.

In 1979 China and the United States established a formal diplomatic relationship, and Western culture was no longer unofficial in China. In the academic world and the world of art education, the study of Western theory was approved and supported by the government. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, although the official ideology in art was still realism, the mainstream in Chinese art and art education gradually turned to follow Western modernism.

The Importance of Western Formalist Art Theory

Due to the Communist ideology and the long-history of Confucian tradition, Chinese education, Chinese art, and Chinese art education have been extremely political. During the Cultural Revolution, many Chinese intellectuals, including artists and art educators, were condemned and prosecuted for various reasons, mostly political. After the Cultural Revolution, they openly expressed their hatred for political art, and turned eagerly to formalism, because of its concern with visual form, not political content.

In the West, the mainstream of modernist art was formalism, especially in the first half of the 20th century. During the 1980s, because China opened up to the West, Western formalist art theory reached China through translation. Among them, Clive Bell's *Art* was influential in China. Chinese artists, art educators, scholars, and students in arts were fascinated with the formalist concept "Significant Form." A prominent Chinese artist and educator of that time, Wu Guanzhong, proposed some

controversial formalist ideas from 1979 through 1981, such as "Formal Beauty" and "Abstract Beauty." Wu was an artist trained in France in the 1930s. Although he was not a theorist, his formalist idea caused a sensation and great debate in the art world in China. The translation of Bell's *Art* was first published in China in the mid 1980s, which provided a strong theoretical support to Wu's formalist idea. Although Wu had never mentioned Clive Bell and the concept "Significant Form," he was an advocate of Paul Cézanne (1839-1906), the artist promoted by Clive Bell in *Art* (Bell, 1958, p.36, p.135). Wu's students and followers promoted Clive Bell and Wu's formalist aesthetics, and in fact almost the whole generation of Chinese avant-garde artists of the 1980s was in favour of Western formalism.

Postmodern and After

While Western formalism was still popular in China, postmodernism first made its way to China in the second half of the 1980s due to a series of lectures on postmodernism given by a renowned American literary theorist Frederic Jameson at Beijing University in 1985. However, at that time China was in the early stage of industrial and economic development, and was not yet ready for post-industrial and postmodern culture. Correspondingly, Chinese intellectuals at that time were not yet ready for postmodern theory either. To a certain extent, China did not need postmodernism at that time, and Jameson's lectures were beyond general acceptance in China.

Things changed after the Tiananmen Square incident in 1989. The Chinese

government realized the importance of economic development and thus re-announced its open-policy. Since 1992 the Chinese economy has increased rapidly in more than a decade at an average rate of 10-12% every year. Along with economic development, Chinese people and the West witnessed a dramatic social change. Although none declared that China entered a postmodern era, Western pop culture became phenomenal in China and Chinese scholars, educators, artists, and art students became interested in postmodern culture and the Western theories about postmodernism.

Towards the end of the 20th century, postmodernism was no longer the mainstream in Western culture. Consequently, Chinese scholars have also started a critical rethinking of what postmodernism has meant to the development of Chinese culture in the age of globalization. One of the postmodern heritages in China is the decrease of elite culture and the rise of pop culture, which, ironically, is in correspondence with Mao's proletarian ideal that art should serve the grassroots.

Today, in the commercialized Chinese society of the first decade of the new century, mass media and pop culture play an important role in the life of common people. Compared to the past, common people spend less time on reading books and more time on watching TV, anime films, and viewing internet images and videos. Against this cultural and social background, the study of visual culture becomes a new subject in the academic world in China.

Chinese scholars and intellectuals alike have embraced a new theory elaborating the new subject, which is the so-called "Pictorial Turn," discussed by W.J.T Mitchell (W. Mitchell, 1994, p.11). Mitchell's theory on the image is one of the most important

proposals in art education and the study of visual culture in the West today. His study of visual culture is not limited to visual art, but extends to all visual forms, such as those in the commercial, political, and news media. Since Mitchell's theory is new to China, art educators and scholars expressed great interest in exploring his theory and the study of visual culture. In this context, a translation of Mitchell's *Pictorial Theory* was published in China in 2006, which became popular instantly in the Chinese intellectual world. Even so, this Chinese text contains mistranslations as I have discussed in Chapter 2.

3.2 Key Sources That Have Been Translated Into Chinese

(1) Peter Fuller (1979, 1988). *Art and Psychoanalysis***. London: Hogarth Press. Tranlsated by Lian Duan, Chengdu: Sichuan Fine Arts Publishing House, 1988.**

Peter Fuller (1947-1990) was an important and controversial British art critic in the 1980s. He studied literature at Cambridge University and then became a freelance-writer on art. In 1987 he launched an art magazine "Modern Painters" which became a leading art journal in Europe thereafter. Meanwhile, he also taught art theory at Goldsmith's College, University of London. Among his numerous publications, the book *Art and Psychoanalysis* is the most important, which has been translated into major European languages, and Chinese as well.

Peter Fuller was a Marxist at first, and an opponent of the formalists, often taking Clement Greenberg (1909-1994) and his followers as critical targets. In the late 1970s, he became unsatisfied with Marxist art theory, which, he believed, was unable to explain some key feature of art, such as aesthetic quality. Thus, he turned to psychoanalytical theories, particularly, the British school of psychoanalysis.

Art and Psychoanalysis was based on a series of seminars that he gave at Goldsmith's College on the topic of "Post-Freudian developments in psychoanalysis and their relevance to aesthetics." The book was first published in 1979 by Writers and Readers, London. The second edition was published in 1988 by Hogarth Press, London. This book aimed at exploring the psychological and biological basis of the aesthetic feeling which dominates artists' creations and spectators' receptions of and responses to art works. While theoretical foundation to Fuller's study is the British School of psychoanalysis developed after Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), the methodology is historical. Peter Fuller looked at some major art works in Western art history and explored how and why these works have a long-lasting aesthetic quality.

In his discussion of historical methodology, Fuller skillfully structured art psychology and art history under one framework, and thus completed a coherent written presentation of his study. This book consists of four chapters, or, four case studies, each is a psychoanalytical study of a masterpiece of art, and each is based on an interpretative application of psychoanalytical theory.

The relevance of Peter Fuller's book to my study is simple and direct. As indicated, I am the Chinese translator of *Art and Psychoanalysis*. The translation was published in China in early 1988, which not only provides me with the personal experience of translating modern Western art theory, but also gives me firsthand experience in dealing with the issues of mistranslation and misreading. This experience of translating Western art theory was really the starting point for my thesis study.

Peter Fuller was modest about the influence of his book in China. At the end of the "Preface to the Second Edition" of *Art and Psychoanalysis*, he wrote, "My Chinese translator, Lian Duan, has informed me about the debates to which the book has given rise over there. I derive great pleasure from the idea, probably fanciful, that *Art and Psychoanalysis* may be playing some part, however tiny, in the radical rethinking of Marxist aesthetics which may, at last, be taking place in China" (P. Fuller, 1988, p.xv). This passage was not only a response to the book reviews on the Chinese version of his book, which I mailed to him, but also an indication of two facts. Firstly, the theory of Freudian psychoanalysis was well received in China in the 1980s almost without any criticism from Chinese scholars and art educators alike. However, Fuller's book questioned Freudian theory, and introduced post-Freudian theory to China. To the best of my knowledge, my translation of Peter Fuller was the first one which introduced Chinese readers to the "Object-Relations" theory of the British School of psychoanalysis. This theory opened a new window for Chinese scholars to look at modern Western art theory, and also to rethink the weakness of Freudian

theory. Secondly, Marxism dominated Chinese politics for decades, and Marxist art theory dominated Chinese art and art education for decades as well. The 1980s was the age of mind-liberation for Chinese intellectuals. Although not the first one, *Art and Psychoanalysis* was among the many translations of modern Western art theories that opened the eyes and minds of Chinese intellectuals, which, as Fuller said, "may be playing some part, however tiny, in the radical rethinking of Marxist aesthetics" in China (P. Fuller, 1988, p.xv).

Precisely because of the two facts above, I chose to translate Peter Fuller's *Art and Psychoanalysis*. Besides, in the 1980s, there were many translations of modern Western psychology theories after Freud, which are directly or indirectly relevant to art. Among the theories, those of Alfred Adler (1870-1937), Carl Jung (1875-1967), Jean Piaget (1896-1980), Erich Fromm (1900-1980), Jacques Lacan (1901-1981), Rudolf Arnheim (1904-2007) were most influential and even popular. Their theories provide Chinese scholars with new points of view. To art educators, these theories provide them with new perspectives to look at and teach art. However, in the 1980s, none of the psychologists from the post-Freudian British school were introduced to China, not to mention the British school of art theory. In this regard, my translation of Peter Fuller's *Art and Psychoanalysis* may have made a small contribution to the shift in the Chinese cultural climate of the 1980's.

(2) Michel Foucault (1966). *Les Mots et les Choses*. **Paris: Gallimard. (1970)** *The Order of Things*. **London: Tavistock. Translated by Mo Weiwen, Shanghai:**

Sanlian Publishing House, 2001.

Since the keywords in my study are "gaze" and "representation," and since they are taken from Foucault's *The Order of Things*, then, in my discussions of the two keywords I am primarily concerned with the Foucauldian interpretation, while other books about Foucault on visual art and the Lacanian interpretation of "gaze" will also be briefly reviewed.

In my study, I discuss the concept "gaze" first, then, "representation." Correspondingly, in this review of literature, I discuss the Foucauldian "gaze" first. The difference between Foucault and Lacan on "gaze" is that Foucault is more politically oriented, and pays more attention to issues of power, surveillance and control, while Lacan is more oriented to sexuality and gender issues, particularly, the way the male gaze objectifies women. However, the commonality between Foucault and Lacan is the nature of visual communication and the interaction of a gazer and the gazed. In other words, seeing and being seen, or to see and to be seen, form the common ground for Foucault and Lacan in the case of "gaze."

In my opinion, such common ground reveals what Foucault meant by "gaze" in *The Order of Things*, though this book is not a political consideration of government surveillance. Foucault starts his book *The Order of Things* by describing Velázquez's painting *Las Menina* (1656) in the first chapter, and discusses how one looks at this painting and how this painting is looked at, as well as how the spectator could be looked at by the painting, namely, by the mirrored Spanish King and Queen, and the other figures, in the painting. In this process of seeing and being seen, the spectator

spends time in reading the images of figures and surroundings in the painting, involving thinking and speculating on their spatial relationship and possible interaction. Thus, the simple action of seeing and being seen turns into the action of gazing and being gazed upon.

While the concept of "gaze" in contemporary critical theory could be traced back to Foucault's discussion of *Las Meninas* in *The Order of Things*, it could also be traced back to Jacques Lacan's discussion of child psychology. Lacan lays the foundation of his elaboration of "gaze" in two well-received articles (J. Lacan, 1977, 1981), which relate gaze with the notion of the mirror stage. At this point, I would hint at the mirror in *Las Meninas*, though Lacan does not suggest the connection. Both French and American feminist film critics developed the gaze theory in the late 1970s, and turned it into a contemporary critical concept. In this respect, Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (L. Mulvey, 1975) is an acclaimed essay on this subject in the Western academic world. Its Chinese translation was well received by Chinese scholars in the 1990s and early 2000s as well. In the West, other scholars also elaborated the Lacanian "gaze," such as Elizabeth Grosz's *Jacques Lacan: a Feminist Introduction* (E. Grosz, 1990). Another scholar, Todd McGowan, offered a more specific study on this subject in his article *The Real Gaze: Film Theory after Lacan* (McGowan, 2007), though his perspective was not necessarily feminist.

Like Foucault, Lacan is an important subject for academic study in the scholarly world in China. One of the recent studies worth mentioning is Zhang Yibing's *The Impossible Truth of Being: the Mirror Image in Lacan's Philosophy* (Y. Zhang, 2006).

In this book, the author offered an overall study of Lacan's philosophy and a specific study of the Lacanian concept of gaze.

Coming back to the topic of Foucault on *Las Meninas*, a question arises: what is the gazer speculating while looking at this painting? According to Foucault, the gazer is thinking about the issue of "representation." I would rather consider that Foucault himself is the gazer, and he is speculating on the issue of "representation."

In my study, the critical concept on "representation" is the second keyword. In Foucault's *The Order of Things*, "representation" is the keyword throughout the ten chapters. For Foucault, the purpose of writing *The Order of Things* was to subvert the order of things, be more specific, to deconstruct the order of representation through elaborating the contradictions and even absurdity in representation, just like what a spectator could see in the painting *Las Meninas*. In the first chapter "*Las Meninas*," Foucault explores the visual paradox of gaze and uses the seemingly disordered gaze in the Velázquez painting as a sample and also as a tool to deconstruct the order of visual representation.

Scholars have written extensively about Foucault on visual art. A recent study is Joseph Tanke's *Foucault's Philosophy of Art: a Genealogy of Modernity* (J. Tanke, 2009), which offered both an historical overview of Foucault's writings on art and an account of the current development of the study of Foucault's interpretations of art, particularly Foucault on *Las Meninas*. Similar and more focused studies of Foucault on art can also be found in magazine articles, such as Yvette Gresle's "Foucault's *Las Meninas* and Art-Historical Methods" in *Journal of Literary Studies* (Y. Gresle, 2006).

These studies provide me with updated scholarly information about the Foucauldian concepts of gaze and representation, and thus help me to be on the frontier of this scholarly field.

(3) Erwin Panofsky (1982). *Meaning in the Visual Arts*. **Chiacago: University of Chicago Press. Translated by Fu Zhiqiang, Shengyang: Liaoning People's Publishing House, 1987.**

My study of Western influence on contemporary Chinese art education is focused on the influence of modern Western art theory, in particular, the theories about the image. In the 20th century, before the era of postmodernism, one of the most important theories about the image, especially about how to read images in a work of art, is the theory of modern iconology developed by Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968) in the late 1930s. This theory has strongly influenced later art theories about reading images, and has influenced the development of contemporary Chinese art education since the late 20th century.

A prominent scholar of Renaissance art, Panofsky carried on the scholarly heritage of iconological study from his forerunners, such as Aby Warburg (1866-1933) and other art historians of the Warburg School. Based on his studies of Renaissance art, Gothic architecture, Baroque criticism, and classical antiquity, Panofsky developed a theory of how to read the image, and how to interpret the cultural significance of art works. In other words, what interested him was not only the meaning of the image or the meaning of a certain art work, but also the cultural

significance of art works. He regarded all art works as cultural products. In order to uncover the hidden cultural significance through interpreting art, according to Panofsky, one needs to reconstruct history and enter the cultural setting of the past. There is a systematic process to reading images, which consists of three sequential steps. In the terminology of Panofsky, describing the image at the level of its visual surface is a pre-iconographical reading, which is a visual identification of images. At this step one regards formal elements as a representation of natural objects, including human figures. The next step is iconographical; here the reader interprets the meaning of the image. At this step, if one possesses the knowledge of what is represented by the image, or, if one knows the story behind the image, such as the biblical story about the Last Supper, one should be able to understand the theme of the art work. The third step is the iconological reading which goes beyond the image and reaches the cultural significance behind the image. In other words, at this step, one pays more attention to the extended meanings of an art work, such as its historical, cultural, and philosophical implications, and theorizes the hidden significance of the work.

Defined by Panofsky, iconology is a branch of art historical study, concerned with the meaning of art works. The introductory chapter to his book consists of two parts; an explanatory account of the theory and a historical support for this theory with analyses of both visual and textual materials. The first part is important to Panofsky's iconology, which consists of three aspects: explaining the cultural meanings behind a gesture, such as tipping one's hat, dividing three levels in reading images, and elaborating each of the three levels, ending with a summarizing graphic chart.

Regarding the first aspect, Panofsky distinguishes form and content in terms of their functions in the case of tipping one's hat, and claims that iconology is about content, and is particularly based on formal elements. According to him, form refers to colours, lines, volumes, and the like, while content refers to the subject matter, meaning, and the like. Differentiating content from form helps Panofsky to concentrate on the social and cultural significance of the subject matter in art, which is the main concern of his iconology. In the history of the 20th-century critical theory, formalists deny the division between form and content, and argue that form is content, and the unity of the two constructs an organic structure (G. Graff, 1970, p.87). Although he lived and worked in the high time of formalist triumph, Panofsky was not a formalist; on the contrary, he preferred to focus on the meaning and content in art and favoured the exploration of how to interpret the meaning of art.

Regarding the second aspect of image reading, Panofsky describes three systematic steps, or levels in reading images, which I have summarized previously.

Regarding the third aspect, Panofsky offers cases and examples of image reading, and specifies certain possible problems in the process of deciphering images. At the first level, or step, of the pre-iconographical description, Panofsky raises a question about accuracy, and discusses the relationship between accuracy and a spectator's practical experience. At the second level of the iconographical reading, Panofsky discusses the necessity of referring to textual documents, which is beyond the image itself, and brings about the semiotic notion of sign, which helps in identifying certain murky or unknown images. At the third level of the iconological interpretation,

Panofsky emphasizes the importance of synthetic intuition, which, according to him, helps in understanding the meaning of symbols. In other words, interpretation at this level goes beyond the specific work and ascends to a higher level of cultural and philosophical signification.

Panofsky claims that iconology is a synthetic study that makes it possible to go beyond the work of art in digging out the intrinsic meanings with cultural and philosophical significances that lie hidden beneath the images. Reading Panofsky, I could sense that while advocating the synthesis in his iconological study, he plays down the importance of analytical study, since analysis is more applied to the formal elements in visual study, and Panofsky is not a formalist. Nevertheless, I recognize the importance of formal analysis in the pre-iconographical description and iconographical reading. The first level provides formal or visual materials to support the reading at the second level which is the foundation of the interpretation at the third level. Therefore, I would say that without formal analysis in reading images, an iconological interpretation of a work of art would be impossible. As a matter of fact, in the practice of iconological reading by Panofsky himself, analysis of form plays a basic role. For instance, in his chapter on human proportions, Panofsky discusses formal elements analytically, and from this analysis he synthesizes stylistic developments in visual art. This is to say that, in the teaching practice, formal analysis is fundamental at the level of the pre-iconographical description, which makes the synthesis at higher levels possible.

Panofsky first applied his iconological theory to the study of Renaissance art in

his book *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance* (1939) and also further developed his theory in the introductory chapter. Then, in 1955, Panofsky included the same chapter in another book, *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, as its first chapter, titled "Iconography and Iconology: an Introduction to the Study of Renaissance Art."

The 40-page Chinese translation of this chapter has been an immensely influential canon of iconology for Chinese scholars and art students alike, because this theory provides them guidelines and procedures that they can follow when reading images in Western art. However, there is a debate about the use of Panofsky's approach. According to Wang Lin, an important educator in visual art and active art critic in China today, in the study of art history, Panofsky's iconology should be applied to Western art, not Chinese art, because Chinese cultural tradition is different from Western cultural tradition, particularly, the tradition of using symbolic images is different (L. Wang, 2004, p.1). Nevertheless, a British scholar of Chinese art history, Valerie Melanfer Ortis, has employed Panofsky's iconology in her study of 13th-century Chinese landscape painting (V. Ortis, 1999). I also employed the same in my comparative study of the influence of 13th-century Chinese landscape painting on 18th-century Japanese erotic prints (L. Duan, 2008b).

At this point, regarding the direct relevance of the Panofsky theory to today's art education in China, I would refer to my own personal experience of teaching art. On the one hand, teaching modern Western art theory is an accepted part of today's art curriculum in China, and on the other hand, applying modern Western art theory to

the teaching and study of Chinese art is an experiment that aims to embrace Western influences. When I gave lectures in 2009 on visual culture in China and discussed the issue of how to read images, I applied the iconological approach to the interpretation of classical Chinese landscape painting and went beyond the interpretation of those paintings. For example, in one lecture, I theorized that the 13th-century Chinese landscape motifs of "Eight Views of Xiao and Xiang Rivers" were found in certain Japanese erotic prints of the 18th century, which revealed Chinese influence on Japanese art, and demonstrated the importance of international cultural communication in the development of regional culture. A descriptive discussion of this lecture is included in "Appendix 1."

(4) Rudolf Arnheim (1972). *Visual Thinking*. **Berkeley: University of California Press. Translation by Teng Shouyao, Chengdu: Sichuan People's Publishing House, 1998, 2005.**

Rudolf Arnheim (1971). *Art and Visual Perception*. **Berkeley: University of California Press. Translation by Teng Shouyao, Chengdu: Sichuan People's Publishing House, 1984, 2008.**

American scholar Rudolf Arnheim is another much welcomed Western modernist theorist of the same period. Interestingly, his popularity in the Chinese intellectual world could be partially credited to Mao. Besides being a politician, Mao was a poet who wrote classical style verses and his poems were once widely read in China. A few years before his death, when discussing poetry, Mao promoted the traditional Chinese

poetics of "figurative thinking." The discussion of this poetic concept continued for a few years among poets, writers, artists, and theorists in China, until the mid 1980s. The Chinese translation of Arnheim's *Art and Visual Perception* was first published in China in 1984, printed 30,000 copies, which provided a theoretical support to Chinese readers for the discussion of figurative thinking, though, as a matter of fact, Arnheim and Mao did not really talk about the same thing. Within a year, this translation was reprinted, totaling 76,000 copies. The latest reprint of the Chinese version of *Art and Visual Perception* was in 2008.

Arnheim has deeply influenced the development of Chinese art education theoretically, in the aspect of art psychology. His book has been on the top of the reading list for students in the fields of art, literature, aesthetics, philosophy, education, psychology, communication study, and so forth. Because of the success of Arnheim's formalist theory in China, the translator Teng Shouyao, a prominent scholar and professor of aesthetics, translated another book of Arnheim some years later, *Visual Thinking*. Like the first translation, this one also provided theoretical support to the discussion of figurative thinking. In the preface to the second edition of the translation of *Visual Thinking*, Teng wrote that the discussion of "figurative thinking" could have been fruitless due to the lack of theory, and the publication of the translation of *Art and Visual Perception* made a great contribution to the discussion and helped in solving some crucial aesthetic problems like "figurative thinking" in the debate that seemed in no way to be solved without Arnheim's theory (Teng, 2005, p.1).

The story of the "figurative thinking" discussion is but a superficial anecdote. The

real influence of Arnheim is his psychological study of visual form which strengthened the importance of the formalist theory in the curriculum reform in Chinese art education in the 1980s. However, Arnheim's popularity in Chinese academia has never stopped, and his theory has been a favoured subject of study ever since. Scholars have translated his other books, such as collections of essays, and graduate students have researched on his theory. In 2006, a monograph titled *A Study of Arnheim's Aesthetic Thoughts* by Fenghua Shi was published in China, which is based on the author's 2001 Ph.D. dissertation. Arnheim enjoyed his scholarly popularity in the academic world in China and supported the studies of his theory there. According to Fenghua Shi, the author of the monograph, Arnheim personally mailed her a package of research materials in 2000 and also asked the director of the University of Michigan Archive to help the Chinese researcher with gathering data regarding his life and academic career (F. Shi, 2006, p.1, p.284).

(5) Ales Erjavec (2010). Aesthetics and/as Globalization. Trans. Liu Yuedie and Xu Zhongyun. Chengdu: Sichuan People's Publishing House.

This is a collection of essays on the issue of globalization in the field of aesthetic study, selected from the anthology of the 2004 *International Yearbook of Aesthetics*, compiled by Ales Erjavec, a Slovenia scholar and former chair of International Aesthetic Association (IAA). The authors of the essays in this collection are from both the West and East, including those from Germany, the US, China, and Japan, among others. There are four essays which are directly relevant to my study.

The first essay is the translators' lengthy "Introduction" to this collection, on the issue of "un-Chineseness and re-Chineseness" in the discourse of contemporary Chinese culture and art education.

While I regard the keyword "localization" in my study as a Western concept and not a Chinese one, the translators propose the Chinese concept "Chineseness," demonstrating the connection between the Western concept of "localization" and the Chinese concept of "localization." Based on an historical account, the translators observe that the development of contemporary Chinese art since the late 1970s could be summarized as a process from un-Chineseness to re-Chineseness. This is a 30-year process from Westernization to Sinicization. In this process, context has played a crucial role. According to the translators, "un-Chineseness" happened in the context of Westernization, and then, "re-Chineseness" happened in the context of Sinicization. From a Chinese perspective, the translators name the first context "de-contextualization" and the second "re-contextualization." In my opinion, although the two names are not clearly defined and elaborated, the historical process from Westernization to Sinicization forms an intellectual context for my discussion on the issue of "localization," because, contextually speaking, localization is neither Westernization nor Sinicization due to its non-Western nature and the nature of un-Chineseness. In this sense, localization could be regarded as a process in the middle between Westernization and Sinicization.

With the above pretext, the translators turn to discuss the issues "new-Chineseness." They argue that popular cultural symbols in contemporary

Chinese art are superficial and taken out of context, such as the pseudo-folk images, and the politicized and commercialized images. In the eyes of the translators, these images chosen from today's life are part of the Chinese cultural symbols aimed at pleasing the West, they are not really Chinese, and they represent the "failed Chineseness" due to the un-Chinese and de-contextual nature. Thus, towards the end of the introductory essay, the translators propose their idea of "new-Chineseness."

How to gain "new-Chineseness"? According to the translators, the above cultural symbols, such as the Taoist sign of Yin and Yang, should be returned to the Chinese context, finalizing the process from the un-Chinese Westernization to re-Chineseness. This constitutes the last stage of the 30-year process of the development of contemporary Chinese art.

In my opinion, the Chinese translators, Liu Yuedie and Xu Zhongyun, in their "Introduction" to this collection have politicized the old structuralist dualism, and put the West and China in opposing positions. Indeed, contemporary culture, contemporary art and art education are somewhat political in the current context of globalization. However, the interactive cultural negotiation between the West and China is positive, which is beneficial to the development of and innovation in today's Chinese art education. The cold war mentality is not always helpful for us to comprehend today's world, and to explore the Western influence on contemporary cultural issues either. Nevertheless, the conception of "re-contextualization," along with "new-Chineseness" is helpful in my exploration of the issue of localization due to its specificity regarding the cultural symbols and images.

In the second essay, "Conceptual Art: Foundation of Global Art, or the End of Art" by the US scholar Curtis Carter, he further explores the idea of Chineseness. Discussing the topic of "Conceptual Art in China," Carter offers the opinion that, although Chinese conceptual art is influenced by Dada and Western conceptualism, the developmental driving force of Chinese conceptual art is local, which comes from Chinese cultural traditions, such as spiritual Zen Buddhism. This is to say that, regarding the notion of "localization," Chinese educators of visual culture should pay more attention to their own culture.

In order to support his opinion, Carter discusses some well-known Chinese conceptual artists, such as Xu Bing. Although Xu made his name in the late 1980s in China for his conceptual installation works, he became internationally successful and became known to the West in the 1990s after he immigrated to the United States and immersed himself in Western culture. Xu Bing is a friend of mine, I discussed his late 1980s teaching in China in my master's thesis (L. Duan, 1995, p.90), interviewed him twice in 1993 and 1997 in New York, visited him in his studio in Brooklyn fairly often in the early 2000s, and wrote on his art for Chinese art magazines in the meantime. Since I know Xu Bing quite well, I would say that the case of Xu Bing is hardly supportive of Carter's opinion, because, although the motifs in Xu Bing's conceptual works are Chinese, filled with the Zen spirit, Xu Bing is deeply influenced by Western art, especially Western conceptual art of the late 20th century, such as the art of Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968) and Joseph Beuys (1921-1986).

Ironically, all the Chinese artists that Carter names to support his opinion are

US-based immigrant artists, they are all deeply influenced by Western culture, and their works are largely westernized. In this case, they cannot effectively support Carter's claim. In my opinion, Carter is half right when he talks about Chineseness, pointing out the importance of Chinese cultural tradition and denying the importance of Western influence in the development of contemporary Chinese art. Nevertheless, the most interesting point in Carter's essay for my purpose is that Chinese cultural tradition plays only a partial role as a driving force in the development of contemporary Chinese art.

In the third essay, "Chinese Aesthetics in the Global Background" by the Chinese scholar Gao Jianping, the idea of Chineseness is further discussed, in relation to the issue of globalization. In his discussion, the author distinguishes two seemingly similar but actually different notions, "aesthetics in China" and "Chinese aesthetics." According to the author, there are no universal aesthetics, but only specific aesthetics, such as ancient Greek aesthetics or modern German aesthetics. Although some basic principles must be universal, such as questions about the meaning of aesthetics, the answers are specific and not universal, demonstrating differences among French, British, and American aestheticians.

Such a different specificity could define the notion of "Chinese aesthetics," which demonstrates the Chineseness in universal aesthetics, according to the author. Unfortunately, the author does not offer a definition and elaboration of the notion of "Chinese aesthetics" and does not reveal how to make contemporary aesthetic theory Chinese.

(6) Other Relevant Translations

In addition to the above, as mentioned previously, Chinese translations of Western publications on art have also made significant contributions to the development of art education in China, such as the translations of the DBAE series. The theory of DBAE made its way to China in the early 1990s and immediately attracted the attention of Chinese art educators. In 1996, Teng Shouyao, a translator of Arnheim, proposed a project to translate a series of books on DBAE, edited by Ralph Smith of the University of Illinois. Teng himself was appointed as the editor-in-chief of the series of translations. However, in the second half of the 1990s, Chinese culture was becoming more commercial, giving a smaller market to scholarly publications. Teng and his team managed somehow to start their project and published the first translation of DBAE in 1998, *Art Education: a Critical Necessity* by Albert William Levi and Ralph A. Smith. Then, the translation of *Art History and Art Education* by Stephen Addiss and Mary Erickson also came out, followed by the rest of the translations of the DABE series.

3.3 Sources That Have Not Been Translated into Chinese

(1) George Ritzer (2006). ed, *McDonaldization: A Reader***. London: Pine Forge Press.**

As stated in the "Introduction," the issue of "localization" in the context of globalization is relevant to my study, because localizing Western art theory is a main reason for purposeful misreading of Western theory in China. The case of "McDonaldization" illustrates how "localization" works in such a context. As the editor of this anthology states, "McDonaldization affects not only the restaurant business but also education,…… politics,……and virtually every other aspect of society. McDonaldization has shown every sign of being an inexorable process, sweeping through seemingly impervious institutions and regions of the world" (G. Ritzer, 2006, p.5).

Ritzer discusses four dimensions, or elements, in the success of McDonaldization, they are efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control. Although the four dimensions seem to have nothing to do with art education issues, they are important to the issues of globalization and localization, since Rizer considers that the four represent the advantages of McDonaldization.

Nevertheless, while Ritzer defines McDonaldization as a process, I propose that Western influence on Chinese art education and the Chinese localization of Western influence are processed similarly to the global impact of McDonald and the ways in which McDonald's restaurants are localized. Whereas Ritzer summarizes 9 characteristics to describe McDonaldization, I select 3 to describe the localization of Western education influence on Chinese art education. I consider the following: (1) Western influence is realized in part through offering Chinese art educators models to follow in the name in part of educational reform and curriculum change. (2) Adapting

Western models according to Chinese needs, art educators in China have made changes to Western models and modified the models to fit the local Chinese context and reach the Chinese goal of reform in art education. (3) Consequently, the system and curriculum of today's Chinese art education are not replicas of the West, but have a strong feature of Chineseness. At this point, I do not suggest a conflict between Chinese ideas and Western ideas in contemporary art education, but suggest the commonality and diversity of the two.

In this anthology on McDanoldization, two chapters particularly draw my attention. One is about localization, titled "Transnationalism, Localization, and Fast Foods in East Asia" by James L. Watson, and the other is a reconsideration of globalization, titled "Some Thoughts on the Future of McDanoldization" by George Ritzer, the editor himself.

In the chapter by Watson, the author studies the impact of McDonaldization on some five local cultures. He notes the social, political, and economic aspects. On the one hand the author emphasizes McDonald's irresistible force in changing local culture, on the other hand, more interestingly, the author also stresses the irresistible force of the other cultures in changing McDonald's (G. Ritzer, 2006, p.293). Thus in my study "the localization of Western influence" means the ways in which Chinese art educators change Western theories for their own purpose. In this regard, Watson explains the meaning of the term "local culture": it refers to "the experience of everyday life as lived by ordinary people in specific localities. In using it, we attempt to capture the feelings of appropriateness, comfort, and correctness that govern the

construction of personal preference, or 'taste'." (G. Ritzer, 2006, p.295). Using Watson, I would change the words "personal preference" to "national preference" which better explains the term "localization" in relation to Chinese art education, particularly, with regard to the Chinese embracing of Western influence. Interestingly, Watson also admits the purposeful change made by McDonald's itself. In other words, the Western influence is flexible towards Chinese adaptation, and thus Chinese educators are able to fit the Western model to their local needs.

Watson offers some concluding observations, among which three are significant for my study. (1) There are two aspects involved with "localization." One is the change of local culture in order to receive Western influence, and the other is the change of the Western model in order to fit in the local culture. The two changes make the interaction between the two parties possible, and make the development and renovation of Chinese art education in the 21st century possible. (2) The success of localization is largely determined by the maturity of the local culture. This is to say that if a local culture is not sufficiently developed, and not willing to face the challenge of globalization, then, localization will not happen. As I described in the historical account of the development of modern Chinese art education, Westernization is a major force in the establishment of modern Chinese art education in the first half of the 20th century (see p.7 and pp31-36). Due to the process of early Westernization, today's Chinese art education is prepared, ready, and willing to embrace Western influence in the 21st century for a further development in the context of educational globalization. (3) Ironically and also reasonably, while

McDonaldization is largely a process of standardization, localization is not to standardize local culture but rather to preserve the diversity of local cultures, as Watson's remarks with the term "multilocal strategy." In this sense, with the localization of Western influence, Chinese education in today's visual culture is by no means a replica of the Western model, but maintains the spirit of Chineseness.

In the chapter on the future of McDonaldization, Ritzer notifies his readers about an extreme notion of De-McDonaldization which, to a certain extent, is a notion of anti-globalization. Ritzer describes some features of de-McDonaldization, and discusses why it happens. According to Ritzer, the first reason is that in the process of development McDonald's has lost the driving force that it once had. It thus becomes less competitive in both domestic and international markets. In other words, internal problems make the process of McDonaldization difficult. The second problem is external, stemming from the fact that, since McDonald's went international, many anti-globalization organizations in the world take it as a symbol of the evil nature of capitalism and Americanization. Although the international extremist anti-globalization movement poses no threat to the Western influence on Chinese art education, today at the end of the first decade of the 21st century, some Chinese art educators and theorists have called for a reconsideration of Westernization. This call is intended to strengthen the change in Chinese art education and to assure that the change is on the right track, though what is "right" is under discussion.

(2) Reidar Almas and Geoffrey Lawrence (2003). eds, *Globalization, Localization and Sustainable Livelihood.* **Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing Limited.**

The issue of globalization and localization is also the subject of the 2003 collection of essays, *Globalization, Localization and Sustainable Livelihood,* compiled by Reidar Almas and Geoffrey Lawrence. In the introductory chapter by the two editors, the interactive relationship and the tensions between globalization and localization are discussed in depth.

Regarding this tension, the editors ask a basic question: "Is globalization destroying the local social system?" This is a fundamental question about the benefits of globalization to local development. In a similar way, this question could be extended to a series of questions about the importance and side-effects of Western influence on the development of Chinese art education. For example, how the West can contribute to the reform of the education system and the renovation of curriculum, but also about how to localize Western influence. In other words, this primary question is about how Western influences could help Chinese art educators make changes that benefit the local art education in China.

In the introductory chapter of this collection, "globalization" is defined as "a process through which time and space are 'compressed,' as new technologies, information flows, trade, and power relations allow distant actions to have increased significance at the local level" (R. Almas, 2003, p.2). Although the subject of this collection is about international economic development, this definition is useful for

my study, because in the definition we can see the importance of the globalized influence on local development, and we can sense the importance of localization.

In the pioneer studies of the interaction between globalization and localization, the editors admit that the relationship between the two is not crystal clear, and it is not easy to generalize the relation. Thus, the editors value the case studies in the essays included in this collection, which shed some light on the interaction between localization and globalization. Regarding art education, this relationship touches on some further questions, such as whether or not an international standard is needed for the development of Chinese art education in the new century, whether or not Chinese education needs to maintain or even create its Chineseness, and, basically, whether or not Chinese educators need to make a choice between modern Western values and traditional Chinese values.

3.4 General Sources in English and Chinese

In order to contextualize my study, I first offer a brief review of the literature about Western influence on the development of Chinese art in the 20th and early 21st centuries.

A British art historian, Michael Sullivan, who is prominent in the study of Chinese art, has contributed a comprehensive study on this subject in *Art and Artists of Twentieth-Century China* (M. Sullivan, 1996). In this historical narrative, the author

grasps the importance of the role that Western art played in the development of Chinese art in the 20th century. Similarly, another book of Sullivan's, *The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art* (M. Sullivan, 1998), is also an historical narrative, telling the story of the mutual influences and interaction between Western art and Eastern art from the 16th century to the end of the 20th century. With regard to the development of Chinese art under Western influence, Sullivan emphasizes the innovation and modernization of 20th-century Chinese art. The importance of Sullivan's writings to my study is found, in addition to the historical narrative, in the author's Western point of view which demonstrates how Chinese art is observed from a Western perspective. However, mainly a narrative account, Sullivan's study is less theoretical or interpretative, namely, not from today's point of view of cultural and visual cultural studies. Besides, Sullivan has paid little attention to education in art and visual culture.

American scholar Julia Andrews approaches the same topic from a different angle. In her historical study, *Painters and Politics in the People's Republic of China 1949-1979* (J. Andrews, 1995), Andrews discusses the development of Chinese art in the 1950s through the 1970s from a political perspective. She focuses on the political influence of the communist ideology on Chinese art before the Western influence of the late 20th century. Hence, her study could serve as a historical and political pretext for my study. In 1998 Julia Andrews co-organized an important retrospective exhibition of 20th-century Chinese art at the Guggenheim Museum in New York City. In the catalog of that exhibition, *A Century in Crisis: Modernity and Tradition in the*

Art of 20th-Century China (J. Andrews and K. Shen, 2003), to a certain extent, the curators offered an historical narrative to illustrate Andrews's 1995 study on the issue of communist political influence, which opposed Western influence.

Catalogs offer useful information and even case studies on the issue of Western influence on Chinese art of the late 20th century. In this regard, an American-based Chinese art historian and art critic Gao Minglu has made significant contributions. Gao's catalog articles (M. Gao, 1998, 2006) present his case studies of how certain Chinese artists are influenced by Western art concepts in the last two decades of the 20th century. Needless to say, no art historian has missed the importance of Western influence on the innovation and development of 20th-century Chinese art. However, scholars have mostly framed the issue of Western influence in a general historical narrative, and barely contributed a topic-centered single monograph on the issue of Western influence.

The scholarly research on the other side of the world is somewhat different. On the one hand, art historians in China and Taiwan have looked at the issue of Western influence on modern Chinese art in their studies of modern Chinese art history. For example, Gao Minglu has published his studies in China, *A History of Contemporary Chinese Art 1985-1986* (M. Gao, 1997) and *Art Movements of 1985* (M. Gao, 2008). On the other hand, some other art historians in China, such as Lu Peng, have emphasized Western influences in their studies of modern Chinese art. Lu has contributed three historical studies on the development of 20th-century Chinese art (P. Lu, 1992, 2000, 2007), and his exploration of the development of modern Chinese art

is not a simple historiographical narrative. Rather, he blends the study of Western influence, both conceptual and formal, with historical interpretations. Due to his strong sense of historical conditions, Lu's three studies of modern and contemporary Chinese art provide an informative historical context to my study, because he placed Chinese art education in the context of contemporary Chinese art.

In Taiwan, art historian Lin Xinyu shares Julia Andrews's belief that politics is the most important factor influencing 20th-century Chinese art. In his comprehensive study of modern Chinese painting, Lin claims that Mao Zhedong had the most important influence on the development of modern Chinese art (X. Lin, 2002). Although these scholars have different opinions, their studies provide me with sufficient information on the influence of Western theory on contemporary Chinese art education.

Although many historical studies of 20th-century Chinese art exist in both English and Chinese, only a handful of studies of 20th-century Chinese art education exist in the two languages. These kinds of research sources in English are mostly short articles on specific topics, such as those in the collection compiled by Lindy Joubert, *Education in the Arts: Asian Experience* (L. Joubert, 2008). The main idea of this collection of recent essays is to celebrate the cross-cultural understanding of visual art. As for the relevance to my study, although the topic is interesting, only two or three among the 24 articles touch on the subject of Chinese art education, none about Western influence and Chinese misreading.

An active researcher in the scholarly field of Chinese art education, I have written

some short articles on the subject of Western influence. In the article "Art Education in North America Today" (L. Duan, 1994), I offered a general review of art education in North America in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Based on my personal experience of studying at Concordia University, in that article, I also described and discussed the concepts, methods, and theories of art education in the West, aiming at offering some new ideas to art educators in China. This purpose is continued in my recent article "Visual Culture and Art Education of Today" (L. Duan, 2008b), which describes the latest development of art education in North America, focusing on the new theories and methods of teaching visual culture. As mentioned in the previous chapter, my MA thesis (L. Duan, 1995) at Concordia University was about Western influences on 20th-century Chinese art education, particularly, on curriculum changes that were related to teaching drawing. That thesis is relevant to my current study, though it is limited to the subject of teaching drawing, while my current study goes beyond that topic.

Among the sources in Chinese, Chen Ruilin's *Fine Art Education in 20th Century China: a Historical Perspective* (R. Chen, 2006) is a comprehensive historical survey. In this article, the author discusses the rise of modern Chinese art education in the late 19th century under Western influence, as well as the development of modern Chinese art education throughout the 20th century under Western influence. However, the author devotes a relatively small portion, the last chapter only, to the discussion of contemporary Chinese art education, which is limited to outlining the development of art education in China from the late 1970s to the beginning of the 21st century.

Nevertheless, the author emphasizes the importance of Western influence on the curriculum change in Chinese art education in the first three decades and the last two decades of the 20th century. Needless to say, the last emphasis provides an historical context to my study on the same subject.

As I have shown, in China there has been considerable interest in modern Western art theory. However, the issue of misreading and deliberately distorting Western theory so that it sits more comfortably with Chinese ideas, has not been addressed. And this is the reason for my study.

3.5 Methodological Sources

I will now review the sources which have provided me with my research methodology. Since this research consists of two case studies (interviews of academics and student written responses to my lectures), I will review the literature about case study first, and then about interview analysis and textual analysis. In the reviews, I will also mention the relevance of the literature to my research.

(1) **Yin, Robert K. (2009).** *Case Study Research: Design and Methods.* **Thousand Oak, California: Sage Inc.**

This widely received guide book about qualitative research methods in social science was first published in 1984 and the fourth edition was released in 2009. Yin defines case study as a research method for empirical inquiry that systematically explores contemporary phenomena in real life. Regarding research subjects and methods, the author further specifies three characteristics of case study: 1) it deals with various aspects of the technically distinctive situations, 2) it uses data from multiple sources as evidence, and 3) it relies on previous research for both theoretical support and procedure of data collection (R. Yin, 2009, p. 18).

This guide book consists of six chapters, dealing with the topics of defining, designing, preparing, conducting, analyzing, and reporting case studies. Discussing the first topic, the author defines case study and rationalizes and justifies the use of case study. Moreover, the author emphasizes the importance of following a set of specified procedures. In other words, adherence to standard procedure is essential for case study.

The second topic deals with identifying cases and establishing the logic for case study. Discussing this topic, the author explores the general approach to designing a case study, and offers a model of 5 components: (1) raising questions, (2) presenting propositions, (3) categorizing analytic units, (4) establishing a logical link between data and propositions, and (5) setting up criteria for interpreting the findings. Regarding the component of "raising questions," Yin suggests 5 Ws as basic forms of questions and emphasizes "how" and "why," because, according to Yin, the two provide "important clues regarding the most relevant research method to be used" (R.

Yin, 2009, p.27). Nevertheless, since my case studies are descriptive and analytic, I place the "what" question before the others, because the answer to a "what" question could provide a basis for "how" and "why" questions.

The third topic discusses what and how to prepare for the research, specifically, how to collect research data. In relation to the interview, the author stresses the importance of planning ahead regarding what questions to ask and how to ask them. For better preparation, the author also suggests pilot interviews and pilot questionnaires. In my case study of interviews, both pilot interviews and pilot questionnaires are prepared in advance, and the face-to-face interviews are designed in accordance with the findings from the pilot interviews.

The fourth topic explains the principles of data collecting, and discusses six sources of evidence: documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and physical artefacts. On this topic, the author also outlines 3 principles for data collection: using multiple sources, creating a database, and maintaining a chain of evidence.

The fifth topic elaborates the details of data analysis, which I will further develop in the next chapter on methodology. The final topic is about how to present a case study in writing.

In general, this book offers sufficient models, principles, and samples for descriptive and analytical case studies in different fields of social science. However, since this is a general guideline, some models, principles and samples are helpful for

one kind of research or in one field of social science, but not applicable for another. Therefore, an important point the author makes is that a researcher does not have to strictly follow a certain model, but should modify it in accordance to his or her chosen case in a specific field of study.   And, this is what I have done in my two case studies.

(2) Methods for Interview

Robert Atkinson's *The Life Story Interview* (R. Atkinson, 1998) is an introduction to how to conduct interviews. In this technical guide, the author discusses the significance of life interview for empirical research, and discusses the preparation and interpretation of interviews. Concerning the practical approaches and procedure, the author focuses on what to do before (planning), during (conducting), and after (interpreting) an interview. Atkinson also offers useful sample questions for interviews and samples of full interviews. Although this guide book has nothing to do with art education, technically, the approaches and procedural details that the author discussed are relevant to my interviews.

Similarly, Charles Briggs's *Learning How to Ask* (C. Briggs, 1986) provides details of how to use interviews in the field of social science. In particular, he indicates how to prepare and ask questions. In this guide book, the author also offers sample questions and sample interviews with discussions about the interview questions. In my research, I used some methods and techniques from this guide book to enhance my preparation for interviews, and make my questions more insightful.

Compared to the above two, John Sumser's *A Guide to Empirical Research in Communication* (J. Sumser, 2001) and John Hayes's *Reading Empirical Research Studies* (J. Hayes, 1992) are more general while more comprehensive as well on the methodology of empirical research. Although they are not about the qualitative study in the field of art education, in terms of the process of conducting empirical research, the former contains technical discussions, which are beneficial to my study, and the latter provides sufficient case studies with interpretations and discussions which are also beneficial to my study.

(3) Terry Barrett (1993). *Criticizing Art: Understanding the Contemporary.* **San Francisco: Mayfield Publishing Company.**

Terry Barrett is a professor emeritus in art education from the State University of Ohio. Many of his publications are about how to teach art, especially, how to discuss art in a classroom setting. Among his publications, *Criticizing Photographs: an Introduction to Understanding Images* (1990) and *Criticizing Art: Understanding the Contemporary* (1993) both are on the similar topic of how to read images. In the two books, the author elaborates the same process of image reading: description, interpretation, evaluation, and theorization. For my purpose here, I will focus only on the 1993 publication about reading contemporary art since it is the most relevant to my research.

It is relevant for two good reasons. Firstly, Barrett's method of reading images is a basic process for the analysis of art works. Although Barrett applied his method to

the analysis of visual materials, I am convinced that I can apply it to the analysis of textual materials, such as student papers. In fact, Barrett developed his process of visual analysis based on literary criticism, which is a textual analysis. Secondly, when I taught visual culture and discussed the issue of how to read images, I explained Barrett's method to my students, and asked them to follow his process in both reading images and writing about them. I found that a workable and effective method like Barrett's helped my students to effectively and efficiently write papers on visual culture.

I also see a link between Barrett's method and Panofsky's, namely, the four stages in Barrett's reading process correspond to the three levels in Panofsky's iconological reading process. Broadly speaking, Barrett's first stage of description corresponds to Panofsky's first level of the pre-iconographical description, Barrett's second stage of interpretation corresponds to Panofsky's second level of the iconographical reading, and Barrett's third and fourth stages of evaluation and theorization correspond to Panofsky's third level of the iconological interpretation. Thus, Terry Barrett's can be considered an extension of Panofsky's methodology. In the meantime, as indicated, Barrett has developed his methodological theory based on a literary approach, in particular, the theory of Morris Weitz on Shakespeare. In his *Hamlet and the Philosophy of Literary Criticism*, Weiz developed a four-step reading method based on his analysis of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, and summarized the four steps as description, interpretation, evaluation, and theorization (M. Weitz, 1964, p. vii). Of course, Barrett has enriched Weitz's method by taking the best from some important contemporary

art critics, both formalists (modernists) and post-formalists (postmodernists), such as Clement Greenberg, Laurence Alloway, Arlene Raven, and Lucy Lippard, and integrating their methods with Weitz's method (T. Barrett, 1993, pp.11-15).

Barrett's four steps will be discussed in detail in the next chapter on procedures and methods.

Although Barrett's method is about visual art criticism, I claim that he provides a viable model for critical writing on both visual art and textual work, and also provides me with a well described process for doing research as well as writing about it.

We now turn to my research procedure and methods, and a discussion of my interview methods and Barrett's analytical procedure.

Chapter 4   Procedures and Methods

4.1 Case Study

In the last section of the previous chapter of the literature review, I briefly discussed Robert K. Yin's guide book, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (R. Yin, 2009). I first reviewed his definition of case study, then described the topics and main contents of each chapter, and promised to develop a discussion of the topic on data analysis.

Regarding the relevance and the necessity of using case study in my research, I consider that case study is a general design serving as a descriptive and analytical framework. At this point, I would like to specify two data sources for my research: interviews and student responses to my lectures. The two cases I have studied are different, thus, my specific method for each case differs accordingly. In order to describe the interviews and analyze the interview data, I use Yin as my primary guide, and also apply the methods of Robert Atkinson (R. Atkinson, 1998), Irving Seidman (I. Seidman, 1991), and Bill Gilham (B. Gilham, 2000). In order to describe the second case involving student essays and analyze this data, I apply the method of Terry Barrett (T. Barrett, 2011) to my study, which will also be further elaborated in this chapter.

In discussing data analysis, Yin identifies three topics: analytic strategy, analytic tools, and analytic techniques. In addition, he also offers analytical samples.

Discussing analytic strategy, Yin outlines four principles. The first is "relying on theoretical propositions." According to Yin, the so-called "theory" in relation to this principle is more methodologically and procedurally oriented (R. Yin, 2009, p.130), which aims at answering questions raised by the research topic. Regarding my case studies, theoretical concepts that inform my research are the literary concept of "misreading" and the sociological concept of "localization." More importantly, my choices of specific interview procedures fall within Yin's case study model. Other procedures in my research are taken from the work of analytical methods of Robert Atkinson. I also use Terry Barrett's procedural approaches for analyzing the student responses.

The second principle is "developing a case description" (R. Yin, 2009, p.131). As I will demonstrate in this chapter, my analyses of interviews and student responses are grounded in extensive descriptions of the interviews, my lectures, as well as student written responses. My rich descriptions are coherent with Yin's approach and with Terry Barrett's four-step method, which I employ in my analysis of student responses.

Yin's third principle is "using both qualitative and quantitative data" (R. Yin, 2009, p. 132). My research is basically qualitative, however, due to its empirical nature, I collected both qualitative and quantitative data from interviews and class

observation (student essays). When I discuss students' written responses to my lectures, I will use simple percentage counts in order to support my arguments.

Yin's fourth principle is "examining rival explanations" (R. Yin, 2009, p. 133). In my "Conclusion" I do raise the possibility of alternative explanations for the data that I have outlined, such as my consideration of the literary notion of "anxiety of influence" (H. Bloom, 1997). However, as this study is unique and one of the first to address the question of misreading in art education, there are no other empirical studies with which it can be compared, and that might suggest alternative explanations.

Within the above framework of case study, I now turn to the discussion of specific procedures and methods that I used for the two case studies of interviews and student responses.

4.2 Choosing Interviewees for the First Case Study

Initially, I conducted 7 interviews, which took place in Beijing and Chengdu, China, in the summer of 2009. Since the interviews and the analyses of the interviews form the first case study of this dissertation, in this chapter about procedure and methodology, I first present my interviewees.

In choosing my interviewees, I took the following into consideration: (1) The

relevance of their professional background to my study in the academic field of Chinese art education at the college level. Therefore, I chose educators and students of visual art from universities in China. (2) Since my exploration of Western influence concerns mistranslation, the interviewees needed to have some translation experience, or they should have been exposed to the translated Western art theories. (3) Accessibility and availability were also important, therefore, I chose interviewees in Beijing and Chengdu where I could stay longer and had sufficient time to schedule appointments for the interviews.

Some of the interviewees are my friends, and some are friends of friends. With telephone and e-mail arrangements, the interviewees willingness to participate was confirmed, and the appointments for interviews were made. Among them, one is from Hangzhou, five are from Beijing, and one is from Chengdu. Below are brief descriptions of the interviewees.

(1) Fan Jingzhong (interviewed on June 28, 2007), born in 1951, studied philosophy and aesthetics, earned his doctorate in art history. He is then appointed professor of art history at Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts (ZAFA) in Hangzhou, China. Since he is the translator of Gombrich, I interviewed him in 2007 in Hangzhou. However, that was a pilot interview, not directly relevant to the questions of my study, since I was still conceptualizing the thesis for this study at that time. Therefore, I will not discuss the interview with Dr. Fan, though the interview was a helpful exercise for the upcoming interviews.

(2) Shang Yang (interviewed on June 26, 2009), born in the late 1940s, and

educated in studio art at Hubei Arts Institute, Wuhan. Now he is a professor of painting at Capital Normal University in Beijing. I interviewed Professor Shang Yang in his studio in northern Beijing. Professor Shang mostly talked about his life story and personal experience teaching painting, which are not precisely what I expected, therefore, I will not discuss this interview in the succeeding chapters. Nevertheless, a typed-out transcript of this interview is available.

(3) Yi Ying (interviewed on August 1, 2009), born in the early 1950s, educated in both studio art and art history at Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA), Beijing. Now he is a professor of art history at CAFA, and editor-in-chief of the CAFA journal *World Art* quarterly. I interviewed Professor Yi Ying in the summer of 2009. Since his talk is similar to an earlier pilot interview that I did in the summer of 2007, with no further information or new inspiration, I will not discuss this 2009 interview either, but offer a brief account of the 2007 interview.

(4) Wang Chunchen (interviewed on June 1, 2009), born in 1965, and educated in both English and art history. Wang is from an intellectual family in Zhangjiakou, a medium-sized city near Beijing, in the province of Hebei. His father, Mr. Jizi, is a well-established and sophisticated artist, known for making spiritual and surrealistic landscape paintings with traditional media, i.e., Chinese ink and brush on large scale rice paper. In 1983, the young Wang Chunchen entered Hebei University and studied English in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, where he received a BA degree in 1987 for a thesis on *Hamlet* of Shakespeare. In the next 4 years he worked as a clerk in the foreign affairs office of a joint-venture company in Hebei.

Then, from 1991 to 1998, he taught as a lecturer of English literature at Tangshan University in an eastern suburb of Beijing. Due to his passion for art, he went to CAFA in Beijing in 1999 to study art history and art theory towards a master's degree. He received the degree in 2003 with a thesis on the American art critic Arthur Danto (1924-). With this degree he obtained, in the same year, a lectureship in art education from Zhuhai University in the province of Guangdong, southern China. One year later, he returned to CAFA to work on a doctorate in art history with the same thesis supervisor, Professor Yi Ying. He wrote a dissertation on the American art historian, Meyer Schapiro (1904-1996), and received a Ph.D. degree in 2007. He was appointed lecturer of art history in 2006 for the CAFA-Glasgow Project one year before obtaining his doctorate. Since then, he has held the positions of lecturer in art history at CAFA and curator of the CAFA Gallery.

In late 2009 Dr. Wang was granted a scholarly prize of a hundred thousand US dollars for translating Western art theory. With this financial support he went to New York City to visit Arthur Danto for a research project (Figure 4-1), and spent about two weeks there.
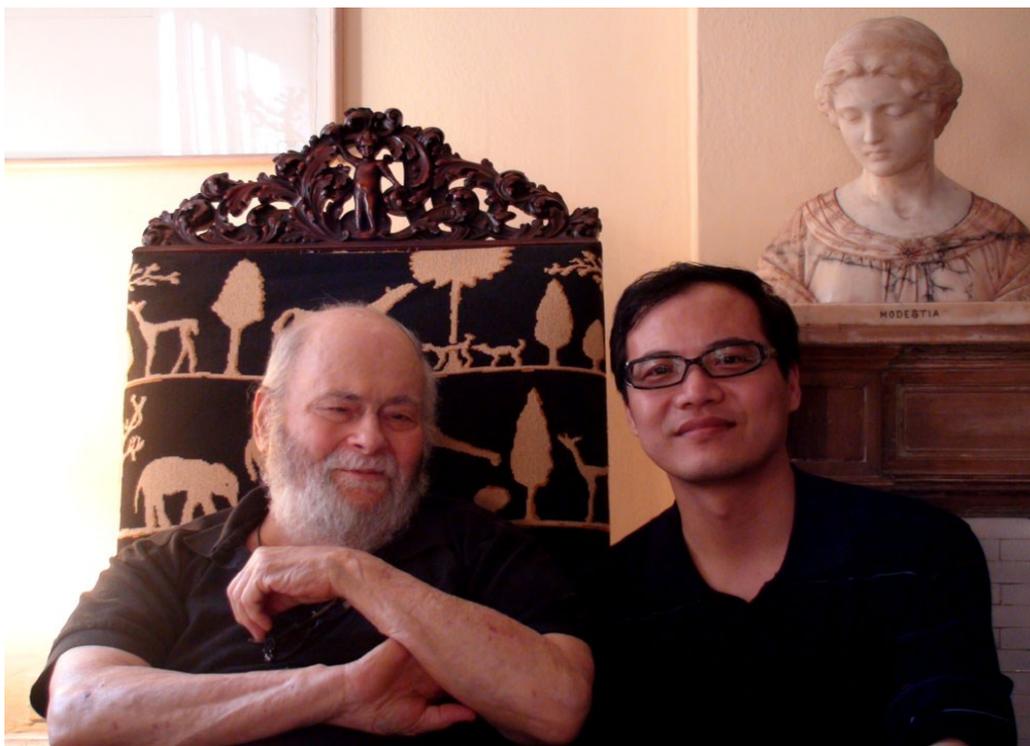
Figure 4-1   Dr. Wang Chunchen Visiting Arthur Danto in New York, 2009.
Reproduced courtesy of Dr. Wang Chunchen.

By the time I interviewed him, Dr. Wang had translated the following modern Western art theories into Chinese. The list is in chronological order of their publications in China.

1. Jonathan Fineberg. *Art Since 1940*. Beijing: Chinese People's University Press, 2005. Co-translator.

2. Nigel Wentworth. *Phenomenology of Painting*. Nanjing: Jiangsu Art Press, 2006. Co-translator.

3. David Brett. *Rethinking Decoration*. Nanjing: Jiangsu Art Press, 2006. Co-translator.

4. Arthur Danto. *After the End of Art*. Nanjing: Jiangsu Renmin Press, 2007.

5. Arthur Danto. *The Abuse of Beauty*. Nanjing: Jiangsu Renmin Press, 2007.

6. Terry Barrett. *Interpreting Art: Understanding the Contemporary*. Changsha: Hunan Fine Arts Publishing House, 2008. Co-translator.

7. Salim Kemal, et al, eds. *The Language of Art History*. Nanjing: Jiangsu Art Press, 2008.

In addition, Dr. Wang Chunchen has proofread, edited, and compiled a number of translations of modern Western art theories. Meanwhile, as an active art critic and scholar, he has also published more than 30 critical reviews and research articles in recent years on contemporary Chinese and Western art.

The reason that I chose to interview Dr. Wang Chunchen is twofold. Firstly, he is an educator of visual art with first-hand experience teaching modern Western art theory in China at the college level. He holds a teaching position at the most important and prestigious art institute in China, the CAFA in Beijing. Because of his teaching, he has a direct and close observation of Western influence on contemporary Chinese education in visual culture. Secondly, Dr. Wang is a productive and important translator of modern Western art theory in China in recent years. His translations are influential in today's Chinese art world, and in particular, are very welcome by students majoring in both fine art and liberal arts. The interview with Dr. Wang was fruitful, I will offer an analysis of this interview in Chapter 7.

(5) He Guiyan (interviewed on June 2, 2009), born in the early 1970s, and educated in both studio art and art history. A Ph.D. student under the supervision of Professor Yi Ying when interviewed, Mr. He is presently a lecturer of art history at

Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts (SAFA), Chongqing, and also an active art critic. The interview with Mr. He is informative; therefore, I will offer an analysis of it in Chapter 8.

(6) Lu Mingjun (interviewed on July 14, 2009), born in 1978, and educated in law and political science, he is now a Ph.D. candidate in art history at Sichuan University, Chengdu, and also an active art critic. Although Mr. Lu is one of the youngest scholars that I interviewed, he is intellectually mature. He is an important and active art critic of contemporary art in China, with two published collections of critical essays. One is a two-volume collection, *Art, Anti-Art, and Non-Art: a Sociological Approach* (M. Lu, 2007), the other one is *Whose Critique, What Kind of Modernity? Contemporary Chinese Art and Cultural Politics since the 1980s* (M. Lu, 2009). Due to the insightful opinions in his critical writing, Mr. Lu won the first-place prize for young Chinese art critics in 2008, which resulted in a great scholarly reputation. Since Mr. Lu is not based in Beijing but in Chengdu, at first I did not put him on my interview list. However, before I left Beijing for Chengdu, I decided to interview him. The interview is informative as well; therefore, I will also analyze the interview in Chapter 8.

(7) Duan Jun, born in the late 1970s, is a Ph.D. student of art history at Qinghua University, Beijing, and an active art critic. Mr. Duan answered my preliminary questions in writing. However, due to his unexpected unavailability for the person-to-person interview, I will analyze his written answers only.

Before the person-to-person interviews, in order to know the interviewees better

and in order to conceptualize some specific questions as well as to explore some in-depth issues, I prepared 10 preliminary questions for the interviewees and sent them by e-mail. Dr. Wang, Mr. He, and Mr. Duan answered these preliminary questions in their e-mail replies.

4.3 Method for Conducting and Analyzing Interviews

In order to make the interview-research work, I adopted Robert Atkinson's method. In his book *The Life Story Interview* (R. Atkinson, 1998), the author suggests a three-step procedure, namely, planning, conducting, and interpreting the interview. I worked out the basic procedure for my interviews, which involves three steps as well, but slightly different from Atkinson at the third step. I extended the third step of interpreting interviews to a further and deeper analysis, because the ultimate purpose of my interviews is not to present life stories, but to conduct a study of art education.

Thus, my first step was to prepare for interviews by e-mailing a preliminary interview outline to each potential interviewee (Appendix 2), except Dr. Fan Jingzhong of ZAFA. I requested information on their background. This also clarified topics and helped me to form specific questions for the up-coming face-to-face interview. Then, the second step is the interview itself. Based on my knowledge of the interviewee's background, I prepared specific, detailed and right-to-the-point questions, and thus addressed key issues in the interview. The third step is a review of

the feedback from the interviewees. After each interview, I sent a transcript of the audio record to the interviewees, and asked them to add anything they wished, and to make corrections or changes.

The main task of my research was to analyze the interviews, focusing on interviewees' personal experiences of teaching, studying, and translating Western art theory. Analyzing the interviews, I focused on key issues that are relevant to my study, and paid more attention to the interviews that provided more relevant information, rather than treating all the interviews equally. When it comes to theorizing the interviews, I paid attention to some specific individual data that could lead to meaningful findings. After all, I regarded the interviews as a whole when I summarized the main thesis from the interviews.

At the final stage of analyzing the interview, I put together the methods of Atkinson, Irving Sheidman (I. Seidman, 1998, p.85), and Bill Gillham (B. Gillham, 2000, p. 59), and formulated the following for my own work: (1) grouping data by subjects, quoting excerpts; (2) labelling and categorizing sections of the transcripts by topics; and (3) interpreting the interviews by answering the questions: what do I learn from the interviewee? What are the connections among the above groups, what do the connections tell me? What is the interviewee's interpretation and understanding of what he/she said? For instance, analyzing the interview with Dr. Wang Chunchen, I screened the audio file and transcribed it into a digital text. Reading the transcript analytically and emphasizing main issues, I summarized the interview into seven themes, categorized the thematic groups with highlighted headings, and codified them

with keywords.

The purpose of formulating the above analytical procedure is not only to adopt the existing methods but primarily to make the methods work properly and efficiently for my study.

In order to incorporate with the above procedure and methods, I organized the written presentation of this thesis as two case studies, and the following chapters are organized around the two case studies: (1) presenting and analyzing interviews, (2) describing my lectures and analyzing student responses to my lectures.

4.4 The Second Case Study: My Lectures and Student Essays

The exploration of my teaching of visual culture in China and the analyses of student responses to my lectures, form the second case study, which complements the interviews and provides data about misreading from the perspective of teaching practice.

In late July 2009 I gave four lectures on visual culture, in the form of series of talks titled "Reading Images in the Context of Visual Cultural Studies," to third-year undergraduate students at the Liberal Arts College of Xinan Caijing University (XCU) in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China. The size of the class was large, 73 students in total. Among the students, 40 majored in Chinese language and literature, and 33 majored in journalism and communication studies. That was the first time the students

encountered the subject of visual culture. Although these students had no previous knowledge of visual art, they had sufficient education in literature and literary criticism or communication theories. To a certain extent, they acquired basic knowledge of Western modernism, postmodernism, and cultural studies. Therefore, they did not have too much difficulty in comprehending my talks, except for some technical terms of visual art.

My talks were categorized by XCU as an international exchange event and designed as a series of bilingual lectures, delivered in both Chinese and English. I prepared sufficient visual materials for the lectures, with Power Point presentations and short film shows. In addition, I also prepared reading materials in advance for students, mostly the recent articles on visual culture that I wrote in Chinese, directly relevant to the topics of the lectures. I posted these articles on the internet and informed students to read online beforehand.

The four lectures were given in four days, two sessions each, all heavily loaded and intensive. During each morning session, I gave a 3-hour talk on a specific topic, and in the afternoon session, I organized discussions based on and developed from the topic of the morning, also 3 hours.

The topic of the first lecture on the first day was "Subjectivity in Visual Communication," elaborated in four aspects. The first aspect was the presence of the author/artist in the process of making the work of art, in contrast to Roland Barthes's notion of the "death of the author" (R. Barthes, 1977, p. 148). In this aspect, I introduced students to the works of the French photographer Sophie Calle, and

discussed her personal involvement with the photographing process. The second aspect was the notion of intentionality, both authorial intention and textual intention, in the terminology of Paul De Man (P. De Man, 1983, p. 26). In this aspect, I introduced the students to the works of a New York sculptor, Don Bonham, by focusing on his anti-war intention that was embodied in his war machine-like sculptures. The third aspect was the deadpan aesthetic (C. Cotton, 2004, p. 81), as in the works of the Canadian photographer Edward Burtynsky. In this aspect, I discussed politics in the eco-environmental issues within the context of global economic development and urbanization in the developing world. The fourth aspect is the language of visual art. In this aspect, I discussed the paintings of a Los Angeles-based Chinese artist, Acton Chin, by focusing on the development of his personal artistic language from decorative to abstract, then to deconstructionist and conceptual (L. Duan, 2005), illustrated by slides of his paintings.

In the afternoon, in order to demonstrate how to approach a work of art, I showed students a 50-minute documentary on the life and art of Velázquez, from the BBC mini-series "The Private Life of a Masterpiece," in the original version, English. With the help of subtitles in Chinese, the students understood the movie. Then, I divided students into small groups, with 4-5 people in each, to discuss Velázquez's painting *Las Meninas* in the above four aspects. Although the movie was about the painting *The Rokeby Venus*, not *Las Meninas*, I assigned each group to discuss one aspect of *Las Meninas*, namely, to discuss the aspects of (1) "who": the presence of the artist in the painting, (2) "why": the intention of the artist in making this painting, (3) "what":

the message that the artist delivered in this painting, and (4) "how": the representational and non-representational language of this painting. With this discussion, I introduced the students to the two theoretical concepts of "gaze" and "representation" in the terminology of Foucault.

The topic of the second lecture on the second day was "Representing Modernity: Modes of Visual Presentation in Painting," elaborated in four aspects as well: figurative, abstract, expressionistic, and symbolic. In the morning lecture, I first discussed the figurative paintings of two New York artists, Mark Tansey and John Currin, by focusing on the theoretical, social, and stylistic issues in the paintings of the two artists, and explored why their works were considered conceptual, and not representational. Then, I discussed the abstract paintings of Amedeo Modigliani and the American Abstract Expressionists, by focusing on the issues of "inward eye" and spirituality in abstract art. After that, I discussed the expressionist paintings of the German "Die Brucke" artists and the symbolism in the paintings of the French Nabi artists. In the afternoon, I showed students an educational movie on art history, in the original English version, with Chinese subtitles as well, "Impressionism and Post-Impressionism" from the series "Landmarks of Western Art: a Journey of Art History across the Ages," and organized discussions. In the discussion, I asked students to pay attention to Manet and the issue of gaze in his paintings. On the one hand, this discussion was a summarization of the morning lecture on the four modes of visual representation and presentation, while on the other hand it was a preview for the next lecture.

The topic of the third lecture on the third day was "Gazing into History: Reading Images from the Perspective of Panofsky's Iconology and W.J.T. Mitchell's Picture Theory." On this topic, I introduced some pre-modernist artists to students: (1) the 17th-century Italian female artist Artemisia Gentileschi (1593-1652/3), discussed her paintings in the terminology of feminism and the Foucauldian theory about power struggle, followed the process of Panofsky's iconological reading; (2) the Pre-Raphaelite artists of the mid-19th century, discussed from the perspectives of historicism and Neo-Historicism; (3) James Tissot and (4) Herbert Draper of the late Victorian period, discussed from the perspective of commercialization. In the afternoon, students watched the 1998 feature film *Artemisia*, in the original French version with Chinese subtitles, and discussed the commercial aspects of the movie, such as eroticism and violence that were blended with high art.

The topic of the fourth lecture on the fourth day was "Gaze and Representation in Visual Exploration of Women's Identity," based on my research of the works of a young Canadian photographer, Mia Donovan, a 2002 Concordia graduate majoring in photography and art history. The purpose of this lecture was to show students how to apply the theoretical concepts of "gaze" and "representation" to a critical interpretation of contemporary Western art. In the afternoon of the final lecture, I assigned students to write a short essay on either "gaze" or "representation" in relation to one or more topics of the four lectures.

For the purpose of analyzing student essays in response to my lectures, I applied Barrett's 4 step procedure.

4.5 Method for Analyzing Student Essays

Responding to my lectures, students submitted answers to my questionnaires and also wrote short essays on assigned topics. In terms of the method for analyzing student work, particularly, analyzing student essays, I am inspired by Terry Barrett's procedure, i.e., the four steps of description, interpretation, evaluation, and theorization (T. Barrett, 1990, 1993). It is for this reason that I included a review of Barrett's book in the previous chapter of literature review. Here in this chapter, I offer a more detailed discussion of his four steps.

(1) Regarding the first step of description in the critical process, Barrett defines it as using language to tell what an image looks like, and to provide information about the image, both internal and external. The internal information refers to subject matter, media, form, etc., and the external information refers to the social context, cultural condition, historical background, etc. In this regard, Barrett emphasizes the importance of accuracy in description, which gives reliability to the next stages in the process. His emphasis is reminiscent of Panofsky's emphasis on accuracy in a pre-iconographical description. In other words, accuracy guarantees reliability, and the two form the preconditions for the following stages of interpretation, evaluation and theorization.

The issue of accuracy in description is important because, according to Barrett,

when describing an image, an art critic is hardly being neutral, but is expressing personal opinions. He writes,

[W]hen a critic makes a descriptive claim about a painting – points to something in it and names it – we should be able to see it and agree (or disagree) with the critic's observation. Description is said to deal with facts, and it does. …… Critics could write description in a painstaking way so as not to reveal their preferences and biases; …… (T. Barrett, 1993, p.43).

(2) Regarding the second step of interpretation, although the interpretative process cannot be separated from the description, it is different from the descriptive process, for its personal observations and judgments. Based on his discussion of some works of art, and his discussions of some art critics' discussions of art works, Barrett offers 19 principles of interpretation, and I suggest there are 3 basic ones: the necessity of interpretation, the image-focused interpretation, and the multi-aspect interpretation. Nevertheless, I am in favour of the multi-aspect interpretation. I consider that it could enrich my analysis of student works. In the case of my study, multi-aspect interpretation could provide me with opportunities to have more findings from the data.

(3) Regarding the third step of evaluation, or judgment in the critical process, Barrett offers some possibilities for readers to consider, such as judging art based on the theories of realism, expressionism, formalism, instrumentalism, and holding

criteria of originality and craftsmanship. According to Barrett, two issues are important for judging art: choosing criteria, and pursuing incompleteness. What criteria should be applied to the practice of judgment? Barrett proposes that choosing criteria should be in accordance with the type of image, and should not be limited to one criterion, but that the critic should use multiple criteria.

(4) Regarding the fourth step of theorization in the critical process, Barrett discusses the theories of modernism, postmodernism, and cultural studies, including feminist criticism and multicultural criticism. His point is that, regardless of the perspective of the theories, the description, interpretation, and evaluation should be finalized with a theoretical signification. In order to illustrate this point, Barrett discusses some critical writings by some influential art critics, and explores how they theorized the works in discussion.

The reason why I am inspired by Barrett's method in analyzing the student essays is that he demonstrated how the four-step procedure can work effectively in analyzing visual data and presenting the analyses in writing. In my research, although the first three steps are important, the final step is even more important due to its direct relevance to the conclusion. I consider that theorization can take two forms: the specific and the general. Analyzing student essays, I offer findings and summarize specific meanings or significance of the findings. Putting all the analyses together, I offer a final conclusion, which is more general and less specific.

Nevertheless, I must state clearly that I borrow Barrett's method to help with my discussion of student essays, and my discussion is not identical to Barrett's method.

Since Barrett's method is applied to the discussion of images, and mine is to the discussion of texts, I do not strictly follow Barrett, but use variants when necessary.

4.6 Acquiring the Ethical Release Forms

Planning the interviews, I prepared the ethical release form "Consent to Participate in Art Education Study" which is based on the "Sample Consent Form to Participate in Research" prepared by the School of Graduate Studies, Concordia University. I first prepared the form in English, then translated it into Chinese, and eventually gave the interviewees an English-Chinese bilingual version to sign before the interview, since they understood English, see Appendix 6.

Regarding the ethical release forms that I acquired from students of XCU, I integrated it into the questionnaire, with the permission of XCU, and asked students to sign in advance.

Regarding the permission for using the images as illustrations in this dissertation, I acquired it from Dr. Lu Peng, professor of art history at Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, China. To date, Dr. Lu has published 5 books about modern and contemporary Chinese art, including one in English, and holds the copyright of all the illustrations in his books. I talked with him in the summer of 2008 in Hangzhou about granting me the permission to use images from his books, and he agreed verbally. On November 14, 2011, I spoke to him again over the phone for the same purpose, he

agreed again. Then, I sent him an e-mail right away asking for permission in writing, and he replied me an e-mail with permission on the same day. See Appendix 6.

Regarding other release permissions, please see Appendix 6 as well.

Part Two   First Case Study: Interviews with Chinese Academics on

Misreading and Localization

In the next three chapters I will present my interviews with Chinese academics and students in art, discussing the issues of misreading and localization, and also offer analyses of the interviews.

Chapter 5   Preparing the Interviews

5.1 Two Pilot Interviews: Professors Fan and Yi

Upon preparing the study of Western influence on Chinese art education, I conducted two pilot interviews in the summer of 2007. Although at that time I did not have a clear idea about the specific questions for the 2009 interviews, I knew that I needed first-hand data from some renowned scholars and translators about translating modern Western art theories, since translation is one of the main venues through which Western influence reached China. For this purpose, I interviewed Professor Fan Jingzhong of China Academy of Fine Arts in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, and Professor Yi Ying of Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing, two prominent

translators of modern Western art theories and scholars of Western art history.

Professor Fan is an expert on Ernst Gombrich. He translated major publications from Gombrich, including *The Story of Art* and *Art and Illusion*.

During the interview, I asked Professor Fan the following questions. I provide his answers after each question, in short form.

(1). Q: When did you first read Gombrich in English?

A: Early 1980s.

(2). Q: What books from Gombrich have you translated?

A: The key works, such as *The Story of Art* and *Art and Illusion*.

(3). Q: Did you translate art theories of other Western scholars, if so, where do they differ with Gombrich?

A: Yes, some other theories of formalism.

(4). Q: What are the historical and cultural contexts in which your translations were published?

A: At that time Western formalist theory was very welcomed in China.

Based on the above questions and answers, we briefly discussed some issues in relation to Professor Fan's teaching, such as why Gombrich was important in China in the 1980s and 1990s. Professor Fan's main ideas were that, firstly, Gombrich's formalist theory was a timely gift from the West when Chinese art education needed Western formalism for curriculum change in the 1980s. Secondly, Gombrich's formalist theory could help Chinese students better understand visual forms. Thirdly, as he said, his graduate and undergraduate students had responded enthusiastically to

his teaching of Gombrich's theory because of its formalistic nature.

However, regarding Professor Fan's translation of Gombrich, a scholar published a critical article about the Chinese version of *The Story of Art*, stating that the opening sentence of the book, "There really is no such thing as Art" (Gombrich, 1971, p.5), was translated not quite right. The author of the review article argued that the capitalized "Art" at the end of the sentence referred to "absolute art" and not art in general as a common term. I wrote an article in 2006 about Fan's translation and the critical review, and defended Professor Fan for not having distinguished the two kinds of "art" (Duan, 2007, p.221). However, during the interview, I did not mention that anecdote, and I did not know whether Professor Fan had ever read the two opposite review articles.

Professor Yi is also a translator of Western formalist art theories. He has translated the theory of Roger Fry (R. Fry, 1920, 1981) and the study of Panofsky by Michael Ann Holly (M. Holly, 1984). In the interview with Professor Yi in July 2007, I asked him the following questions, and he responded with these shortened answers below.

(1). Q: When did you become interested in Western formalist art theory, and why did you turn to Panofsky thereafter?

A: I started to translate the formalist theory of Roger Fry in mid 1980s, and Holly's study of Panofsky in the 1990s.

(2). Q: Why iconology after formalism?

A: In the 1990s, Chinese scholars realized the necessity to go beyond

formalism and modernism.

(3). Q: Do you think Western formalist theory is still necessary for Chinese art education today?

A: Yes, it is always necessary as long as we have the sense of history, while we also need to look toward the future. Education should not be limited to one theory, and we should not be confined by formalism and modernism.

(4). Q: How do you employ modern Western art theory in your teaching practice?

A: I am interested in the methodology of image reading, such as Panofsky's iconology. I have organized field trips every year for my art history courses, bringing graduate students to Europe. In front of Renaissance paintings, I told my students the stories behind the paintings and discussed how we could use the background stories to interpret the meanings and significances of those masterpieces.

Regarding Professor Yi's translation, there is an anecdote as well. In 1988 an editor from Sichuan Fine Arts Publishing House in my hometown Chengdu asked me if I could clean-up a manuscript of a translation. I answered "yes," and the editor gave me a pack of hand-written manuscripts which is a translation of Roger Fry's *Vision and Design*, the translator being Professor Yi. Before getting my hands on the manuscript, I wondered what the "clean-up" job could be. Upon opening the manuscript, I found that the translation was written in black ink, and a proofreader's corrections with blue ink were on almost every page. Then, the translator re-corrected almost all the corrections with white paper-mate, literally. Cleaning up the mess done with pen and paper-mate, I compared the black, blue and white words, and found that

the proofreader did not have sufficient knowledge about art, but had only a general English vocabulary, and that was why Professor Yi re-corrected the corrections back to the original translation. Doing the cleaning job, I could feel the anger of the translator, which was hidden in and also disclosed by his white re-corrections: he recovered almost everything that had been corrected, without hesitation and mercy.

Remembering this incident made me think about some additional questions. With mistranslation, what kind of misreading would be offered to the readers in China? What kind of misunderstanding might be behind mistranslation? How could mistranslation affect the use of Western theory in China? Are the art educators and students in China aware that they read mistranslations?

With these kinds of questions in mind, in March 2009 I started to prepare interview questions before my summer trip to China.

5.2 Preliminary Written Interviews

In order to better prepare the up-coming person-to-person interviews by acquiring preliminary information about some key issues, I e-mailed ten questions to the intended interviewees, Dr. Wang Chunchen, Mr. He Guiyan, and Mr. Duan Jun. In the following, I offer a brief discussion of the findings from the preliminary written interviews, and present summaries of the written answers in "Appendix 2."

Question one: Which Western art theory was the first you read in translation? How did it influence you?

This question is a general one, and the purpose of asking this question is to determine what kind of theory the young Chinese readers have embraced at the beginning of their professional careers. This question intends to reveal a part of the cultural and educational context of the historical period that is covered by this study.

In summarizing the answers to this question, I have three observations. First, all the interviewees indicated that the Western art theories they read first were of a formalist nature. Second, formalist theory opened a new window for them to look at the world of art. Third, two of the three have spoken of their dissatisfactions thereafter with the limits of the formalist theory.

Examining the three observations, I have the following interpretation of the responses I received. Western formalist art theory was appreciated in China after the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) for its affirmation of "art for art's sake," which is in direct contrast to the Chinese notion of "art for revolution." Therefore, during the period from early 1980s to mid 1990s, formalist art theories dominated the reading list in the art world in China, replacing the old vulgar Marxist art theory imported from the Soviet Union. However, in the late 1990s and early 2000s when the three interviewees entered the art world, what they first encountered in theoretical reading was still formalism. This is to say that formalism is the entry theory for art students in China. Nevertheless, when more Western art theories reached China, the limits of the formalist theory in fathoming the meaning of art is exposed, such as the confinement

to the autonomy of art to itself without reaching the external context. Thus, the Chinese readers turned to look for alternatives.

Evaluating the influence of formalism based on this interpretation, I note that, although formalist art theory was no longer a fashion in the West in the 1980s and 1990s, it was a timely theory for the Chinese to escape from the political analysis of art. Thus, the value of Western formalist art theory was determined by the cultural and historical context in China, and by the theoretical needs of China at that time.

Question Two: When you were a student, how many translations of Western art theory were you required to read per semester?

The purpose of asking this question is to determine the importance of Western influence on Chinese art education more specifically, in relation to the course requirements. I realize now that I should have asked my interviewees to compare the quantity of Western books with the quantity of the books written by Chinese scholars, as well as the translations from Russian written by Soviet Marxist scholars, that they were supposed to read. Such a comparison could make better sense of the importance of Western influence.

Summarizing the answers, I observe that at least two of the three interviewees practiced two types of reading, namely, close reading and general reading. The former pays more attention to the theoretical arguments and the details of how the arguments are made, while the latter aims at acquiring basic information only. The answer from Mr. Duan also suggests a self-motivated reading, which is not to acquire a reading list

from a graduate supervisor but to decide on one's reading list by oneself. In a certain sense, this kind of reading is more research-like, giving freedom to the student to compile a topic-centered bibliography and to decide which ones should be weighted more.

As for the question about how many translations of Western art theory the interviewees had read, Dr. Wang Chunchen said he did not remember the exact quantity, however, every semester there were 4 or 5 translated books assigned for close reading and more than 10 for general reading. Mr. He Guiyan's answer was 5-10 books every semester. Answering the same question, Mr. Duan said that he read about 20 translated books of Western art theory every semester, and, among them, at least 5 for close reading.

Question Three: When you became an art educator how many translations of Western art theory do you require your students to read per semester?

The purpose of this question is similar to that of the previous one, but, in order to have a fuller view, this question is addressed from an opposite angle.

Although the angle is different, the information in the three answers is what I expected, which is no big difference from the information in the answers to the previous question. However, additional information is also found in these answers, which make this question fruitful. The unexpected information includes: (1) Some Chinese art educators value Western scholars' opinions on Chinese art, not only their opinions on Western art or art theory. This is to say that some young art educators

want to look at Chinese art not only from a Chinese perspective but also, and even more importantly, from a Western perspective, such as reading the books by James Cahill and Michael Sullivan. (2) Valuing a Western perspective in looking at Chinese art and in teaching Chinese art discloses the importance of Western concepts for young art educators in China. (3) Western understanding is not only important to the Chinese understanding of Western art, but also important to the Chinese understanding of Chinese art, because Western understanding demonstrates a different perspective and provides different point of view, which enriches Chinese understanding of Chinese art.

Question Four: Have you translated any Western art theories? If yes, what are they?

The purpose of asking this question is to determine the interviewees' direct experience with Western art theory. From the "yes" answers I obtained three findings. Firstly, graduate students majoring in art history have been exposed to original texts of Western art theories directly, and no matter whether they are good or not at translating, they are required to translate art theory from Western sources, such as Clement Greenberg's formalist art theory and/or Author Danto's post-modern art theory. Secondly, art educators of the younger generation, especially those in the discipline of art history, have the basic training of reading Western art theory in the original language. Thirdly, however, not all the young art educators are fully capable of translating Western art theory, and this suggests that mistranslation becomes

possible.

Question Five: In the process of translating, how do you deal with the concepts, notions, and terms for which there are no existing and accepted Chinese equivalents?

The purpose of asking this question is to determine how deeply the interviewees have been involved with translating Western art theory, and also to fathom their knowledge of both contemporary art theory of the West and their mastering of Western languages. Certainly, this is also a question about mistranslation.

Although it seems that only one interviewee has been involved with translating Western art theory in a professional manner, all three answers show that it is necessary to create a new term for a Western term that has no existing and accepted equivalent translation in Chinese.

Beneath this, I see the scholarly seriousness of the interviewees in facing Western art theory, which is different from those translators who do not have adequate knowledge in translating art theory. Considering Dr. Wang Chunchen's answer, I could also see that his professional knowledge about contemporary art theory in the West is updated and that he has sufficient experience in translating Western art theories.

Question Six: As an art student and also as an art educator, when reading Western art theories, how do you deal with mistranslations?

Summarizing the answers, I could sense Dr. Wang Chunchen's sympathy with the mistranslations and translators. In his answer, Wang emphasized the difficulty in translation, and the undertone in his answer could be that mistranslation is unavoidable. In the second answer, Mr. He Guiyan emphasized the importance of knowledge about art theory for a reader to detect possible mistranslations. In other words, a sufficient knowledge of art could help a reader discover mistranslations. The third answer from Mr. Duan Jun indicates the desire to avoid further mistranslation.

Question Seven: At a technical level, what is your comment on the Chinese translation of Western art theory in the past 30 years, such as your opinion about mistranslation?

The three interviewees have similar comments on the problem: in order to better understand and translate Western art theory, a translator needs sufficient knowledge of art and art theory, and sufficient knowledge of foreign language.

Regarding either one of the two kinds of knowledge, their comments also hint at a paradox, or hermeneutic circle: in order to understand A, one needs to understand B, and in order to understand B, one needs to understand A. Nonetheless, going back and forth between A and B could improve the understanding of both A and B.

Question Eight: At a scholarly level, do you have any comments on the "importation" of Western art theory? For instance, what is your opinion about importing Western formalist art theory to China in the cultural context of the

21st century?

The purpose of this question is to take the first step beyond the technical level of misreading in translation, and test the interviewees' personal opinion about Western influence. Regarding the first part of this question, I acquired two opposite answers. Mr. He considered that in the past 30 years, the achievement in translating Western art theory was great, while Mr. Duan considered it was not so. Although Dr. Wang did not give a direct answer, he is not fully satisfied with the translations in terms of coverage, quantity, and quality. With different opinions, all three interviewees agreed that translating Western art theory is important to the development of Chinese art education. Regarding the second part of this question, Dr. Wang and Mr. He emphasized the historical importance in translating formalist art theory, while Mr. Duan emphasized, with a historical sense as well, the importance of the visual form itself, which is a foundation for the understanding of visual art.

The difference and the commonality in the three answers reveal that Chinese intellectuals and art educators have welcomed and positively embraced Western influence and weighed the importance of this influence. In the meantime, Chinese scholars are clear that Western influence should be valued in a historical context.

Question Nine: How important is the teaching of Western art theory at art institutions in China? In your teaching practice, do you often use Western theories, concepts, notions, and terms?

This question is a continuation and further development of the previous question.

The purpose of asking this question is to offer a practical test of the interviewees' personal opinions about the Western influence in relation to their teaching practice. All three interviewees gave positive and affirmative answers to this question, and emphasized the importance of teaching modern Western art theory to the scholarly exchange and theoretical conversation between Chinese art educators and Western art educators.

Behind their emphasis on the China-West exchange, I could sense the Chinese anxiety of catching up with the development of education in art and visual culture in the West. Based on the three answers, I could also detect that the way to catch up with the West is first to learn from the West and then borrow Western theories to initiate contemporary Chinese art theory, and finally to establish the Chinese art theory of today. However, as Mr. Duan suggested, this is not an easy job, it is challenging. The challenge is found in both understanding Western art theory and putting Western theory into practice in China.

Question Ten: How do you employ Western theory in your study of contemporary Chinese art?

According to Dr. Wang and Mr. Duan, since contemporary Chinese art is largely influenced by Western art, it is appropriate to employ Modern Western art theory to study it. In the meantime, since contemporary Chinese art is framed in the Chinese context, the traditional Chinese art theory of the pre-modern period, i.e., before the 20th century, should also play its role in the study. At a superficial level, Mr. He's idea

is different, but he stressed the importance of the Chinese context and the importance of the Western approach. This is to say that, at a deeper level, the three interviewees hold a similar view in answering this question: they believe in employing modern Western art theory in the Chinese context and integrating it into the study of contemporary Chinese art. This is a way of deepening the understanding of contemporary Chinese art, enriching the interpretation of contemporary Chinese art, and eventually establishing contemporary Chinese art theory.

To the best of my knowledge, the above idea is not new. Since the first half of the 20th century when the first wave of Western influence reached China, Chinese intellectuals have reached a common understanding of the idea, which has almost become a cliché in discussing the issue of Western influence. However, the three interviewees supported this prevailing idea with their personal experiences and opinions, and thus shared this idea.

5.3 Summary

Pulling the above information together, I see that some keywords appear consistently in my interview responses. In terms of the frequency in appearance, the most important keywords are "context" and "knowledge," the secondary is "formalism," and the rest are related to these concepts. For instance, the term "historical sense" is related to "context," whereas "development" is relevant to "knowledge." Although the topic of each question and the corresponding answers are different from one another, relevance among the keywords can be discovered, since

all the questions and answers are centered on the same issues of Western influence and misreading, which construct internal connections among the keywords.

The primary keyword "context" is historical. On the one hand, it denotes that today's Chinese art education needs Western "knowledge" to benefit its development and to reach the goal of catching up with the development of education in the West. On the other hand, it denotes that, although modernism is no longer fashionable in the West today, formalist art theory is still valuable for Chinese art education due to two reasons: to study it as a part of history and to borrow from it for today's theoretical development. Moreover, the keyword "context" also indicates the necessity to localize Western theory, and to integrate it into the Chinese framework, so that Western theory could serve Chinese needs. Similarly, the keyword "knowledge" indicates what is needed in today's China for the purpose of the developing Chinese art education.

Summarizing all the above answers, I would say that the Chinese misreading of the West first comes from mistranslation, which causes misunderstanding and misinterpretation. However, this is not the whole story, there is an issue of purposeful misreading, which will be explored extensively in the next chapters. I would also say that, while Chinese scholars and educators acknowledge the importance of learning from the West, they are fully aware of the importance of the local Chinese context that integrates, or digests, Western theory.

Regarding Western influence on today's Chinese art education, the above written interview is mainly about the issue of misreading in the aspect of translating modern Western art theory. In order to go beyond the issue of mistranslation for a better

understanding of the Chinese purposeful misreading of the West in art education, and for a deeper understanding of Western influence on Chinese art education, I developed further questions in accordance with each interviewee's individual background and their answers in the above for the up-coming person-to-person interviews.

With all the above preparations, I offer my analyses of the person-to-person interviews in the next two chapters.

Chapter 6　　Analyzing the Interview with Dr. Wang Chunchen

6.1　Questions for the Interview

Based on Dr. Wang's answers to the preliminary written interview, I worked out a set of further questions for the up-coming person-to-person interview. To a certain degree, some of these questions overlap with some in the previous written interview, but these questions are necessary for further exploration. These new questions are both general and specific. The general questions aim to clarify the context and the specific questions aim to examine some key issues in detail. The main purpose of this interview was to further examine Dr. Wang's personal experience, to further collect data, and to find out the interviewee's personal opinions about Western influence on contemporary Chinese art education. For this reason, the interview is topic-centered. Below are the questions I prepared for the interview, though in the actual interview the questions are asked in a more colloquial manner.

(1) Please describe your teaching experience; how many years have you taught Western art theory at the college level?

(2) Based on your personal teaching experience, do you think teaching Western art theory could enrich art education in China; if you think so, why and how? In your teaching practice, what is the process of your discussion of a certain Western concept on art? Please give examples.

(3) What are the main difficulties that you have encountered in your teaching, and how did you deal with those difficulties? For instance, students might not be able to read Western theory in English. Please give specific examples, such as students' understanding of certain Western critical concepts.

(4) In your teaching, what are the common questions students have asked when they are introduced to Western art theories, and how did you help them explore the answers?

(5) Is there any misreading of Western art theory? If there is, what kind of misreadings are they? How and what did you do with the misreading in your teaching? Do you discuss historical, cultural, and theoretical contexts in order to help students to better understand Western art theory?

(6) When you employ Western theory to interpret Chinese art, what are the difficulties that you have to pay attention to?

(7) Is there any purposeful misreading in introducing Western art theory to China? If yes, what, how, and why?

(8) Do you think the current curriculum reform and art education development in China is a process of westernization? If so, why is it necessary?

(9) Why is teaching Western image theory important today in the commercialized society of China? What are the relationships between image reading and contemporary issues, such as politics and art form?

(10) In your teaching how did you explain the Western idea of "pictorial turn" in the current commercialized cultural context in China?

(11) Based on your teaching experience, how is Panofsky's iconology helpful for Chinese students to interpret art works, both Western and Chinese?

(12) Have you taught Foucault's chapter on *Las Meninas* in his *The Order of Things*? If yes, how did you explain to students the two key concepts, gaze and representation? How did the students relate the two concepts to their study of Western image theory?

(13) In the so-called information age, how is W.J.T. Mitchell's picture theory helpful for students to understand commercial images as a commodity?

(14) Regarding the interactive relation between art theory and teaching practice, from your personal point of view, what are the difficulties and achievements in today's Chinese art education?

As mentioned, some of the above questions have been asked in the written interview before. In order to further discuss certain important issues with Dr. Wang, I brought up those questions again in the face-to-face interview.

6.2 Summary of the Interview, with Keywords Coding the Topics

(1) Localization: Western theory is no longer truly Western in China.

Dr. Wang said that he purposefully employed Western art theory, such as the late 20th-century American art criticism of Arthur Danto in his teaching. According to him, however, it was not easy to draw a line between Western theory and Chinese theory,

since Western influence has been integrated into traditional Chinese aesthetics in art education since the late 1970s. For instance, when discussing the aesthetic change in the new architecture in Beijing, Dr. Wang used the term "modernity" to approach this topic. The term came from contemporary Western critical theory but has been localized in China today. In this case, his approach was not necessarily Western, nor Chinese, as there is no clear border line separating the two. Dr. Wang discussed an example of a building that illustrates a mixed aesthetic, the CCTV headquarters building in Beijing (Figure 6-1), designed by contemporary Dutch architect Remment Koolhaas, and completed in 2008.

Figure 6-1   CCTV Headquarters. Photo by Lian Duan

(2) Chinese First: Understanding Chinese art and culture is the precondition to encountering Western influence.

Dr. Wang considered that Western art theory was beneficial to the development and reform of art education in China, because the West was highly developed and China was not yet so developed. Therefore, there was much to learn from the West.

However, if the students embraced Western theory with empty minds, they might have no idea about what to learn from the West, and they might not even understand Western ideas. In order to understand the West and find out what they needed to learn, they should first understand traditional Chinese art theory and culture, such as the Confucian and Taoist based aesthetics. According to Dr. Wang, this is a preparation and precondition for meeting with Western influence.

(3) Hidden Source: Exploring Western concepts behind Chinese issues.

In his teaching of contemporary Chinese art, as well as art history and art theory, Dr. Wang has explored Western concepts behind Chinese issues. According to him, contemporary Chinese art is deeply influenced by Western art and art theory, and today's Chinese art education at the college level is influenced by Western concepts. Many important and immediate issues in Chinese art and art education are related to certain Western concepts, such as modernism, abstraction, formalism, and so forth. In his opinion, those who have a historical sense will never ignore the Western concepts behind Chinese issues when teaching contemporary Chinese art.

(4) Today's Perspective: Contemporary concepts in interpreting old masters.

Discussing this topic, Dr. Wang stated that Chinese scholars should employ Western contemporary concepts to interpret old masters, both Western and Chinese, although those masters might not have even thought of certain contemporary issues when they created their works. For instance, Dr. Wang noted that when Velázquez

painted *Las Meninas*, he did not have the Foucauldian ideas of "gaze" and "representation" in his mind. However, if Chinese scholars bear the two concepts in mind when discussing Velázquez, they will have a deeper understanding of this painting, and will make more sense of its meaning from today's perspective. So they will be able to raise issues like the social role of women and the power of domination. In this case, students will find something new in the old works. Dr. Wang called such a Foucauldian perspective a sort of brain storm.

(5) Mistranslation: A big problem in understanding Western art theory.

Dr. Wang pointed out the issue of misreading in students' understanding of Western art theory. He said when he read Chinese translations of Western art theory he was often frustrated because sometimes he could not understand the author. For example, when he read Arthur Danto in Chinese translation he found Danto logically contradictory at times. So, he checked the book in the original English and found that the contradiction came from mistranslation. Dr. Wang remarked that the real problem at this point was that most Chinese readers were not aware of the translation mistakes because they were not able to read or to verify the translation in the original. Therefore, certain issues remained either not understood, or simply misunderstood. In Dr. Wang's opinion, this was not healthy for the students, nor was it healthy for Chinese art education.

(6) Visual Cultural Study: Today's theory about image is beyond visual art.

To the Chinese art world, some of the most influential Western art theories of today is the theory about images, such as the picture theory of W.J.T. Mitchell. In Dr. Wang's opinion, in the context of contemporary cultural study, Chinese art educators should understand that new theory is not limited to visual art. In other words, today's study of visual art should not be limited to visual art itself, but should be related to mass media, visual advertisement, cinema, TV, internet, and the like. In this way Chinese educators could better understand art in the context of popular culture and the globalized culture of today.

(7) Cross-Culture: Testing Western art theory.

Speaking about his teaching practice, Dr. Wang said that in order to help students better understand Western art theory, he used not only Western art as examples to illustrate or explain the theory, but also Chinese art. According to him, it was easier for students to explore Chinese art and aesthetics first, and then approach Western art theory from a Chinese perspective. In other words, Chinese art and aesthetics could support Western art theory, -- and similarly, one could also use Western art theory to understand Chinese art.

6.3 Concepts from Dr. Wang's Interview: Localization and Chinese First

"Localization" and "Chinese first" are the most frequently used terms in the

interview when Dr. Wang discussed purposeful misreading. According to Dr. Wang, "Chinese first" is the precondition for localizing Western influence. In order to illustrate his opinion, Dr. Wang compared Western-influenced new architecture in Beijing, constructed in the recent decade before the 2008 Olympic Games, to traditional Beijing architecture. Below is an excerpt from the interview on this subject.

An Excerpt from the Interview Transcript: Dr. Wang on Western Influence in China (June 1, 2009)

Duan: In your teaching practice, what is the process of your discussion of a certain Western concept on art? Please give examples.

Wang: When I taught an advanced course on History and Criticism of Art at CAFA to undergraduate students, I did not start with the beginning of art history chronologically, because I had to re-structure the course outline and re-organize my class due to the lack of sufficient time for lectures, and because of a new idea about how to teach this course. I started from today, in China, with Beijing architecture. I started with a comparison between the Western-influenced new architectures and the old buildings in Beijing. The new ones include the CCTV headquarters building designed by Remment Koolhaas, the Olympic stadium Bird-Nest, and the Water-Cube as well, the National Opera House (Figure 6-2), and the Beijing West Railway Station, among others. The old ones include the city walls, the traditional courtyards, and so forth. Juxtaposing these architectures of different times and styles, I actually gave

students a chance to face a visual challenge. To those who study art history and art criticism, such a challenge is helpful for them to understand contemporary art. So, offering a challenge is my new idea.

Figure 6-2, National Opera House, Beijing, designed by Paul Andrew, completed in 2007. Photo by Lian Duan.

Duan: How did you make it challenging? Introducing students to certain Western theoretical concepts, or Chinese concepts?

Wang: Yes, but not necessarily defined as Western or Chinese. For instance, comparing the new and old architectures, I focused on the issue of modernity. For sure you could say that the concept "modernity" came from the West. However, within the framework of the changing society of China today, almost everyone is trying to catch up with change. The nation needs changes, the people need changes, and change is a

timely pursuit. I pursue a personal development for my professional career, this is also a change. Why did I start teaching this course with Beijing architectures? Because modernization is a big change to old cities like Beijing, which indicates the change to national identity, not just a change to the urban landscape alone.

Duan: In other words, in your teaching, you adopted the concept "modernity" to look at Beijing, an ancient city, and to discuss the change in Beijing from old to new. Don't you think this is a look at Chinese issues from a Western perspective, although this is not the only perspective?

Wang: It might be so, however, I didn't intentionally take a Western stance in looking at Chinese issues. Beijing architecture could be regarded as a representation of Chinese culture, old and new. In this sense, the discussion of the changing urban landscape in Beijing is not a simple issue to the students. In order to demonstrate the course of urban change I discussed old photos of old Beijing using the iconological approach, in comparison with the photos of the "Ten Grand Buildings" of the 1950s and the images of the new architectures of today.

Duan: Regarding employing the theory and methodology of iconology, do you think modern Western art theory could be beneficial to Chinese art education? How could it help the development of today's Chinese art education?

Wang: It would surely help. The development of China in modern times is behind the development in the West. In the highly developed West, many people have a strong sense of protecting their cultural heritage, such as old buildings. In China, on the contrary, this sense is not strong enough. What's more, due to political reasons,

Chinese cultural heritage was heavily damaged during the period of the Cultural Revolution in the mid-1960s through late-1970s. In the West, although Europe experienced two world wars in the first half of the 20th century, and because of the destruction caused by the wars, people still have a strong sense of value for their cultural heritage. Such a sense is particularly meaningful to the Chinese people today, because for the purpose of today's urban development, we are demolishing the old architectures, and destroying our ancient culture. In this sense, we have a lot to learn from the West. Most of the students in my class will go to Europe, Glasgow in the UK, to continue their study in an exchange program. It is very important for them to understand such current Chinese issues. Prepared with Chinese knowledge and equipped with Chinese experience in advance, they will be able to better understand the West, figure out what they really need to learn and study, and figure out what to do in the future when they return to China.

Discussion

I have coded this section of Dr. Wang's interview transcript with keywords "localization" and "Chinese first," referring to Chinese contextualization of Western theory and Chinese preparation for contextualization. Localization is an idea that Dr. Wang promoted, and his idea about "Chinese first" is a way to localize Western theory. As for the relationship between "localization" and "Chinese first," according to Dr. Wang, it is a relationship of "end and means." The purpose of promoting "Chinese first" is to reach the goal of "localization," while "Chinese first" is the precondition to

"localization."

Examining Dr. Wang's discussion of Beijing architecture and cultural heritage in relation to the discourse context, I stress the importance of interaction between the use of language and the social environment of current Chinese cultural trends, which could disclose the intended and implied meanings of Dr. Wang's words in this interview. Analyzing the discourse of this interview, I would also go beyond the individual words and expressions, and contextualize them in an historical, social and cultural framework.

Briefly speaking, in the 1980s, learning from the West was a priority for the development of Chinese art education. In the 1990s, Westernization in Chinese art education was deepened while the value of Chinese cultural traditions, such as Confucianism, were also recognized. Since the beginning of the first decade of the 21st century, Chinese art educators have highly valued the importance of Confucianism and regarded it as a philosophical preparation to situate modern Western art theory for the development of Chinese art education. For instance, Dr. Teng Shouyao, the translator of Arnheim, organized a series of monographs "Studies in the Frontier of Art Education" in the beginning of the 2000s. One of the books in this series is *Confucianism and Art Education* by Nie Zhenbin. From a historical and sociological perspective Nie advocated the importance of Confucianism in the development of Chinese art education in the new millennium (Z. Nie, 2006, p. 4).

Why does Confucianism play a crucial role in the concept of "Chinese first"? After the Cultural Revolution the Chinese intellectuals, both traditional and

Western-influenced, were disappointed with the Stalinist Marxism that dominated Chinese ideology from the late 1940s throughout the 1980s, because the promised ideal communist dream for a bright future did not materialize. Instead, China experienced terrible social upheavals during the Cultural Revolution, and Chinese intellectuals experienced a prolonged period of suffering. Due to such a disillusion, the majority of Chinese intellectuals basically denied any socialist and communist value, and considered that there was no achievement in art education from the late 1940s to the 1980s. If there was anything ideologically valuable for Chinese art education during that period, it must have been the old tradition of Confucianism. In other words, regarding "Chinese first" in the terminology of Dr. Wang, it is code for traditional Chinese culture and ideology, not the "Marxism, Leninism, Stalinism, and Mao Zedong Thought" that controlled education in China for more than three decades.

As for the topic of Dr. Wang's conversation in the interview, I would summarize his classroom discussion of Beijing architecture as a comparison of the images of the old and new buildings, which disclosed the necessity to better understand the Western concept of protecting cultural heritage in the modern age. As for the issue behind this topic, my interpretation of Dr. Wang's discourse is that, along with the change in Beijing urban landscape, it is necessary to change Chinese ways of thinking about our cultural heritage, and this change challenges the old ways of thinking. As for the opinion of Dr. Wang, according to him, all students should understand Chinese cultural traditions before approaching Western art theory. This will help them to better

understand and accept Western concepts. His main idea is that, for the Chinese students who study Western art theory, understanding Chinese culture is the precondition for understanding Western culture, and "Chinese first" is a way to localize Western art theory.

In terms of learning from the West for the development of art education in China, in recent years, scholars and art educators have recognized and accepted the idea of "Chinese first" as the precondition for adopting Western concepts. Due to the idea of "Chinese first," when Chinese art educators study modern Western art theory, they take what they need, and they also manipulate Western theory in their interpretation for pragmatic reasons. This is the purposeful misreading. At this point, I would assume that Dr. Wang's implied message is: Chinese needs are the criteria with which to filter Western influences, and Chinese needs form the basis for Chinese art educators to select what they want to learn from the West. Effectively, Dr. Wang gives us the rationale for misreading.

6.4 Further Analyses

(1) Hidden Sources. This is directly related to a sense of history. Dr. Wang is aware of the role of Western theoretical concepts behind the contemporary issues in Chinese art education. Tracing the influence of the hidden sources in his teaching of art history and criticism reveals that Dr. Wang has a strong sense of history. The

realization of Western influence on the development of Chinese art and art education in the late 20th century was historically conditioned. Without such an historical sense, it would have been difficult to imagine how Western formalism could have been so influential in China in the 1980s. After all, this was when postmodernism replaced modernism, and formalism had already lost its theoretical ground and academic priority in the West. In the 1980s, Western formalist theory was needed by Chinese artists and art educators, and was used as a workable and effective weapon in fighting against the politicized art and art education that was influenced by Soviet ideology which had dominated the Chinese education system from the late 1940s through the 1980s. Since the Chinese historical needs functioned as a temporal background that conditioned and allowed the influence of Western formalism to happen, then the notion of "Chinese first" does not refer to the knowledge of Chinese culture alone, but also refers to the Chinese needs. This is to say that the knowledge of Chinese theory helped students to better understand what the needs of China are, why they are needed, and how they can be acquired. In this case, all these together make the "localization" possible.

(2) Today's Perspective. The reason to employ Western contemporary theory to interpret old masters, both Western and Chinese, is not only to historically localize Western art theory, but also to justify the localization as well. In the interview, Dr. Wang briefly talked about the interpretation of Velázquez's painting *Las Meninas* from the perspectives of Panofsky, Foucault, and Lacan. As I re-read the text of my interview with Dr. Wang, I formulated two questions: Could we employ Western art

theory to interpret traditional Chinese art of old masters? Could we use ancient Chinese masterpieces to test modern Western art theory for the purpose of localization? I would give an affirmative answer to both questions. Although in the interview I did not raise the two questions and Dr. Wang did not talk about them directly, I would infer that Dr. Wang may hold the same idea. Why is this so? This is due to the fact that when Dr. Wang uses the term, "today's perspective" in this interview, it carries much the same meaning as "Chinese first," and both are crucial in supporting the notion of "localization." In this regard, if "Chinese first" is a cross-cultural issue with an historical implication of Confucianism, then, "today's perspective" is not only cross-cultural but also temporal with an historical implication as well. In other words, "today's perspective" is complementary to "Chinese first" and is supportive to the idea of "localization."

(3) Cross-Culture. According to Dr. Wang, the purpose of crossing the Chinese-Western cultural boundary is to help students in understanding Western art theory through reading Chinese art and art theory, and also support Western art theory.

6.5 Concluding Discussion

Throughout my interview with Dr. Wang, he frequently used certain words and phrases. For instance, regarding Western influence and Chinese context, he used the words "localization" and "Chinese first" more than 10 times each, and used "hidden

sources," "today's perspective," "cross-culture," etc., more than 5 times each in the course of the interview that was about two hours long. Due to the centrality of these words and phrases in the interview, I regard them as keywords and use them to code the transcript. This is to say that the findings come from the topics of the interview, and the main findings could be coded with these keywords as well. Based on the above descriptions and analyses, I now elaborate and interpret the main findings synthetically, in accordance with the topics of the interview and the subject of this study.

Firstly, "localization" is a major issue for Dr. Wang, referring to what Chinese art educators do with modern Western art theory and its influence on contemporary Chinese art education. Since Chinese art educators recognize the importance of Western theory to the development of art education in China, they have had various ways of embracing Western theory, and have employed Western theory in their teaching practice and educational reform. This is a process of localizing Western theory, which promotes Western influence in China.

Secondly, "Chinese first" is an important way to localize Western art theory, or, it is the precondition to localize Western theory. Without "Chinese first," the Chinese art educators and students would not know what, why, and how they need to learn from the West. In other words, "Chinese first" is a preparation for embracing Western influence and for employing Western art theory. However, purposeful misreading is related to this issue, because Chinese educators could intentionally manipulate Western art theory to fit their needs.

Thirdly, "hidden sources" is also an issue about the preparation for embracing Western influence, which consists of two aspects. On the one hand, some issues in Chinese art education could be explained with the help of a Western art theory, and on the other, one needs a strong sense of history to see the relevance of Western theory to Chinese issues.

Fourthly, "today's perspective" is complementary to the issue of historical sense, and it is also a preparation for embracing Western influence. Historical sense could help to form a part of context for Chinese art educators to embrace Western theory, and today's perspective could help to form another part of the context. In other words, localization is accomplished in the Chinese context. Meanwhile, it is also a process of re-contextualizing modern Western art theory in China.

Last, but not least, the key term of "cross-culture" demonstrates another dimension in localizing Western influence. If the issues of historical sense and today's perspective form the context with a temporal frame, then, the issue of cross-culture forms the context with a cross-regional frame. This is to say that the Chinese context for localizing Western influence is not one dimensional, but multi-dimensional, involving multiple considerations.

To sum up: Chinese art educators localize modern Western art theory for their own needs, and they project their expectations onto Western art theory, and thus, purposeful misreading happens. In this sense, the process of localization could be regarded as a process of misreading, and conversely, purposeful misreading happens in the process of localization.

Chapter 7   Interviews with Mr. He Guiyan and Mr. Lu Mingjun

Following the previous chapter, now I further discuss the topic of purposeful misreading by analyzing the interviews with Mr. He Guiyan and Mr. Lu Mingjun, concentrating on key issues. I follow the same analytical method that I employed in looking at Dr. Wang's interview.

7.1 An Interview with Mr. He Guiyan

Mr. He Guiyan is the second young educator of art history that I interviewed in Beijing in the summer of 2009. I have already given a short description of Mr. He's biography in Chapter 4, therefore, I wish to note only at the beginning of this chapter that Mr. He is a schoolmate of Dr. Wang, under the supervision of the same thesis advisor, Professor Yi Ying, in the same Ph.D. program at CAFA, though Mr. He is 10 years younger and enrolled in the Ph.D. program a few years later than Dr. Wang. The comparability of the two interviewees makes their difference meaningful, namely, interviewing Mr. He is to obtain an interview from a different point of view. Whereas Dr. Wang is both an educator and a translator, who is able to discuss the issues of mistranslation and misreading based on his personal experience, Mr. He is both an educator and a student, and discusses issues from the point of view of both educator

and student.

Based on Mr. He's answers to the preliminary written interview, I worked out some further questions for the person-to-person interview. The main purpose of this interview is to further derive meanings from Mr. He's personal experience with art education, to further collect data, and to find out the interviewee's personal opinions about Western influence. In order to be focused, I will not offer a general descriptive summary of the interview, but perform an interpretative analysis of the key issue of purposeful misreading.

I interviewed Mr. He on June 2, 2009, one day after the interview with Dr. Wang, in the same place at Beijing Foreign Studies University. At the end of the interview, Mr. He told me that he would defend his Ph.D. dissertation the next day, which was entitled *The End of Formalist Criticism*, dealing with Clement Greenberg and 20th-century American formalist art theory and art criticism.

After the interview, I transcribed the full interview into text and e-mailed a copy of it to Mr. He, asking him for changes and feedback. He replied that there was no need to make any changes.

Presenting the analysis of the interview with Mr. He in this chapter, I identify 4 of his keywords: (1) Relevance, (2) Confusion, (3) purposeful misreading, and (4) image making. These keywords could help me further interpret the issue of purposeful misreading, and further explore its significance on the topic of Western influence on Chinese art education.

7.2 Keywords for He's Interview and Discussion of the Findings

In the following, I use keywords to code the findings from the interview, and offer discussions of the findings.

(1) Keyword: Relevance

Transcript Excerpt (June 2, 2009)

Duan: Please talk about your personal experience in relation to Western influence, such as the use of modern Western art theories in your teaching.

He: When I taught Western art theory, I had to think about its relevance and explain the relevance to my students. For instance, when I discussed Roger Frye, I emphasized the specific context of the cultural trend in the early 20th century, in the 1920s and 1930s. Relevance means that I must put a certain theory into its original context, temporally and culturally, to discuss it. Of course, we could employ formalist theory to discuss Renaissance art, but in terms of relevance, it is more effective to employ it in the discussion of modern art.

Discussion

According to Mr. He, the main point of "relevance" is about context. An educator of visual art should explain to students a Western theory in its original context and employ the theory to discuss relevant art. Otherwise, the relevance of this theory could be questionable. At this point during the interview, I mentioned Collingwood's

notion of the historical "re-enactment" (Collingwood, 1970, p.282) and Mr. He agreed with it. In addition to the historical relevance, Mr. He also talked about cultural relevance. His elaboration of this idea suggests that when teaching Western art theory in China it is much easier to use a certain Western theoretical concept to interpret Western art and it is not so easy to interpret non Western art due to the difference in cultural context. In this case, the real and fundamental question behind the keyword "relevance" could be "is Western art theory adoptable to art education in China, why and how?"

(2) Keyword: Confusion

Transcript Excerpt (June 2, 2009)

Duan: please explain the problem with "relevance" and the importance of context to the problem.

He: Indeed, the idea of "relevance" is problematic. When I was a student, I was not clear about some of the Western theories, I did not know where they came from and what the context was. I was confused about the relationship of a certain theory to other theories. I had difficulty in understanding why a certain theory was like that and how it was like that, and why the others were not. In fact, this confusion is still problematic today for many students. Realizing this problem, and in order to solve this problem, I did one thing, that was to read more Western art theories systematically, and so I could be able to place and locate a certain theory in its original context.

The most helpful theory book that I read when I was a student was *Modern Art*

and Modernism compiled by Francis Francina and Charles Harrison (F. Francina and C. Harrison, 1982). That book provided me with a contextual framework and showed me a way to explore modern Western art theory. There is a historical line in this collection of essays, showing the development of modern Western art theory. With the help of the historical timeline, I could find the theory in which I was interested, and read the corresponding essays. Although the essays are mostly introductory, they raised issues and suggested what to read for further exploration of those issues. So, I consider that the framework and the historical outline to be very important for students to understand Western art theory.

Discussion

In the terminology of Mr. He, "systematically" refers to locating a certain Western art theory historically and intellectually, or finding its historical place in intellectual development. Mr. He offered a specific case of the collection of essays, *Modern Art and Modernism* to illustrate what he did "systematically" when he was a student. As indicated, that collection was the first book on modern Western art theory that Mr. He read when he was an undergraduate student of studio art. According to what he said in the interview, this book was so important to him that he read it again when he became an art educator in order to contextualize a certain theory. For Mr. He, the process of such a contextualization is to validate that theory historically, and to make it available for him in studying both Western art and Chinese art. This is what he did about the issue of "relevance," and this is also what a student could do to make an irrelevant theory relevant, and thus use it to solve problems in approaching art,

whether Western or Chinese.

(3) Keyword: Purposeful Misreading

Transcript Excerpt (June 2, 2009)

Duan: Could you further talk about the problem of misreading Western art theory from the point of view of relevance and context?

He: Talking about misreading, Chinese theorists mostly interpret Western art theories based on their own understanding, and for their own purposes. Certainly, different readers have different understandings. For instance, "modernity" is a popular theoretical concept from the West, but Chinese theorists have rarely conducted genealogical studies on how this concept comes into being. Instead, they rush to use it for their own practical purposes. Here I have an example. The concept of "pictorial turn" in the West is different from the understanding of it by some Chinese theorists and artists who take it as a different thing. In the West, this concept comes from the context with at least three theoretical aspects, namely, social, historical, and cultural concerns of the use of image in today's society and daily life. However, in China, this concept is used by a certain influential art critic to refer to the use of images as personal logos in the paintings by some popular artists. This is a purposeful misreading, omitting the social, historical, and cultural implications of this concept. Such manipulation of the Western theoretical concept poses a difficulty for students to comprehend. On the one hand, we shall place a certain Western theory in its own context when we study it; while on the other hand, we have to place it in the

Chinese context of today when we employ it in our study of contemporary Chinese art. In order to deal with the difficulty in comprehension, a simple way is to put the Western and Chinese contexts together. But how? It is not really that easy. As for myself, when I borrow a Western theory to interpret a Chinese art work, I place the work in Chinese context. In this case, the Western theory becomes a tool, or merely a method.

Discussion

Based on the above, we could see at first that Mr. He is somewhat contradicting himself with regard to the issue of cultural "relevance." Indeed, while he sees the difficulty of contextual complexity, he also sees the necessity of employing Western theory to deal with issues in Chinese art. Regarding the issue of purposeful misreading, which is related to the necessity, Mr. He made three points. Firstly, Chinese theorists interpret Western theories based on their own understanding and for their own practical purpose. Secondly, due to such a purposeful misreading, Western theory losses its original social, historical, and cultural context. Thirdly, it is difficult to solve the contextual problem, and thus Western art theory could be simply reduced to a tool or a method only, for Chinese scholars to use in their study of Chinese art.

In this regard, the example of "pictorial turn" touches on a key issue in contemporary Chinese art and art education, namely, the commercialization that is not only relevant to China today but also to the West. The Chinese artists' use of images as personal logos in their art works aims at selling. In today's hot art market in China, certain ways of making images reveal the process of codifying personal

logos as commercial brands. For instance, one of the most popular artists of today, Yue Minjun, uses the image of his own portrait with an over-proportioned huge foolish-looking smiling mouth showing super white teeth in almost all his paintings (Figure 7-1). Yue is very successful in the art market, and many art students follow him in trying to find sign-like or signature-like images as their own logos. How should an art educator discuss this commercial phenomenon? How to employ the theoretical concept of "pictorial turn" to the discussion of contemporary Chinese art? How to help students understand the actual meaning of this concept in its original context and also in Chinese context in relation to interpreting contemporary Chinese art? The significance of Mr. He's opinions on this issue is found in raising these kinds of difficult questions, which may suggest the necessity of purposeful misreading, and even justify or legitimize such purposeful misreading. However, at least at the superficial level of what he said in this interview, he shows his dissatisfaction towards the purposeful misreading of Western art theory.
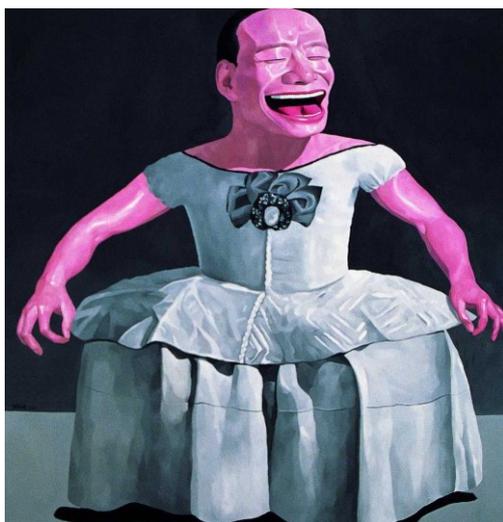
Figure 7-1, Yue Minjun, *Self-Portrait-Las Meninas*, 1998. Reproduced courtesy of Lu Peng.

(4) Keyword: Image Making

Transcript Excerpt (June 2, 2009)

Duan: Please further explain the use of a certain image as an artist's logo, in relation to commercialization of art.

He: Using a certain image as a personal logo is a striking characteristic in contemporary Chinese art. The idea of turning an image into a logo comes from the market consideration, and for the market consideration as well. Today in China, such a way of using logos, or the abusing of images, has become a sign showing whether or not an artist is commercially successful.

Discussion

According to Mr. He, as discussed above, the purpose of image making in contemporary Chinese art to a certain degree is commercial, which touches on the very fundamental issue of the purpose of education in visual culture. How to explain the commercial phenomenon to students, theoretically and historically? What is the main purpose of art education in China today?

Today in China, both educators and students are discussing and even debating the purpose of art education. Some knowledgeable intellectuals discuss this issue by referring the different purposes in the history of Western art education, such as the different purposes that were summarized by Arthur Efland in his *A History of Art Education* (Efland, 1990), which was translated into Chinese and published in China

in 2000. Some scholars pay more attention to current purposes, which are more practical, such as occupational skill training. In my personal opinion, the confusion about the purpose of art education causes real problems in China today. Some art educators value the elitist ideal and advocate the idea that art institutions are built for training great artists. Some emphasize craftsmanship and advocate the idea that art institutions are built to train craftsmen for the commercial and industrial development in today's society. Still, others insist on the general aesthetic education for the masses. Due to the structural problem of the Chinese higher education system, the elite art education, the occupational applied art education, and the general art education co-exist in both art institutions and comprehensive universities, and the problem about the purposes of art education remain unsolved. In this context, image making becomes a debating issue to both elite art education and general art education. In my opinion, in order to clarify the purposes of art education and then solve the problem of commercialized image making, the higher education system in China should be re-structured, and the importance of art education within the system should be re-addressed. However, such an opinion is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

7.3 An Interview with Mr. Lu Mingjun

The third interviewee is Mr. Lu Mingjun. Similarly, the interview aims to further explore Western influence on Chinese art education from a student's point of view, by

focusing on the key issue of purposeful misreading.

Influenced by the critical theory of the Frankfurt School, Mr. Lu is interested in socio-political and cultural studies of art. As he told me during the interview, his ambition was to eventually go beyond art criticism and to become a social and political critic and activist. Perhaps due to this ambition, although he looks humble and modest, deep in his heart, he is a critical young man, which is disclosed in his writings towards authorities and authoritative scholars in art, as well as his verbal comments that pose as a challenge to the renowned art critics of the older generation. Interestingly, and also somewhat bizarre however, Mr. Lu told me that he was not capable of reading English easily, not to mention other foreign languages, and therefore, all his knowledge of Western art theory came from, and also limited to, Chinese translation. To the best of my knowledge, any student in China must pass a foreign language test before being admitted to a graduate program. How could he not be able to read English easily?

The interview with Mr. Lu Mingjun was conducted at noon, on Tuesday, July 14, 2009, at Sichuan University in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China. Since Mr. Lu was not in Beijing, I did not put him on my interview list at first and did not e-mail him the preliminary written questions. However, when I decided to interview him thereafter, I had to prepare quickly. I put together the preliminary written questions and the further questions for other person-to-person interviews, and revised the questions for the interview with Mr. Lu. Although I knew there was not enough time, I still e-mailed him the questions in advance. Then, when I gave him the interview, the

question list became a guideline for the conversation.

7.4 Highlights of the Interview with Mr. Lu Mingjun

Similarly, I use keywords to code the findings from the interview, and offer discussions of the findings.

(1) Keyword: Background

Transcript Excerpt (July 14, 2009)

Duan: Is there any precondition for the use of Western art theory?

Lu: In the West, a theory of art has its historical and current background, as well as an ideological background. To the Chinese students including me, when we study Western art theory, we must first find its historical place, and then figure out what this theory is about. Based on such an understanding, we could be able to cautiously borrow it, use it, and not abuse it.

Discussion

According to Mr. Lu, a Chinese student must understand a certain Western art theory against its historical, current, and ideological background. Such a contextual understanding is the precondition for Chinese students to employ the Western theory in dealing with Chinese issues. Why "precondition"? What is the purpose of understanding Western art theory contextually? It is to understand the West correctly

and thoroughly, and thus, as Mr. Lu said, one could borrow it and use it. In fact, this is a common idea accepted by the Chinese intellectuals. Although there is nothing new with this idea, behind it, we could dig out the pragmatic mentality in the Chinese response to Western influence, which started in the early 20th century, as mentioned in the "Introduction" of this study, for the purpose of strengthening China and catching up with the development of the West. In this respect, since the issue of "background" is about borrowing Western art theory, then it is relevant to the next one, the main issue of this research, "purposeful misreading."

(2) Keyword: Purposeful Misreading

Transcript Excerpt (July 14, 2009)

Duan: I would like to hear your personal opinions about misreading.

Lu: As for misreading, especially, cultural misreading, or misreading due to cultural differences, the first example that I could give is the Chinese misunderstanding of the Western concept about postmodernism. Some authoritative scholars and professors consider that postmodernism is a cure or remedy to the illness of modernism. I don't think so. I consider postmodernism as also an illness. I presented this idea at a conference and caused some scholars and professors to be unhappy. Another example is the Chinese purposeful misreading of elitism. According to postmodern theory, advocating mass culture is politically correct. However, in the Chinese context, this is not the case. Chinese theorists manipulated the definition and interpretation of elitism, saying money and power signify elitism. In my opinion,

elitism is a cultural taste, not money and power alone. Therefore, I advocate elitism, and I do not like those theorists who pretend to enjoy mass culture. They are hypocritical.

Discussion

According to Mr. Lu, misreading is cultural and purposeful. An example is that Chinese intellectuals consider postmodernism as a treatment for the illness of modernism. What Mr. Lu did not say but could have suggested at this point is that misreading is also conceptual and ideological. Inferring the idea of conceptual and ideological misreading from Mr. Lu, I would say that purposeful misreading is culturally and ideologically processed. Although Mr. Lu is a student, he challenges the purposeful misreading of Western art theory, such as Chinese scholars' manipulation of the notions of elitism and political correctness. However, contemplating what he said, I have a question: does Mr. Lu himself purposefully misread Western theory, such as the illness of postmodernism, elitism, and political correctness, and misread Chinese scholars as well? If he does, why? Is that for the purpose of challenging the Chinese scholars of the older generation? As I mentioned before, Mr. Lu is an ambitious person and he is not satisfied with the power and domination of the oppressive authorities in the academic world in China. If this is the case, how should we interpret the "Mr. Lu phenomenon" in the terminology of Bloom's "anxiety of influence" (H. Bloom, 1975, 1997)? At least, I would say that Mr. Lu somewhat resembles a "strong poet" in fighting against the shadow of the older generation. To a certain extent, Mr. Lu's case is self-reflectively paradoxical: on the one hand, he

criticizes Chinese scholars' purposeful misreading of the West, and on the other hand, allegedly, he may also purposefully misread the scholars of the older generation in China, such as his opinion about the illness of modernism and postmodernism. However, the poignancy of this case is not about whether Mr. Lu misread the older generation, but about the paradox, which could lead us to go further in exploring the possible irony in the issue of purposeful misreading with regard to the subject of Western influence.

(3) Keyword: Localization

Transcript Excerpt (July 14, 2009)

Duan: Regarding the issues of westernization and localization, what is the relationship between the two?

Lu: In China today, Western culture is considered as new and Chinese culture as old. Today's Chinese art education is westernized with new concepts. However, this is a superficial observation. In reality, the extrinsic background or context of today's Chinese art education is very Chinese, and the inside issues or problems are even more Chinese. Yes, Western influence has arrived and has been embraced, but it has also been localized in the Chinese context. In my opinion, it is not important to distinguish Western from Chinese, since globalization makes westernization global. In terms of the localization of Western art theory in China, what really matters to me is whether Western theory could help me analyze the problems that I encounter and help me make a judgment, and help us move forward towards the future.

Discussion

Talking about localization, Mr. Lu offers his opinions. (1) Western culture represents the new value of today while Chinese culture represents the old. (2) The localization of Western art theory in China happens in the process of teaching, and this process integrates a Western theory into the Chinese context. (3) Therefore, it is not necessary to tell the West from China in the intellectual context of today. (4) The Chinese localization of the Western art theory follows the course of today's main stream of globalization. The internal connection among the four opinions is clear. Since the old value in traditional Chinese culture needs to be modernized by Western culture, localizing Western theory is a way to fulfill Chinese needs and such localization is realized in the process of teaching. Therefore, Mr. Lu admits that he deliberately embraces Western theory, and his purpose is to use Western theory to deal with Chinese problems.

(4) Keyword: *Las Meninas*.

Transcript Excerpt (July 14, 2009)

Duan: Regarding embracing Western art theory, could you talk about your understanding of Foucault's discussion of *Las Meninas*?

Lu: According to Foucault, this painting is about "appearance" or superficial phenomenon. This painting poses a paradox of representation, and thus challenges the old concept of representation. Since Foucault's subversive interpretation, Western scholars have pointed out that this painting is not representational, it does not

represent a true scene.

Discussion

Mr. Lu's reading of Foucault on Velázquez's *Las Meninas* is based on the only Chinese translation, and therefore, he first uses the term "appearance" for "representation." However, he also reads Western scholars' study of *Las Meninas*, such as the article "*Las Meninas* and the Paradoxes of Pictorial Representation" by John Searle that is in the collection *The Language of Images*, edited by W.J.T. Mitchell (W. Mitchell, 1980, p.247), and understands that Foucault's topic is "representation" and not "appearance." Nevertheless, Mr. Lu does not know that "appearance" is a mistranslation of "representation" and so he follows the Chinese translator to interpret Foucault's reading of the painting, and his idea about this painting is largely a repetition of what the translator said in the "Translator's Preface" to the Chinese version of Faucault's *Les Mots et Les Choses* (M. Foucault, 2001), mixed with what some Western scholars said on this topic, such as that of Searle and W.J.T. Mitchell (W. Mitchell, 1994, p.58).

From Mr. Lu's reading of *Las Meninas* I could confirm that, as a Chinese student, his understanding of Western art theory is largely limited to and conditioned by translation and mistranslation. In the case of reading about *Las Meninas*, he hardly has his own opinions about the interpretation of Western art theory. If he wants to have one, he may have to purposefully misread the theory or manipulate the interpretation of the theory.

7.5 Concluding Commentary on the Two Interviews

Putting together the highlights of the above two interviews and comparing them, I have the following observations.

Although the keywords of the two interviews are different at the superficial level of wording, beneath the language surface, the issues that the two interviewees brought forward are similar and even the same. This is to say that, answering the same questions in the interviews, the two interviewees have much in common, such as what they thought, how they thought, and how they put their opinions into words.

Juxtaposing Mr. He Guiyan's keywords, "relevance," "confusion," "purposeful misreading," and "image making" with Mr. Lu Mingjun's keywords, "background," "purposeful misreading," "localization," and "Las Meninas," I observe that, firstly, Mr. He's "relevance" and Mr. Lu's "background" both refer to the same, namely, the notion of context. Moreover, in their discussions of the importance of context, they had a clear idea about the nature of the double sides of this notion, which concern both the original context of a certain Western art theory and the context of the Chinese use of the Western theory. From the two sides of the notion "context" and also from the similarity or commonality in their opinions about context, I further observe that, because of the difference of the two sides, when a certain Western art theory is translated into Chinese and transplanted in a Chinese academic field, no matter whether the translation is correct or not, misreading certainly happens. In this sense, I

consider "transplant" a proper word to use.

Corresponding to the above, secondly, the two interviewees used the same keyword "purposeful misreading" to confirm that Chinese art educators have made changes to the original connotation of a certain Western art theory when they transplanted the theory in China. The change of connotation is purposeful.

Thirdly, the process of such transplantation or purposeful misreading is referred to as localization. As Mr. He's keyword "confusion" indicates, this process does not go easily or smoothly. My remark at this point is that the localization of modern Western art theory in China poses a challenge to Chinese scholars, art educators, and students alike. Due to cultural and ideological differences between China and the West, the challenge makes localization difficult.

Comparing the two interviews with the interview with Dr. Wang Chunchen in the previous chapter, the above observations are confirmed. The keywords of "localization" and "Chinese first" in the interview with Dr. Wang disclose a similar opinion about purposeful misreading. Thus, I infer from these interviews that, in order to use modern Western art theory for the good of Chinese art education, Chinese scholars and art educators uprooted Western art theory from its original context and transplanted Western theory to Chinese context. Because of this purpose and process, misreading happens purposefully.

Part Three   Second Case Study: Lectures on Visual Culture

In order to further examine the problems of Western influence, misreading and purposeful misreading, in this part I turn to explore my teaching practice in China, focusing on the two key concepts, gaze and representation. On the one hand, my teaching practice reflects the issue of Western influence and misreading, and on the other, it provides me with more first-hand materials, such as responses from students, to examine the questions about influence and misreading that were raised in "Introduction." More importantly, my teaching practice provides me with a new perspective in the meantime to explore some possible answers to these questions. For this purpose, I will also discuss student responses to my teaching by analyzing their written answers to questionnaires and short essays.

The context of my teaching in China has been discussed in Chapter 4 "Procedures and Methods" and the description of the lectures has been offered in the same chapter as well.

Chapter 8   Lecturing on Gaze and Representation

This chapter demonstrates what I discussed in the series of lectures on visual cultural studies and how I delivered the lectures in China. As indicated in the

"Introduction," teaching is one of the three main avenues that the influence of modern Western art theory is spread out in China.

8.1 Elaborating the Concept of "Gaze"

As one of the two key theoretical concepts in the four lectures, "gaze" was used and discussed almost all the time. In particular, it was discussed in the second lecture. In the discussion, I first briefly defined the term "gaze" and interpreted it as a theoretical and critical concept about visual communication with the interactive relationship between seeing and being seen. Then, I illustrated the interpretation with examples, such as Edouard Manet's paintings. Literally, "gaze" means looking, watching, staring, and the like, related to contemplation in visual communication. As its most important feature, in the context of contemporary critical discourse, the concept of gaze deals with the issue of identity, and refers to the notions of gender, voyeurism, sexuality, race, subjectivity/objectivity, and so forth. This concept is also involved with the notions of objectification, commodity, and is inscribed with power, manipulation, and desire, etc.

In the afternoon of the second lecture, as mentioned, I showed students an educational documentary film and asked them to discuss Manet's paintings. Manet is one of the much discussed artists related to the issue of gaze. His paintings, *Dejeuner sur l'herbe* (1863), *Olympia* (1865), and *Bar at the Folies-Bergere* (1882) have

caused debate, controversy, and even scandal, directly due to the challenging gaze of the women in these paintings.

To some of Manet's contemporaries, the problem with his *Dejeuner sur l'herbe* comes from the nudity, referring to the fact that the naked (opposite of nude) woman is not a goddess. The worst is that the woman looks back and stares at the spectators of the painting. To these spectators, Manet challenges the established morality and social norm by representing and presenting the woman in an unacceptable way. The gaze of the woman in the painting confronts the gaze of the spectators, especially, the spectator's voyeuristic male gaze that intends to objectify the woman. In this painting, the somewhat flirting and somewhat empty gaze of the woman could perplex and confuse the male voyeurs, and could even rip the voyeur-spectators' clothes off, which, as a sign, are encoded with the message of the spectators' identity and the social order. Identity is not indicated by gaze alone, nor represented in Manet's paintings in a simple way. According to Lacan, the sense of identity is also realized in the relationship between the gazer and the gazed. Discussing this issue, Paul Smith, an art historian, considers that Manet shortened the distance between the woman on the grass and the spectators of the painting by playing the gaze (P. Smith, 1995, p. 49). In my opinion, the play of gaze could also be found in the other two Manet paintings.

The shortened distance between the woman in the painting and the spectators of the painting makes the involvement of spectators possible. In *Bar at the Folies-Bergere*, the involvement concerns the relationship between the barmaid and the surrounding world, including the male patron facing her. In this painting, the

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involvement is somewhat complex. Paul Smith remarks, "[T]he world in the mirror is no reflection of how things really are, but shows instead the superficial glamour ......[T]he mirror serves as a metaphor of the falsehood of the appearance, and to provide a contrast with the subjective and more 'real' experience of the barmaid" (P. Smith, 1995, p. 54). Although Smith did not discuss Lacan's theory of gaze and mirror, his remark suggests an outside world for us to look at from Lacan's point of view, namely, the point of view of the interactive and self-reflective relationship between the gazer and the gazed (J. Lacan, 1981, pp. 80-84).

Discussing the issue of gaze and identity in the third Manet painting, *Olympia*, a Marxist art critic, T. J. Clark, denies the existence of the issue of identity. The poignancy and insight of this denial is found in Clark's observation that the theoretical significance of Manet's *Olympia* is constructed not by Manet, but by art critics (T.J. Clark, 1992, p. 114). This is to say that Manet provides art critics with a slice of an experimental sample and gives them an opportunity to exercise their theoretical exploration of that issue.

Why is the concept gaze one of the crucial focuses in my lectures? The above discussion of Manet and his paintings reveals at least three implications of gaze for art education and education in visual culture in China.

The first implication is about the importance of visual communication for art education. Historically speaking, the concept of gaze serves as one of the foundational theories for today's art education. According to Arthur Efland's historical account, craftsmanship, or training of skills and techniques, was the main task of art education

before the modern era. Then, the modernist educators turned to emphasize the importance of fostering students' creativity and individual expression (A. Efland, 1990). Since postmodernism of the 1980s and 1990s, art education has become more socially communicative. Thus, in the new century, art educators have paid more attention to the function of visual communication in the studies of art and visual culture. Today, the basic theories for the study of visual culture come from three fields, visual art, cultural studies, and the studies of mass media and communication. Scholars first employed the Lacanian concept of gaze in film study, and then expanded it to other fields, such as studies of photography and painting. In other words, gaze is a crucial concept for education in art and visual culture, which could help students study in the disciplines of visual art, cultural studies, and mass media and communication studies in the liberal arts field.

Relevantly and consequently, the second implication of the concept of gaze is that it indicates the communicative function of visual art. Before the 1990s, the Soviet-influenced Chinese art educators believed that art had three main functions: educational, aesthetic, and informative. In the 1990s, due to the influence from the West, Chinese art educators accepted the new idea about the communicative function of visual art: art communicates to people, and people communicate to one another through art. The communicative function of visual art could be explained by the concept of gaze, and thus, to a certain degree, this concept has helped to change the basic notion of today's art education in China.

The third implication of the concept of gaze is more specific and personal, which involves my experience in teaching visual culture some years earlier. In 2003 I taught a course of Chinese art history and studio practice at Marlboro College in southern Vermont in the United States. Teaching that course, I applied the gaze theory to my interpretation of art works, and found it helpful for the students to approach Chinese art from a Western perspective. Similarly, I consider that the gaze theory could also help students in China to understand Western art in the context of current scholarly discourse, and help them interpret both Western and Chinese art from a socio-psychological perspective. Therefore, when I prepared my lectures for XCU, I intended to introduce the concept of gaze to Chinese students, focusing on the function of visual communication.

Relevant to the above three implications, there is a long history of cultural discourse about gaze in China. A 4th-century Chinese artist and art theorist, Gu Kaizhi (345?-406?), once said in his discussion of the importance of depicting eyes in figure painting, "Eyes are important because they disclose one's inner spirit, while also represent one's outside appearance and look" (J. Yu, 2007, p. 267). In this discourse, the expressive power of human eyes expresses one's feelings and thoughts, thus communicates one and others. In the sense, Gu Kaizhi's idea about eyes is relevant to the Western concept of gaze. In fact, Gu's discourse about depicting eyes has a profound meaning to the development of Chinese figure painting, and to the later discourses about the importance of gaze in Chinese art history (J. Yu, 2007, pp. 267-268).

Discussing gaze in my lectures in China, I pointed out to the students the importance of the visual communications between an artist and his or her models, between the figures in a painting and the spectators of the painting, and, indirectly, between the artist and the spectators. I also expanded my discussion and extended the communication to the relationship between an individual and a group of people, between an individual and society, and between a group of people and society. Among these relationships, gaze is found to be relevant to the notion of identity.

Moreover, communication through gaze is not only outward, but also inward. A figure in a painting could communicate with him or herself, such as the figure in Durer's *Melancholia* (1514). Meanwhile, a spectator could also communicate with him or herself by gazing at a certain art work, just like the Chinese Zen meditation, and also like a baby looking at him or herself in a mirror (J. Lacan, 1981, pp. 80-84).

In addition to the inter-personal and self communications, the gaze theory could also help students understand the relationship between human beings and the non-human world, or between the subjective and objective world. In order to elaborate this relation, I introduced my students to a traditional Chinese aesthetic concept, inscape. In Buddhist discourse, inscape refers to the inner landscape, or visionary landscape, and relates to the other concepts in my lectures, such as representation. In order to offer a detailed discussion of the traditional Chinese aesthetic concept "inscape," I attach an excerpt from my research article as *Appendix 4*, "The Poetic Inscape and Contemporary Sinology in the West."

Concluding the above discussion of the concept of gaze and its implication for education in art and visual culture, I would observe that, firstly, gaze is a key concept in contemporary theoretical discourse in visual cultural studies. This concept can broaden and deepen students' understanding of art and visual culture. Secondly, this concept can help students to communicate with the surrounding world, both social and natural, through interpreting art. In the meantime, the process of interpretation is also a process of self understanding, through which an individual could better locate him or herself, intellectually and socially, in the world, and thus better understand his or her cultural identity. Thirdly, the concept of gaze could help students with a cross-cultural communication and mutual understanding.

8.2 Elaborating the Concept of "Representation"

Like "gaze," in the four lectures "representation" is a key concept as well. From the very beginning of my lectures, I started to discuss this concept, and followed a similar way to define, interpret and use examples to illustrate this concept. In Western philosophical and critical tradition, the term "representation" could be generally defined as a process of using image or language to refer to something or someone else, in relation to imitation and resemblance. However, "representation" is not a simple notion, but a complex theoretical concept. Historically, the complexity first came from Plato's doubt about the truthfulness of mimetic representation (Plato, 1991, p.4). In

the dialogue with Glaucon in *Republic*, Socrates questioned the so-called truthful relation of a painting of a bed to the actual bed made by a carpenter, and eventually to the idea about bed in the mind of God. According to Plato, due to its nature of imitation, artistic representation is far from being truthful.

A scholar of today, David Summers, explains the problem with the concept of representation, "In the long Western discussion of artistic representation there are typically three factors: a thing, its actual image, and a mental image. This third term, in being called an 'image' at all, is likened to a work of art made by the mind……" (D. Summers, 1996, p.3). Since the three factors are involved with the issue of representation, Summers raises several questions about their relationship. He asks, "How do we know that the world is *truly* represented to us? For mental images these problems are even greater. If perceptions and dreams are both representations, how do we tell them apart? How do we know the world is represented in the same way for everyone? Are concepts truer than sensations, or vice versa?" (D. Summers, 1996, p.3).

The keyword in Summers's questions is the same one as that in Plato, being truthfulness. From a contemporary perspective of cultural studies, Summers explores the different ways in which the world is represented. Among these ways, cultural difference makes representation different and therefore untruthful. Discussing the issue of representation in my lectures, I also brought about the question of truthfulness, and elaborated the different ways in representation, focusing on the significance of this concept, such as the exploration of women's identity through photographic

representation.

Discussed in the first lecture, in the works of photography by contemporary French artist Sophie Calle, the presence of the artist in the process of photographing is subversive to the classical definition of photographic representation that excludes the direct presence of the photographer in his or her photographs. In the case of Sophie Calle, the direct involvement of the artist in the process of realizing her work demonstrates the development and expansion of the concept of representation, which is no longer limited to re-presenting only an objective world, but also to re-presenting a subjective world, opinions and feelings alike. The same case can also be found in the anti-war political stance in the sculptures of Don Bonham, the New York artist, and the critical attitudes in the eco-environmental issues represented in the photographs of the Canadian artist Edward Burtynsky.

In order to help students comprehend the topic of representation, as mentioned, in the second lecture I discussed figurative, abstract, expressionistic, and symbolic paintings against the background of the history of Western art, and particularly, in the context of modern Western art. A figurative painting could be representational in the sense of imitation and resemblance, and could also be conceptual as in the case of Mark Tansey and Johan Currin. An abstract painting might be less representational. However, considering the spirituality in the American abstract expressionist paintings, it could still be a representation, depending on how the concept of representation is defined and interpreted. Regarding abstract representation, a Canadian writer, Alberto Manguel, offered an illustrative study in his article "Joan Mitchell: the Image as

Absence" (A. Manguel, 2002, p. 19). At this point, misunderstanding of the concept

of representation and art works could arise for these students, which could be their

misreading of the theory about representation. For instance, in the terminology of the

Peircian semiotics, the abstract trace of brushwork in a Jackson Pollock painting is an

indexical sign of the movement of the artist's body, and the trace is also a

transformation of the artist's feeling. In this case, the abstract trace of brushwork is

representational too. So are the paintings of the German Die Brucke artists.

Theoretically, semiotics is involved with the issue of representation. Reading

symbolist paintings from this point of view, I told students that the symbolic images

in Nabi paintings did not necessarily stand for something that shared the same or a

similar image, but could be regarded as signs that referred to or signified something

else with a completely different image. A good example of this case was the lily

flower in the Nabi artist Maurice Denis's painting *Annunciation*, which, on the one

hand, was a pictorial representation of the actual flower, but on the other hand, it was

a conceptual and symbolic representation, or a signifier, of the idea about chastity and

purity, as well as divinity, of the virgin Mary. In fact, such a symbolic and semiotic

tradition in Western culture could be traced back to more than one thousand years, as

demonstrated in the religious paintings of medieval times and the Renaissance period.

In relevance to misreading, I reminded students that, on the one hand, there was

more than one way of representation, and on the other hand, representation was not

the only way to re-present something. With the case of symbolic representation in the

long history of Western art and visual culture, I tried to tell students that, in today's

cultural context, representation was no longer the sole purpose of image making, but a means of making an image. With such an understanding, students were expected to be able to draw inferences about other cases from the instance of my discussion of the concept of representation.

Thus, the students will not only feel more at ease in appreciating modern art and contemporary art, both Western and Chinese, but also to comprehend the visual cultural phenomenon of today, and further making sense of the meanings of current culture in their daily life. To the students majoring in literature, journalism and communication studies, such a comprehension could be helpful for the study of their major subjects. Of course, as for myself, this was certainly not the only purpose of lecturing on the studies of visual culture, but also to explore more possible purposes and methods of art education, and to explore more possibilities of education in visual culture in a cross-cultural setting.

Chapter 9   Analyzing Student Responses

91. Introduction

In this chapter, I examine student responses to my lectures. In the afternoon of the last lecture (the fourth lecture) I assigned two sets of assignments to students, one on the topic of "gaze" and the other on "representation," each consisting of two questions and a short essay. Among the 73 students, 37 wrote on "gaze" and 36 wrote on "representation." Since the purpose of this assignment is to examine how much the Chinese students understood and misunderstood the two Western concepts, and how these students use and misuse Western art theories in reading images, and not to test their memory of the lecture contents, I gave the assignment as an open-book work, and allowed the students to use their notebooks for reference.

In order to analyze student responses, at this point, I provide a summary of my lectures on the topics of "gaze" and "representation" by quoting two corresponding passages from previous chapter. Below is the first one on "gaze":

In the discussion, I first briefly defined the term "gaze" and interpreted it as a theoretical and critical concept about visual communication with the interactive relationship between seeing and being seen. Then, I illustrated the interpretation with examples, such as Edouard Manet's paintings. Literally, "gaze" means looking, watching, staring, and the like, related to contemplation in visual

communication. As its most important feature, in the context of contemporary critical discourse, the concept of gaze deals with the issue of identity, and refers to the notions of gender, voyeurism, sexuality, race, subjectivity/objectivity, and so forth. This concept is also involved with the notions of objectification, commodity, and is inscribed with power, manipulation, and desire, etc (p.143).

The second quotation is on "representation":

In Western philosophical and critical tradition, the term "representation" could be generally defined as a process of using image or language to refer to something or someone else, in relation to imitation and resemblance. However, "representation" is not a simple notion, but a complex theoretical concept. Historically, the complexity first came from Plato's doubt about the truthfulness of mimetic representation (Plato, 1991, p.4). In the dialogue with Glaucon in *Republic*, Socrates questioned the so-called truthful relation of a painting of a bed to the actual bed made by a carpenter, and eventually to the idea about bed in the mind of God. According to Plato, due to its nature of imitation, artistic representation is far from being truthful (p.149).

Lecturing on "representation" in the terminology of contemporary critical theory, I also discussed David Summers's opinion about this concept. Below is another quotation from the previous chapter as well:

From a contemporary perspective of cultural studies, Summers explores the different ways in which the world is represented. Among these ways, cultural difference makes representation different and therefore untruthful.

Discussing the issue of representation in my lectures, I also brought about the question of truthfulness, and elaborated the different ways in representation, focusing on the significance of this concept, such as the exploration of women's identity through photographic representation" (p. 150).

In my analyses of student responses, in addition to the issue of misreading, some other issues are also taken into consideration, such as the structural organization of the essay, the clarity of the written language, and the logical coherence of the paper, etc. Below I present quantitative analyses of students' answers to my questions.

9.2 A Quantitative Analysis of the Answers to the First Question on Gaze

In the assignment to students, the first of the two questions on "gaze" was about the definition and elaboration of this critical concept, based on my lecture which is summarized at the beginning of this chapter, and their readings: "what is your understanding of 'gaze'?" I required students to write half a page to answer this question, roughly an equivalent of 2/3 page in double-spaced text in English.

In my lecture, I defined and interpreted the concept of "gaze" based on Margaret Olin's essay "Gaze" (M. Olin, 1996, p.208), and regarded it as a standard elaboration of this concept. Therefore, I expected students to cover as many aspects of my definition and interpretation as possible, and emphasize five of them: visual communication, identity, sexual objectification, commodity, and power. From the 37

answers I abstract 8 aspects, and use 8 keywords to code them. The number pertaining to each keyword indicates the number of students who wrote this particular aspect in answering the question: looking (37), communication (30), message (25), role (12), objectification (6), identity (6), voyeurism (4), and power (4). Below are the explanations to the percentages.

(1) Looking: all 37 students (100%) defined "gaze" as "looking," "seeing" or "watching," not a simple and regular looking, but a long, fixed or focused staring.

(2) Communication: 30 students (81%) explained gaze as an act of seeing and being seen, as an eye contact and visual communication. The communication is found (a) between the person in a picture and the spectator, (b) between the individuals in a picture, (c) between the image maker (artist) and the individuals in the picture, and (d) between the image maker and the spectators, communicating indirectly via the picture.

(3) Message: 25 students (67.6%) further explained that the visual communication delivered messages in a bi-directional way, which could be the gazer's ideas, feelings, attitudes, and so forth, as well as the responses from the gazed. Three out of 25 students explained that the gaze of the person in a picture could place an impact on the spectator, and even control the spectator through the impact.

(4) Role: 12 students (32.5%) considered that the role of the gazer and the gazed could be changed or switched in the communication process. The change of roles revealed the subjectivity and objectivity in relation to gaze. In this case, both the gazer and the gazed had a interchangeable double identity.

(5) Objectification: 6 students (16.2%) considered that objectification was an important function of gaze, which could turn the gazed to an object for seeing, and change the identity of the gazed as well. In other words, gaze could objectify the gazed other.

(6) Identity: related to the above, 6 students (16.2%) considered that gaze had much to do with identity, both the identity of the gazer and that of the gazed.

(7) Voyeurism: 4 students (11%) used the cases of Manet's paintings and the photographs that I used in my lectures to illustrate the notion of voyeurism from the point of view of desire and sexuality, and related it to the notions of "role change," "objectification," "identity" and "power," as well as "control" and "manipulation."

(8) Power: 4 students (11%) considered that gaze possessed political power. According to these students, the power was political, it was controlling and manipulating. However, at this point, none mentioned Foucault and his idea about this issue.

Among the 37 students, 19 answered the question in two aspects, mostly the first two, "looking" and "communication," and 15 students answered in three aspects, mostly the first three, "looking," "communication," and "message," while some wrote on other aspects. Two students answered the question in 4 aspects, one included "looking", "communication," "objectification" and "identity," while the other included "looking," "communication," "role" and "objectification." There is 1 student who answered in five aspects, "looking," "communication," "message," "objectification" and "power."

A Sampler

The above shows that the students mostly grasped the key or main ideas of the concept of "gaze." Interestingly, one student answered the question in a completely different way, which was from the point of view of the traditional Chinese concept of Zen meditation. Although the point of view was completely different, the answer touched on the first two aspects, "looking" and "communication" (Figure 9-1). Equally interesting, the answer was written in classical Chinese, not the usual modern Chinese. An abstract of the answer is translated here:
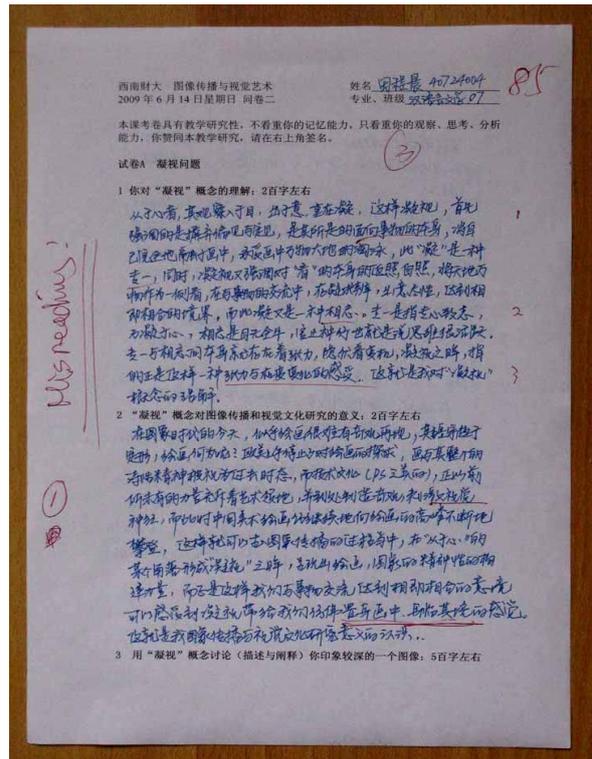
Figure 9-1, A student answer toquestionnaire, XCU, Chengdu, China. Courtesy of the student-author of the essay

Starting from the heart, one's observation is realized through his eyes. Intentionally focused, gaze needs no preoccupation and partiality. Focusing on an image and emerging in the picture, the gazer could enjoy the whole world with

the picture. In the meantime, gazing back at oneself, the gazer could explore the world in the process of the communication between himself and the world. This is a way to reach the realm of fusion, the fusion of oneself and the world, and so to further reach to the realm of forgetting or losing oneself. In this realm, the gazer's mind gains maximum space for contemplating and meditating. Thus, everything in this world is no longer the same as the gazer previously perceived.

Discussion

Reading this answer, I could imagine an image of this student: an ancient monk-like young man, sitting on the top of a cliff, surrounded by floating clouds and the woods, contemplating the relationship between human beings and nature, gazing back at his own heart. This imagined picture is very Chinese, and could be considered a Chinese understanding of the concept of gaze. However, I find a similar case in the West. In the early 19th century, the German landscape artist Caspar David Friedrich received 9 letters from his friend and pupil Carl Gustav Caruss, who was also a landscape painter. In one of those letters, Caruss recounted his aesthetic experience and spiritual contemplation before nature:

Stand then upon the summit of the mountain, and gaze over the long rows of hills. Observe the passage of streams and all the magnificence that opens up before your eyes; and what feeling grips you? It is a silent devotion within you. You lose yourself in boundless spaces, your whole being experiences a silent

cleansing and clarification, your I vanishes, you are nothing, God is everything (M. Andrews, 1999, p. 143).

A present-day British scholar of art history, Malcolm Andrews, interprets this letter as a case of sublimity. Andrews writes:

The vocabulary associated with the experience is one of surrender to a superior power – the very reverse of the Picturesque. In the act of surrender we acknowledge the feebleness of our power of the articulate expression and representation. We surrender ourselves, or at least the self that is constituted by language is dissolved" (M. Andrews, 1999, pp 142-3).

Facing the overwhelming power of nature, the imaginative young monk on top of the cliff lost his words. He could not answer my question in a usual way, but gripped the spiritual sublimity within him. In a way, I would say that this Zen-like answer is a Sinicized textual presentation of the student's understanding of the Western concept of gaze.

In my lectures, I did not frame "gaze" in the context of traditional Chinese aesthetics, simply because it is not a Chinese concept, though it could be well employed to interpret traditional Chinese art. The case of the student's discussion of "gaze" in the terminology of Chinese aesthetics indicates that there is always someone, even if not majoring in visual art, who has the intention to localize Western concepts

in some way.

In the lectures, I approached the concept of "gaze" in three ways. I first defined and interpreted this concept, then I elaborated my own understanding of this concept that could be found in my discussion of Manet's paintings in the previous chapter, and finally I discussed images and works of visual art from the point of view of "gaze," demonstrating how this concept was employed in the practice of image reading. Taking the three ways I aimed at helping students to better understand "gaze" and also to master the use of this concept in reading and interpreting images.

Findings

Upon examining students' responses to my teaching based on the above percentages and discussion, I have the following findings:

(1) Since none of the students included all 8 aspects about "gaze" in answering the question, I observe that my lecture hardly delivered full or complete information on the concept of gaze, but partial information only.

(2) Although their answers are partial, the students are able to grasp the key or main ideas about "gaze." In other words, they are basically able to define and elaborate this concept.

(3) Since the answers were mostly taken from my lectures, i.e., based on their notebooks, I would say that the students are able to comprehend the basics of Western theory through listening to lectures.

(4) In terms of partial understanding, I observe that it is easier for students to

understand the aspects that impressed them most due to its relevance to their life experience, such as "looking," "communication" and "message."

(5) Regarding the translated excerpt of the answer from a single student, I observe that misreading is purposeful. It happens when someone takes a Western theoretical concept out of Western context, places it in a Chinese context, and interprets it in the terminology of Chinese aesthetics.

9.3 A Statistic Analysis of the Answers to the Second Question on Gaze

The student answers to the first question on "gaze" were primarily concerned with the definition and interpretative elaboration of this concept, for which students most likely followed, or had to follow, what they learned from my lectures, and hardly put forward their own personal opinions, except the one single student writing in classical Chinese. In order to acquire students' personal opinions about "gaze," I designed the second question in a different way: "why is this concept meaningful to the study of art and visual culture?" This question aimed at acquiring students' ideas about the necessity and importance of embracing the critical concept "gaze," and embracing modern Western art theory in general, for the study of visual culture in China. In a far reach, this is also a question about how to evaluate Western influence on today's Chinese art education. In this sense, this question opens a bigger space for students to express their own opinions, and I expected the answers to be more personal, which

could demonstrate what the students really understood about the significance of accepting Western influence and what they thought about the Western influence, through exploring the concept of "gaze."

Similarly, I required students to write 2/3 page to answer this question. In their answers, most students explored the significance of "gaze" to the study of art and visual culture from two perspectives, namely, that of the message sender (image maker, artist) and that of message receiver (image viewer, spectator). Speaking from the image maker's perspective, the concept of "gaze" could be regarded as a tool helping the artist to encode and deliver messages through making images. Speaking from the spectator's perspective, the concept of "gaze" could be regarded as a method helping the spectator to decode and better comprehend the image and the messages hidden in the image. Many students based their answers on the important function of gaze, i.e., visual communication.

Screening the 37 answers, I abstracted 3 main points of view from student answers, and coded them with 3 keywords. The number pertaining to each keyword indicates the number of students who wrote this point of view in answering the question: tool (25), method (23) and communication (23). Fewer students wrote on other points of view: power (2), vision (2), and commercialization (1).

Scrutinizing the percentages, I observe that, in addition to the findings that 25 students (67.56%) regarded "gaze" as a creative tool and 23 students (62.16%) regarded it as a perceptive method, among the total of 37 students, 23 (62.16%) based their answers on "visual communication," which is a key aspect of the definition of

"gaze" in the answers to the previous question, and 30 students (81%) included this aspect in their answers. This observation tells that, although the answers to the second question about the significance, not the definition, of "gaze" are more personal, the students' personal opinions were conditioned by the definition of "gaze" which is from my lectures and not students' personal ideas. This observation further demonstrates that, as for the Western influence in general, students' personal opinions were largely and significantly conditioned and even confined by what they learned in the lectures. In other words, the Chinese students' personal opinions are hardly completely personal, and the strong Western influence forms the foundation of their understanding of this concept, as well as their understanding of art and visual culture.

Regarding the percentages about students' personal opinions on the significance of "gaze," among the 37 students, 25 (67.56%) considered that this critical concept could be used by the image maker or artist as a tool to create images or art works. From this point of view, students could explore how the image maker or artist encoded messages in an image and delivered the messages through art works, and thus made art meaningful. Although 25 students pointed out that "gaze" had much to do with the function of creative tools, their specific answers to my question were varied. Among the 25 students, 12 (48%) considered that, with the help of the theoretical concept of "gaze," the image maker could enrich and deepen the meanings of the image, and deliver more messages with the image. Another 12 students (48%) considered that, keeping the concept of "gaze" in mind, the image maker could make the image more expressive, and give the spectator a stronger visual and also conceptual impact. One

student (4%) went further in the political direction and considered that, relevantly, "gaze" was a tool for propaganda.

While some students emphasized the creative "tool" function of "gaze," they also pointed out the perceptive "method" function of "gaze" in the meantime, from the perspective of spectator, opposite to that of image maker. In total, 23 out of 37 students (62.16%) considered that the significance of "gaze" had much to do with the function of the perceiving method. They regarded the critical concept of "gaze" as a method for them to interpret the image and to decipher the message in the image. Nonetheless, their specific answers from this point of view were varied. Among the 23 students, 10 (44%) considered that the concept of "gaze" provided a new perspective to the spectator to view images, 7 (30%) considered that "gaze" challenged the old way of seeing, and was even subversive to the old way of seeing. Six students (26%) considered that the concept of "gaze" could help the spectator to better understand the image.

In addition to the quantitative information in the above, among the 37 students, 22 (59.46%) answered the question with two points of view, mostly "tool" and "method," and 11 students (29.73%) answered with one point only, either "tool" or "method," or another point of view. There are 3 students (8.11%) who answered the question with three points, and 1 (2.70%) with four points.

Based on the quantitative information, I would observe that a little more than a half of the students (59.46%) could think about the question from two different angles, namely, the artist's perspective and the spectator's perspective, and a significantly

smaller percentage of the students (29.73%) took only one point of view, either the artist's or the spectator's, in answering the question. Contemplating this observation, I would remark that, on the one hand, the majority of the students are not able to think more in answering the question from multiple perspectives, since only 3 students (8.11%) offered a third point of view and 1 student (2.70%) offered four points of view. However, on the other hand, they are able to be focused on the main point of the issue, and thus grasp the key or core of the significance of "gaze" in their answers. This finding is indeed in accordance with, and also supports my findings from the answers to the first question, in particular, supports the first 4 findings.

9.4 Analyses of Student Short Essays on Gaze

In addition to the above two questions, I also assigned a topic for students to write an essay: "applying the theoretical concept of gaze to the discussion of an image that has impressed you." The purpose of assigning students to write this essay was to examine if they were able to apply Western theory to the reading of images and visual art, and to examine how they would apply it. I required students to write this short one-page essay, an equivalent of one and a half pages in double-spaced text in English. Some students wrote in full length, some only half, but most of the students wrote in between: a length of an equivalent of one page of double-spaced text in English.

As stated, 37 students wrote on gaze, and so I collected 37 essays, which have

been sorted out into four groups according to the images the students chose to discuss. The first group consists of 10 essays, employing the concept of gaze in discussing the photographs of the Concordia educated photographer, Mia Donovan. I discussed her photography in the fourth lecture in relation to gaze. The 10 students in this group basically followed my discussion in writing their essays. The second group consists of 9 essays, discussing the paintings of Manet, which I also discussed in a lecture from the perspective of gaze. The third group consists of 2 essays only, on the Velázquez painting *Las Meninas* that I also discussed. The fourth group consists of 16 essays, discussing the images that I did not cover in my lectures, and the images that I discussed but not specifically related to the concept of gaze.

The 16 essays in the fourth group are important for my research because from those writings I could further learn how much the students really knew about the concept of gaze and how they applied this concept in reading images. These essays could also provide a comparison to the essays in the other three groups which mainly followed my lectures, with less personal opinions. Therefore, in the following I focus on this group in analyzing student essays.

Among the 16 essays, 8 deal with Chinese images and 8 with Western images. Among the 8 Chinese images, 5 are news photos and 3 are paintings. Among the 8 Western images, 7 are paintings of masterpieces and 1 is an image of a movie poster.

Since my research is qualitative and not quantitative, I did not conduct a random sampling study, but chose sample essays according the purpose of this study: using the most informative essays as samples. Such a choice enabled me to examine how

many aspects of gaze a student discussed in writing his or her essay, and enabled me to find what the student said about the topic, why he or she said that, and how he or she said that. For this purpose, I consider that analyzing the essays on Chinese images could better demonstrate how the Chinese students applied Western theory to the reading of images, and thus better help me to reach the goal of my study. Due to limited space, I analyzed the essays on Chinese news photos only, though I read all the essays when I graded them.

Fortunately, all 5 essays on Chinese news photos are informative, though some contain more information and some less. All 5 students majored in journalism and communication studies, class of 2007, second-year at the time of summer 2009.

In terms of the methodology of analyzing these essays, as indicated before, I followed the four steps of description, interpretation, evolution, and theorization, elaborated by Terry Barrett in his *Criticizing Art: Understanding the Contemporary* (Terry Barrett, 1993). The reason why I followed this particular analytical procedure could be found in my discussion of Terry Barrett's book in Chapter Four "Method and Procedures."

(1) The First Essay on an Earthquake Photo "Hand in Hand"

The female student-author is Zhang Qian. This 5-paragraph essay is about an earthquake photo, the quake of May 12, 2008 near Chengdu, China. The first paragraph is a description of the image: the subject-matter of this photo is formed by two hands, holding each other, one small, apparently a hand of a child, and the other

is bigger, a hand of an adult. The two dust-covered hands are reaching out from the debris of a collapsed building, and the bodies of the two persons are fully buried in the debris, not showing in the photo. The second paragraph tells the background story of the photo: the photographer came to the campus and gave a talk on his earthquake photographs. The student attended the talk and learned that the photo was taken on the site of the earthquake two days after it happened. The third paragraph is the student's reading of the image: the victims helped each other, demonstrated love and determination of struggling for life. The fourth paragraph is a discussion of gaze in relation to this photo: gaze refers not only to that of the individuals in a picture, it is not only demonstrated by eyes. Regarding this particular photograph, the gaze refers to that of the spectator's. At this point, the student generalizes her opinion:

By gazing, a male gazer could objectify a photo. With the help of details, expression of one's eyes, gesture, setting, background, and so forth, the image maker (photographer) could objectify his thoughts, and deliver his ideas to the spectators of the image.

Consequently and correspondingly, in the fifth paragraph, the student summarizes her opinion: gaze is bi-directional, the gazer could be the person in a picture and also be the spectator of the picture, therefore the communication of the gazer and the gazed realizes the meaning of the picture.

The main idea of this essay is about the bi-directional visual communication of

gaze, and the student applied this opinion to her discussion of the earthquake photo that does not show the eyes of the individuals in the photo. In this case, the gaze is that of the spectator's, which makes the two hands in the photo meaningful.

Students usually discuss the gaze of the individuals in a picture. However, this student chose to discuss a photo not showing the eyes, and discussed the gaze of the spectator's. This choice demonstrates that the student understood the key of gaze: multi-directional visual communication, not looking in one direction, and thus the gaze gives meaning. However, in the above quotation, the important word "objectify" (objectification) is used somewhat improperly. If the student had replaced it with the word "visualize" (visualization), then her writing could make better sense when she wrote "the image maker (photographer) could objectify his thoughts, and deliver his or her ideas to the spectators of the image." In this quotation, "objectify" could also be replaced by the word "concretize."

Interestingly, the student understood that the notion of "objectification" is relevant to the issue of gender and therefore mentioned "male gaze," though it seemed that in her essay the male gaze had nothing do to with this specific photograph. Nevertheless, placing the "male gaze" in the context of the topic of this essay, it could be a reference to the male photographer. If this is the case, then he does not objectify the photograph, but visualize his own thoughts through photographing. On the contrary, if the "male gaze" is that of a spectator's, then he could concretize or understand the photographer's thoughts through reading the photo image.

Concluding my reading of this essay, I observe that, first of all, this student

grasped the key in the concept of gaze, the bi-directional or multi-dimensional visual communication, and knew how to apply this concept in reading images, even reading an unusual image that does not show the eyes, though with a certain problem of impropriety. Secondly, this student also understood certain important aspects of this concept, such as the relation between "objectification" and "male gaze" which I discussed in the fourth lecture. Nonetheless, this student did not know the nuance of the relationship, and mentioned "male gaze" that is irrelevant to the photo and to the topic of her essay, and also used the word "objectify" improperly. In short, once again, this student understood the main idea of the concept of gaze and was able to use it in image reading, but was not clear about some important details of this concept. This unclearness caused her misuse of the concept of gaze in a certain way.

(2) The Second Essay on the Photo "Hope in Big Eyes"

The student-author of the second essay is Liao Dunkai, male, and the essay is about a photo of a school girl, consisting of 4 paragraphs. The first paragraph serves as its "introduction," stating that the photo that impressed him is "Hope in Big Eyes," and the essay aims to explore the eyes with the concept of gaze. The second paragraph is a description of the photo image: a little girl in a shabby classroom with her textbooks on the top of a broken desk in front of her. In the center of this photo are the big eyes of the girl, staring with anxiety and worrisome. The third paragraph is the main body of this essay, in it the student asked a question: Why do I choose to discuss this photo in the terminology of gaze? He offered two answers. Firstly, there is eye

contact between the little girl and the spectator, and thus the visual effect of this photo is strong. Secondly, the strong visual effect shows the power of gaze, which helps to deliver messages, helps to communicate with the people, and helps the spectators to think about the meaning of the big eyes. The fourth paragraph is a theorization, serving as a conclusion of this essay:

The photograph "Hope in the Big Eyes" best demonstrates the key of the concept of gaze. Not only does it represent reality, but also produces a persuasive power, namely, the power of telling spectators the difficulty of receiving education for kids of poor families in remote regions in China today. From the perspective of gaze, I see and say that this is the meaning of this photo.

Compared to the photograph that was discussed in the previous essay, this one is easier for the student to apply the concept of gaze in the discussion, which grasped two key aspects of gaze, visual communication between the person in the picture and the spectator of the picture, and the power of persuasion that was demonstrated by the gaze of the girl in the photo.

Similarly and relevantly, compared to the previous student, this student applied the concept of gaze in his discussion of the photo with much less problems, while with much less personal opinions too. Nevertheless, his discussion of persuasive power is a merit point of this essay.

Another interesting aspect of this essay is the structure. Indeed, in my lectures I

discussed the four steps in reading images: description, interpretation, evaluation, and theorization. In terms of the compositional structure of this essay, the student followed the four steps, though he did not mention this process. This is to say that, on the one hand, this student had a clear idea about certain processes about how to read images and how to present his reading in writing, i.e., following the professor's procedure. On the other hand, this student also clearly knew what I said in my lectures about reading images and presenting the readings, and may have taken good course notes. This is a type of student who is hardworking, studies conscientiously, and knows almost all of what the professors and books stated, but has less personal opinions, because, speaking based on my observation of students, this type of student paid attention primarily to listening to the lectures, with less innovative thinking, less thinking of why and how the speaker talked about the issues.

(3) The Third Essay on the Same Photo

The student-author of the third essay on the same photo, "Hope in Big Eyes," is Wan Qi, a female, and the essay being rather short. Similarly, this essay focuses on visual communication, and the author interprets the significance of the visual communication at two levels. First, the gaze shows the communication between the girl and the photographer, and between the girl and the spectators of the photograph. Second, the gaze of the girl shows her desire to study, which demonstrates the hope of the poor children who are looking forward to seeing a possible bright future. Looking into the girl's gaze, the student writes, a spectator has to rethink about how to help the

poor, and this is the persuasion of the photographer. In other words, the gaze of the girl also embodies the visual communication between the photographer and the spectators.

Although the two-level interpretation is interesting, the idea of visual communication is not unique. Moreover, reading the two essays about the same photograph, I observe that choosing an easy image to discuss could make the essays mediocre, with less personal opinions.

(4) The Fourth Essay on a Photo of Poor Children

The student-author of the fourth essay on the photograph of a group of poor children is Zhang Yumeng, a female, and the essay is in full length, consisting of three paragraphs. Similar to the other students, this student described the image in the first paragraph: the image is a group of poor children looking at the camera, with empty food-bowls in hands. The second paragraph is short, the student turned to talk about how the concept of gaze helped her in reading this photograph:

When I first saw this photo, I appreciated it, I thought it was a good photo, but I did not know how to describe this photo, and did not know how to explain why this photo was good. Now I know that the concept of gaze could help. With some help, I found a way to talk about this photo.

This is precisely what I want from the student essays. Needless to say, the last

paragraph is a lengthy discussion of the gaze of the children: the most striking aspect of this photo was the gaze of the poor children, which touched the spectator's heart through visual communication.

Although the concept of gaze helped, looking at this photo the second time when writing her essay, the student also puzzled: was that I who was gazing at the children, or were the children gazing at me? Answering this question, the student did not stop short of discussing the issue of visual communication, but further gave a social meaning to this photo: the children were gazing at society, while the photograph reflected a part of the reality of this society. Therefore, the student explained, looking was in fact thinking. At this point, I am afraid that the student could have further written that, in the terminology of gaze, looking at this photo is a way of thinking about the social and sociological significance of this image. Indeed, the student concluded that the success of this photo should be credited to the communicative function of the image, and also to the same function of the concept of gaze. Thus, the student demonstrated that she then knew how to describe this image and how to explain the success of this photograph.

Although this essay is based on the student's personal aesthetic experience of appreciating a photograph, the opinions of interpreting this photo are not really personal: both visual communication and social significance are main topics in my lectures. However, writing this essay, this student was very clear that the aim of her essay was to discuss the usefulness of the concept of gaze, rather than the interpretation of gaze. The main idea of this essay was not about the interpretation of

the photo, but about how the concept of gaze helped her to read the photograph.

(5) The Fifth Essay on an Earthquake Photo

The student-author of the fifth essay is Yu Wen, a female, and the essay is also about an earthquake photo that is different from the first one. After describing the image of a girl who is looking out from debris, the student-author claimed that the gaze of the girl delivered a message of seeking help for life. Reading this image, the author raised several questions about how to read this image: Where was the little girl? Why was she buried in the debris? What did the photo tell? The author did some research: according to the photographer who gave a talk on campus about his earthquake photographs, this photo showed the last moment in the life of this little girl, at which moment the photographer was not able to help her to get out of the debris, and the only thing the photographer was capable of doing at that time was to accompany the girl, giving her a final consolation. Therefore, the gaze of the girl was the last desperate word she could speak to the world.

In my opinion, raising questions and answering them demonstrated the strength of this essay, since the 3 "W"s, not 5 though, in this essay were pointing directly to the topic, and thus the student took on the issue of how to apply the concept of gaze in reading the image.

Reading all 37 essays, and analyzing the above 5 essays on gaze, I have the following findings.

Firstly, among the 37 essays, only 16 discussed the images that I did not discuss

in my lectures, and the rest took the images that I discussed as their samples, such as the paintings by Manet. In other words, less than half of the students (43%) were willing to try something new. A campus joke goes: learning is repeating and also copying. Therefore, many students are satisfied with repeating what the teachers said in their assignments, and not willing to venture into innovative thinking. This is precisely the same case that the Chinese engineers are satisfied with copying Western technology without investing effort to create and invent new products, such as the so-called "knock-off" electronic products which are made in China. In this case, Western art theory finds no significant difficulty to be embraced in China.

Secondly, reading and comparing the above 5 essays, I observe that, in a perfect accordance with the first finding, the more personal opinions a student has, the more chances of misreading he or she could have, and more difficulties in writing, and vice versa. Personal opinions represent students' own understandings and ideas, which are not based on my lecture and not derived from their reading of other scholars either.

Thirdly, comparing the photographs discussed in the above essays, I also observe that, in perfect accordance with the above two findings as well, the more unusual the image is, such as the image of "hand in hand" without showing the eyes in the first photograph, the more opportunities the image could give to students to write out their personal opinions, and vice versa. Unusual images offer no model or sample for students to follow and copy, the students have to figure out how to deal with the unusual.

Finally, developed from the above findings, I remark that some unfamiliar new

theories from the West could pose an intellectual challenge to Chinese students, as well as scholars, and thus force them to find a way to digest and then localize the new theories, as long as they are assured that these new theories are worthwhile.

9.5 Analyses of Student Short Essays on Representation

As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, I prepared two sets of assignments for students, one on "gaze" and one on "representation," each consisting of two questions and a short essay. Among the 73 students, 37 wrote on "gaze," and 36 wrote on "representation."

In the assignment, the first of the two questions on "representation" was about the definition and elaboration of this concept. The questions were asked in the same way precisely like the questions about gaze: "what is your understanding of 'representation'?" and "why is this concept meaningful to the study of art and visual culture?" The purposes of asking these questions are no different from those of the questions for "gaze," and so is the requirement for the length of the answers.

In my lecture, I defined and interpreted the concept of "representation" based on David Summers's essay "Representation" (D. Summers, 1996, p.3), and regarded it as a standard elaboration of this concept. Therefore, I expected students to cover as many aspects of my definition and interpretation as possible.

In reading and grading the answers from students, I determined that the findings

from these answers were not significantly different from those to the questions about "gaze." Therefore, I will not present my analyses of the answers, but move forward to present the analyses of the short essay on "representation," because, although the findings from these essays pose no opposition to the findings from analyzing those essays on "gaze," there are some interesting aspects in these essays on "representation," which are worth discussing.

The topic for the essay is similar to the previous one about "gaze": "applying the theoretical concept of representation to the discussion of an image that has impressed you." The purpose of assigning students to write this short essay is also the same: to explore the issue of misreading by examining how much the Chinese students understood and misunderstood the concept of "representation," and how the students use and misuse this concept in reading images.

Among the 36 students who wrote the essays on representation, 18 majored in Chinese language and literature, another 18 majored in journalism and communication studies.

Among the 36 essays, 19 are about photographs, and 17 are about paintings. Similar to what I found from those essays on gaze, these essays on representation are mostly about the images that I already discussed in my lectures: 13 essays dealt with the photographs of Edward Burtynsky, Mia Donovan, and other photographers that I covered in my lectures, and 10 essays dealt with the paintings of Leonardo da Vinci, Velázquez, Artemisia, and other artists that I also covered in my lecture. In other words, about 64% of the students followed my method to apply Western concept in

their discussions of images that I discussed already. The ratio is 7% higher than that of those who wrote on gaze, which is about 57%. These percentages further support my previous findings.

In this case, these "knock-off" essays are not valuable for my research, because I wanted to know their personal and individual ideas, not what I said in the lectures. Therefore, I turned to analyze the 13 essays on the photographs and paintings that I did not discuss in the lectures. Analyzing student writings, I first divided the 13 essays into two groups according to the genre of the works in discussion, one group consists of 6 essays on news photos and the other consists of 7 essays on paintings, and then I analyzed the two groups of essays. In this process, I paid special attention to the ways of how the students used the concept of representation in reading the image.

(1) Essays on photographs and a movie poster

The author of the **first essay** is Zhang Qianyong, and his essay demonstrates that he basically understood this concept in accordance with Plato and Summers. Discussing a news photo "A Starving Girl," the student claimed that, on the one hand, this photo represented a miserable scene of African rural life, and on the other hand, this photo also represented the photographer facing the scene. The aim of the first representation was to show how miserable rural life was in Africa, and the aim of the second representation was to show how the photographer made an effort to bring such a miserable life to the attention of the world. In this case, the first representation was a passive one, i.e., the little girl was unwillingly represented, and the second was an

active one, i.e., the photographer wanted to represent his effort.

By distinguishing the two different representations, the student-author touched on an important aspect of a contemporary issue that is related to the concept of representation, namely, the presence of absence, and the absence of presence, though the student did not use these very terms. The second representation mentioned above is the case of the presence of the absence, since the photographer was not represented in this photo. The concept of representation is usually related to the presence of an object, or a subject-matter in a picture. Although the photographer cannot appear in the photo he took, he showed his effort to expose a miserable life, according to the student-author, he thus represented himself in the way of absence from the photo, which is the case labeled "presence of the absence."

"Representation" once was a classical Marxist-Soviet-Maoist aesthetic term in China before the end of the 1980s. According to the socialist-realist doctrine, representation was a realistic reflection of true life, or a true scene of life, corresponding to the first kind of representation in the student essay. However, the student discerned the second kind of representation, which found no correspondence with the socialist-realist doctrine. Although the student's idea about the second representation may be relevant to my discussion of Sophie Calle and her engagement with the photographing process, I did not see a strong, direct, and clear connection between them. Therefore, I would rather say that this idea of second representation demonstrated the strength of this essay. However, the student did not mention and did not use the postmodern terms of the dichotomy, presence and absence, the presence of

absence, and the absence of presence.

Speaking of how this student applied the concept of representation in his reading of the image, I would observe that he first looked at the image with an old eye of socialist-realism, and then looked at it again with a new eye of contemporary Western theory. In other words, this student was able to use the concept of representation in the sense of old Marxist doctrine to read the image, and also able to use the new idea of this concept in the sense of contemporary Western critical theory, thus shed some light on the understanding of the significance of this photograph, which is beyond the limit of the old doctrine. Nevertheless, the student was not really clear about the new idea, and so could not use the terms of presence and absence. This is to say that, while the old influence of the socialist-realist doctrine is still strong in China, especially in the discipline of art education, the later influence from the West is also strong and could help students with new understandings of visual art.

The author of the **second essay**, Zhang Pengfei also touched on the topic of presence of the absence in his discussion of an earthquake photo. He wrote that the photo represented a rescue scene, and in the meantime represented indirectly the photographer's sympathetic feelings towards the victims. At one point, I observe that this student did not confine his understanding of the concept of representation within the old doctrine by going beyond the limit of Marxist idea. For instance, according to Marxist-Maoist ideology, art should represent the positive side of life, and not the negative side. In other words, art should be a tool of glorification. However, the student described what he saw on the photo: there were no sufficient mechanical and

technical support to the rescue, the people were panic, and the scene was chaotic. Nevertheless, in a certain sense, an all-side representation tells truth. At another point, I also speculate that this student, as well as his classmates, heard of the Western postmodern idea of the presence of the absence, but did not really digest this new concept.

At the same point, some other students had similar ideas that were presented in their essays. The authors of the **third** and **fourth essays**, Wang Jingrui and Tan Qing, wrote that, in their discussions of a Vietnam War photo and a September 11 photo of the terrorist attack in New York City, the photographers expressed their sympathy toward the victims through representing the victims. In the two photographs, although the photographers were not represented, the spectators could feel their sympathy. The student-author of the **fifth essay**, Zhong Jieyang, had a similar idea as well in his discussion of the last image of the Hollywood movie *Schindler's List*, which is a little girl in red amid the massive black and white surrounding. He wrote in the essay that, in addition to representing the Holocaust, the director showed hope in the final image, which was represented by the little girl in red, and the hope was that of the director's. Although the authors of the three essays touched on the postmodern notion about the presence of the absence, they all stopped short of using the very terms to develop a direct discussion of this issue. As I speculated, they might have heard of the postmodern notion, but had no clear idea about it. Hence, I observe that this is the case where misreading could happen.

The **sixth essay** is an interesting one since the student-author, Liu Xuetao, applied

the concept of representation in her discussion of the poster of the 1992 movie *The Piano*. She developed her discussion from the perspective of a traditional Chinese aesthetic concept, inscape. The student first described the image on the poster that represented the beautiful scenery from the movie, and then retold the story of the movie with her discussion of the meaning behind it. In her essay, the student-author tried to say that the image on the poster represented not only the beautiful scenery, but also the love story and the sentiment behind the story. In this sense, the representation is multi-layered, not only visual, but also psychological, and even conceptual. By discussing the multiple layers of representation, this student also went beyond the limit of the Marxist doctrine of the reflection theory about socialist-realist art. However, although this student clearly stated that she would discuss inscape in the beautiful scenery, she did not actually develop any further discussion of it. In this case, her application of the concept of representation in discussing the movie poster did not have the chance to be integrated with the Chinese concept of inscape.

The main finding from the above analyses of the 6 essays is that almost all the students mentioned and valued the importance of the image makers' feelings toward what were represented in the images, and thus touched on the postmodern notion of the presence of the absence. However, none of the students used this very term directly, they did not discuss the notion clearly either. Thus, my observation is that the Chinese students had contact with modern Western art theory, but did not have a clear and precise understanding of it. As has been pointed out, this is where misreading could happen.

(2) Essays on paintings

The 7 essays on paintings exemplify how students applied both the old doctrine of socialist-realist representation and the postmodern concept of representation in discussing art, and also exemplify something new and different.

The **first essay** is about a Pre-Raphaelite painting *The Blind Girl* (1856) by John Everett Millais. The student-author, Tang Xiao, first described the painting, and then discussed the symbolic meanings of the visual signs in this painting, such as the images of the accordion, rainbow, butterfly, blue sky, and so forth, which signified a world that the blind girl saw in her heart. After the description and discussion, the student brought about her first opinion: representation is intentional (authorial intention), and thus selective, namely, the artist represented what the blind girl hoped for in his painting with his imagination, rather than representing everything realistically that surrounded the blind girl. In this case, the representation is not naturalistic, but selective and subjective. Developing from this point, the student brought about her second opinion: the intentional selective representation is a presentation of the artist's ideal and a presentation of the artist's sentimental and sympathetic aesthetics, not a representation of the objective world. Finally, the student concluded that the nature of representation is determined by the authorial intention, and also determined by the interpretation of the spectators of the painting, or the interpretation of the image readers.

According to this essay, there are two worlds available for artistic representation.

One is the actual or objective world in front of the eyes of the artist, and the other is an ideal world inside the heart of the artist. Determined by the authorial intention, the artist paints images and puts them together to represent either one of the worlds, such as the ideal world in his heart. Since representation is selective, the purpose of representing something is not only to simply reflect an objective world, but mainly to deliver messages about ideals or hope, and to express a certain feeling or sentiment. Therefore, as the student summarized, representation is not one dimensional, but multidimensional.

Reading this essay at first, I was a bit puzzled: how could this student be able to discuss this painting in such detail, such as the accordion and butterfly? In order to write such an essay, and to discuss the painting in such a detailed manner, the student must have had a reproduction of the painting in front of her. However, there was no internet access in the classroom, and I did not offer images on the projection-screen. My speculation was that the student brought a picture book or an art history book to the classroom, and placed the painting on the desk when she was writing the essay, since I informed the class in advance that the final writing was open-book. If this was the case, could it be possible that the student just re-wrote what the book said? I had no proof, since I did not invigilate the open-book writing, although I was in the classroom when the students wrote the final essay. Nonetheless, although I discussed the issue of intention, in particular, the issue of authorial intention in my lectures, I did not relate this issue to the concept of representation, nor did I relate it to the Pre-Raphaelite art. In this sense, this essay is original and also valuable.

While the student went beyond the old doctrine of Marxist art theory, she also demonstrated her opposite stance towards the doctrine. From this essay, I saw some traces of how modern Western art theory helped a Chinese student to stand against the remaining old official ideas about art, i.e., the socialist-realist ideas. Along with curriculum innovation and reform, such ideological change shows how Western influence had helped with reshaping Chinese art education of today and possibly reshaping Chinese art education in the near future.

The **second**, **third**, and **fourth** essays are similar to the first one, though not as strong as the first one. Nevertheless, all 3 essays showed difference, and also showed the conflict between the old doctrine about the concept of representation and the new ideas about it.

The next two essays demonstrate something interesting too. The **fifth essay** by Chen Zhenghong is about a classical Chinese painting *Peace Reigns over the River* of the Northern Sung Dynasty court artist Zhang Zeduan (ca. 11-12th century). The student observed that this painting realistically represented urban life from 9 hundred years ago in the capital city of China, and thus this painting gained an archival and documentary value for historical and cultural studies. In the meantime, the realistic nature of the representation gave today's spectators a sufficient space to imagine life in ancient times, and to contemplate history as well. Contrary to the realist idea about representation, the **sixth essay** by Shen Yan proposed something different, which is about a painting by Raphael, *The School of Athens*. In his essay the student proposed opposite opinions: this painting was not a representation of a real scene, but an

imagined scene, and the representation was not realistic or truthful, but imaginary. The student further claimed that, due to the unrealistic and imaginary nature of the representation, Raphael broke through the temporal and spatial barriers, and brought together the people of different times and different places. This idea sounded poignant, however, in order to illustrate and support his idea, the student identified some figures in the painting: the central figure Plato was modeled based on Leonardo da Vinci, while Michelangelo and Raphael himself were also shown in the painting. The student's familiarity with this painting and his identification of the major figures in the painting, disclosed that a reproduction of this painting and a text interpreting this painting, might be placed in front of him when he wrote the essay. Nevertheless, the purpose of assigning students to write this essay was, partially, to see if they were able to apply the concept of representation to the reading of images, and the essay by this particular student demonstrated that the student-author was capable of doing so.

The **seventh essay** by Li Wei is about the painting of *Mona Lisa* by Leonardo da Vinci. However, this student did not apply the concept of representation to his reading of this portrait, but discussed the story about who the sitter was. Reading this essay, I could sense that the student tried to explore the representation of the sitter or model, but somehow went astray and missed the point.

The main finding from the above 7 essays on paintings poses no major difference from that of the essays on photographs, namely, the co-existence of an old Marxist doctrine about the concept of representation and the new idea about it from the West. In the 1990s and early 2000s, in the West and also in China, the debate about the

concept of representation centered on the issue of truthfulness, which was brought about in the postmodern discourse, along with semiotic studies of the types of signs. In my lectures I discussed the issue of truthfulness, and I found that in their essays the students also talked about this issue and some of them even used truthfulness as a criterion to tell the difference between realistic and non-realistic representation. In this sense I observe that the students grasped the key of the concept of representation.

9.6 Summary of the Findings

Based on the two quantitative analyses of student responses to my questions about gaze, I summarize two main findings. Firstly, the students rarely have multiple perspectives in examining this theoretical concept. However, secondly, they could grasp the main point of this concept from a key perspective.

Based on the analyses of student essays on gaze, I summarize two main findings as well. Firstly, in accordance with the above two findings, the main point the students grasped is basically from my lectures, not from their own critical thinking. In this case, they could be misled by mistranslation and misreading. Secondly, when there is no help available, they have to exercise their own independent and individual thinking and thus may offer their own opinions. However, this is not an easy work. For many students, it is difficult to be original when using Western art theory to deal with Chinese issues, while a few indeed demonstrate their originality.

Based on the analyses of student essays on representation, I also summarize two findings. Firstly, students have ideas about this Western concept, but their ideas are mostly not clear. Secondly, when the students use Western theory to deal with Chinese issues, they blend the old Soviet-Marxist ideas that were once popular in China from the late 1940s through the 1980s and the new ideas from the West. The old ideas of art theory could be easily obtained from textbooks and left-wing publications in China today. I regard such a blend a way of localization.

At the end of this chapter, I now synthesize the above findings. Employing modern Western art theory to deal with contemporary Chinese issues in art and visual culture, Chinese students have experienced certain difficulties, which are referred to as cross-cultural and ideological "confusion" in the interviews in the previous chapters. Since the students in my class did not have direct experience of translating Western art theory, therefore I did not require them to discuss the issue of mistranslation and misreading. Although they may not know, some of their readings could be mistranslations and misinterpretations, and thus they could be "confused" by what they read. In any case, the students have to follow other scholars' opinions, whether or not those opinions are misleading. However, some students could manage to demonstrate their originality in employing Western art theory, and transplant the theory from its Western context to Chinese context. In my opinion, this is a process of localization at the level of individual practice.

Part Four   Concluding the Research

Chapter 10   Conclusion: Anxiety of Localization

10.1   Summarizing the Study

In the first chapter, "Introduction," I proposed five questions regarding Western influence on Chinese art education and Chinese response to the influence, namely, misreading and localization of modern Western art theory. In order to answer these questions, I presented two case studies which form the main body of this dissertation.

The first is the case study of interviews and my analyses of the interviews. In this case, I stressed the importance of context to localization, and suggested that the difference between Western context and Chinese context made misreading possible. While such difference discloses the purposeful misreading of Western art theory, it also suggests the significance of localization.

The second case is based on my teaching in China and my analyses of Chinese students' responses to my teaching. The findings from students' answers and essays reveal how the students transplanted Western art theory to China. In other words, these student works illustrate the double-sided nature of Chinese localization of Western art theory.

Based on the two case studies, I now answer the five questions with elaborations in this concluding chapter.

10.2 Answering the Questions

The five questions from "Introduction" and brief answers with elaborations are presented here below.

(1) What are the misreadings?

Misreadings are false interpretations, which could be unintentional and also be purposeful. The first one could be mistranslation, such as a Chinese scholar's mistranslation of the term "perspective" in W.J.T. Mitechell's *Picture Theory*. The second one could be the distortion of Western art theory for Chinese use, such as the distortion of Mitechell's notion "pictorial turn," which was used to bring up the topic of this study at the beginning of "Introduction." In Chapter Two I discussed my personal experiences with translating Western art theory and my critical writing on Chinese translation of Western art theory. While those experiences demonstrate the unintentional misreading, my analysis of Mr. Wang Wenbin's article on contemporary Chinese art in the same chapter demonstrates purposeful misreading of Western art theory.

(2) Why and how have these misreadings happened?

Misreadings happen due to cultural and ideological differences between China and the West, and happen when the different cultures meet or confront each other. I presented my interview with Dr. Wang Chunchen in Chapter Six. According to Dr. Wang, dealing with the influence of Western art theory, Chinese academics should emphasize Chinese context and the idea of "Chinese first." This is the meeting and confrontation of two cultures, at which misreadings happen.

(3) Are there purposeful misreadings?

Yes, there are purposeful misreadings. In addition to the example of Mr. Wang Wenbin's article, which is discussed in Chapter Two, Mr. He Guiyan also identified some purposeful misreadings in the interview in Chapter Seven, such as the purposeful misreading of W.J.T. Mitchell. According to Mr. He (June 2, 2009),

> The concept of "pictorial turn" in the West is different from the understanding of it by some Chinese theorists and artists who take it as a different thing. In the West, this concept comes from the context with at least three theoretical aspects, namely, social, historical, and cultural concerns of the use of image in today's society and daily life. However, in China, this concept is used by a certain influential art critic to refer to the use of images as personal logos in the paintings by some popular artists. This is a purposeful misreading, omitting the social, historical, and cultural implications of this concept. Such manipulation of the Western theoretical concept poses a difficulty for students to comprehend (p.135).

(4) If yes, why and how?

A main cause of purposeful misreading is the anxiety of localization, and misreading involves distortion of Western art theory for Chinese needs. In Chapter Six, I offered a concluding discussion of the interview with Dr. Wang Chunchen, focused on his opinion about "localization" and "Chinese first." The concept "localization" refers to what Chinese art educators do with modern Western art theory. Since Chinese art educators recognize the importance of modern Western art theory to the development of art education in China, they have had various ways of embracing Western theory, such as employing Western art theory in their teaching practice and educational reform. In the meantime, however, the concept "Chinese first" tells the other side of the story. "Chinese first" is an important way and precondition to localize Western art theory. Without "Chinese first," the Chinese art educators and students would not know what, why, and how they need to learn from the West. In other words, "Chinese first" is a preparation for embracing Western influence and for employing Western art theory. According to Dr. Wang, purposeful misreading is related to "Chinese first," because Chinese educators do intentionally manipulate Western art theory to fit their needs.

(5) What could be the possible significance of misreadings to Chinese art education?

The significance of misreading and exploring the problem of misreading is found

in the notion of anxiety of localization. In other words, the significance is found in the practical reason for Chinese to embrace the West. In the context of the development of modern civilization and society, Chinese intellectuals, including art educators, recognize that the West is more advanced than China in respect to economy and technology. The West also seems more advanced in respect to education. Chinese educators note that educational advancement provides an intellectual foundation for economic and technological development. In order to make the Chinese economy and technology strong, they need to learn from the West, regarding systematization of educational disciplines and curriculum planning, as well as the development of theory and methodology for teaching approaches. Due to this perception, Chinese intellectuals embrace Western influence for practical reasons.

10.3   Synthesizing the Thesis

Elaborating the above answers to the five questions, I emphasize the impact of two key cultural characteristics: 1) the Chinese traditional culture of respect for academic authorities and 2) the Chinese anxiety of localization.

Regarding the culture of respect, my interviews provide examples for the persuasive influence of this cultural characteristic. My own personal experience living, studying, and teaching in China also supports this observation. As I have noted: if a respected Chinese scholar offered a translation of a Western art theorist, no one in the Chinese academic establishment would be comfortable suggesting that there is a problem with this important person's translation, even though some junior academics

can see that there are indeed significant problems. A good example is the problem of Professor Mo Weiwen's translation of Foucault's key terms "gaze" and "representation" in the first chapter on *Las Meninas* in *The Order of Things*. A detailed discussion of this problem can be found in Chapter Two of this dissertation (pp.28-32). Thus, the misinformation spreads because students and junior academics accept the mistranslation as authoritative, and are prevented by the culture of respect from questioning the quality of the translation. In other words, it is the traditional Chinese culture of respect for authority that contributes significantly to the acceptance of faulty translations of Western art scholars. And this acceptance in the academic community ends up perpetuating incorrect ideas about Western theories, which become widespread. The Chinese culture of respect for older and more established academics makes it very hard for junior academics to critique their elders, even though the critique is perfectly sound. Of course, such things happen in the West as well, it may just be a matter of degree. However, it happens more in China, even today. At this point, I would remark that there is not such a huge difference between respect for senior academics and their authority here in the West or in China, but there is a crucial difference in degree, and this difference contributes to the way that distortions of Western art theories are spread and left unchallenged.

Another cause of misreading is the effect of what I labelled "China first" in my analysis of the interviews with Dr. Wang and Mr. He. Namely, theories and ideas from the West are understood, interpreted, and used in terms of how they meet the needs of contemporary Chinese culture. If a certain Western art theory does not work

well for Chinese issues, the theory will be distorted, just like what happened to those who rested in the Procrustean bed of Greek mythology. At this point, the global phenomenon "McDonaldization" could offer some help for our understanding of the distortion in the terminology of "localization." In the "Review of Literature" in Chapter Three, I discussed James L. Watson's article in George Ritzer's *McDonaldization: A Reader*, which is titled "Transnationalism, Localization, and Fast Foods in East Asia." I re-iterate my discussion here:

Dealing with the issue of localization, Watson notes the social, political, and economic aspects. On the one hand he emphasizes McDonald's irresistible force in changing local culture, on the other hand, more interestingly, he also stresses the irresistible force of the other cultures in changing McDonald's (G. Ritzer, 2006, p.293). Thus in my study "the localization of Western influence" means the ways in which Chinese art educators change Western theories for their own purpose. In this regard, Watson explains the meaning of the term "local culture": it refers to "the experience of everyday life as lived by ordinary people in specific localities. In using it, we attempt to capture the feelings of appropriateness, comfort, and correctness that govern the construction of personal preference, or 'taste'." (G. Ritzer, 2006, p.295). Using Watson, I would change the words "personal preference" to "national preference" which better explains the term "localization" in relation to Chinese art education, particularly, with regard to the Chinese embracing of Western influence (p.59).

Related to the above, the notion of "anxiety of localization" in this dissertation is inspired by American literary critic Harold Bloom's theory "anxiety of influence." According to Bloom, a purposeful misreading in literature, such as modified appropriation or revision, is an effective way for young poets to confront the influence of old masters (H. Bloom, 1994, p. 372). However, Bloom's theory is more temporal, framed within the tradition of English literature, whereas my notion of "anxiety of localization" is more cross-cultural. This is how I interpreted the response from Chinese art educators and students to Western influence. To a large extent, localizing Western art theory and fitting it into the Chinese context is an example of purposeful misreading. In other words, the main purpose of the Chinese intentional misreading of the West in art theory is to construct its own education system in art education, which is a way to search for national identity in contemporary education and global culture.

The history of 20th-century Chinese art education is the story of China constructing its own art education system. China starts by imitating the West at the beginning of the century, borrowing the Western model of the education system and installing it in China. Then, towards the late 20th century, the process continues beyond imitation, modifying and changing the model in accordance with Chinese needs. Hopefully, the process will conclude with innovation. In this process of moving from one stage to another, the anxiety of localization plays a crucial role, which comes from the struggle between imitation and going beyond imitation, and finally landing on an innovative localization.

Regarding the intentional or purposeful misreading of modern Western art theory,

I would refer to the thesis of this dissertation that I proposed in the "Introduction" and further state that, in its specific historical, political, economic, and cultural context of today, Chinese art educators project their immediate situation onto their perception and acceptance of Western influence, and take what they need from the West to deal with their practical issues and problems. In this sense, the anxiety of localization is a drive for the Chinese to learn from the West first, and then to go beyond imitation. It is also in this sense I would say that the anxiety of localization is a drive for Chinese art educators and students to see what they want to see in modern Western art theory, and take what they need to take from the West. In this sense, the Chinese purposeful misreading of the West is a pragmatic appropriation for its own use.

Referring to my remarks on George Ritzer's opinion about localization in Chapter Three (p.57), I now conclude my study of Western influence on contemporary Chinese art education: On the hand, Western influence is realized in part through offering Chinese art educators models to follow in the name in part of educational reform and curriculum change. On the other hand, adopting Western models according to Chinese needs, art educators in China have made changes to Western models and modified the models to fit the local Chinese context and reach the Chinese goal of reform in art education.

10.4   Limitations and Unanswered Questions

In this study, the interviews were mostly conducted in the summer of 2009 in China. Analyzing the interviews, I realized that some of them could not be well used because some of the topics were not relevant, such as those of Professor Shang Yang from Capital Normal University in Beijing. Contemplating why and how such an interview strayed away, I consider that I encountered a dilemma. On the one hand, I did not intend to disturb and intervene with the interviewee, and wanted to allow the interviewee maximum freedom for his opinions. On the other hand, however, I wanted to control the direction of the conversation and focus on the selected topics, not random topics. In this case, I should have stated the topics of the interview more clearly in advance and drawn a border line for the interview, instead of giving a vague idea on what to talk about. In other words, the freedom should be for opinions, not for topics.

In addition to the data from interviews, I also collected data from student responses to my teaching, from their essays and answers to questionnaires. However, regrettably, I did not have student responses to my special talk on the influence of the 13th-century Chinese landscape motif on the 18th-century Japanese erotic prints, which is presented in "Appendix 1." This special talk is a class topic taken from my course on "Chinese Visual Culture" at Concordia University. Although I thought about comparing Concordia student papers on this topic with Chinese student papers, I did not have a chance to assign the students in China to write a paper about it. Otherwise, the data and comparison would have been very useful.

Similarly and regrettably, the analysis of Professor Qiu Zhijie's teaching in

"Appendix 5" is lacking in student response, since I acquired all the materials and documents from the internet, not from the professor or from his institution directly.

Hence, when there is a need to develop this research, or to conduct further research in this field, I shall put more emphasis on conducting interviews and collecting sufficient data from students.

The above limitations demonstrate one side of my experience conducting this research, whereas the other side is what I have learned from this research, which, to a certain extent, has changed my way of doing research. In the past 20 years, almost all my academic writings, including my MA thesis on art education (L. Duan, 1995), belong to the category of the so-called study-room theoretical research, or textual study, and are not empirical. However, the two case studies in this dissertation gave me a chance to do an empirical study. Regarding my experience with this type of research, I would say that the textual study and empirical study play the roles of two feet when I walk. Without the collaboration of the two feet, I could not walk. In the future, I would take the best from the two, and make them work together when necessary, so that my scholarly career will continue to progress.

First draft: May-October 2010, Beijing-Montreal

Revised version: January 2011, Montreal

Third version: June 2011, Beijing

Final version: January 22, 2012, Eve of the Year of the Dragon, Montreal

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Excerpt from "Iconology in Teaching Chinese Art and Its Influence"

Translated from Chinese, Beijing: *Art Observation* monthly, 12th issue, 2008

Lian Duan

My personal vision of education in visual art, in the intellectual environment of visual cultural study, is to teach students to understand human culture through reading visual art, and, conversely, to teach students to interpret visual art from the perspective of a broader cultural context. In this short essay, I will discuss a class of mine that demonstrates the vision, and elaborate the relationship between today's education in visual art and the theory of Erwin Panofsky's iconology that I employed when teaching the class.

During the fall semester of 2007 I taught an undergraduate course of Chinese Visual Culture in the Faculty of Arts and Science at Concordia University, focusing on the development of Chinese landscape painting. The students were not necessarily majoring in visual arts, so they did not have sufficient theoretical preparation for this course. Therefore, in a particular class about the influence of the 13th-century Chinese

landscape painting on the 18th-century Japanese erotic painting, I adopted the theory of Panofsky's iconology to interpret Chinese painting and its influence, and hoped that the theory of iconology could help the students.

The topic of the class sounded somewhat odd at the beginning, since the students would wonder how landscape could influence erotic art. In order to answer this question, I laid out a step-by-step scheme for this class.

I first showed the class a series of Chinese landscape paintings, entitled *Eight Views of Xiao and Xiang Rivers*, consisting of eight paintings by Mu Qi, a Chinese monk painter from the late 13th century. With juxtaposition, I also showed a series of Japanese erotic paintings, *Eight Views of Modern Interior*, consisting of eight prints by Suzuki Harunobu (1724-1770), a popular Japanese woodblock print artist. I asked students to describe what they saw in these works and determine the connections between the two series by comparison. Although the description of the images in each painting was relatively easy for the students, they found there was almost no connection between the landscape paintings and the erotic prints, since all eight Chinese paintings are out door scenes of landscapes with very small figures in the scenes, while all the eight Japanese prints are erotic figure paintings of interior scenes. Most students observed that there was nothing in common between the two series.

Then, in the second step of my teaching, I introduced students to a traditional Chinese artistic notion, allusion. In the first painting "Geese Descending to Sandbar" (Figure 12-1) of the Chinese series, there are geese in a linear formation descending to a river bank. The descending geese become an allusion in the first print of the

Japanese erotic series, "Geese Descending to a Koto." The koto is a traditional Japanese music instrument with strings. In the erotic print, a Casanova-like young man reaches (descends) his hands to a girl who plays koto with her fingers reaching (descending) to strings. Interestingly, a landscape painting with descending geese is hung in the background of the interior, which alludes to the Chinese motif of "geese descending to sandbar."

Although students could not see the connection between the two series before, except the background painting in the Japanese interior, being informed of the notion of allusion, the students were then able to discuss the connections between the remaining seven pairs of the two series. Students observed that the allusions in the two series were not visual images alone, but more importantly concepts, such as the concept of descending, illustrated by descending geese and descending hands. In the Chinese painting the concept of descending is visualized in the image of a landscape with geese and a river bank, while in the corresponding Japanese print, it is visualized in the image of an amorous action, foreplay.

In order to further explain the visualization of the concept of descending in the Chinese series, I discussed the political message embodied in the landscape of the Xiao and Xiang rivers, which was a remote place for the ancient emperors to exile the ministers who were out of favour. For Mu Qi, the Chinese artist from the 13th century, the particular landscape was a metaphor for the shelter of the political refugees. Bearing in mind this political interpretation, students were able to interpret the Japanese interior as a shelter for sexual encounters, and thus they discerned the

symbolic connections between the Chinese and Japanese series.

In the process of the class, as a teacher I played the roles of tour guide and interpreter, while the students were the tourists and adventurers exploring a new territory of visual experience. In the class, the students' exploration reached the third step of Panofsky's iconology in searching for the meaning of Chinese paintings to Japanese art in a more general sense, beyond the limit of the landscape of the Xiao and Xiang rivers.

At this step, I talked about my visit to an exhibition in New York, "Waves: Chinese Motifs in Japanese and Korean Paintings" in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in May 2003. The theme of the exhibition was similar to the topic of my class, though the works in the exhibit were not exclusively the landscapes of the Xiao and Xiang rivers, and there was no erotic print by Harunobu. Nevertheless, one of the eight landscape paintings of the Xiao and Xiang rivers by another Chinese artist, Xia Gui (1180-1230?) from the early 13th century was included in the exhibition. Speaking of the exhibition, I told students that Mu Qi was not the first painter in Chinese art history to paint the landscape series of the Xiao and Xiang rivers, and Xia Gui was not the first one either. The political message in the particular landscape motif could be traced back to as far as the poet and politician Qu Yuan (340-278 BCE) who drowned himself in a branch of the Xiang River in protesting the King of Chu who did not favour him.

All the eight landscape paintings of Mu Qi's Xiao and Xiang series were brought to Japan even before the artist's death by a Japanese monk who studied Zen Buddhist

philosophy with Mu Qi in China in the late 13th century. About seven hundred years later, Japanese writer Kawabata Yasunari (1899-1972), the 1968 Nobel literature laureate, referred to Mu Qi as the benefactor of Japanese art. In a talk given in Taiwan soon after his Nobel laureate, Yasunari attributed the source of aesthetic sensitivity and sensibility in Japanese culture to Mu Qi and his landscape paintings of the Xiao and Xiang rivers. In the eyes of the 20th-century Japanese writer, the delicacy of Japanese art came from Mu Qi.

As pointed out in the above, I employed the method of Panofsky's iconology to discuss Chinese influence on Japanese art. Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968) was a German-born art historian who developed the theory of iconology and taught art history in the United States.

Panofsky proposed three levels in reading visual art, especially the Renaissance paintings. The first is the so called pre-iconographical level, on which he focuses on a visual reading of motifs, such as the representation of natural objects. Adopting Panofsky's method of visual reading in my teaching, I demonstrated how to identify the descending geese in the Chinese painting, and helped students to identify the other allusions in the other seven pairs of paintings in the Chinese and Japanese series.

According to Panofsky, the second level in reading images is iconographic, on which, students search the theme of an art work, such as the concept of descending and exile in the series of Chinese landscape paintings. The third level is iconological, at which students explore the extended meaning or symbolic meaning in a more general sense, such as the Chinese influence on Japanese art.

After reading a visual text on the three levels, in order to support his interpretation, Panofsky also proposed a corrective measure. In my class, the exhibition in the Metropolitan Museum and the talk by the Japanese Nobel prize winner could be considered the corrective measures, which support my opinion of the Chinese influence on Japanese art. Thus, in the case of my class, the relationship between the theory of iconology and the topic of my lecture is clear: the methodology of Panofsky could be adopted to interpret non-Western art.

Discussing the limit of Panofsky's iconology, a scholar remarks, "[i]t limits itself to a specific period within Western civilization and is not easily applicable to non-representational and non-Western art." (J.G. Istrabadi, 2003, p. 225) In the sense of this scholar, iconology of Panofsky can only be applied to the study of Renaissance art in Europe, and cannot be applied to the study of Chinese art. However, since Panofsky in the study of Durer generalized his interpretation of a particular art work, *Melancholia I,* to a more general idea about the mentality of artists, and advocated an interdisciplinary study of visual art and human culture, why should not I try to employ his method to my study and teaching of Chinese art?

Today, a new trend in education in visual art is the interdisciplinary study of visual culture. According to DBAE, a theory of art education developed at the end of the 20th century, art history is one aspect of the study of visual art. Since DBAE is discipline based and interdisciplinary, and since Panofsky's iconology is an interdisciplinary approach to visual art, then, it is not too difficult to say that the theory of iconology is central not only to my class above, but also central to my

personal vision of art education in the intellectual environment of a cross-border and cross-cultural study of visual art and visual culture. As stated in the beginning of this essay, my personal vision of education in visual art is to teach students to understand human culture through reading images, and interpret visual art from the perspective of a broader cultural context. In this sense, I conclude that the class discussed in the above could be regarded as an exercise of the iconological theory in my teaching practice in the context of current visual cultural study.

Appendix 2

Summary: Questions and Answers of the Preliminary Written Interviews

Question one

Which translation is the first Western art theory that you ever read? How did it influence you?

This question is a general one, and the purpose of asking this question is to determine what kind of theory the young Chinese readers have first embraced at the beginning of their professional careers. This question intends to reveal the cultural and educational context of the historical period that is covered by this study.

In summary Dr. Wang Chunchen said that the first modern Western art theory that he read was the Chinese translation of Clive Bell's *Art*, which was first published in the mid 1980s. He was attracted by the notion of "significant form," and also wondered how it could be possible to explain every thing pertaining to art. Then he read Arnheim's *Art and Visual Perception* (R. Arnheim, 1972), which opened a new world of art psychology for him. However, Arnheim's theory is not really an interpretation of the meaning of art. After that he read Panofsky's *Meaning of Visual Art* (E. Panofksy, 1982), which is not simply about how to appreciate art, but with an historical exploration of the meaning of art works.

In summery Mr He Guiyan said it was *Modern Art and Modernism* (F. Franscina

and C. Harrison, 1982), a collection of Western modern art theories edited by Francis Frascina and Charles Harrison. The Chinese translation was published in 1988. He was a studio student when he read this book, and this book turned his interest to art theory.

In summary, Mr. Duan Jun said he did not remember precisely which book was the first one. However, among the books that he read at an earlier time, the most impressive one was Gombrich's *The Story of Art* (E. Gombrich, 1971). Duan also said that, compared to the books on art written by Chinese scholars, Gombrich was so thoughtful and his book was so rich in thoughts. However, later on when he read more, he found that the sources in Gombrich were not rich enough, some discussions of details are not well developed, and, in terms of methodology, Gombrich is somewhat conservative. Nevertheless, in reading that book, he learned a lot, and so he decided to pursue his future career in the study of art history. Besides, Mr. Duan considered the language of Professor Fan Jingzhong's translation of Gombrich to be very beautiful.

Question Two

When you were a student, how many translations of Western art theory did your professors require you to read per semester?

The purpose of asking this question is to determine the importance of Western influence on Chinese art education more specifically, in relation to the course requirements. I realize now that I should have asked my interviewees to compare the quantity of Western books with the quantity of art books written by Chinese scholars,

as well as the translations from Russian written by Soviet Marxist scholars, that they were supposed to read.

Answering this question, Dr. Wang Chunchen said he did not remember the exact quantity. However, every semester there were 4 or 5 translated books assigned for close reading and more than 10 for general reading.

Mr. He Guiyan said when he was an undergraduate student majoring in studio art, he was basically interested in reading art books translated from the West, not the books written by Chinese scholars. When he became a graduate student majoring in art history, his supervisor required him to read 5-10 books every semester, mostly translations. Then, when he worked on his Ph.D. in art history, he read more, including books in the original English versions.

Mr. Duan Jun said that due to his personal interest, he focused on Western art theory when he was an undergraduate student. Then, when he worked toward his master's degree in graduate school, he read about 20 translated books about Western art theory every semester. Among them, at least 5 for close reading. His supervisor did not give him a specific number of books to read, rather, he gave him reading topics, which motivated him to look for books on the topics. Of course, those books were mostly translated from the West.

Question Three

As an art educator how many translations of Western art theory do you require your students to read per semester?

The purpose of this question is similar to that of the previous question, but, in order to have a more complete view, this question is addressed from an opposite angle.

Answering this question, Dr. Wang Chunchen said the requirement varied at different levels. He required graduate students to read more, especially the graduates majoring in art history, while 2 or 3 books were good enough for undergraduates majoring in studio art. In terms of what to read, he recommended some important translations and recently published translations to his students.

Mr. He Guiyan said when he was a lecturer at SAFA teaching undergraduates, he did not require the freshmen and sophomores a specific number of books to read. However, he required seniors and fourth year students to read at least 2 translated books of Western art theory every semester.

Mr. Duan Jun said he graduated with a master's degree in art history in 2006 and started to teach right away at Huaqiao University where he taught Chinese art history and Western art history to undergraduate students majoring in studio art. The teaching materials were translations of Western scholars. He even chose translations for the course "Chinese Art History," and used James Cahill's *A History of Chinese Painting* and Michael Sullivan's *The Arts of China* as course books. He did not require his students to read a certain number of books. However, towards the end of a semester, he gave them a recommended reading list of about 50 books for their further reading if they were interested. On the list about 20 were translated books on art theory, such as Norman Bryson's *Looking at the Overlooked: four essays on still life painting*.

Question Four

Have you translated any Western art theories, if yes, what are they?

Answering this question, Dr. Wang Chunchen said that his undergraduate major was English, so he started with translating English literature first. Then, when he became a graduate student in art history at CAFA in 1999 he turned to translate Western art theory. At that time his translations were mostly course assignments for the purposes of knowing the latest development of art theory in the West and enhancing the ability of reading professional texts in the original English versions. Since he graduated with a master's degree in art history, and especially since 2004 when he became a Ph.D. student in art history, he turned to focus on translating Western art theory. So far he had translated two books by Arthur Danto, *After the End of Art* (A. Danto, 1997) and *The Abuse of Beauty* (A. Danto, 2003). He also translated another 5 books on contemporary art in collaboration with other translators. In the meantime, he compiled, edited, and proofread more translations of Western art theory.

Mr. He Guiyan said he translated some research articles on art, but no full-length books.

Mr. Duan Jun said he did not have much experience in translation. The recent experience was to translate a lengthy article about "poor art" by an Italian art critic, Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, who has been appointed to be the curator of Kassel Documenta 2012. Mr. Duan also said although he started to translate Western art theory for course assignment when he was a master's student, he was not good at

translating.

Question Five

In the process of translating, how do you deal with the concepts, notions, and terms for which there are no existing and accepted Chinese equivalents?

The purpose of asking this question is to determine how deep the interviewees have been involved with translating Western art theory, and also to fathom their knowledge of both contemporary art theory of the West and their mastering of Western languages.

Answering this question, Dr. Wang Chunchen said that the difficulty in doing this work was not to translate, but to revise and correct the translation, which require more expertise. He also said it was important to re-consider how to put some key terms into Chinese, such as the Lacanian "phallus" and Spivak's "subaltern," as well as "theory of institutions," "ekphrasis," "abject," "hyperuranian," and so forth.

Mr. He Guiyan said if there was an existing and accepted translation of a certain term, he would follow those who had translated it before. Otherwise, he would have to figure out a translation himself, based on the topic and context.

Mr. Duan Jun said, in that case, he would create a new term. He would not try to find an existing term, because the existing one had existing connotations and denotations, which could hardly be an equivalent to the original, and may confuse the readers and cause misreading.

Question Six

As an art student and also as an art educator, when reading Western art theories, how do you deal with mistranslations?

Answering this question, Dr. Wang Chunchen said he indicated the differences between possible translations by writing notes on book margins, and pointed out the difficulties with presenting ideas in different languages.

Mr. He Guiyan said when he was a student, it was not easy to see the mistranslations in reading. Now with the knowledge of Western art theory, he could see some mistranslations.

Mr. Duan Jun said he wrote down the mistakes on the page margins of the books, so that he could avoid similar mistakes in the future.

Question Seven

At a technical level, what is your comment on the Chinese translation of Western art theory in the past 30 years, such as your opinion about mistranslation?

Answering this question, Dr. Wang Chunchen said that, as a translator, he acknowledged the unavoidable mistranslations, but he valued the effort of making progress in offering better translations. Contemporary Western art theory was framed in the context of cultural theory and humanities theories, which required better knowledge for comprehension. Besides, there was always the technical requirement, urging a translator to master two languages.

Mr. He Guiyan said that the major problem was that many translators of the

Western art theory were not professional, who did not have necessary knowledge about Western art and art theory. Since they did not have the basic knowledge about what they worked on, how could they offer good translations? We needed professionals to do the work.

Mr. Duan Jun said that, on the one hand, since the non-professionals did not have sufficient knowledge about art and art theory, they made considerable mistakes in their translations. However, on the other hand, some art professionals did have knowledge about art and art theory, but did not have a good command of a foreign language, and their translations were not fully reliable either. Facing this dilemma, we needed the translators to have both knowledge of art and knowledge of foreign languages.

Question Eight

At a scholarly level, do you have any comments on the "importation" of Western art theory? For instance, what is your opinion about importing Western formalist art theory to China in the cultural context of the 21st century?

Answering this question, Dr. Wang Chunchen said that translating modern Western art theory was important to the development of Chinese art education, and to the Chinese understanding of the West in many respects. However, compared to the other fields of humanities and social science, the translations of modern Western art theory were not enough, with regard to coverage, quantity, and quality. Improvement in these respects was needed. In this sense, translation of Western formalism was still

necessary today. Meanwhile, within the context of contemporary art, Chinese scholars should be clear that formalism is not everything about art.

Mr. He Guiyan said, in terms of translating modern Western art theories, the achievement was great, which was especially demonstrated in the works of Professor Fan Jingzhong, Professor Yi Ying, Professor Pan Yaochang, Professor Chang Ningsheng, and Professor Shen Yubing, among other scholars in China. However, in terms of the pace of educational and artistic development, there was a time difference between the West and China, because translation was always one-step behind the original. With a historical sense, he could understand the importance of formalist art theory to the Chinese understanding of Western postmodernism and other contemporary art theories. Besides, formalism itself is also an important subject for Chinese scholars to study today.

Mr. Duan Jun said, speaking at a scholarly level, in the past 30 years, the translation of Western art theory was very bad, we could not catch up with the theoretical development of social science and humanities in the West. He said that he read a recent book *Image Factory* (M. Wang, 2009) by a well-known Chinese scholar Wang Minan, which was a collection of his articles on contemporary Chinese art. He found that the author borrowed a lot from Foucault, Deleuze, Nietzsche and Heidegger to interpret the meanings of art works. However, there was no formal foundation in his interpretation. This kind of far-fetched over-interpretation was what Susan Sontag had opposed. The author did not show his sensibility towards visual forms, and in this sense, translating formalist art theories was still necessary today.

Question Nine

How important is the teaching of Western art theory at art institutions in China? In your teaching practice, do you often use Western theories, concepts, notions, and terms?

Answering this question, Dr. Wang Chunchen said that teaching modern Western art theories was very important, which gave students essential knowledge and also helped educators in visual art to have theoretical exchanges with Western scholars. In other words, such teaching could help Chinese scholars and educators to catch up with the development of education in visual art in the West. In this respect, Dr. Wang considered that Professor Yi Ying had done a great deal in teaching at the graduate level, which was very constructive. As for his own teaching practice, he had employed Western theories and introduced Western theoretical concepts and notions as well. Certainly, Dr. Wang used Western terms in his teaching.

Mr. He Guiyan said that the importance of teaching modern Western art theory could be found in the fact that Chinese scholars and educators in visual art were at the beginning stage of establishing modern Chinese art theory for the development of education in visual art at the college level. At this initial stage, there was no original contemporary art theory in China yet. In order to solidify the foundation for original Chinese art theory, Chinese scholars and educators in art need to learn more from the West, otherwise, there was no way to have scholarly communication with the West.

Mr. Duan Jun said there was no question about the importance. Chinese scholars

should open up their minds and embrace the Western art theories. In his teaching practice, he did use a lot of Western theories, concepts, notions, and terms. The employment of Western terminology made his teaching more challenging to the students, and his courses more attractive.

Question Ten

How do you employ Western theory in your study of contemporary Chinese art?

Answering this question, Dr. Wang Chunchen said that, to his understanding, contemporary Chinese art was no longer a sole continuation of traditional Chinese art, but an integration with Western influence, which involves two issues: what to take from the West and how to take it. Since the late 1970s, contemporary Chinese scholars had learned a lot from Western formalist art theory, and then also learned sociological, psychological, philosophical, postmodern, and cultural theories in the study of art. In his opinion, in the process of learning from the West, Chinese scholars should have a scholarly independence in judging what they had learned, and took the Chinese context into consideration. He said, while Chinese scholars opened up their minds and embraced Western theories, they should also be aware of the side effects of the fast-food culture in learning from the West in today's commercial age. Thus far, as for the study of contemporary Chinese art, they should be able to talk about establishing Chinese art theory.

Mr. He Guiyan said that Western art theory should not be directly employed in the study of Chinese art, because the Chinese context was different from that of the

West. However, it was important to learn Western methodology that could help Chinese scholars to change their way of thinking. In other words, Chinese scholars could approach contemporary Chinese art from different angles, which could deepen and enrich their understanding of contemporary Chinese art, and could widen their field of vision in seeing a new world in art.

Mr. Duan Jun said that contemporary Chinese art was a part of world art or global art, and there was no doubt that he employed modern Western art theory in his study of contemporary Chinese art. More importantly, the study of contemporary Chinese art was largely informed by Western art theory. However, he had a strong sense of history and he approached contemporary Chinese art from the perspective of traditional Chinese art theory. He was clearly aware of the inadequacy of traditional Chinese art theory in dealing with contemporary Chinese art, since the historical and cultural context was different, and the methodology of research was different as well.

Appendix 3

**Transcripts of Three Interviews with Dr. Wang, Mr. He and Mr. Lu
The original documents transcribed from the audio records**

1   Interview with Dr. Wang Chunchen: June 1, 2009, Beijing

西方艺术理论与中国高等美术教育：王春辰访谈录
段炼

访谈日期：**2009 年 6 月 1 日**
访谈地点：北京外国语大学

一、建筑的变迁与艺术史论教学

段炼：我先问一些基本问题，然后再问专门的问题。您在高校教美术史论有多少年了？

王春辰：我从 2006 年就开始在中央美院教了，当时美院同英国格拉斯哥有一个合作项目，接受中国的高考落考生。他们先在美院学一年，通过英语考试，例如雅思，然后再到格拉斯哥学习。合作的条件是，他们在美院学习的这一年，要计入他们在英国的学分和成绩。这一年的学习全是用英文，我教课也当然是用英文。

段炼：您教的内容是什么？

王春辰：内容全是按照英国格拉斯哥的课程设置，他们叫 H&C，没有教材，但有大纲和大样。具体课程是由我来准备的，叫 H&C, History and Criticism（历史与批评），是美术史论。
但是，我并没有严格地按照历史的脉络去讲，因为学生学习的时间短，只有一年，而且他们的英语基础也不太适应，所以不能一开始就讲得太复杂。这当中就涉及到不少问题，比方说他们来自各个专业，70-80 人，有学绘画的，有学设计的，有学造型的。
我不按历史脉络，而是一开始就描述、分析北京这个城市的发展变化，从老北京说起，那时有城墙、老建筑。现在又有新的现代化大楼，例如 CCTV 的大楼，奥运建筑、国家大剧院、北京西站之类。这些不同风格的作品放在今天北京的城市改造和大的视觉图景里面，对学习艺术的人来说，这就是一种视觉挑战。对学习艺术史和批评来说，这样的挑战有助于学生对艺术的理解。

段炼：既然是中英合作项目，您在这样的教学活动中，是不是有意识地采用了某些西方艺术理论，或者中国的艺术理论？

王春辰：是。但是很难说什么是西方的，什么是中国的。比方说"现代化"这个概念，可

以说是西方的，但在中国现在社会变化的大框架中，大家都有一种追求，这就是追求改变中国，追求个人的职业发展等目标，包括我个人。

为什么我要从北京说起呢？因为在现代化的城市改造中，本民族的文化不可能没有变化，而北京的建筑正好就是一个实证的例子。

段炼：这就是说，您用"现代化"这样一个眼光来看北京古城，看北京的变化，怎样从古城变到今天。在一定的意义上，这就是用西方眼光看中国，尽管这不是一个绝对的眼光。

王春辰：也许是这样，但我自己并没有这个意识，我并不一定要刻意用西方的眼光去看问题。北京是中国历史和文化的代表，在这样的背景下，我们该怎样认识北京的变化，可能对这些学生来说有点深了，所以我就从图像的角度去讲。我给他们看过去的老照片，例如 50 年代的十大建筑，还有 80 年代到 90 年代的照片，每个十年都有十大建筑，一直到今天又有十大建筑。我就通过这些图像，在视觉上让学生看到：原来北京的变化是这样。然后，我才回到美术史，因为建筑本来就是美术的一部分。

段炼：您从建筑图像和北京的发展变化这个角度来将学生引入美术史，使他们能够对课程有一个切身的理解。那么，我在这里有个问题：在这个过程中，假如您要引进几个西方的理论或概念来达到您的目的，您认为西方理论对中国当代的美术教育有什么益处，或者说有什么帮助？

王春辰：这个肯定是有的。中国是一个后发的国家，中国人对自己的非物质文化遗产存在认识上的不足，甚至由于政治的原因，中国的文化遗产还受到了人为的破坏。相反，在欧洲的很多国家，他们对自身文化遗产的保护，有很多年的历史，哪怕经过了现代化和世界大战，欧洲的文化遗产保护意识还是那么强烈。这就对我们今天有启发意义和借鉴作用，甚至是警示作用。

但是，这些学生是要到英国去学习的，那么我的想法是，既然如此，就得先了解中国。有了中国的视觉经验，不管他们将来做什么，不管是搞设计还是绘画，他们对中国文化都会有一种意识，这是他们的文化背景。

在对待文化背景方面，西方的美术教育比我们做得好，他们对文化的保护和普及，都是我们需要学习的，尤其是学习他们的文化意识。

段炼:除了上面这个项目的教学，您还教其它班吗？

王春辰：我博士毕业后，从 2007 年我开始教西方美术史。当时有一个班，是城市设计学院的，当时是三个老师分着教。我教的是文艺复兴之后，一直到 19 世纪。

段炼：您现在给研究生上课吗？

王春辰：2007 年的班以后我接着就给研究生上了两年课，是西方艺术史与设计。学生都是本科生，什么专业的都有，雕塑、陶瓷、设计、实验艺术、电影、新媒体、等等。下一年度同时开两门，就是 08 年秋季，一门是本科的，叫"现代艺术批评"，还有就是硕士生和博士生的，叫"现代艺术理论"，两门课的内容比较接近。

二、西方艺术理论的教学实践

段炼：您能否描述一下您在教学中采用某一西方理论或概念时的程序？比如用图像学，我会先介绍一下这理论是怎么回事，下个定义；然后举个例子来阐述一下这个理论，像潘诺夫斯基的揭帽子或者他讲解的《最后的晚餐》的例子；最后再试着应用一下这个理论。那么在您的教学实践中，您是怎么处理这个问题的，您的教学程序是怎样的？

王春辰：我这两门课的名称，虽然本科和研究生大致一样，但具体讲起来是不一样的。本科生的课，例证比较多，研究生的课，理论多一点。这两门课都是大课，主要是讲解，很难有什么互动。但是，我会围绕一个主题，来组织课业。研究生这边，我会分几个大块，比方说形式主义、精神分析、后结构主义、当代社会批评，等等。虽然这是美术理论，但我也要让学生看看当代美术背后包含些什么，比如社会学理论之类。作为参照，我要看看这样的理论在国外是怎样进行描述的，然后用这样的理论回过头来看中国美术。

段炼：我重复一下您说的。您说在涉及到中国当代美术的某个问题时，您要看看它的背后是不是有什么西方理论，您要去追根溯源，因为事实上西方美术理论对中国当代美术是有影响的。那么，如果您找到这个理论了，您就要给学生作讲解，然后再用这个理论来解释中国当代美术。是这样吗？能否举个例子？

王春辰：关于中国当代美术，我不会扯得很远，比方说我讲到中国的乡土美术，以及批判现实主义，这些艺术现象的前提，是在当时思想文化解放的情况下才出现的。这就涉及到西方的古典艺术，他们的写实主义、现实主义，一直到他们的现代主义之间的过渡。为什么中国在这个时候会出现这样的艺术变化？可能是因为这个时候的思想解放，画家、艺术家获得了自由，所以，他们的作品跟文革完全不一样。
我们不能忽略这样一个背景，就是这些画家是在改革开放这个大的时代背景下才获得了一个机会。因此，尽管某位画家不一定读到了某个具体的哲学家或思想家的著作，但是在当时的大氛围中，大家都得到了精神上的洗礼，了解到、听到了许多东西，受到了西方理论的影响。这些画家是恢复高考后第一批进入学校的人，他们后来的谈话，都不否认他们从文革中走出来，大家都很热情。在这种情况下，当时他们都如饥似渴地读西方的书，那些画册，那些图录，还有展览，例如哈默的藏画展，全国各地那么多人到北京来看。这个影响太大了。在理论的层面上，那时大家开始反思中国的艺术到底出了什么问题，社会主义现实主义究竟有什么问题。也就是在那个时候，大家开始理解现代主义，于是现代主义进入中国了。也正是在那个情况下，人们开始认识了抽象主义和形式主义。

段炼：我记得那个时候存在主义哲学在中国很流行。

王春辰：是，我记得当时萨特的著作，例如《存在与虚无》，不管艺术家们懂不懂，但他们都要去了解，就像梦幻、荒诞、存在、自我中心，等等。所以 85 时期出现了很多作品，是进入艺术家的心理，表现艺术家是怎样存在的。那个时候西方理论进来了很多，除了萨特的存在主义，还有弗洛伊德的精神分析，这些理论对 85 时期的艺术影响很大。

段炼：那么在您的教学实践中，当您讲到这些理论和现象，有没有什么学生对这些理论理解有困难、或有不同的想法？遇到这情况，您是怎么帮助他们的？

王春辰：因为是大课，主要是课间休息时或课后有学生来提问，或交流。因为我讲课比较随意、平和，所以大家喜欢来交流。我讲的课还有一个背景：我的课不仅仅是这三十年来的中国美术史，也不仅仅是这三十年来的理论，而是以最近几年的中国当代美术为前提，是这几年中国当代美术爆发式的发展，以这个为前提来讲课，所以大家很关注。这些学生多数都还不是成熟的艺术家，多数都还处于学习阶段。他们不是当代艺术的参与者，他们对当前发生的事情也不理解。他们用过去学画的眼光来看今天，便对当代美术百思不得其解，那么我今天这门课就可以帮助他们，当然我不知道能帮到什么程度。但是，课程结束之后，大家反映很有收获。尽管不是全部问题都解决了，但我在讲课过程中，把中国当代艺术放到世界当代艺术发展的大格局中来讲解，尤其注意西方的影响。举个西方影响的例子。这些学生对西方艺术的理解，还是经验性的，没有什么理论，他们关注写实、人体、风景之类，并不了解今天西方艺术的发展。事实上，由于艺术的发展，西方出现了"艺术已死"或"艺术终结"的说法。中国的艺术理论和实践与西方并不同步，比方在 85 时期，大家使用的是西方现代主义和 20 世纪中期的方式，所以就有人说是模仿，是陈旧的。但在中国当时的历史条件下，确实令人耳目一新。

在今天的多元时代，我们该怎样看西方？我的课不会突出某一个理论，比方说抽象主义，或者只用精神分析去看问题，而是有一部分艺术现象需要用精神分析去看。

段炼：这就是说，您的课时代感比较强。在某个时代出现的艺术理论，尤其是比较适合某个时代之艺术作品的理论，您就拿来用。这并不是说，某人是研究精神分析的，就只讲精神分析，只用精神分析来阐释作品。

王春辰：是这样的。

三、理论概念与艺术阐释

段炼：在您的教学实践中，不知道您碰到过凝视和再现的概念没有。您能不能举个例子，来说明您是怎样讲解这两个概念的。

王春辰：碰到过这两个概念。我可以举的例子就是西班牙画家委拉斯开兹的《宫娥》，这件作品是被很多学者、哲学家讨论过的。中国学者谈得相对较少，而且主要是从形式、风格等方面去谈，而这一套话语系统也是从西方学过来的。但是在今天，这套话语系统却转换了，学者们认为，一件作品在它被创作的时候，可能会带有作者当时并没有意识到的意义。这就是一个视角，比如我们今天去看作品，一是跟艺术史对话，二是跟现实对话。艺术家并不是模仿了前人，而是使用了已有的各种手段去表现自己的题材。

我们今天看《宫娥》，可能会问：艺术家是不是处于一种被雇用的位置，是谁在主宰画面？我们还可以看到女性处于画面的中心。我们看到，画中所有的人都退到后面，围绕着中心的小公主。画中女性是核心，周围的人展开了一场对话。这就是凝视和被凝视，正是在这种关系中，各人在画中各就其位。

在当时，并没有"凝视"和"身份"的概念，但是后来的人却用这样的概念去看这件作品。这并不是说后人生造了这些概念去解释前人的作品，而是后人在前人的作品中发现了这些因素，然后进行理论升华，最后才这样去看前人的作品。所以，这些概念与这些作品的关系并不是脱节的或生硬的，这当中有一个对应。当然，"凝视"的概念与法国心理学

家拉康有关，尤其是他的"镜像"理论。

我们看画就像看镜子，而镜子里面的人却在看镜子外面，这就是一种凝视，其中又涉及到再现问题。再现理论在西方的历史很长，可以追溯到柏拉图的模仿论。但是在今天，再现论已经不能反映艺术家的主体性，所以在当代艺术理论中，再现就和凝视理论有了联系。

在我班里听课的学生中，主要是搞艺术实践的，是绘画和设计专业的学生。他们听了这样的理论后，觉得艺术再现的问题可以这样去理解，便有了一种收获。

段炼：就是说，学生在听了您的课以后，突然发现，面对某一幅很熟悉的画，过去是那样看、那样理解的，今天却可以这样看了，今天有了新的理解，于是就有了收获。

王春辰：对，是这样。有一个美国摄影家，按《宫娥》的图像拍了一部短片，我看到的是摄影。我用这样的摄影告诉学生，今天的艺术家利用古代绘画图像，创作的作品却是当代的。即便这只是去还原一个经典绘画的场景，但是，今天的人怎样看过去的作品、怎样看自我，这涉及今天的观念，而这一切都在摄影作品中展示出来了。这个时候我们才能理解，什么是当代艺术。

四、误读与引进西方理论

段炼：现在我要问一些具体问题，首先是"误读"。您在讲课的时候，学生应该有相应的背景知识才能听懂您的课。但是您上大课的时候，学生的背景是不一样的。尽管上大课几乎没有什么师生互动，但是，有没有个别有兴趣的同学在课间或课后来问您些什么问题？例如请您解释一下作品的背景，以便理解这件作品。

王春辰：其实也就是补充一些信息，例如推荐某一本书给学生。学生在听课的时候会有自己的思考，包括不赞同老师的说法。这里重要的是，老师讲的很多问题是学生所不知道的，正因为不知道，所以才要听。

段炼：您不仅自己翻译西方理论，也读别人翻译的西方理论，当您感觉译文别扭时，也许会找出原文来对照，这时就可能发现别人译错了。这是一种误读。可否举些例子？

王春辰：比方说米歇尔的《图像理论》，译文中的人名有错译，另就是"视角"，这个您已经在文章里写到了。这些问题只有专业读者才能发现，一般人也就稀里糊涂地过去了，不会细究，这也是一种误读。

第二个例子是但托的书，2001年出版的《艺术的死亡》，原名是《哲学对艺术的剥夺》。在序言中，译者把原作者的意思译反了，我觉得很难理解，好像是作者站在一个相反的立场上说这个事。我只好去查原文，才发现完全不是那样的，译者完全翻译错了，彻底错了。因此，如果只读汉语翻译本，您会以为原作者但托的立场会是他所批判的立场，可是事实正好相反。

段炼：您觉得这个问题出在什么地方，是译者的语言问题吗？

王春辰：是对原文没有吃透，想当然地理解，这当中当然也有知识和判断问题,是译者对

作者的立场没有整体的把握。

段炼：所以，译者应该先把书大致地看一下,知道这本书的大体内容，然后再进入细节来具体地翻译。如果翻译者事先不了解书的大致内容，连他本人都不知道自己在翻译什么东西，这时候就容易出现翻译的误读。
通过翻译将西方理论引入中国当代美术,而且是以教育为途径,那么您是否认为这是不是一种西化呢？

王春辰：从文本和理论上判断,我很清楚它们是来自于国外的，不是在中国本土产生的，但我并不排斥，因为它有价值，是一种独创的知识和话语。这些西方理论有针对艺术的有效性和普遍性。我们不能忽略这个问题，比如有些理论可以阐述中国艺术问题，那么我们为什么不能运用它呢？理论本身并不存在西方和东方之分，我觉得现在一味地强调"中国化"是一个很大的问题。理论的产生是普遍性的，而不是仅仅局限于某一个区域。

五、高等美术教育中的图像理论

段炼：最近两年, 图像理论和研究比较走红,无论是画家还是理论家都在搞图像。您刚才强调社会环境的重要性和时代的重要性，那么，我们现在处于信息时代和全球化时代，信息将我们联系到一起，当西方图像研究和理论进入中国时，　所谓的"当代图像理论"已经不再是 20 世纪中前期的图像理论了。现在的"当代图像理论"更为复杂，其中具有代表性的就是米歇尔的理论，这个理论已经跳出了美术的范畴，已经涉及到视觉文化、信息传播等等领域。那么，关于当代图像理论的引入，在当前的条件下对中国当代美术有什么样的意义？

王春辰：图像理论作为一种新理论，随着技术的进步和革命带来了一种新的观察方式。为什么中国艺术界会对"四大金刚"产生厌倦呢？严格来讲他们的创作是一种简单的符号，还不是"图像理论"所说的那种丰富的视觉语言。图像理论包含的是一种全球化的革命性变化。比如说图像的概念不仅仅是绘画或雕塑，现在的媒体，例如平面媒体、电视、网络，甚至是手机都能转换图像，也还出现虚拟图像。图像信息借助于这些高科技把图像、语言、符号，编码扩散到全世界。图像已经进入到我们生活的各个角落，我们生活的空间都已经图像化，所以我觉得图像已经超出美术所研究的领域。在这种情况下，我们应用当代图像理论，并不是一个简单的图像转向和切换。作为今天的艺术家，面对一个新的世界，我觉得艺术家应该成为一个视觉语言表达者。过去我们讲美术，总是强调造型,无论是平面、立体还是空间。但在今天这个时代,无论有没有图像理论，现代的艺术家都认识到视觉决定了一切，甚至可以说，在商业社会中,也是运用图像来吸引人、打动人。广告就是运用图像的视觉吸引力，来做到商业推广。艺术家要成为图像的创造者，比如设计一个商标，那么就要了解这个商标对人能起到的作用。

段炼：　我觉得上海就是一个很好的例子。上海最高建筑的顶层原来有个圆孔，网上有人说它像一把日本军刀，搞得很多人反对这样的设计，最后便改成一个方孔。这个事件跟您讲得就很类似，是一个图像问题。老百姓接受不了原来的图像，因为它触及了历史的伤痛。所以图像并不简单，它可以涉及到很深的问题。刚才您还谈到图像转向，其实图像转向也不简单。

王春辰 ： 严格说起来，图像的转向是一个时代的特征，但从历史上讲，当人类还没有自我意识和文字的时候，人类就已经开始用图像来表达思想了。从历史研究看，也是先有图像后有文字，所以说图像在人类的史上实在是太重要了。汉字来源于图像，两河流域的文字也来源于图像。

段炼：您在教学中涉及到图像时，尽管主要讲当代图像理论，但您会不会提及潘诺夫斯基？

王春辰：会的，因为<mark>潘诺夫斯基的理论和方法毕竟是美术史研究的重要方法</mark>。有些专家说，如果说到美术史研究对其他人文学科的所贡献和影响，还就是潘诺夫斯基的图像学。这个图像学被其他学者转化为现代图像理论。艺术院校的学生当然要了解图像学。在实践上说，潘诺夫斯基的图像学比当代图像理论更具有操作性，很多艺术家在设计作品时都会运用图像学，因为他需要别人理解和解读他的作品，图像使作品具有一定的意义。

段炼：这就像刚才说到的《宫娥》，画家可能原来没有某个意思，但在后来很长时间的解读过程中，例如在２０世纪中后期，福柯那样解读了，很多人一下就豁然开朗了，后来大家就开始发挥这个理论。但托也读《宫娥》，只是不提福柯，其实他讲的是同一个问题，再现。但托还专门说了一句：我读《宫娥》有一个贡献，也是我唯一的贡献，这就是解读画面前景的那条狗。别人都没有在意那条狗，他却指出那条狗在打瞌睡。这条狗是宫里的，主人就是镜子里的两个人，皇帝和皇后。狗本应该起来迎接主人，而不应该打瞌睡。但托认为有一种可能，就是主人早就在那里了，所以狗才会不动。另一种可能，就是主人不在那里。无论是哪种情况，但托都否认了别人的解读，别人认为皇帝和皇后从画面走入画室。虽说这是一个小小的贡献，但是作为一个读者能够做出这些贡献，对《宫娥》的解读不断积累， 就积少成多．一人贡献一点就形成了当代图像理论，也丰富了图像理论。即使这样的理论不像潘诺夫斯基有一个体系，但这也是一点一点建立起来的。甚至于我们这些其他国家的人，也许某一天讲解《宫娥》的时候，突然会有灵感，说出一些见解会使自己感到吃惊。
这就是这个人的贡献，所以我认为现代理论就是这样慢慢地丰富起来的，并且这也是一种途径来促进和提升教学的质量。

王春辰：其实开这个课也就是这样，由于之前没有看过类似的课程，"当代艺术批评"的课名是我提出来的。易老师曾经开过"后现代艺术批评"课，虽然部分内容有交叉，但我后来又寻找了新的内容和材料，才开了这门新课。

段炼：您自己是否感觉这门课比较成功，学生能够接受？

王春辰：对，通过教课，连我自己都大有收获。因为通过备课，我能更系统地去研究和探索。当课程教了一轮后，我自身也融入其中，学习到很多东西。

段炼：当您将实践和理论放到一起，您有没有发现学生会有困难去理解呢？

王春辰：会有一些，比如说当面对一个理论，想去寻求一个合适的例子，虽然有的时候书中会有一些提示的例子，但我认为过于简单，这样就会去寻求其他的例子。另就是我

在授课过程中，会交叉使用中外的例子，有时候我会用到中国的一些例子。不过，在准备过程中，我也有一个疑惑：中国美术在这二三十年中，在发展的脉络中，虽然我们有这么多理论去解释，但这些理论能不能成为我们这些作品背后的支撑？

虽然学生通过我课程能够理解作品，并且去思考和运用这些理论，但是这些理论能够成为作品的支撑吗？这个时候我就在想，在中国这么多美术现象里边，如何恰如其分地进行阐述呢，如何把握其中的线索呢？这个工作我们未来还是要深入研究的。

2 Interview with Mr. He Guiyan: June 2, 2009, Beijing

（00：01：16）

段：我提出一个具体有关于现当代西方美术理论对中国艺术教育的影响的研究课题，整个大的项目主要讨论当代西方文化在全球大格局中的影响和作用。

为什么我要讨论艺术教育的问题？首先，已经有很多人在讨论现当代西方美术理论对中国当代美术的影响。其次，中国当代美术不是一个笼统的东西，而是一个很具体的关于美术教育的东西。为什么会觉得你比较好，你是在读博士你有这个学生的眼光，你同时又是四川美院的老师，你又有教学方面的经验，有和学生打交道的经验。你就有两种不同的眼光。

你在四川美院教了多少年？

（00：04：00）

何：我在四川美院总共教了6年

（00：04：07）

段：你在中央美院已经3年了，之前在四川美院教了3年，然后本科也在四川美院，硕士3年，你又工作3年，一共13年，那你的经验应该相当丰富了。

你在四川美院主要教什么？

（00：04：36）

何：我主要教三个部分，美术史（文艺复兴到19世纪），西方现代美术史（印象派到抽象表现主义），和美学概论。使用的是国内的教材，作者是张房（FANG），这本书主要关于美学，理论方面的就比较少。

（00：05：51）

段：在你教的三门课中，特别是你的第二门课，西方现代美术史，肯定会涉及到有关理论的问题。你觉得在你教学的过程中，理论对于你的教学有没有帮助？为什么会这么问，因为我自己认为理论对于学生理解作品是有帮助的。

（00：06：53）

何：在国内学习美术史，以我来说，我主要在三个方面讲解。第一，艺术家的作品脉络；第二，作品产生的时代文化背景；第三，作品和文化语境背后的理论问题，这种理论问题有包括两个方面：一，艺术家自身提出的艺术创作的方法论证，二，理论家（批评家）对于某些问题的讨论。在第二部分批评家的体系还有一些自身的延续性，但是我的课主要是对于大学三年级的学生，所以关于这个问题我还没有非常系统和深入的讨论，还是停留在中等层面。

（00：08：20）

段：比如说理论问题。我这有两个问题。第一，你讲形式主义，你的方法是什么？我会用比较老套的方式，先讲概念，然后和大家分析理论和作品发展的过程，然后再讲解理论，最后把作品和理论互相对照。那你的方式是什么？

（00：09：10）

何：我讲形式主义的时候，首先涉及到一个定义,另外就是这种理论话语产生的特定的艺术处理情景。第三的一个就是分析形式主义在当时所具备的对 19 世纪以前的艺术审美方式，观看方式以及对艺术本身的价值判断的导向性问题都会涉及到一个深层次的转变。从这个概念（去讲）。

段：有可能是转变，有可能是反驳，也有可能是挑战。

（00：09：56）

何：对，它形成了美术进入现代领域的最重要端点，一个发生的原点的性的东西。我就是从这个角度去讲。第四个部分是涉及到这个概念的有效性的问题。例如罗杰弗莱他也只是在特定的时间，20 世纪初，20 到 30 年代这个特定的语境下他的弊端和意义。

（00：10：27）

段：我觉得你说的这个有效性的问题很重要，不能把一个理论四海而皆准，任何时候，任何国家，任何作品都使用，也许可以做这种尝试，但是难免会有点牵强附会。所以有效性很重要，比如说形式主义，要用来探讨罗杰弗莱，…（人名），的作品就很好，但是要用形式主义来探讨别的东西就有点困难了。

　　有效性问题又存在两点。一种可能是来自你自身，你觉得你用形式主义讲课是有效的。另一方面，你要不要向你的学生解释它的有效性。

（00：11：32）

何：一个是在具体上课时尽量回到当时的语境，我个人判断（有效性）不是很重要，重要的是要放在到当时特定的语境之中。包括你之前谈到的形式主义的有效性 。比如说同样在 20 世纪初，形式主义和图像学……。我如果要讲形式主义的弊端，就会把两个方法做一个对比。就会发现一个问题，形式主义对古典绘画一样有解释的可能性。比如说舶来对意大利文艺复兴的时候的乌琪罗的作品，维纳斯…，普桑也可以用形式主义。但是它的有效性最重要的还是体现在现代主义上，那么潘·科夫斯基他的东西的长限就刚好在解释文艺复兴时候的绘画。所以有效性这个问题的判断还是基于客观本身，基于理论家提出的方法，以及在这个框架之中去呈现它的意义和价值还有缺陷。

（00：12：53）

段：实际上就是这个理论他自己产生的语境。这个问题很重要。那么在你自己具体的教学之中，你是否发现有的学生会有理解的问题，如果有，你能否举一个学生曾经问过你的问题的例子，你是如何回答的。

（00：13：28）

何：不光是这样，这个问题很多，因为三年没教学，具体例子想不起。这个问题的核心原因在于他不认同你所讲的东西。比如他不认同罗杰弗莱……，他觉得不是这样。潘·科夫斯基这个图像学的分析,比如分析"阿尔多分的婚礼"他认为这种分析很牵强。这种问题的疑惑在于西方理论和中国人接受艺术的观念相矛盾，他是无意的。这种问题的核心观念在于中国人对于艺术的理解和审美方式跟西方人的理论的学历化的对于艺术作品理解的产生体系是完全不同的，这是根本原因。

（00：14：45）

段：因为人在这两种文化环境中的思维方式不一样。在你解释形式主义要放回到当时的语境中时，我想到一个术语。英国的历史学家，也是美学家柯林伍德，他曾经有一个（著作）叫做历史重演，或者情景再现，英文叫 reenactment ，跟你说的一样，要回到当时的情况，或者把当时的情况再重演一次。只有这样才能理解形式主义或者

用形式主义理论来理解作品。回到你现在的问题，如果能过做到这点，也许这些学生会觉得容易理解一些，西方理论和中国的的东西有隔阂，有距离，觉得老师说的很牵强，如果来一次重演会对他们有所帮助。你在做学生的的时候有没有遇到过类似的问题。

何：这种情况非常多

段：所以不光是你做老师的时候遇到这种情况，当你做学生的时候你也会同样的问题。

（00：16：18）

何：当学生的时候最大的问题是对西方现代主义艺术的概念很模糊。西方理论家如何认同现代主义。其实这个问题现在觉得很简单。我觉得国内的艺术院校基本理论的概念都不一定弄得很清楚。

（00：16：50）

段：但是最近几年我觉得要容易写了。为什么呢？现在的概念可以上网搜索出来，不像以前只有百科全书和专业书籍，现在网上都可以找到，而且很丰富，虽然资料的准确性不能保证。
　　你提到的过一本书"现代艺术和现代主义"，这本书很早就出版了（80 年代，上海人民美术出版社出版）。你说这本书对于你早期进入这个圈子的影响比较大，你是否记得这本书对于你的具体影响。

（00：18：00）

何：这本书的作者在编写的时候把西方现代艺术这一百年来所遭遇的问题就已经给我们划分出几个大问题，几个重要板块。里面涉及到现代主义的概念问题，现代主义文化在资本主义文化体系中所具有的意义问题，艺术与社会的问题，艺术与心理学的问题。有了这么一个框架以后，在我读研究的时候给我提供了理解西方现代艺术的基本思路和框架。

（00：18：56）

段：他把这个大框架建立起来后，在板块里放了很多他所搜集的文章来编成这边书。对于我们来说可以这样理解，现代主义就是涉及这些方面，或者说我们可以从这方面，比如心理学，社会学等等来理解现代主义。你觉得这个从方法论和认识论上对你影响非常大。

（00：19：24）

何：他给我提供了一个基本思路和框架，而且他的文本本身能形成一个历史性的线索，如果对这个问题感兴趣，我就会就以这个文章为一个出发点，然后去搜集这个文章背后所引发出的诸多问题。他就是给我提供了一个大的框架。我觉得这个框架非常重要。

（00：19：55）

段：它实际上有引导作用，一下把你引导到现代主义的话题中来了。你上四川美院是什么时候？

何：我是 96 年

（00：20：07）

段：那么就是在 90 年代人们已经在谈论当代艺术，这本书一下把你引导到现代艺术，又通过现代主义把你引入当代艺术。这个书类似于一本入门书，但是比入门书要专业的多，一下子就把你引到正道上来了。这就是这本书的作用。对于你的教学，我也看了这本书，我认为也不妨就按照这几个大话题来讲解现代主义，当然你可以用现在的资料和现在的理解来做一些改变，但起码它能起到一定的参考作用。这个问题很好，上次你回答问题的时候你提到这本书我就觉得很重要。

不管是在你的教学还是学习的过程中，你觉得有没有某种理论和某种概念学到后面的时候你突然发现你误解了？

何：这种情况经常有。

段：你可不可以举个例子。

（00：21：45）

何：比如说三年前，误解了一个阿瑟单托说的"艺术的终结"，当时从自身的字面意思不能理解。为什么不能理解？因为当代艺术非常的活跃，不管是在西方还是在中国。后来发现我们的中文翻译和阿瑟单托说的"艺术的终结"是两回事。这个就是最典型的误解

段：那你后来是怎么发现这个误解的。

（00：22：22）

何：后来发现就是因为读过他的东西，再加上前年（王申岑翻译）他的著作被翻译成中文版。仔细读了之后就发现，它实际上说的是叙事模式的终结，像瓦塞米来这种再现模式，格林伯格列这种宏大的形式主义的叙事模式。他说的是叙事模式的终结而不是艺术本身死亡。

（00：23：01）

段：你原来的理解是艺术本身死亡了，艺术本身是不可能死亡的。你会不会理解成他指的是某种形式的艺术死亡，比如说再现艺术的死亡和抽象艺术的死亡。你有没有产生这种理解？

（00：23：22）

何：当时是这样理解的。最早了解这个概念是他 64 年"艺术界"这篇文章。我当时以为他谈到……（步里骆驼子）以后，传统的艺术概念就消解掉了，艺术的本质在物品和现成品之间，艺术的定义变得模糊。换句话说这种模糊造成文艺复兴以来的整个再现的历史的终结。我当时就是这么理解，就认为到……（步里骆驼子）之后就是一个分界点，一个断裂。这个断裂以后早期的艺术就死亡了。

（00：24：06）

段：到后来通过你阅读中文译著以后，你发现他说的是叙事模式的终结。那么你是否记得他说的这种叙述模式是怎样的叙述模式？

（00：24：18）

何：他就是两种叙事模式。一种是瓦塞里建立起来的古典主义的叙事模式。这种叙事模式是艺术家对自然表现世界的模仿（再现理论）。按照瓦塞里的理解，一部古典主义的美术史就是一个现行的对自然的模仿的接近程度与否的发展的进化论的历史。

（00：24：52）

段：因为瓦塞里是文艺复兴时期后期的，他不可能超越他这个时代，他不可能提出一个新的理论。那么你说的第二个方面是什么？

（00：25：04）

何：第二个就是格林伯格列的形式主义模式，回到平面重新简化。从 19 世纪的马来到抽象表现主义折回画的终端。

（00：25：17）

段：那么换句话说，现在你觉得你对这个"艺术的终结"的理论已经理解的比较准确，全面了。那你有没有机会在教学过程中讲他这套理论。

何：肯定是有的。

段：以后有，但是现在还没有，因为这个事情是发生在你在中央美院读博期间。

何：第一年。

段：你现在还没有回到四川美院，所以这个问题还没有产生。所以在教学中还没有体现出来。这个我觉得很重要。

你读过很多现在国内批评家和画家在网上发表的文章，有些比较学术，有些我认识是凭自己的想象在胡乱说。在你的阅读中，你有没有发现别人对一些重要的问题产生了误解？

何：这种情况应该非常多。

段：你能不能举个例子。

何：这种例子涉及到人和事。国内有个大的语境，一，在国内做纯理论的人很少；二，当代艺术界对于批评以及批评理论本身的建设是不足的；第三个方面是，国内发表这种很专业和学术理论性文章的平台很少。所以换句话说在这种语境下，大部分人，尤其是艺术家在使用概念的时候都涉及到误读，他可能会按照他自己的理解。中国目前有很多问题。比如说现代性，这个概念怎样理解，每个人都会有很多看法。再比如说最近的问题当代艺术和后现代艺术这几个概念怎样理解。前两年是关于……（后志铭）的问题的理解。我们的误读是建立在我们本身没有对这个概念进行考证，而是跟着我们的实际需要把西方的概念拿来使用。

段：我可以举个例子。在吴红的网上，徐维新是比较活跃的。当大家在讨论当艺术的时候，他没有对当代艺术这个术语发表意见。当他在网上阅读到一定程度的时候，他觉得他已经理解了当代艺术。前不久，他就在网上发表了一篇关于他自己理解的当代艺术的文章。我看了以后觉得就类似于你刚才说的，一个是根据自己的理解，一个是根据自己的需要。按照他的说法，他画的黑白大头像就是当代艺术。我就觉得比较可笑。当然如果你从很广泛的角度讲任何东西都是当代艺术，只要你是现在画的。但是当代艺术的概念是从西方引进的。中国在引进当代艺术的时候存在一个问题，是严格遵守西方定义的这个当代艺术的概念，还是完全把他中式化。如果是第一种情况严格按照西方的定义，徐维新这个文章说当代艺术就比较牵强。如果要把它中式化也就是本土化，现在还没有本土化的当代艺术这个概念，大家都是个说个话，谁也不服谁。总体说来我对徐维新的话是很不感兴趣的，我的办法就是不发表任何意见，没有必要去关注他的东西。这个就是涉及到某个概念某个理论在中国的语境中我们怎样去理解是否会产生误读的情况。对于这个当代艺术这个简单的概念也是存在误读的情况。

现在我们回到一个比较具体的问题。你提到图像理论。20世纪西方图像理论刚开始影响最大的肯定的潘·洛夫斯基，中央美院关于潘·洛夫斯基的研究肯定是走在最前面的。到了后来，尤其是80，90年代以后，其实从70年代开始西方图像理论已经存在了一些变化。到了，80，90年代由于信息社会的原因，图像学研究的内容变化就很大了。潘`·洛夫斯基的图像学基本上是去阐述绘画，方法论的成分要多一些。现在图像学不仅仅是局限于方法论上。那么在这种情况下，米歇尔这个关于图像转向这个术语的问题在中国就比较流行。那么大家现在对于图像转向这个术语的理解究竟到了一个怎样的程度。图像转向究竟是什么？你们在学校里不管是研究，学习还是教书，涉及到现当代图像学，尤其涉及到图像转向这个概念的时候你们是怎样理解，怎样阐释，怎样教学的？

（00：34：13）

何：这个问题有两个方面。我现在还没有教学，在教学当中还没有体现图像转向这个概念。另外一个就是，你刚才说的图像转向的问题，我个人理解，在西方从潘·洛夫斯基到米歇尔包括中间段霍利对图像学的解释，我想说的是西方说的想象转向和我们批评界说的图像转向是两个概念。西方的图像学转向我认为有两个大的语境。一个是艺术史的语境，从欧普艺术以后，从整个对抽象表现主义的反驳以后，大众影响图像进入艺术式研究。这个是美术史的一个背景。还有一个是社会背景，整个图象时代的来临，也就是我们说的电视的普及，图像的传播，以及后来波登尼亚说的仿像时代，紧管社会。它是基于这两个平台，一个是社会的，艺术史的；一个是社会客观条件的。还有一种是文化研究中的方法论的问题。比如说罗兰巴特把日常的图像进行研究。这种研究的背后他是基于结构主义对于图像的理解。我觉得这三个语境构成了西方关于图像方面的讨论。我们国内的批评家，比如说鲁宏老师，我毫不质疑他是提出图像理论的第一个人，但是他的图像理论概念出现的问题在于他所说的图像转向只是把它放在中国当代绘画之中表现图像的艺术家来分析。

（00：36：22）

段：比方说王光利，华文平的图像。

（00：36：28）

何：他也说过几个清晰地图像，图像的图像，辨易的图像，还有就是最新的历史当中的图像。鲁宏老师的问题在于他说的图像如果和中国当代艺术商业化联系一起来的话，这个时候的图像转向就是一个简单层面的当代艺术家画一个图像或者符号，而他的误区,弊端在于这些图像和符号本身就成为了在商业社会中的一个标识和品牌。这个是他的最大的问题。我们中国的问题就是图像转向背后的泛滥在于只要是符号和图像就被认为是中国当代艺术

（00：37：30）

段：中国当代艺术就出现一个情况就是中国的画家都拼命去发现（图像或符号）。比如张大毕甚至把他的侧面，下巴凸起印在名片上面，这个就完全符号化了。再有一个就是赵范毕把熊猫放在脖子上。

（00：38：46）

何：这个时候当代艺术中的图像问题是值得研究的。但是这个时候提出图像转向和西方语境中的图像转向的意义和价值也是不一样。同样是在利用图像，那么安……（人名）的播谱，李希岑斯坦的播谱和王光义的政治播谱尽管都有图像，但是这个图像在中西方两种不同的语境当中他的目的，意义和策略都是不一样。

（00：39：28）

段：比方说李希岑斯坦，他用新闻照片方式来模仿抽象表现主义的笔触是有他另外的目的。像王光利这种做法，现在还有人在模仿他。王光利的东西出来已经超过 15 年了（92 年，广州），居然还有人在模仿王光利，这真是不可思议。

这有一个问题，回到你在四川美院教书的经历。潘·洛夫斯基他的图像学，方法论现在看来是比较老，但是他还有一定的意义，尤其在解释文艺复兴时期的作品。我曾经看到王林的一篇文章，他提出图像学就是在解释文艺复兴的，形式主义是在解释现代主义的。尽管说他的说法比较机械，但是他还是把握住这个要害。对于你来说，你在教学实践中用潘·洛夫斯基去解释文艺复兴，是用西方理论去解释西方作品。或者说你搞形式主义也是用西方理论去解释西方现代作品。那么会不会有有这样的情况，你用西方理论来解释中国作品，也许你现在没有教学，但是在你的写作中会有这样的情况，你能不能谈下这个问题？

（00：41：45）

何：我觉得这个方面在我身上体现得最明显是在解读中国当代作品的时候，在方法论上很多时候都用了西方的理论。比如说，这个图像转向，按照批评家的说法中国图像转向是从90年代开始。就我个人的看法，这种图像转向要追溯，而且在分析当中完全可以用到图像学的分析方法。比如说，梦罗丁85年的"在新时代"，"亚当夏娃的启示"。如果是用西方方法论的观点，我们就可用对作品中的任何一个图像进行解读。（潘·洛夫斯基的做法）。比如说苹果，长城，故宫的大门，（框框，玻璃），门钉。这些从视觉上说本身就具有图像学的意义。我可能非常喜欢用西方理论去解读作品。这个方法论本身没有问题，但是方法论背后会存在一个最大的问题，**如果只重视方法论会导致这个作品产生的文化语境的错位。同样要用图像学的分析方法，但是你要把作品放在中国特定的语境下作为讨论这个作品的前提。我希望把这两种结合起来，既有西方的方法，同时又要把这个作品尽可能还原到特定时候的中国的艺术，社会，文化的语境中。**

（00：43：55）

段：至少是不违背语境。你这个观点非常重要。刚才你涉及到商业图像化的问题，不管是从你的研究或是教学当中，你能不能从图像商业化的角度来说一下当前中国当代艺术中流行的图示化的情况，你是怎样看待这个问题的？

（00：44：53）

何：按照中国老一代批评家（鲁宏）的解释图像转向是中国当代艺术的特点。这个是值得肯定的。但是另外一个核心的问题是，大部分艺术家对于图像的选择无非就是对个人的表示。比如我们刚才提到的"你"是画熊猫的，"我"是画泥沟的，方亮军是画关口的，张晓刚是画大家庭的。这会让中国目前的艺术家，尤其是年轻的艺术家无意识的认为当代艺术就是应该找到一种个人图示。当找到这个个人图示后，这种个人图示是两个方面的，他其实是一把双刃剑。如果艺术家没找到个人图示前，就说明他不成功，他很焦虑。一旦确定了一个图示以后，他就必须去扶持他，他又很难再打破这个图示。这种焦虑在第一代，就是我们说的F4身上体现得最明确。这里面的问题在哪？比如说，我前段时间写过一篇文章关于泛图像化的趋势。同样是论证播普文当中，由于图像转向成为一个弊端。比如说，王广义是画毛泽东，那么从大的范围来讲他是属于政治播普。如果以图像的标准去划分就会出现另外一种情况。"你"画毛泽东，"我"画天安门，"我"画五星红旗。那么这个政治播普的泛滥就会引发成一个泛政治播普。这是一种情况。

段：现在已经有了这种现象

（00：47：00）

何：对，我前段时间写了一篇文章就是关于这个情况。那么第二种情况，同样是画毛泽东，"你"画播普式的毛泽东，"我"画受伤的毛泽东。"你"画白天的毛泽东，"我"画晚上的毛泽东。它又形成了一个……。"你"画金对英是在开会，"我"不画这个开会，"我"画战役,，"我"画金对英野史的场景。这样就会导致整个图像（的泛滥）。如果没有商业的催化，没有市场对艺术家个人标示的识别就不会造成这种图像化的泛滥。

（00：47：50）

段：你说的意思是整个社会和时代的商业化是中国当代美术图示化的一个最本质的原因（他的推动力在于商业化的动机）。我还有另外一个问题。这种图示化包括占领一个图像，去寻找去发现一旦找到就要占领它，在20世纪中国艺术当中是有传统的。齐白石画虾，黄胄画毛驴，你觉得能不能这样说？

（00：48：30）

何：可以这样说，比如说徐悲鸿画马。但是我觉得有一个问题。我这样判断，这种传统在西方也有，梵高画那么多鞋子，塞尚画他们家乡的维克多尔……，他都画过很多张。但是有一个区别是，中国的艺术家和塞尚他们是不是一样的。

段：他们没有把他图示化

（00：49：04）

何：这是其一。其二，他们画的目的不是为了商业，他的核心目的不是为了进入这个商业体系。我觉得这个区别一定要区分开，不然就会形成误会，价值上的判断就会形成一个误差。那么徐悲鸿画马可以画很多种画，但是在他特定语境下他的马是和某种文化精神结合在一起的。

（00：49：34）

段：徐悲鸿画马，我看到一些材料是在抗战时期有激起民族精神的意思。齐白石画虾有古代文人的闲情逸致。在90年代初我曾经看到一篇文章，是李苦蝉的儿子写的，叫李雁。这篇文章我看了以后觉得很可笑，他说到20世纪大画家的题材，就是我们说的图像。他说徐悲鸿画马把马占领了，齐白石画虾把虾占领了。那"我"画什么呢？所以他决定画猴子，当年他和他父亲讨论这个问题。他父亲也觉得别人都没有画猴子，你现在画猴子就很好。他就把猴子这个题材占领。这是90年代初的事，我当时觉得很可笑。但是把它放在今天这个语境来理解，跟今天的情况有相似之处，都是要占领山头。尽管说90年代初商业化倾向还不是很重，但是他也有这种占领山头的目的。所以这样说来今天图示化的流行在20世纪中国现当代的艺术的语境中是有根源的，他不是90年代凭空出现的，尽管说来他们有本质的区别。

刚才你提到过你的论文，我认为很有意思，因为你是搞现代主义的。你能不能讲一下你论文的内容是什么？

（00：52：12）

何：我的论文分三个大的章节。第一个章节是讲美国形式主义的产生和它特定时候的语境。

段：你只谈美国的形式主义。

（00：52：31）

何：对。文章中会注释为什么会选择这个，以及美国的形式主义和罗杰弗莱的区别。在注释中会体现。在第一部分主要讨论在美国早期以格林伯格列为主导的形式主义产生的西方语境。比如从30年代末期从前文艺术的理论写入抽象艺术，这个是格林伯格列的第一个阶段。第二个阶段是把形式主义和抽象表现主义的结合，然后对大立画派，立体主义进行超越，所以才有了后来的迪撒，波洛克的迪撒，包括格林伯格列某年写的"美国式绘画"。他核心的东西还是形式主义的分析方法。第三个阶段是讨论格林伯格列在60年代如何把形式主义的批评上升到一个现代主义理论的概念，同时建立了一种对现代艺术的艺术史叙述方式。这种叙述方式也是以形式主义作为核心。第四的部分是讲形式主义在60年代初所面临的问题。这是第一个章节的四个部分。第二个章节就是说讨论形式主义在60年代艺术创作，艺术理论中所面临的问题。这个问题大概有五个部分。第一个部分是讲早期的极少主义跟抽象表现主义的联系；第二个部分是讨论格林伯格列对极少主义的批判。这种批判我觉得还是从形式主义的角度节切入的。第三个部分是讲到67年后的极少主义对早期极少主义的批判。比如说对他的形式，形式主义的养息，因为像莫里主塔史他主张反形式，就彻底的抛弃了极少主义和抽象表现主义某种形式上的联系。这个部分主要讨论后期极少主义的变化。比如说大地艺术对早期形式主义的抛弃。这种抛弃形成了新的理论概念，比如说剧场，剧场化的概念。比如说人物长时间的关系中人的身体性的体验，

感受性时间的体验。这就是这个部分的内容。第三个部分是讨论弗列德，因为他是对格林伯格列的继承，就讨论格林伯格列如果利用形式主义和捍卫现代主义的方式的立场对极少主义提出的批判。这是第三个部分。第五个部分是讲克罗兹同样是通过形式主义提出了和格林伯格列完全不一样的解读西方现代雕塑和后现代雕塑的一种分析方法。主要是文张澜院士他写了一篇关于"扩展场的雕塑"的文章。这个整个论文的第二个章节。第三个章节是主要是针对格林伯格列的形式主义，以及他以形式主义为基石的现代主义叙事方式的问题各种批评家提出的批判。我找的第一个构案是阿瑟单托的"艺术界理论"以及他认为格林伯格列这个现代主义叙事审美化的倒塌。也就是我们刚才提到的艺术终结的问题。第二个构案是比格尔认为的前卫艺术对现代主义的反驳。按照格林伯格列的理解未来主义，超现实主义以及播普他根本就没有办法进入格林伯格列的体系。包括早期意大利的批评家波机奥利出版过一本关于前卫艺术理论的书。他们恰恰就认为除了有这个现代主义传统以外，包括还有罗森不格的行动绘画，还有另外一种方式，那么这种方式就可以把未来主义，杜张伟代的……纳入其中。提供了另外一种梳理 19 世纪以来的西方现代艺术的方法。第三的一个章节我找的是罗散林肯罗斯直接批判形式主义的问题。因为后来罗散林肯罗斯后来就完全走上背叛格林伯格列形式主义的思路。那么就是我找了他的几篇文章，通过克罗斯对于形式主义的意义的否定，一个是消减他的延长性，就是格林伯格列为形式主义的延长性。第二个就是消减他所谓的形式自律所产生的意义的自主。克洛斯都给他消减。我觉得这个是对形式主义本身最大的挑战。最具有颠覆性。第四个构案是……（噼里啪啦）克里社会批评，就认为如果这种形式主义的叙事方法，如果艺术家进入这个品音化的形式，通过这种形式范围，主题境况 那么这些作品与现实社会是没有关系的，他是生产一种无意义的意义，所谓无意义是作品本身没有意义，但是它的意义是在整个文化当中。所以……就提出另外一个从社会学的角度切入 19 世纪中期以来西方绘画的解读，又是一种跟格林伯格列完全不一样的解读方式。我的结论是同样是这样一段历史，格林伯格列以形式主义建构了一个体系，而这个体系又是在当时特定的艺术史的语境当中。跟当时具体的艺术创作结合，尤其是结合的情况下产生。我把这个过程尽量呈现出来，然后把各个批评家在当时看法，意见，当时的语境呈现出来。最后的结论是 70 年代以后这个形式主义的批评的终结并不是说形式主义就死亡了，而是说这种形式主义作为主导性的叙述方式，这个和阿瑟单托就一样，他已经消亡了。后来 70 年代以后艺术的创作同样有他的叙事方式。比如说种族，生存问题，性别问题。（后现代得话题）这些叙事模式取代了形式主义。我说的是终结是他再也不是一个主导性的话语或者说历史性的话语，就是从这个角度上去分析。

段：从这个角度说也可以是一种转向。

3 Interview with Mr. Lu Mingjun: July 14, 2009, Chengdu

1 一般问题

Q.1 你在高校教了几年西方艺术理论？

我没有在高校任过教。不过作为一名学生，从这几年的学习经历看，四川大学的西方艺术理论教学偏重文艺理论，也就是西方文论，或者说文学理论，主要是西方马克思主义那一套，从马克思、卢卡奇，到马尔库塞、阿多诺，直至阿尔都塞、哈贝马斯、伊

格尔顿、杰姆逊及后现代理论如福柯、德里达、德勒兹等，它是这么一条线索。实际上，这样一条理论对图像本身而言是有局限性的，它是缺乏针对性和有效性的。

Q. 2: 根据你的经验，你认为西方艺术理论会怎样有益于中国美术教育，为什么？

按我的学习经历和思考，我觉得首先应该分两个层面，一是形式、语言层面上的分析，必须端赖于图像理论、语言哲学，这样的话才能进入作为对象的文本本身；二是在此分析基础上，必须回应到历史与现实的考量，也就是说，任何分析、论述最终都必须扎根于历史与现实中，而不能仅只停留在表面的语言拆解上，这是远远不够的，也是没有意义的。从这个意义上说，西方艺术理论首先在方法层面上，它有一个相对完备的系统，促使我们更深地进入图像本身，其次，西方艺术理论作为一套现代话语，已经不可避免地成为我们学习和教学中的一部分，我们回避不了，最后，今天的中国艺术问题已经与世界纠缠在一起，单凭中国文论是不够的，我们必须更深地了解西方艺术理论，只有在这样前提下，才能更深地认识我们今日所处的现实。

问题就在于，在西方，一套理论的兴起，必有其深刻的现实与历史背景，所以，我们在学习一套西方理论的时候，在力图澄清其历史位置的基础上，探得它的所指到底是什么。在此基础上，审慎地挪用，而力避滥用。事实上，20世纪以来，西方大部分理论背后都有一套意识形态背景，我们必须把这个背景搞清楚了再挪用，而不是简单、粗暴地模仿。

比如格林伯格为什么力推抽象表现主义？他的精英主义立场背后隐含着什么？还比如后现代主义兴起的背景是什么？这些问题本身是值得我们今日重新反思的。在此前提下，我们再来援引西方理论和方法。

你做老师时，怎样向学生讲解某一理论概念？其程序是什么？例如：下定义、讲解理论、举例发挥、用于美术研究实践。

Q. 3: 你在西方艺术理论的教学中遇到的主要困难是什么（例如学生的外语能力），你是怎样解决这些问题的？

当然，外语是最重要的。包括我自己，外语也不好，阅读主要是中文译本，所以尽量选择一些相对好的译本，条件允许，就和英文本对着看。这几年，您所作的一些工作我觉得很有建设性。

我选修过赵毅衡先生的符号学与叙述学，比如符号学，主要分析几对概念，包括能指/所指、难率/易率、像似/程式、纵聚合/横聚合、外延/内涵、语言/言语等等。比如叙述学中，包括隐指作者、隐指读者、叙述者、叙述接受者、人物之分，不同的叙述范式，其之间的关系是不一样的，还有比如格里玛斯方针，用以超越二元模式的设计，很有意思。

比如我们看政治波普，实际上，符号学分析非常彻底的。就用这几组概念。另外，叙述学，我们不妨举《开国大典》的例子，从反复涂抹，一直到岳敏君的创作。这些变化过程中，我们可以看出隐指作者、隐指读者等角色的变化。

关于福柯在《词与物》中的"凝视"、"再现"这两个概念，在我看来实际上是一个特例。为什么这么说呢？关键是他所选择的图像，委拉斯规之的《宫娥》，它是一个相对复杂的图像，所以，福柯的解构才呈现了丰富性，问题就在于，当代艺术的图像本身是很简单的。所以，我们首先应该质疑的一个问题是，这些复杂的图像理论对于当代艺术

的图像有多少有效性？

回过头来看，福柯所谓的凝视、再现最终还是回到作者、观看者之间的复杂关系中。其实，安卧粗浅的理解，在这里福柯归根追问的是：谁是主体？谁在凝视？再现的是谁？其之间的关系怎样？通过凝视与再现的不断转换，拆解了一个本是二元一体的系统。

《现代艺术和现代主义》很早就读过，但理解不是很深，那时候没什么理论背景，理解是很浅的。不过有些文章还是印象很深，比如波德莱尔的、柯莱夫·贝尔的、格林伯格的。

你做学生时，学习西方艺术理论，可否举一具体实例，说明怎样用么一理论概念去解读艺术作品，如用凝视、再现？
《现代艺术和现代主义》对你的具体影响是什么？

Q. 4: 学生最常问的问题是什么，你怎样回答的？

作为一个学生，据我的经验，大家最关心的是什么好的当代艺术。当代艺术的标准是什么？您怎么看这个问题？

2 具体问题
Q. 5: 学生会误读误解西方艺术理论吗？是怎样的误解？你是怎样帮助他们的？

大部分都是很多误解。比如，我们如何看待西方后现代理论。最大的问题是，我们在接受后现代理论的时候，对它本身缺乏认识和反省。所以，前段时间，在云南开会，我说了一句话。得罪了很多人，我说：不管是在西方，还是在中国，后现代是一种"病"，而不是"药"。我们现在却把它当作"药"，而不是"病"。还比如，我们对大众文化的理解，也缺乏清醒的认识。我们今天谁要是反对大众，那肯定就是不正确的，政治上不正确的。实际上，文化从来都是有等级的，恰恰是在大众文化泛滥成灾的今天，我们更需要警惕和反省，更要倡导精英主义。问题就在于，我们根本不理解什么是大众，什么是精英。所以，也是在这会上，杨卫先生就批评我们这些年轻的批评家太精英化，实际上，我们年轻人之间也是有分歧的。可能，我是最力主精英主义的。为什么这么说，我觉得，精英没错的，关键是我们所理解的精英到底是什么？我们总以为，有钱有权就是精英，实际上真正的精英指的是一种品味，一种教养，这与钱和权没直接关系。同样，大众也是，我们的大众并不是真正意义上的大众，我们的大众实际上被那些有钱有权的伪精英绑架了的伪大众，所以，我坚持认为，在文化层面上，我们必须让精英回到真正的精英位置，让大众回到真正的大众位置。可我们都喜欢扮演大众的角色，都喜欢从众，总有一种古斯塔夫·勒庞、玛斯科维奇所说的群氓心理，不知为什么？可能是喜欢放松，喜欢堕落吧？不喜欢高的东西，高贵的东西，看东西喜欢往低看，不喜欢往高看。这是非常糟糕的。至少在我看来。

所以，我去年在我一篇很长的文章中，我就写了这么一句话：或许是由于我们缺乏对西方思想史整体的观照和反思，缺乏对西方理论整体的翻检和吸纳，以至于面对某一理论、某一立场时，往往在没有澄清其本然的历史位置及其真正所指的前提下，盲目地接受并予以了无限的放大。或许这并不乏有效的支撑性及批判的正当性，然而，正是因为这一表层价值的蒙蔽，致使我们非自觉地回避了对于思想史可能的嬗变之维的理性检省，从而陷入了常常无所适从的精神荒漠和价值真空。我想，不仅如此，包括图像理论也同样存在这个问题。这需要我们不断地深入研究。

用西方理论概念去阐释西方艺术时，你认为要注意什么问题，例如怎样解决中国学生了解西方文化背景知识的问题？会不会变成转述西方学者的阐释？

Q.6. 国内美术界有无故意的误读？若有，为什么？请举例。

故意是否不清楚，但是误读很多。比如，有人批评鲁虹对"公共性"误读了，说鲁虹的公共性是毛时代的公共性。我想，某种意义上，这并不重要，或许这背后就是鲁虹立场本身。这更重要。因为我们批评别人的时候，总是有一个自以为绝对正确的东西。实际上，不一定的。包括我们对现代性的认识。

何况，西方很多伟大的思想，它不是一个面目的，它其实有着多个面相。比如黑格尔，你说他是保守主义，但实际上，他也不乏自由主义的一面，还比如尼采，你说他是虚无主义，是后现代，但实际上，这只是他左翼的一面，他还有着右翼的一面，从这个意义上，他又是一个保守派。所以这都很复杂。伟大的思想家都是没有立场的，只有思想，立场只会让自己变得肤浅。

这里面就涉及到翻译的问题。我举个例子。去年在中央美院开会，有个南京师范大学的同学就提出今天我们翻译有问题，他说特别是本雅明的国内翻译，实在没法看。因为我没看过本雅明的英译本，更不懂德文。我所看的也只是中文译本。而且也没系统地读过。但是后来，我读到一篇文章，好像是一个德国学者在说本雅明，他就说本雅明本身就是不容易被理解，也就是说，即便是德文原版也是很难理解，也不知道他在说什么。这样的话，转译成中文，自然就更难了。从这个意义上说，转译、解读都不可避免地隐含着误读，关键是你误读的水平怎么样了。何况，误读还有杰作，比如施特劳斯的《关于马基雅维利的思考》。所以我想起这么一句话，说：世上本无对错，权且将错就错！有时候，这也不见得没有道理。后现代本身就喜欢误读，比如德里达解读尼采的《扎拉图斯特拉如是说》中的"耳朵"，新历史主义就更喜欢想象，喜欢玄虚地做一些文章。

在这个前提下，我还是希望，更多专业精、外语又好的学者多做一些翻译，多提供一些译本。在西方，一般的经典，至少都有两三个不同译本。中国学术界也在慢慢好转。可能段老师您有更深的体验和感触。

用西方理论概念去阐释中国艺术时，你认为要注意什么问题，例如怎样解决目的与手段的协调问题？在阐释实践中，究竟有无这个问题？

Q.7: 你认为国内的当代美术理论教育是一种西化吗？若是，为什么西化是必要的？

这要怎么看了。其实我觉得，你说是，它就是，你说不是，它也不是。这要分层面说。从外部层面，它就是西化的，但从内部层面，教育的背景还是中国问题，也就是说，在教和学的过程中，已经潜在地被中国化了。所以，我觉得不是很重要。我觉得关键是我们要对问题作出判断，也就是一个人的问题意识的问题。不管什么理论，只要能帮助我们分析、判断问题，分个中西又有什么必要呢？

退一步讲，为什么西化是必要的。我前几天在读梁漱溟先生的《东西方文化及其哲学》，有很多洞见，值得玩味。比如他说，中国文化就是古文化，但西方文化就是今文化，中国一直在吃老本，喜欢往回走，而西方则喜欢往前走，喜欢新的东西。所以，西化的前提是趋新。这也是中国至今还未完成现代性转型的反应或势必要选择。

还有个很重要的背景，就是全球化带来的知识的相对通约性的要求决定了必须西

化。

这便涉及到一个底色的问题，我们再怎么接受西学，但是中学永远是基本底色，这是回避不了的。所以，一百多年前，张之洞那些人就提出"中体西用"，还是很厉害的。要是放在今天，我们是不会有这样的洞见的。所以，历史学家说，我们至今课也没超越近代那帮人，还是有道理的。

Q. 8: 在目前的商业社会时代，为什么教授西方图像理论是重要的？图像理论与当前的社会政治和艺术形式有怎样的关系。

在我看来，商业社会时代最大的特征就是图像的复制化、符码化、消费化，或者说去精神化、去深度化。这自然意味着，这样、一个图像时代的来临。而这个所谓的图像时代实际上是一个事实判断，也就是一个图像的泛化时代，导致的结果是大家事实上并不自觉于图像，因为图像是一种常态。于是，也就没有人去深究图像到底意味着什么。换言之，图像成为一种新的规训力量或支配者，这一点米尔左夫有着深刻的理解和判断。他将图像的支配归结为一种"视觉权力"，他说：大多数后现代理论家都赞同，后现代的区别特征之一是图像的支配性。如斯蒂安·麦茨以及其他 70 年代电影理论家的电影理论把电影看作是散播意识形态的工具，观众则被简化为完全被动的消费者。他认为图像所建构的新表现形式即"视觉—大众"正在形成，其创造出一个超越民族国家的大众，这种大众通过被称为"超民族国家想象"的视觉媒体而团聚起来。而且它具有许多不同的形式，有着不同的政治和文化反响。

恰恰是在这样一个背景下，我们更需要图像理论的准备。作为一个时代的生成，它并不是这么简单，其形式及其语言背后还是隐含着什么，比如权力或什么。

隐含着什么呢？这便关涉到您的第二问即当前社会政治与艺术形式的关系问题。也就是说，当我们自觉于图像的时候，便意识到其语言形式与社会政治、意识形态的关系问题。这包含两个层面的问题：1，图像时代的图像与社会政治之间的关系？在什么样的社会政治条件下，图像时代才成为可能？2，就图像本身而言，其形式语言背后传达着怎么样的社会政治背景？态度？立场？换言之，在今日之这样一个既定的这回政治背景下，我们需要什么样的图像语言和形式？这都是需要回答的问题。

Q. 9: 在全球化时代、在国内的商业化社会语境中，你怎样讲解"图像转向"的问题？

没有讲过，但是我想，主要还是按照上面两个层次去讲。而且，我不会很机械、很技术地区讲解这些理论，在我看来，最重要的是问题意识，如果说有人不需要这些理论能够意识到其中的根本问题，那又何苦学这些复杂的理论、方法呢？

Q. 10: 照你的教学和学习经验，帕诺夫斯基的图像学对学生理解和阐释艺术，尤其是中国艺术，又怎样的帮助？

按照 Panofsky 的定义，图像学就在于确认画作题材及自题材而来的意义，而其讨论的题材皆有文化上约定俗成的象征意义及历史传承，并有文字记载明指其意义，因此自记载中追查画作的题材及其意义是图像学史研究的根本。图像学假设题材的确认是画作意义产生的惟一来源，而文本又在其中扮演着不可或缺的角色，可以"固定"画作的意义。由此可见，其明显缺乏风格的探讨，而多就题材寻求意义，忽略风格形式也可能具有象征意义。这也是它的局限所在。

由此可见，Panofsky 理论最有效的对象是现实主义美术。当然，包括对古代绘画，其实也不乏意义，但是古代绘画相对而言，要复杂得多，其毕竟不是政治意识形态支配的结果，里面隐含着古代士大夫阶层的很多隐深的思考和观念。而这更多则是通过形式，并非题材来表达的。所以，Panofsky 理论是不够用的。对于现代艺术，基本上是失效的。对于当代艺术，还有某种针对性的可能。因为，当代艺术的"题材"也有着不确定性，其无法固化意义。而现实主义美术，往往都有具体背景，很容易在题材叙述中找到历史根源。

Q. 11 你在课堂上讲过或学过福柯论宫娥吗？若是，你是怎样讲解凝视和再现的？学生又怎样用其读图实践？

按照福柯的读法，这幅画的主题是表象。所谓表象，是指客观对象不在主体面前呈现时，在观念中所保持的客观对象的形象和客体形象在观念中复现的过程。表象可以是各种感觉的映象，有视觉的、听觉的以及嗅、味觉和触、动觉的表象等等。表象在一般人中均会发生，由于视觉的重要性，大多数人都有比较鲜明的和经常发生的视觉表象。委拉斯开兹通过视觉表象将一个有序的表象世界呈现在我们眼前。没有被表象出来的是表象的功能，是安置这些表象并使他们成为自身客体的、既进行统一又进行被统一的主体。在画中，虽然表象的产生（画家）、被呈现的客体（模特）、表象的观者（观画者）这三种表象功能都成功地表现出来，但不包括行为本身。画家没有在绘画的行为中表现出来。"如果他正处于作画的过程中，他将消失于他作画的大画板框架后。但在画中，他不在工作，他停留在作画过程之间，使他能被我们——观画者看到。"同样，模特不是在作模特的行为中被呈现出来，相反却成了观画者。观画者不再是观察这幅画，而成了被画的客体。于是，这幅画的主要吊诡就表现在"表象表象性行为的不可能表象"。

"再现的悖论！"第一，假设画家与模特能够换位，那么《宫娥》便可以是一幅自画像，也可以是国王夫妇的肖像；第二，假设镜中的国王正在作画，那么这幅画就是国王正在描绘委拉斯开兹给国王画像的场景（这句汉语陈述中语言的自涉性循环呼应了视觉悖论的自涉性循环）；第三，假设画中的墙上没有镜子，那么《宫娥》就与库尔贝的《画室》一样，是画家工作场景的再现，画中没有悖论，也没有视觉的玄机。然而这一切仅仅是假设，希尔指出：《宫娥》之视觉悖论的意义，揭示了这幅画的非再现性，所以这幅画所描述的场景并不真实。

Q. 12: 在所谓信息时代，米歇尔的图像理论可以怎样帮助学生理解作为时尚的商业图像？

美国实用主义哲学家理查德·罗蒂这样描述西方哲学（思想）的转向："古代和中世纪的哲学图景关注事物，17 至 19 世纪的哲学图景关注思想，而开化的当代哲学图景关注词语。"也就是后现代所说的：文本之外一无所有。语言就是一切。图像就是一切。图像即语言，即思想。

米歇尔主张"复兴图像学"，他提出：一是放弃建立一门科学理论的希望，而在绘画和文学珍品以及姊妹艺术传统等话题上让"图像"和"数字语言"相遇，使图像学远远超过了语言和视觉艺术的比较研究，而进入把人类主体作为由语言和图像构成的一个存在者的基本建构；另一个关键步骤是与意识形态话语进行批评对话。

按照米歇尔的逻辑，意义的明确化过程就是从认识论的"认知场"（主体对客体的认识）转向了伦理的、政治的和诠释的场（属民对属民的认识，甚或主体对主体的认识）。

也就是说，在这里，图像不仅仅作为一种客体、对象存在。图像本身也是主体。从

这个意义上说，图像本身是极其复杂的，比如其内容代表某个事实，但其形式表征某个观念，一方面，我们在观看图像的时候，我们是主体，但另一方面，图像也作为主体，对观看者形成支配。同时，我们在观看图像的过程中，形成了对自己的另一种认识。同样，图像也在被观看的过程中，其意义也在不断地被重构当中，作为客体的主体本身，也在不断地发生着变化。

按照这个思路，我们再来理解作为时尚的商业图像。

首先，图像既是客体，也是主体，也就是说，我们既支配它，它也受我们的支配。其次，图像不仅指涉某种现实，其形式、语言的背后表征着什么，利益的陷阱？政治的策略？我们在被图像支配的过程中，通过对这一图像的理解，重新认识自己。而图像也在我们的理解过程中，重构了它的意义。

如米歇尔所说的："尽管我们也许无法改变这个世界，但是我们能够继续应用批评的眼光描述它。在一个全球误传、假情报和故意撒谎盛行的时代，那也许就是干涉的道德对应物。"也就是说，图像既是在撒谎，也在揭示谎言。

3 结论

Q. 13: 我会给你一份访谈录，并请你修改。你会在教学中用这份访谈来讲解怎样用西方理论阐释中国艺术现象吗？

如果有机会，我会一试。
关于理论与实践的关系，将某一理论概念用于实践时有何困难、有何成就？请举实例。
从经验主义政治哲学到古典理性主义政治哲学的解读，判断问题的变化。实际上是一个思想史的梳理，或者说时代思潮的梳理。

经验主义或政治哲学与绘画没直接关系，所以，我很少做艺术家个案研究，我更多针对的是批评思潮的梳理。

Appendix 4

Excerpt from "The Poetic Inscape and Contemporary Sinology in the West"

Chengdu: *Comparative Literature: East and West*, 9th issue, 2007.

Lian Duan

The term poetic world refers to the Chinese conception of *jing* 境, *yijing* 意境, and *jingjie* 境界; it is the third category of the topical concern in *Ciyuan* and is regarded in this study as the third aspect of Zhang Yan's poetics, as it is concerned with the perceptual, feeling and conceptual state of the poetic concept *qingkong*. Although Zhang Yan did not use the term *jing*, *yijing*, or *jingjie* in *Ciyuan*, he did introduce us to a poetic world that has within it feelings, thoughts, and implied meanings. As I have pointed out in my review of the research literature on Zhang Yan, scholars consider that *qingkong* is a poetic notion about *yijing*. On the one hand, a song lyric writer takes a way from the inside out in using the scene or landscape as a vehicle for self-expression, and on the other, as the lyric writer may expect, his or her readers take a way from the outside in in experiencing his or her feelings and thoughts via the scene or landscape. In traditional Chinese poetics, *jing*, *yijing*, or *jingjie*, is one of the most crucial concepts, connoting rich and complex implications related to both subjectivity and objectivity, and also creating difficulties for comprehension and

interpretation in the meantime.

To understand the Chinese concept of *jing*, *yijing*, and *jingjie*, one needs to pay attention to the differences and similarities among the three terms, for that such relationship discloses not only the literal connotations of the Chinese concept, but also its poetic connotations. Among the three terms, *jing* is important for it's literal centrality in the three, namely, all three contain the same *jing*. Xu Shen in his *Shuowen jiezi* identified *jing* with *jing* 竟, and defined, "*jing*, [is the moment] when music is over 竟，樂曲盡為竟."[1] This definition refers to a certain period of time when the music is already over but the melody still lingers. Duan Yucai annotated and interpreted the definition: "[*jing* 竟 is] the end of a musical piece. The meaning extends to the end of any thing, such as the end of a piece of land. *Mao zhuan* states that 'border is *jing*' 曲之所止也，引申之凡事之所止，土地之所止皆曰竟。毛傳曰：'疆，竟也'."[2] Whereas Xu's definition is more temporal about the lasting music, Duan's interpretation extends to a spatial dimension. The extended interpretation is somewhat literal, which is closer to the meaning of a bordered area, a world. Nevertheless, when the music is over, the lingering sound leaves the listeners with a lasting musical aura, which is both spatial and temporal, and forms an audile perceptual world. With regard to the differences among the three terms, the subjectivity in *yijing* can be sensed, which is suggested by *yi* 意, literally, thoughts

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[1]   Xu Shen, Duan Yucai, *Shuowen jiezi zhu* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1981), p. 102.

[2]   Ibid.

and ideas;[3] meanwhile, the objectivity in *jingjie* can be sensed as well, which is suggested by *jie* 界, literally, border.[4] In a literal sense, although the emphases on subjectivity and objectivity differentiate *yijing* and *jingjie*, with regard to the similarities, as pointed out, both *yijing* and *jingjie* connote *jing*, and *jing* is the center of the three. Hence, I use *jing* in this study to refer to the three, and use the other two only when necessary.

In a poetic sense, the similarities among the three terms are subjectively oriented. On the topic of subjectivity in the poetic world, Kang-i Sun Chang had an insightful observation in her discussion of the song lyric in the period of Five Dynasties (907-960). In her opinion, the lyric writers of that period

> [took] advantage of the dual poetic elements in poetry (i.e., the objective scene and the subjective feeling), which were thought for centuries to define the integrity of the poetic world. Thus even within the orthodox school of tz'u poetry, there were always possibilities for innovation, both in the shaping of the poetic world and the utilization of the new technical device.[5]

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[3]   Joseph Lee used "idea" to translate *yi* in his discussion of *yijing*. See Joseph J. Lee, *Wang Chang-ling*   (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1982), pp. 53-6. I will discuss the topic of "idea" later.

[4]   For literal differences among the three Chinese terms, also see Adele Austin Rickett, *Wang Kuo-wei's Jen-chien Tz'u-hua* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1977), p. 23, and pp. 25-6. Rickett pointed out some poetic differences as well, I will discuss this issue later.

[5]   Kang-i Sun Chang (1980), p. 96.

This is to say that utilizing technical devices demonstrates as well the subjectivity in creating the poetic world of *jing*, such as infusing personal sentiments and contemplations into the description of objective landscape. Because of the subjectivity in creating the poetic world, the world is no longer a simple scene or landscape represented in poetry; rather, it has human mood in it. Indeed, the subjectivity is companioned by objectivity, as Chang remarked, "In the history of Chinese poetics, the ideal poetic world has often been defined as one in which objective scene and feelings are merged."[6] In this sense, the poetic world consists of the subjective inside and the objective outside.

Due to the coexistence of literal differences and poetic similarities in the three terms, the translations of *jing* are varied, for instance, Florence Chia-ying Yeh used "perceived setting" and "experienced world / world of experience"[7] as translations, and Yu-kung Kao used "inscape" as a translation and emphasized a spiritual sudden realization. Kao explained:

For these diverse possibilities of *ching-chieh* [*jingjie*], I offer to translate the term 'inscape,' as defined by Jonathan Culler, who suggests it as a 'moment of epiphany,…… a moment of revelation in which form is grasped and surface becomes profundity'." [8]

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[6] Ibid., p. 95.

[7] Florence Chia-ying Yeh, "Practice and Principle in Wang Kuo-wei's Criticism," in Hightower and Yeh (1998), p. 497, p. 499.

[8] Yu-kung Kao, "The Aesthetics of Regulated Verse," in *The Vitality of the Lyric Voice: Shih poetry from the late Han to the T'ang*, eds. Shuen-fu Lin and Stephen Owen (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 385.

If we say that Yeh stressed both the perceptual and subjective experiences in the poetic world, then Kao paid more attention to the latter, and stressed the poet's life experience that was embodied in the perceptual setting. Nonetheless, scholars underscored the duality of the Chinese concept. Joey Bonner in his study of Wang Guowei used "world" as a translation and considered that this is a "'world' involves a fusion of inner and outer experience."[9] James J.Y Liu named the subjective inner experience as "spirit," emphasized a harmonious coexistence of the inner spirit and the external setting in the poetic world, and similarly used "world" as a translation as well: "The term I have translated as 'world,' *ching-chieh* [*jingjie*] 境界, is itself a translation of the Sanskrit word *visaya*, which in Buddhist terminology means 'sphere' or 'spiritual domain'."[10] Liu considered that his translation "world" contained almost all the possibilities of *jing*, because his translation was a synthesis reflecting an external world that surrounded a poet and an internal world that responded from the poet to the external world. Therefore, he defined his "world" as

> [A] synthesis of the external and the internal aspects of life, the former including not only natural objects and scenes but also events and action, the latter including not only emotion but thought, memory, sensation, fantasy. In

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[9] Joey Bonner, *Wang Guowei: An Intellectual Biography* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), p. 122.

[10] James J.Y. Liu (1962), p. 84.

other words, a 'world' in poetry is at once a reflection of the poet's external environment and an expression of his total consciousness.[11]

In Liu's opinion, the two worlds are linked by the poet's life experience.[12]

Needless to say, the varied translations come from the scholars' different understandings and interpretations of *jing*, *yijing*, and *jingjie*. To avoid such hermeneutic disagreement, some scholars preferred a transliteration in coping with the nuances and complexity of *jing*. Adele Austin Rickett is one of them. Choosing the transliteration for *jing*, Rickett explained:

[T]he word has been left in transliteration as defying translation, ……. The term occurs in widely-scattered early texts in the basic meaning of a bounded area or region. It later came into Buddhist texts as a translation for *visaya*, which is defined as "a region, territory, environment, surroundings, area, field, sphere, e.g. the sphere of mind, the sphere of form for the eye, of sound for the ear, etc.; any objective mental projection regarded as reality." In the Sung [Song] dynasty dictionary of Buddhist terms, *Fan-yi ming-yi* (Terms translated) 5/142a, completed by the monk Fa-yun in 1143, the term *erh-yen* 爾燄, a transliteration of the Sanskrit *jneya*, is explained as "that which is known," or "that which is knowable," or *ching-chieh* [*jingjie*]. Soothill and Hodous define *erh-yen* as "cognizable, the region or basis of knowledge."

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[11] Ibid., p. 96.

[12] Ibid..

Thus we have added to the simple spatial meaning the qualifying concept of a region which embraces our objective knowledge of reality.[13]

In Sanskrit, *visaya* is a perceived object that is in contrast with the perceiver of the object.[14] However, since it is perceived, it is also devoid of objectivity, and is in contrast with its counterpart *asraya* that is devoid of subjectivity. In other words, in the ancient Indian philosophy, *visaya* is subjectively oriented, although it is objectively founded. Relevantly, since *jneya* in ancient Indian philosophy is more objective, which refers to the object of knowledge or a world to be perceived, we should also pay attention to its counterpart, *jnana*, which refers to the knowledge about the world and the process of gaining the knowledge,[15] and refers to human capability of perceiving the world.[16] In the two sets of dichotomy, the subjectivity of the perceiver and the objectivity of the perceived are interwoven. As stated, Kang-i Sun Chang, Chia-ying Yeh, Yu-kung Kao, and James J.Y. Liu consider that *jing* contains both the inside and outside, and emphasize the inside, then, I regard the significance of *jing* as the reconciliation or fusion of subjectivity and objectivity. In the terminology of Martin Heidegger, who is inspired by ancient Asian philosophy to

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[13]   Adele Austin Rickett (1977), p.23-4.

[14]   Eliot Deutsch. *Advaita Vedanta: A Philosophical Reconstruction* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1973), p. 95.

[15]   Ibid., p. 30.

[16]   As for the way of knowledge and the relationship between *visaya* and *jneya*, as well as the relationships among the four relevant concepts in ancient Indian philosophy, see Charles A. Moore, ed. *The Indian Mind: Essential of Indian Philosophy and Culture* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1967), p. 194.

a certain extent,[17] this reconciliation can be said a fusion of "being here" and "being there."[18] Although I agree with Adele Austin Rickett in using a transliteration for *jing* to avoid confusion and misleading, I have to also pint out that Rickett could not avoid the confusion and difficulty in discerning the subjectivity from objectivity in his interpretation of *jing*. Rickett is objectively oriented, he interpreted *jing* as a scene, and sees *jingjie* as a combination of scene and emotion.[19] In his interpretation, *jing* is one-sided, refers only to an "external scene"[20], or the objective outside of the poetic world, and thus his *jing* 境 is identical with *jing* 景.[21] Rickett did not pay sufficient attention to the subjective inside of *jing* 境, the feelings, thoughts, and spirit in the scene.

Considering the traditional Chinese aesthetic concept *jing*, scholars of today stress the significance of the subjective inside in its relation to the objective outside. Maxwell Hearn, a Chinese art historian, makes it clear in his study of Chinese

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[17]   About the Asian influence on Heidegger, especially the Chinese influence, see Rehinhard May, *Heidegger's Hidden Sources: East Asian Influence on His Work* (London: Routledge, 1989).

[18]   Heidegger discussed the issue of "being-there" as a part of his theory about dasein, see, Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1962), p. 172, p. 182. Later scholars introduced this concept to literary theory, and employed "being here and being there" in critical practice, see, Paul Hamilton, *Historicism* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 150. Although Heidegger's concepts about the "world" and "being-in-the-world," as well as Hans-Georg Gadamer's concepts about "language as horizon" and "fusion of horizons" may be able to assist my discussion of the poetic world from the perspective of modern western philosophy, the employment of the existentialist and hermeneutic theories in interpreting the Chinese concept of *jing* is a big project, and it is out of the reach of this study. Therefore, I will not develop a specific discussion on this topic. For Gadamer's concepts and relevant discussions, see Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Crossroad, 1982), p. 358, pp. 397-414.

[19]   Adele Austin Rickett (1977), p. 23.

[20]   Ibid..

[21]   *Jing* 境 and *jing* 景 are pronounced similarly in Chinese. In order to avoid confusion, I provide Chinese characters when necessary.

landscape painting that "Chinese depictions of nature are seldom mere representations of the external world. Rather, they are expressions of the mind and heart of the individual artists – cultivated landscapes that embody the culture and cultivation of their makers."[22] Hearn is insightful in referring his interpretation of the inside subjectivity to the Song dynasty landscape painting and the artists, "The monochrome images of old trees, bamboo, rocks, and retirement retreats created by these scholar-artists became emblems of their character and spirit."[23] This reference personifies the *jing* by imposing the character and spirit of an artist onto the natural landscape that is represented in the painting, and also regards the personified *jing* as the logo or signature of an artist. Because of the personification, the painting is no longer a mere representation of the natural landscape, but a cultivated landscape, or also in Hearn's term, a "mind landscape," referring to the inner landscape of the artist's heart and mind, to the spirit of the artist.[24]

Hearn's interpretation of Chinese landscape painting can be traced back to the traditional Chinese concept of *jing* in the Tang dynasty. Historically, *jing* 境 is used by philosophers, Buddhists, men of letters, artists, poets and so forth. Probably Wang Changling, a Tang poet, is one of the earliest who used *jing* in *yijing* to discuss poetry. In his *Shige* 詩格 (*Poetic Norms*),[25] Wang Changling distinguished three kinds of

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[22]   Maxwell K. Hearn, *Cultivated Landscapes: Chinese Paintings from the Collection of Marie-Helene and Guy Weill* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), p. 9.

[23]   Ibid., p. 5.

[24]   Ibid., p. 5, p. 7.

[25]   The original version of Wang Changling's *Shige* can be found in *Yinchuang zalu*, edited by a Song scholar Chen Yinxing, in which the term *yijing* is first seen. See Chen Yinxing, *Yinchuang zalu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997), pp. 206-7. Although *Shige* is attributed to Wang Changling, scholars have doubted its authorship; see Joseph J. Lee (1982), p. 50. As for its date, scholars assumed

jing: *wujing* 物境, a material world; *qingjing* 情境, an emotional world; and *yijing* 意境, a conceptual world. According to *Shige*, the material world is visual; it is the landscape described in a poetic work representing the natural world that corresponds with *jing* 景, a scene. The emotional world is not completely visual, it is not simply represented by visual images or landscapes, but conveyed within the images and landscapes. The key to this world is human feelings. Likewise, the conceptual world is not totally visual either, nor represented but implied by images and landscapes. The conceptual world contains thoughts, ideas, and so forth. The material world focuses on representing a visually perceptible scene, the emotional world focuses on the feeling or sentiment expressed via or in the scene, whereas the conceptual world focuses on the ideas and meanings implied in the scene. Since Wang Changling dealt with *jing* from material, emotional, and conceptual perspectives, then, *jing* can be regarded metaphysically as a world consists of the three respects: the material one is on the surface, while the emotional and conceptual ones are deep inside. The integration of the three respects is the key to the notion of the poetic world. Discussing Wang Changling's *Shige*, Pauline Yu emphasized the subjectivity of the poet as well as the surrounding world. She concluded that Wang Changling's poetic world was "both external and internal, sensuous and intellectual, a fusion of mind and world."[26] This is to say that Wang Changling imbued emotional and intellectual contents in the external scene and thus deepened inside of the world. In light of

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that *Shige* was written between 742 and 785. See Zhang Hu, *Zhongguo meixue fanchou yu Zhongguo chuantong wenhua* (Wuhan: Wuhan jiaoyu chubanshe, 1996), p. 231.

[26]   Pauline Yu, *The Reading of Imagery in the Chinese Poetic Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), p. 186.

Pauline Yu, the difference between *jing* 景 and *jing* 境 can be said to be the difference between the material world and the two other worlds in Wang Changling's poetics.

In the early twentieth century, Wang Guowei made a considerable contribution to the development of the poetic notion *jing* 境. In his poetics, *jing* 境 is different from *jing* 景. Ironically, even in his study of Wang Guowei, Adele Austin Rickett admitted that Wang Guowei's *jing* 境 was a poetic state,[27] not a simple landscape. Discussing the influence on the notion of *jingjie*, which Wang Guowei imbibed from an early Qing scholar Wang Fuzhi (1619-1692), Rickett wrote:

Wang Fuchih's [Wang Fuzhi] influence on Wang Kuo-wei [Wang Guowei] can be seen in the latter's adaptation and development of the former's view of the interaction of two elements in poetry, "scene" (*ching* [*jing*] 境) and "emotion" (*ch'ing* [*qing*] 情). The view that poetry is made up primarily of external scene and inner emotion had been expressed by Chinese critics for centuries but Wang Fu-chih contributed to an understanding of the two elements by saying: "*Ch'ing* and *ching* are two in name, but inseparable in reality." Wang Kuo-wei then took the blending of scene and emotion in a poem as the starting point for the development of his own poetic theory as expressed in the compound *ching-chieh* [*jingjie*].[28]

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27   Adele Austin Rickett (1977), 26.
28   Ibid., p. 23.

Although, as I pointed out earlier, Rickett attributed the one-sided scene-only characteristic of *jing* 境 to Wang Guowei,[29] from the above quotation we can infer that it should not be *jing* 境, but *jing* 景 that is the one-sided term, which refers to only the scene.

The poetic world is a new world, created by a poet who infuses not only feelings and emotions but also thoughts, ideas, as well as the poet's spirit, such as the carefree spirit of Jiang Kui, into a scene or landscape; and all of these together make the poetic world implicitly meaningful. Wang Guowei discussed the difference between *jing* 境 and *jing* 景 from an interesting perspective: "There are some (poets) who create worlds, and others who describe worlds 有造境，有寫境."[30] He labeled *jing* 境 as a world created by a poet in poetry, and *jing* 景 as a world described by a poet in poetry. The former is more spiritual, conceptual, and feeling-related, the latter is more visual, perceptual, and image-related. Although he used the same Chinese character *jing* 境, the terms "created world 造境" and "described world 寫境" represent two different concepts: "The 'world' does not refer to scenes and objects only; joy, anger, sadness, and happiness also form a world in the human heart 境非獨為景物也。喜怒哀樂，亦人心中之一境界."[31] Jame J.Y. Liu commented on Wang Guowei's view, which made the difference much clearer, by focusing on the poet who created the poetic worlds and the poet who described worlds:

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[29]   Ibid, pp. 25-6.

[30]   The English translation is taken from James J.Y. Liu (1962), p. 84. For the original in Chinese, see Wang Guowei, *Renjian cihua* in *CHCB* 5. 4239.

[31]   For the English translation, see James J.Y. Liu (1962), p. 84. For the Chinese, see Wang Guowei, *Renjian cihua* in *CHCB* 5. 4240.

"the former leads us into new worlds and therefore enlarges our sensibility, while the latter re-creates for our familiar worlds and therefore only confirms our own experience."[32] Here, as Liu noted, Wang Guowei made it clear that, in terms of their connotations, *jing* 境 is not a natural world of scenery, it is different from *jing* 景. As stated, it is because of this difference of subjective creation, I adopt the term "poetic world" to translate *jing* 境, *jingjie* and *yijing*, since a poetic world is not a natural world described in a poetic work, but a subjective world created by a poet in his or her work.

Chinese poetry has a long history of harmonizing scenes and feelings, which can be traced back to its very beginning in *Shijing*. As Cecile Chu-chin Sun explained, "A well-prepared scene usually fulfills two functions: it expresses the feeling by providing a concrete correlative to the abstract sentiments; it also evokes such sentiments by setting them astir not only in the poetic medium but beyond it in the mind of the reader."[33] When discussing such harmony in *Shijing*, Sun explicated,

Human feelings are rarely expressed in isolation from their immediate environment. In these rural and pristinely natural surroundings, the flowers, plants, and creatures of the animal kingdom, together with the seasonal changes, help to weave a natural background against which human dramas of love, separation, war, and injustice are enacted. Nothing seems more natural

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[32] James J.Y. Liu (1962), p. 99.

[33] Cecile Chu-chin Sun, *Pearl from the Dragon's Mouth: Evocation of the Scene and Feeling in Chinese Poetry* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, The University of Michigan, 1995) p.i.

for the early poets than to express their thoughts and feelings by referring to what they see and hear immediately around them.[34]

Therefore, Sun labeled descriptions of the scene in Chinese poetry as "a habitual mode of expressing human feeling."[35] According to Sun, the period of Song witnessed a comprehensive and theoretical development in the idea about the poetic harmonization of scenes and feelings; she named the development as a "synthesis phase" in its course.[36] Although Sun focused on the criticism of *shi* poetry, she did acknowledge its relationship with the song lyric when she specifically discussed Wang Guowei's concept of *jingjie* about the song lyric in the Song period.[37]

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[34] Ibid., p. 1.
[35] Ibid., p. 2.
[36] Ibid., p. 6.
[37] Ibid., p. 154.

Appendix 5

A Descriptive Analysis of Professor Qiu Zhijie's Course on Visual Culture

A case of employing Western art theory in teaching and study of Chinese subject

Lian Duan

Today in the commercialized society of China, mass media and popular culture play a crucial role in the daily life of the young generation, who spend less time on reading and more on watching TV and surfing the internet. Facing this new social reality, scholars and intellectuals alike in China are attracted to the new theory of visual culture from the West, such as the notion of "pictorial turn" proposed by W.J.T Mitchell, which could help Chinese scholars to explore the new social reality, and find ways to deal with it. Mitchell's theory is the latest influence on curriculum reform in visual cultural education in China. Professor Qiu Zhijie's course on the theory and practice of the study of visual culture, "Iconology and Semiotics: Chinese Visual Culture" could demonstrate the influence, which was first offered in 2004 at the China Academy of Fine Arts. This was an intensive seminar course for undergraduate students majoring in studio art and applied art, and was taught in four weeks. According to the syllabus (Q. Zhijie, 2004), this course aimed at familiarizing students with the theoretical discourse of contemporary theories about the image, or

the new theories of iconology, and helping students to understand and interpret Chinese visual culture from a Western perspective.

1 Describing the Course

Teaching this course, the professor proposed a topic of cultural significance for students to discuss, which involved interpreting photography, TV, cinema, theatre, architecture, urban scenery, and so forth. In terms of theoretical methodology, students were required to exercise a close reading of the texts in the course pack, and apply the political-economic approach to their interpretation of the images.

Western influence on this course can be seen on the required and recommended reading list, i.e., the course pack, which consists of 35 books and articles in Chinese and 7 books and articles in English. Among the 35 readings in Chinese, only 4 are written by Chinese scholars, the rest are translations from Western languages. Nevertheless, one of the four books by Chinese scholars is an introduction to Western semiotics (L. Youzheng, 1994), and another one is an application of Western theories of semiotics and psychology in the study of Chinese art (S. Wenli, 1997).

The 31 Chinese translations of Western theories on the reading list cover the topics of classical, modern, and contemporary theories on image and visual culture. Among the modern and contemporary theories, there are 5 by Umberto Eco, 3 by Roland Bartes, and 1 by W.J.T. Mitchell. Among the 7 readings in English, there are 3

books by Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (W. Mitchell, 1986), *The Reconfigured Eye: Visual Truth in the Post-Photographic Era* (W. Mitchell, 1992) and *Picture Theory* (W. Mitchell, 1994).

Compared to the acceptance of Western influence in the 1980s and early 1990s, which was more to introduce Western theories to China, the recent acceptance of Western influence in the late 1990s and the first decade of the 21st century is more to localize Western theories. This is the historical and intellectual context for me to explore Professor Qiu's teaching.

As mentioned, Qiu's course was intensive and was taught in four weeks. In the first week, according to the course schedule, the professor elaborated the concepts and methods of the Western theories on iconology and semiotics, offered a survey of the development of these theories in the West, and, most importantly, incorporated these theories with traditional Chinese interpretations of images. In his classes during the first week, the professor also proposed the main topic for discussion, the issue of pictorial representation.

The China Academy of Fine Arts is located in Hangzhou, a lake city, which is one of the most popular tourist cities in China. The popularity of the city comes from its beautiful scenery of a lake in downtown west, the West Lake, and the hills along the lake's west shore. The academy is located on the south shore of the lake, and the students could enjoy the lake view from their dorm windows. An ancient Chinese saying describes the beauty of the lake city, "looking up, you see the paradise in heaven, and looking down, you see Hangzhou and Suzhou in the earthly world." The

lake in Hangzhou is dotted with small islands, with gardens and pavilions on the islands. There are many historical remains and cultural heritage sites across the lake city, enriched with folklore and fairytales from historical documents, oral culture, traditional theatre, classical literature, and the like.

The culturally enriched scenery of the lake city provided Qiu Zhijie with an ideal case to experiment how to localize Western theories of iconology and semiotics in his teaching. In the second week, he turned to the topic of how the local folklore and fairytales were visualized with all kinds of images, and how the scenic images of the gardens, pavilions, man-made rocks, artificial fountains, etc., around the lake were encoded with historical and cultural significance. According to Qiu's course description, the process of encoding, as well as the coding system and the codifying mechanism, disclosed the traditional value of the Chinese literati class and their ideals about a utopian or Camelot-like world.

Corresponding to the main topic of pictorial representation in the previous week, Qiu proposed a series of questions for students to discuss in the classes of the second week. (1) What are the key signs in the images of the West Lake scenery? (2) What are the possible ideological significances of these signs? (3) What are the hidden meanings of these signs?

Figure 11-1, "Leifeng Tower," a scene on West Lake, Hangzhou.

Photo by Lian Duan

Closely related to the discussions of the second week, as a part of the classes in

the third week, Qiu asked students to discuss the naming of the major scenic sites of

West Lake, discuss the cultural and aesthetic significances of the names. In the past,

the 10 most beautiful and most popular scenic sites across the lake and the city were

named, and the names were not only poetic but also imbued with human feelings,

emotions, sentiments, and ideals, in relation to old legendary stories. For instance, a

name of a scenic site with a hill-foot tower on the west shore of the lake is "Leifeng

Tower in Evening Glow" (Figure 11-1), which suggests an old story about the love

between a young scholar and a white snake who is incarnated in the body of a

beautiful young lady. As the story goes, a monk master from the Leifeng Temple

knew the true identity of the lady and, because of his jealousy and hatred, eventually destroyed their love and the lives of the two lovers. This tragic love story is visually represented in images on many paintings, sculptures, rocks, gardens, and pavilions on the west shore of the lake. A classical tragedy-opera brought this story to life on stage in the mid 17th century and it is still performed in China today, which is also adapted in movies in China and Japan. Today, along the lake shore in Hangzhou, excerpts from the opera are performed everyday on the open stages for free, attracting tourists.

Similarly, all the other sites have their own stories, whether fictional or factual. In the mid 1990s, due to commercial purposes, and the development of the tourist industry and market needs, the municipal government of Hangzhou launched a new naming campaign inviting local citizens to propose 10 additional scenic sites and name them with current cultural references, in contrast to the old names and old stories. In the class discussion of the third week, Qiu regarded the images of the 10 new scenic sites as visual texts and considered the naming a process of cultural encoding. As the main part of the class, Qiu assigned students to discuss from a Foucauldian perspective the exercise of power in the process of naming, and discuss the negotiation among the commercial, economic, historical, cultural, and political considerations in the naming process. Because of the negotiation, the new names could be subversive to the old names and old sites that stand for the old value and value system of the traditional aesthetics, morality, ideal, ideology, and so forth, while the new names stand for the new value and value system of today, culturally, commercially, and, of course, politically.

Finally, in the classes of the fourth week, in addition to the summarization of the theories about image, the professor also assigned every student a studio work demonstrating his or her individual interpretation of a cultural aspect of the West Lake scenery, based on personal experience.

2　Interpreting the Teaching

Professor Qiu Zhijie assigned his students to explore the naming process in the terminology of contemporary iconology and semiotics. In my opinion, the naming process is an interactive communication and negotiation between the local citizens in Hangzhou and the municipal government of the city, based on their mutual visual and conceptual experience and understanding of the lake scenery. Meanwhile, the visual and conceptual relationship between the citizens and the scenery is similar to the relationship between a gazer and the gazed in the sense of contemporary critical theory, such as that of Laura Mulvey (L. Mulvey, 1975). The process of naming is also comparable to the process of representation: the name of a scenic site is a sign that signifies the site, and thus the name is a nominal or semiotic representation of the actual scenery. In the case of Qiu's teaching, his approach to the visual culture of the lake scenery from Western perspective of contemporary iconology and semiotics exemplifies a new way of exploring traditional Chinese culture, corresponding to the issue of employing modern Western art theory in teaching traditional Chinese visual

culture.

How did Professor Qiu Zhijie localize Western art theory in his teaching practice? The answer is not simply about the method of localization, but involves more relevant issues, which could help with and support the answer to the question of how.

First, in terms of why to localize Western art theory, Qiu's purpose was to help students to explore Chinese visual culture. In addition to the exploration from the Chinese perspective, such as the perspective of traditional Chinese aesthetics, an exploration from a modern Western perspective could provide some new understanding which might be insightful. Since the subject of studying visual culture in the terminology of modern Western cultural criticism is still new in China today, the corresponding Chinese theory about visual culture has not been well developed, art educators in China usually stop short of introducing Western theories and Western cases to students, and they barely incorporate the Western theories with Chinese visual culture. In this regard, Professor Qiu's course about the visual culture of the lake scenery is pioneer and could be regarded as a start of the Chinese localization of Western theory in the field of visual cultural study.

Second, in terms of what to be localized, Qiu prepared a reading list on the subject of visual cultural study, introducing a significant quantity of Western materials to students, both Chinese translations and texts in the original English version. Although other art educators could have done the same in China and therefore what Qiu did in this regard was not pioneering, Qiu made it clear that the reading list was not just for the purpose of reading itself, or for the purpose of gaining knowledge of

Western theory, but mainly for the practical purpose of using Western theory to explore Chinese visual culture. In this sense, the reading materials provided the professor and the students with a theoretical subject to be localized.

Third, in terms of how to localize the Western theory, Professor Qiu decided to explore the images of the lake scenery. To my best knowledge, Qiu is the first educator and scholar to have explored the cultural and historical significance of the lake scenery in Hangzhou from the perspective of modern Western art theory. Although employing Western theory to study Chinese subjects is not new, which started a hundred years ago in China, Qiu brought Western theory much closer to students since the lake was a part of their world and the scenery was involved in their daily life. Such an intimate relationship between the lake and the students made the localization personal, and the personalization is an important aspect of the localization of the Western theory.

In order to further answer the question about "how," I pay attention to the theoretical methodology and practical approach that Professor Qiu employed. While teaching that course, Qiu gave students a specific research case, i.e., the naming process. The exploration of the process was a link between the Chinese subject for the study and the Western method for the study. Because modern Western theory on visual culture did not involve the actual naming process, the exploration of the process from a Western perspective became intriguing, challenging, and could also be fruitful. On the one hand, the named were Chinese subjects, and the naming was based on Chinese cultural traditions, whereas on the other hand, the exploration of the

process was not Chinese but Western. How to bring Chinese and Western thoughts together in this exploration? Qiu provided students with the theories of iconology and semiotics. According to the theories, as pointed out briefly, a name is a signifier (a verbal and written sign) and the corresponding scenic site is the signified. The cultural significance of the site, as required by the municipal government, should be embodied in the name. In the meantime, the cultural significance of the name, which was required by the government, should come from the meaning of the name. Thus the process of choosing a name is the process of encoding, and decoding as well. Deciphering the meanings of the10 new names of the scenic sites in the terminology of semiotics, the students became familiar with the semiotic theory about image, and consequently understood why a certain scenic site received a certain name. Most importantly, students comprehended the meaningful relationship of the name and the named, and understood how to apply a certain Western theory to interpret the relationship. With such an understanding, Western theory was no longer foreign to the students, no longer alien to Chinese subjects, and thus the Western theory became part of student daily life and their personal world, just like the lake itself.

Exploring the naming process, Qiu also introduced to his students the issue of pictorial representation in the terminology of contemporary iconology. On the one hand, the images of the lake scenery represent the historical and cultural heritage of the city, 0n the other hand, the names represent the images, scenic sites, and the heritage as well. In this mechanism of representation, both word (name) and image (scenic site) are involved. The name represents the image, and the image represents

the heritage, while the name also represents the heritage. Thus, a Platonian question about the failed relationship between the idea of a bed, a bed made by a carpenter, and the image of the carpenter's bed drawn by an artist is raised (C. Kaplan and W. Anderson, 1991, p. 4), as well as Foucault's inquiry into Magritte's painting *Ceci n'est pas une pipe* (M. Foucault, 1982).

This is the complexity of the issue about representation, just like the issue about the new architectures in Beijing discussed by Dr. Wang Chuncheng, which reveals the complexity of the relationship between the signifier and the signified, suggesting the issue of gaze and power. By the lake, the citizens play the role of gazer who gives names to the scenic sites, and the scenery plays the role of the gazed. However, the two roles could be reversed when a name needs to be justified. In other words, if a name cannot embody the cultural significance of the corresponding scenic site, then the gazer could be gazed by the scenery, culturally, and judgmentally. Above all, the municipal government was supervising the whole process of naming with a selective and judgmental eye of surveillance. The government controlled and even manipulated the process of naming and the result of the naming. The final decision about what names should be adapted was made by the authority of the municipal government, not the votes of the citizens.

Professor Qiu Zhijie's teaching above was involved with the Western ideology of democracy, which, in this case, was fundamental to the theory of contemporary iconology. In his teaching, the localization of Western theory was not forced to happen, but happened naturally in the process of exploring the relationship between

the names, and named, and the political mechanism of naming. In terms of what to teach and how to teach, this is Qiu's innovation, an innovation with curriculum reform.

3   Evaluating the Teaching

In the case of Professor Qiu Zhijie's teaching, curriculum innovation and reform demonstrate the influence from the West. Based on the above discussion, I would remark that the Western influence on contemporary Chinese education in visual culture is both conceptual and methodological. The influence is demonstrated on the aspects of what to teach and how to teach. Regarding Qiu Zhijie's teaching, I would also say that, to a certain extent, the localization of contemporary Western concepts has partially shaped the innovation and reform of visual cultural curriculum in China at the beginning of the 21st century.

Regarding what to teach, Western modernist and postmodernist concepts of art have played crucial roles in the development of Chinese education in visual art and visual culture in the 20th century. Towards the end of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century, the main concept of contemporary art education in the West is largely based on the contemporary theory of visual culture and visual communication, including the notion of today's iconological theory, or the picture theory. The influence of this new theory can be seen in Qiu Zhijie's course. In it, signs,

images, and the scenery of the West Lake were all regarded as visual cultural products, or texts of visual culture. The new theory of visual culture from the West broadens the concept about what to teach in China today.

In the meantime, the new theory also deepens the significance of contemporary Chinese education in visual culture, which can be seen in Qiu's use of the notion "iconology" in the sense of W.J.T. Mitchell, who borrowed the concept of "linguistic turn" from Richard Rorty's historical study of philosophy and formed his own concept "pictorial turn" (W. Mitchell, 1994, p. 11). Qiu's course, as a visual cultural course based on iconology and semiotics, indicated the "turn" from reading written text to interpreting visual text, by focusing on the signs of the scenic images of the West Lake, such as the tower and the love story behind the tower. Furthermore, Qiu's interpretation went deep into the old values of the Chinese literati culture and explored the mentality of the educated elite of the past, in contrast to the mass culture in today's commercialized society. His course not only provided a new understanding of today's Chinese culture but also a new way of thinking in interpreting images in the context of today's mass culture.

Regarding how to teach, I consider the localization of modern Western art theory in Qiu's teaching most important. The localized new theories of iconology, semiotics, and visual culture demonstrate the Western influence on the "turn" of direction in art education from the traditional training of studio techniques and skills to the modernist fostering of individual creativity and then to the postmodern and contemporary understanding of the value of visual culture.

Although this turn is a small part of a much bigger change in China today, this turn indeed helps Chinese students with their understanding of the value of Western art theory, with shaping a new education system in China, and with bringing China closer to the international community, culturally and ideologically. In my opinion, this is the significance of the Western influence on Chinese education in visual culture today.

Appendix 6

Consent Forms and Permission Letters

Consent to Participate in Art Education Study

This is to state that I agree to participate in a program of research being conducted by Mr. Lian Duan under the supervision of Dr. David Pariser of the Department of Art Education of Concordia University. Contact info: 152-0124-2398 in China and 514-935-9067 in Canada, e-mail <lianduanxh@gmail.com>.
我同意参加加拿大康科迪亚大学美术教育系段炼的研究，联系方式如上。

A. Purpose 目的
I have been informed that the purpose of the research is a study of Western influence on contemporary Chinese art education. 我已知悉这是关于美术教育的影响研究。

B. Procedures 程序
I have been informed that I will be interviewed in the summer of 2009 in China by Mr. Lian Duan and I will talk about my experiencing of studying art as a student and/or teaching art as a professor in China. 我将与今夏在中国接受段炼的访谈。

C. Risks and Benefits 风险与惠利
There is no any risk of participation, and the benefit could be mentioning the name of the interviewee in the research.本研究毫无风险，我的姓名可能会被引用。

D. Conditions of Participation 参加研究的条件
I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at anytime without negative consequences.我已知我可以退出此项研究。

I understand that my participation in this study is non-confidential, and my identity will be revealed in study results when it is needed.我已知我的参与是公开的。

I understand that the data from this study may be published.我已知研究结果会发表。

I HAVE CAREFULLY STUDIED THE ABOVE AND UNDERSTAND THIS AGREEMENT. I FREELY CONSENT AND VOLUNTARILY AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY. 我细读了以上条款，并同意自愿参与研究。

NAME 姓名 _____

SIGNATURE 签名 _____
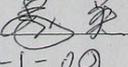
DATE 日期 _____8-1-09_____
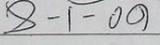
If at any time you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact Adela Reid, Research Ethics and Compliance Officer, Concordia University, at (514) 848-2424 x 7481 or by e-mail at <areid@alcor.concordia.ca>.
若有疑问，可联系上述人士。

Consent form signed by Professor Yi Ying, August 1, 2009.

Consent to Participate in Art Education Study

This is to state that I agree to participate in a program of research being conducted by Mr. Lian Duan under the supervision of Dr. David Pariser of the Department of Art Education of Concordia University. Contact info: 152-0124-2398 in China and 514-935-9067 in Canada, e-mail <lianduanxh@gmail.com>.
我同意参加加拿大康迪亚大学美术教育系段炼的研究，联系方式如上。

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I understand that my participation in this study is non-confidential, and my identity will be revealed in study results when it is needed.我已知我的参与是公开的。

I understand that the data from this study may be published.我已知研究结果会发表。

I HAVE CAREFULLY STUDIED THE ABOVE AND UNDERSTAND THIS AGREEMENT. I FREELY CONSENT AND VOLUNTARILY AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.. 我细读了以上条款，并同意自愿参与研究。

NAME 姓名 _王春辰_

SIGNATURE 签名 _王春辰_

DATE 日期 _6月1日_

If at any time you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact Adela Reid, Research Ethics and Compliance Officer, Concordia University, at (514) 848-2424 x 7481 or by e-mail at <areid@alcor.concordia.ca>.
若有疑问，可联系上述人士。

Consent form signed by Dr. Wang Chunchen, June 1, 2009.

Consent to Participate in Art Education Study

This is to state that I agree to participate in a program of research being conducted by Mr. Lian Duan under the supervision of Dr. David Pariser of the Department of Art Education of Concordia University. Contact info: 152-0124-2398 in China and 514-935-9067 in Canada, e-mail <lianduanxh@gmail.com>.
我同意参加加拿大康科迪亚大学美术教育系段炼的研究，联系方式如上。

A. Purpose 目的
I have been informed that the purpose of the research is a study of Western influence on contemporary Chinese art education. 我已知悉这是关于美术教育的影响研究。

B. Procedures 程序
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I understand that my participation in this study is non-confidential, and my identity will be revealed in study results when it is needed.我已知我的参与是公开的。

I understand that the data from this study may be published.我已知研究结果会发表。

I HAVE CAREFULLY STUDIED THE ABOVE AND UNDERSTAND THIS AGREEMENT. I FREELY CONSENT AND VOLUNTARILY AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.. 我细读了以上条款，并同意自愿参与研究。

NAME 姓名 _何贵彦_

SIGNATURE 签名 _何贵彦_

DATE 日期 _六月二日_   _June 2, 2009_

If at any time you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact Adela Reid, Research Ethics and Compliance Officer, Concordia University, at (514) 848-2424 x 7481 or by e-mail at <areid@alcor.concordia.ca>.
若有疑问，可联系上述人士。

Consent form signed by Mr. He Guiyan June 2, 2009.

YAHOO! MAIL
Classic
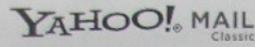
Re: 段炼的邮件   Monday, November 14, 2011 11:23 PM
From: "lvpeng60@sina.com" <lvpeng60@sina.com>
To: "Lian Duan" <lianduanxh@yahoo.com>

段炼：

来信很高兴。

关于使用我的书的图片没有问题，这对推广中国艺术史有很好的作用。

如果可能，我们可以共同在加拿大重要的美术馆策划一次中国当代艺术的展览，你看看有无这样的机会。

吕澎

----- Original Message -----
From: Lian Duan <lianduanxh@yahoo.com>
To: lvpeng60@sina.com, lvpen@21.cn.com, lvpen@21cn.com
Subject: 段炼的邮件
Date: 2011-11-15 11:35:36

吕澎兄好。
很高兴刚才同兄电话短聊。
恭喜兄最近做的大展和主持的年会。
求教一事：
前两年夏天我们在杭州小聚时，兄曾说可使用兄大作中的图片。我最近在写一篇文章，希望从兄的几部书中翻拍一些作品，大约五幅左右。因在国外讲究版权，需要说明图片的出处。所以希望兄能回复电邮，就说可以翻拍大作里的图片，并请在电邮末尾敲打出兄之大名。
蒙特利尔美术馆办展一事，是个好主意，我2月或5月回国，届时我们详谈。
谢谢，并颂
万事如意。
段炼

Permission Letter from Professor Lu Peng, November 14, 2011.
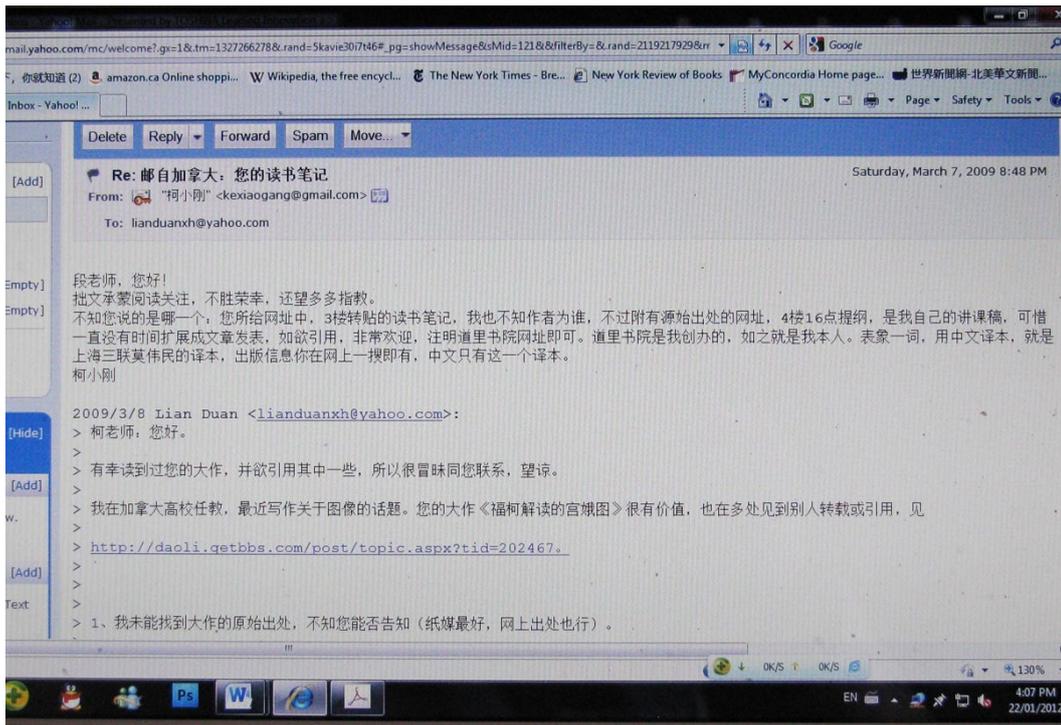
Communication with Professor Ke Xiaogang, March 7, 2009.
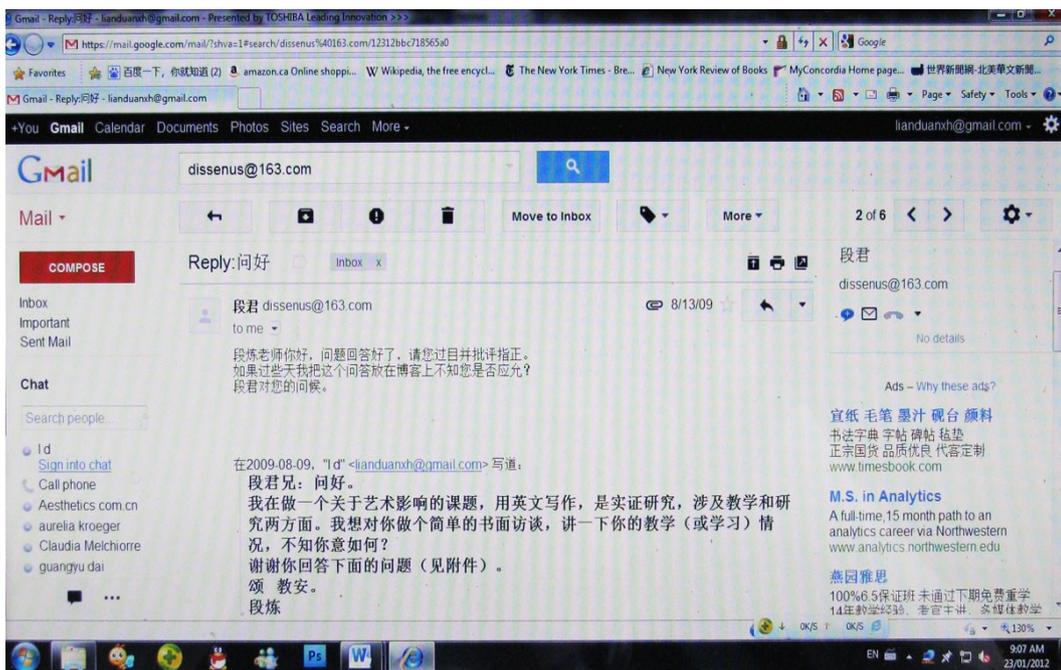
Communication and Permission from Mr. Duan Jun, August 13, 2009.

Glossary

The short definitions of the keywords below are contextualized in this dissertation, and therefore not necessarily encyclopedic definitions.

Gaze: Taking its connotations from Lacanian and Foucauldian theories, this term refers to visual communication in the sense of identity, sexual objectification, power, and so forth.

Image: An important subject of visual cultural study, this term refers to not only what an artist creates, but also all kinds of visual product.

Localization: This term refers to the Chinese adoption of Western art theory for local needs, with changes and even distortion.

Misreading: Literally, this term is about a reader's misunderstanding of a text or image due to language, knowledge, and/or cultural barriers. In the context of this study, misreading is a critical term refers to mistranslation, unintentional misreading, and purposeful misreading.

Representation: This terms is about the use of signs, either image or language, to stand for other things. Since the time of Plato, the debate around this concept has been about the truthfulness of representation. However, since the postmodern era of the late 20th century, the debate has extended to the artist's role, namely, presence and/or absence, in representation.

Abstract beauty	抽象美
Anxiety	焦虑
Appearance	外观
Arnheim Rudolf	阿恩海姆
Art education	艺术教育
Avatar	阿凡达
Berger John	伯格
Bell Clive	贝尔
CAFA	中央美术学院
Case study	个案研究
Chineseness	中国性
Communication	交流、传播
Conceptual art	观念艺术
Confucianism	儒家思想
Confusion	迷惑
Contemporary art	当代艺术
Context	语境
Cross-culture	跨文化
Cultural Revolution	文化大革命
Danto Arthur	丹托
DBAE	以学科为基础的艺术教育

Formal beauty	形式美
Formalism	形式主义
Foucault Michel	福科
Freud	弗洛伊德
Fuller Peter	福勒
Gaze	凝视
Globalization	全球化
Gombrich Ernst	贡布里希
Greenberg Clement	格林伯格
Iconology	图像学
Identity	身份
Image	图像
Imitation	模仿
Influence	影响
Inscape	意境
Interview	访谈
Jung G.C.	荣格
Kline Melanie	克莱恩
Lacan Jacques	拉康
Las Meninas	宫娥
Localization	本土化
Look	目光
Marxist	马克思主义
McDonaldization	麦当劳化
Methodology	方法论
Misinterpretation	误释
Misreading	误读
Mistranslation	误译
Mitchell W.J.T	米歇尔
Modernism	现代主义
Panofsky Erwin	潘诺夫斯基
Parody	戏仿
Perspective	透视、视角
Pictorial turn	图像转向
Postmodernism	后现代主义
Power	权力
Procedure	程序
Psychoanalysis	精神分析
Relevance	相关性
Representation	再现
Plato	柏拉图
Objectification	物化
SAFA	四川美术学院
Significant form	蕴意形式

Songzhuang　　　　宋庄
Spectator　　　　　观画者
Stars　　　　　　　星星画会
Taoism　　　　　　道家思想
Visual culture　　　视觉文化
Voyeurism　　　　　偷窥
Winnicott D.W.　　温尼科特
XCU　　　　　　　西南财经大学
ZAFA　　　　　　　中国美术学院