

ROUTLEDGE STUDIES IN THE MODERN HISTORY
OF ASIA

Museums in China

Power, politics and identities

Tracey L-D Lu



Contents

<i>List of illustrations</i>	xii
<i>Preface</i>	xiv
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xviii
<i>List of abbreviations</i>	xix
1 China between 1840 and 1949	1
2 Missionaries and early museums	19
3 Social elites and early museums	62
4 Museums in modern state formation	89
5 Museums under the communist state	112
6 Ecomuseums, ethnicity and the management of intangible cultural heritage	140
7 Museums, tourism and local cultural changes	168
8 Museums in a changing China	196
<i>Bibliography</i>	217
<i>Index</i>	234

Illustrations

Figures

2.1	Museums discussed in the book	20
2.2	The exhibition hall of antiquities at the Heude Museum	25
2.3	The Heude Museum building	38
2.4	The exhibit showing the East and West road and transportation in Guangzhiyuan in 1947	46
2.5	A map showing different countries of the world at Guangzhiyuan in the 1940s	46
2.6	The entrance of the Guangzhiyuan Museum in Jinan, Shandong Province	48
2.7	The buildings of the Hoang Ho Pai Ho Museum	55
3.1	The NCBRAS building	72
3.2	The south building of the Nantong Museum	81
4.1	Locations within the Forbidden City mentioned in the text	93
5.1	The organizational structure of public museums in mainland China	122
6.1	Group dance performed by the villagers and joined by visitors	146
6.2	A house in the village	147
6.3	A villager showing traditional weaving skills to visitors	148
6.4	The ecomuseum at the Dang village, Guizhou Province	149
6.5	The centre of the Tei village with one of its drum towers	152
6.6	The timber store huts of the Tei village	155
6.7	A roofed bridge at the Tei village	156
7.1	The land in Wei village used to grow grass to feed camels	179
7.2	The new houses in Qu village along the road to the grottoes	183
7.3	The tamped-earth houses in Tang village	185
7.4	The Tsa people burning incense to venerate the big Buddha	189
7.5	The Tsa people performing a local music-opera	190
7.6	Another group of farmers in a 'self-entertaining society'	190
8.1	A small family showroom in Shanghai	202
8.2	The entrance of the Jianchuan Museum Cluster	203

Tables

1.1	Some leading scholars who contributed to early museums in China	7
2.1	Identifiable visitors to the Heude Museum between 1932 and 1946	27–35
5.1	Quantitative fluctuations of museums and national events in mainland China	118
5.2	Classifications of museums in mainland China between 1949 and 1979	124
6.1	Industrialization and urbanization in mainland China since 1978	141
6.2	Comparative data of Guangdong, Shanghai, Guizhou and Gansu	142
6.3	Informants interviewed to study the ecomuseums in Guizhou	145
7.1	Interviewed informants in the Tsa district	172–3
8.1	Classifications of museums in mainland China today	201

Preface

Museum? That's for those who can read *fan* books, not for me.

(Comment from a taxi driver in Hong Kong¹)

One day in 2010, I was rushing to attend an opening ceremony of a temporary exhibition organized by a public museum in Hong Kong. When I told the taxi driver my destination, he gave me the aforementioned comment. He used the term *fan*, which roughly means 'foreign' in Chinese. As Hong Kong was an English colony from 1841 to June 1997, as English has been (one of) the official language(s) in Hong Kong since the colonial era, and as the occurrence of public museums in Hong Kong began in the late nineteenth century, I was surprised to learn that a member of Hong Kong society in 2010 still regarded museums as a place only for those able to understand 'foreign' literature.

However, on consideration, the taxi driver's perception of museums as a place only for the well educated in the context of Hong Kong² reflects the history of museums in China, where many early museums were indeed set up and controlled by social elites from Western countries. Furthermore, his comment reveals that today's museum, as a public institution, is irrelevant or even 'alienating' to a grass-roots individual. Thus his comment raises several anthropological and museological questions: as the majority of museums are funded by taxpayers' money, is it necessary and possible for museums to become more socially inclusive? Or, do the majority of people need museums? If they do not, then is it socially fair to use public funds to serve only the elite of society? Further, what were/are the driving force(s) for certain individuals in the past and in the present to establish and operate museums in China, the majority of which are costly and non-profit-making? Do the founding and management of museums in mainland China differ from their counterparts in Europe and other countries? What can we learn from the similarities and differences? Who were/are the main stakeholders of these museums, what roles have they been playing, and how have they been using museum as a mechanism for their needs and objectives? What were the social, economic and political functions of museums in the past, have these functions changed since the last century, and if yes, why and how? Are the occurrence and changes in museum structures and functions shaped by,

and do they reflect, the social and cultural changes in mainland China in the past 130 years, and if so, in what aspects? How is museum management related to heritage management? These questions should be addressed.

There are various definitions of 'museum'. Some argue that a museum is an 'empowering institution'; others say that it is 'a building to house collections of objects for inspection, study and enjoyment' (cited in Alexander and Alexander 2008: 1–2; Harrison 2005). According to the International Council of Museums (ICOM), a museum is

a non-profit, *permanent institution* in the service of society and its development, *open to the public*, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the *purposes of education, study and enjoyment*.

(ICOM 2007: 1, author's emphasis)

The ICOM definition, however, is not always true in reality. First of all, 'heritage' is defined and constructed in different contexts and for different needs, and what can be collectable 'heritage' in a museums depends on who control(s) the discourse and the museum. Waterfield (2003) has pointed out that only items from social elites and the kings of England were displayed in the early museums, where the ordinary public was to be educated in the process of gazing and admiring (Waterfield 2003), and their loyalty to the ruling class was also subtly cultivated.

Second, because the construction and management of museums require collection, substantial funding, a permanent (or at least stable) space and human resources, a museum has long been viewed as an institution belonging to the state and/or the social elite only, and as a place to provide 'authorized' interpretation of and discourse concerning the culture, the nature and the people of a given area within a given period of time, to legitimate the power of the socially privileged, and 'to reinforce for some the feeling of belonging and for others the feeling of exclusion' (Bennett 1995; Bourdieu and Darbel 1991: 112). As will be illustrated by examples in this book, many museums are in fact 'in the service of' the interests of certain social segments instead of the whole society.

Based on my studies in mainland China and Hong Kong, I define a museum as *a stable social institution open to the public, in which material items of nature, culture(s), and/or physical remains of human beings are selectively collected, (re)organized, (re)interpreted and presented to the public through exhibition and other approaches, in order to convey and promote the values and discourse of certain social segments and to serve their interests*. Here, 'stable' means that a museum is built to last, not as a temporary institution for a few months or a few years; and the term 'culture', as defined by Geertz, is a set of learned ideas, plans, rules and behaviours by members of the society (1973: 44). Thus, items kept and used in museums are in fact materialized ideas, rules, plans and behaviours of certain group(s) of human beings, including items from nature and items created by human beings, for all these items reflect the ideas, values,

behaviours, plans, perceptions and ideologies of past and/or present human beings. Further, the same material in different cultural contexts can have completely different meanings and be interpreted differently in museums.

As museums can be used to serve the interests of various social segments, different stakeholders, ranging from the nation-state and social elites to ethnic groups and religious organizations, have been participating in the building and management of museums. These stakeholders may play different roles as '*agent*' (Bourdieu 1977), and the museums they build are instruments of competition in promoting their values and beliefs, some in a subtle way, others in a more explicit and even aggressive manner, as illustrated by cases in the following chapters.

Based on the founding and managing agencies and the contents of exhibitions and other activities, the origin and development of museums in China from the late nineteenth century to the present can be divided into three phases. Phase I is marked by the occurrence of the early museums and museology in China from the late nineteenth century to 1949, with foreign social elites, missionaries or Chinese governments of different levels, or Chinese scholars, as founding and managerial agents. Phase II is from 1949 to the 1980s, when the majority of museums were controlled by the Chinese state and/or local governments or agents of governments; Marxism and Maoism were the only ideological framework in museums, and there were localized studies of museology and museography. Phase III is from the 1980s to the present, characterized by the significant increase in number and the thematic diversification of museums, the occurrence of ecomuseums and private museums, and the development of museology and museography in the context of globalization and 'modernization' as promoted by the Chinese state.

Hundreds of articles and books on China's museums have been published since the 1980s, describing the history and exhibitions of certain museums, museum professionals, the classification and management of museums, including visitor studies and marketing, as well as the educational roles of museums (e.g. Shan J.X. 2011; Shi 2005; Song B.Y. 2009; Su 2008; Wang H.J. 1990, 2005, among many others). This book is not a comprehensive review of museums and museological studies in mainland China, but focuses on several issues. Chapter 1 summarizes the cultural context when the earliest museums were established in mainland China, and introduces the most important stakeholders in this process. Chapter 2 outlines the establishment, management and functions of the early museums in mainland China from the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth century by Western missionaries, and discusses how museums served as an implement of religious and political power. Chapter 3 comparatively examines the agency of Western and Chinese secular social elites in the process of museum development in mainland China, and the legacy of their works. Chapter 4 reviews the growth of museums from the 1910s to the late 1940s in mainland China in the process of the formation of the Republic of China, and discusses the political, ideological, social and economic functions of museums in different phases of the modern state formation. Chapter 5 discusses

museums as a political and ideological implement in mainland China from 1949 to the 1980s. Chapter 6 studies the ecomuseum in Guizhou and its role on economic development and the management of intangible cultural heritage. Chapter 7 is another case study on the impact of a museum as a touristic destination upon the local culture and communities in rural Northwest China. Finally, Chapter 8 discusses museological and relevant issues in twenty-first-century China.

The content and data of this book are from my experience as a museum curator in mainland China in the mid- to late 1980s, ideas and thoughts accumulated in my teaching, research and student supervision since 2000 at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and information collected through archive studies, participant observation and interviews in mainland China. To protect the informants, the names of the persons mentioned in the book are not their real names.

Notes

- 1 The original comment was in Cantonese and translated by the author. *Fan* is an old-fashioned Cantonese term, meaning 'foreign'.
- 2 As English was the only official language from the 1840s to 1997 and remains one of the two official languages (the other one being Chinese) after 1997 in Hong Kong, and is widely used in the government and the education system, being able to read English is viewed as being 'well educated' by many grass-roots members of society. When claiming that they are not well educated, they often say: 'I have not learnt/cannot understand [much] English.'

Acknowledgements

It would have been impossible to complete this book without the help of so many persons. First and foremost, I would like to thank colleagues in the Department of Anthropology, the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Being trained as an archaeologist, I have learnt enormously from colleagues since joining the department in 2000, particularly from Professors Tan Chee Beng, Joseph Bosco, Gordon Mathews, Maria Tam and Sidney Cheung, on key concepts, theories and field methods of cultural anthropology; all of these have significantly shaped my museum studies. I wholeheartedly appreciate their unfailing collegueship and support over these years.

I am deeply indebted to all my informants, including museum curators, managers and docents, and members of the communities of the field sites, for their valuable information and unselfish help and guidance. I am also very grateful to Professor Xia Zhengkai of Peking University, Professors Fu Xianguo, Liang Zhonghe and Zhang Xuelian of the Institute of Archaeology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences; Professor Fang Hui of Shandong University, Professor Yang Po of the Shandong Provincial Museum, Dr Duan Ying of Zhongshan University, and many scholars who have helped my work on this book. I would also like to thank Ms Marion Bourvier for translating a substantial amount of French archives into English and helping with many other aspects. I also deeply appreciate the efforts made by the editors at Routledge in producing this book, and the very inspiring and helpful comments given by two anonymous reviewers.

Finally, the fieldwork described in this book has been partly funded by the top-up funding of RGC project provided by the Chinese University of Hong Kong (No. 4440369) and partly funded by the Research Grant Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (CUHK No. 450410), and I greatly appreciate the financial aid I have received.

Tracey L-D Lu
The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong
May 2013

Abbreviations

AAP	Association for Antiquity Preservation (Baocun Guwu Xiejinhui)
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
HHPHM	The Hoang Ho Pai Ho Museum
IAE	Institute of Antiquity Exhibition (Guwu Chenlie Suo)
ICOM	International Council of Museums
NCBRAS	North-China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society
RAS	Royal Asiatic Society
SACH	State Administration of Cultural Heritage
SLSS	Shanghai Literary and Scientific Society

1 China between 1840 and 1949

Though antiquity collection began at least 3200 years ago (Lu J.M. 2009), the establishment of museums between the 1860s and the 1930s in mainland China, Hong Kong and Macao is a result of external and internal dynamics between different local and foreign social segments. To understand why and for what purposes museums were established in China, who were the key players, and why there were different causal factors for the founding of museums, as well as the legacies and influences of the early museums not only on museology but also on social sentiments such as the senses of superiority or inferiority, envy and gratitude (Kolm 1995), nationalism and individual and collective identities in contemporary China – to understand all this, we must first understand China, albeit briefly, in this period of time.

China between 1940 and 1949

This period has been considered by many scholars as probably the most chaotic period in the history of China, in terms of economy, political structure, social stability and the relations between China and other countries (e.g. Liang Q.C. 1916; Qian 1995; Yan F. 1896). The growth of population and a decrease of arable land plus a higher frequency of natural disasters resulted in the diminishing of farming returns and worsened the living standard of ordinary people (Fairbank and Goldman 2006), and caused famines, diseases and the deaths of people in many regions (Chen A.Y. 1998). To make things worse, the Qing court and the succeeding governments taxed farmers heavily, because they desperately needed money to pay indemnities to foreign powers after being defeated, or for the cost of wars between warlords (Feng R. 1929; Wu T.C. 1957). Sometimes farmers and ordinary urban residents were forced not only to pay tax for the current year but also to pay tax provisions for several succeeding years (Feng R. 1929), and their lives were made even worse.

In addition, a major economic, social and political blow to China and its people between the 1770s and the early nineteenth century was the opium trade, which was a monopoly controlled by the East India Company from 1773 to 1834, after which the opium was smuggled into China by merchants of various Western countries (Qian 1995). British merchants were the major carriers, but

American merchants also played a significant role in this highly unethical trade, as opium was an ideal substitute for silver to trade with tea and silk from China, and the American merchants brought opium from Turkey to China at least from 1804 onwards, making enormous profits from it (Downs 1968).

The opium trade resulted in the outflow of China's silver and the loss of the labour force and family property, worsening the living and health conditions of many Chinese even more (Qian 1995). Further, the incoming of foreign technologies, finance and factories also caused the destruction of local craftsmanship and markets in many rural regions, though it also facilitated industrial development in some cities and towns and the Westernization of the economic and social systems in China (Chen A.Y. 1998; Fairbank and Goldman 2006).

This period also witnessed a series of wars between China and the West. There were the two Opium Wars, from 1839 to 1842 and from 1856 to 1860 respectively; the war between China and France from 1883 to 1885; the first Sino-Japanese war, from 1894 to 1895; the Boxer War in 1900; and the second Sino-Japanese war, from 1937 to 1945 (Fairbank and Goldman 2006; Qian 1995). Apart from the last, China was defeated in all these wars and had to pay substantial amounts of indemnity, raised by squeezing its already poor people, and to cede its territories to Britain, Japan and Russia (Fairbank and Goldman 2006; Qian 1995). In addition, the continuous defeats caused widespread stress, frustration and demoralization in society in China at the time (Fairbank and Goldman 2006).

With the above causal factors, plus a weak Qing government led by several incompetent emperors and corrupt and demoralized officials, it is not surprising to see many domestic rebellions occurring between 1840 and 1949 in mainland China, including the Taiping Uprising from 1851 to 1864, the Nian (or Nien) Rebellion from 1853 to 1868, the Chinese Muslim Uprising in Southwestern and Northwestern China from 1855 to 1873, the Boxer Rebellion from 1898 to 1901, as well as many other small-scale uprisings (Fairbank and Goldman 2006; Franke 1970). The beginning of the twentieth century witnessed civil wars between local warlords from the 1910s to the 1930s, and between the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) from 1934 to 1937 and from 1945 to 1949 (Qian 1995). No one knows exactly how many houses were burned down and how many lives were lost in each of these conflicts, but ordinary people must have suffered enormously from the warfare.

Briefly put, the era between 1840 and 1949 is a period of natural and economic disasters, of social and politic instability, of suffering, insecurity, massacre, destruction and, consequently, psychological hopelessness in China. 'It is better to be a dog living in a peaceful time than be a human being living in a period of chaos and wars.'¹ This Chinese proverb reveals the desperation and stress of the ordinary Chinese people at that time. '[W]ith the arrival in force of the West in the mid-nineteenth century, ... it [China] suffered the humiliations of innumerable foreign penetrations of its domestic space and interests' (Womack 2010: 5). 'In these dimensions the long-term foreign invasion of China proved to be a disaster so comprehensive and appalling that we are still incapable of fully

describing it' (Fairbank and Goldman 2006: 189). Many Chinese scholars have described this period as the darkest era in Chinese history, a 'Century of Humiliation', when the nation was at risk of being completely colonized and people were subjected to genocide (e.g. Chen A.Y. 1998; Hu Sheng 1991; Liang Q.C. 1916; Yan F. 1896). This grave concern was expressed in the lyrics of a song by poet Tian Han in 1935: 'The peoples of China are at their most critical time.'²

Powerful social segments

There were powerful social segments playing significant roles in China between 1840 and 1949, including the Qing rulers and officials, many of them also scholars; warlords from 1911 to 1949; the Chinese intellectuals; the political parties occurring after the 1890s, some of which becoming the ruling parties of China after 1911; representatives of the Western states; and the social elite and missionaries from the West, associated with their local converts. In the process of founding the earliest museums in China, the Chinese intellectuals, the Western social elites, the political parties and the missionaries played the most important roles, and were directly responsible for the establishment, management and development of many museums.

Chinese intellectuals

The intellectuals in ancient China consisted of scholar-officials and independent scholars, but the position of members of each group was not fixed and could always change, and the two groups had various connections through social, political, intellectual and kinship ties (Wu and Fei 1975). From the ninth century to the end of the nineteenth century, the ancient states of China had maintained a national examination system, which was the main channel of social mobility. Generally, only male members of society were allowed to participate in three levels of examinations, and if they scored highly, they could enter the ruling class (Qian 1995).

Generally speaking the Chinese intellectuals had learnt Confucianism and accepted the political discourse of the ancient state from childhood. By the seventeenth century China was still quite isolated, and the emperors and the majority of literati considered China as 'the centre of the world', with its own 'advanced' economic, social, political, ideological and academic system. This discourse had shaped the Chinese intellectuals' mindset. However, after defeats by Western powers in several wars from the 1840s to the 1890s, and with all the aforementioned economic, political and social problems to be faced, this sino-centrism, long-existing prior to the 1840s among the intellectuals, was shattered, and heated debates among them were triggered, focusing on how to 'save' the Chinese nation.

The Chinese intellectuals during this period consisted of scholars holding different political and ideological stands. Very briefly, some scholars were very conservative and strongly against 'foreignism' and Westernization. Others

vigorously defended the ideology of Confucianism while accepting social Darwinism and called for reform; these are represented by Kang Youwei (1858–1927) and Liang Qichao (1873–1929) (Grieder 1981). The most extreme group within the intellectuals was very reformist. Represented by Yan Fu (1854–1921), Zhang Binlin (1869–1936) and Gu Jiegang (1893–1980), scholars of this group questioned the values (or usefulness) of Chinese civilization, challenged the authenticity and accuracy of Chinese historic documents, refuted the teaching of Confucianism and traditional values, strongly criticized the nation's bureaucratic, economic, social and military structures, and cried out that China must *change* and learn everything, from technology to education, from the West (e.g. Gu J.G. 2002; Liang Q.C. 1896; Wang Tao 1875; Yan F. 1896).

In 1898, Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao persuaded Emperor Guangxu to implement the Hundred Days' Reform, which eventually failed (Qian 1995). Yan Fu translated classical Western literature into Chinese, including Darwin's book *On the Origin of Species: By Means of Natural Selection*, Thomas Huxley's work *Evolution and Ethics*, Adam Smith's book *Wealth of Nations*, John S. Mill's work *On Liberty* and Herbert Spencer's book *Study of Sociology* (Benjamin 1964), hoping that China could learn from the West. There were other scholars who set up factories, schools and other modern facilities for the sake of strengthening China and educating Chinese people. No matter what actions they took, almost all the Chinese intellectuals strongly believed that China needed reform, and the majority of Chinese people needed education.

As full-time education was a heavy burden for ordinary families, particularly for farmers at that time, more than 90 per cent of the ordinary Chinese could not afford education and were illiterate in imperial China (Twitchett and Fairbank 1978). Consequently, the majority of Chinese people at that time were poorly informed, could hardly participate in the management of social matters, and were often subjected to the power and abuse of the ruling class (Elwell-Sutton 1934).

After being defeated by the Western powers, the Chinese intellectuals strongly believed that educating the public, not only males but also females, was one of the most crucial approaches for the salvation of the nation, as they believed that only knowledgeable people would be able to command the sciences and technologies introduced from the West, along with developing China's own industries, infrastructures, technologies, arms and sciences (e.g. Liang Q.C. 1896; Zhang Jian 1905a, 1905b; Yan F. 1896). Some of the Chinese intellectuals had the chance to go to European countries after the 1840s and visited museums, which seemed to be institutions that could help people to broaden their knowledge and increase their intellectuality, particularly museums on science and technology; therefore, they argued that museums should also be established in China, and that museology should be included in the school curriculum (Ma J.X. 1994).

Chinese intellectuals were very active during the first half of the twentieth century, taking leading roles in the fields of archaeology, the arts, biology, geology and other disciplines, as well as in education and museums. Zhang Jian, a Chinese intellectual, established the first private museum in Nantong, Jiangsu Province, in 1905 (Zhang Jian 1905–13). By the 1930s more than 80 museums

had been founded in mainland China. In 1934, a group of Chinese intellectuals proposed establishing the Museum Association of China, and in 1935 the Association was inaugurated in Peking (today's Beijing; the name 'Peking' was used before 1949 and 'Beijing' after 1949), with several committees in charge of museological studies, museum buildings, exhibitions and publications respectively (Pao 1964). The Charter of the Association was also passed in the same year (Pao 1964). The Association held its first annual meeting in 1936 in Qingdao, Shandong Province, but its activities were soon suspended owing to the outbreak of the anti-Japanese war in 1937 and the following civil war between the Nationalist Party and the CCP (Pao 1964).

China's political parties

At the end of the nineteenth century, the Qing Dynasty lost almost all the economic, administrative and political sovereignty in China, and was almost a puppet of the Western powers led by Britain, France, Germany, Japan, Russia and the USA (Huang D.S. 1966). Although Emperor Guangxu (1875–1908) tried to launch a reform in 1898, his attempt failed because of the opposition of the conservative power led by Empress Dowager Cixi (Huang D.S. 1966). The Qing court was no longer able to lead the country and govern the people.

Very disappointed by the incompetence of the Qing court, some revolutionaries determined to overthrow this polity. One of the most well-known revolutionaries was Sun Wen, or Sun Yat-sen (1866–1925), who formed a political party, Tongmenghui (the United League) in 1905 in Tokyo and was a leading figure in a series of uprisings in 1911 against the Qing rulers. The uprisings were supported by the declaration of independence of many provinces and threatened the Qing Dynasty (Qian 1995). In October 1911 the Qing court in Beijing appointed Yuan Shikai (1859–1916), then the most powerful official and military officer of the Qing Dynasty, to lead Yuan's New Army to attack Sun and his political party. On 1 January 1912, Sun was elected by delegates of the independent provinces to be the first provisional president of the Republic of China, with Nanjing as its capital city. But Sun and his colleges did not have a strong army, so they had to negotiate with Yuan and finally agreed to let Yuan become the provisional president of the newly founded republic, with Peking as its capital. In return, Yuan agreed to force Puyi, the last emperor of the Qing Dynasty, to abdicate (Huang D.S. 1966; Franke 1970).

Yuan Shikai was elected as the president of the Republic of China in 1912, but he suspended the Parliament in 1914 and declared himself 'emperor' of the Empire of China on 12 December 1915. His act immediately triggered widespread rebellions in China, and he was on the throne for only 83 days before being forced to step down on 22 March 1916; he died shortly afterwards (Huang D.S. 1966). After Yuan's death, warlords fought for control of the government in Peking, and China was again in chaos (Huang D.S. 1966).

Dissatisfied with the political situation, Sun Yat-sen established another government and an army in Guangzhou in 1917, and led military campaigns against

the warlords' Beiyang government in Peking. After Sun Yat-sen's death in 1925, Chiang Kai-shek (1887–1975) became leader of the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang). He successfully led the Northern Expedition from 1926 to 1928, and became the president of the reunified Republic of China in 1928 (Huang D.S. 1966). The Nationalist Party ruled China until 1949 when it was forced out to Taiwan by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

The Nationalist Party and the CCP were led by their very powerful respective leaders from the early to the mid-twentieth century, so the values and ideologies of the party leaders actually were the doctrines of their party. The two parties have been governing the Republic of China and the People's Republic of China since the 1920s and 1949 respectively. As all the public museums in mainland China after the 1920s have been managed by the government, the political missions and ideologies of the two parties have played significant roles on the operation and development of museums in mainland China since then. Details of these influences will be discussed in cases in the following chapters.

Secular social elites from the West

Facilitated and encouraged by the opening of ports and other favourable conditions set up by the unequal treaties signed between the Qing court and the Western powers after the first Opium War, substantial numbers of the educated social segment of the West arrived and lived in mainland China from the 1840s to 1949. Based on lists of members of the North-China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (NCBRAS hereafter) in Shanghai from 1858 to 1948 (NCBRAS 1858–1948), they were antiquity collectors, archaeologists, educators, anatomists, geographers, geologists, historians, journalists, medical doctors, naturalists, sinologists, palaeontologists, university postgraduate students and teachers from Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Russia, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the USA, as well as other countries. They lived and worked in mainland China, particularly in Canton, Fujian, Shanghai, Shantung, Tianjin and Peking. Many of their works in the field of arts, antiquarianism, archaeology, biology, ethnology, geology and zoology, as well as other natural studies, were foundations of the establishment and management of early museums in China, particularly in terms of collection, exhibition, publication and academic exchange between museums. Table 1.1 lists the most influential and well-known scholars in this period of time, whose works directly or indirectly contributed to the founding and contents of China's early museums. Their impetus for working in mainland China varies and will be discussed in detail in Chapters 2 and 3.

Missionaries from the West

Missionaries from the West were another very influential social segment in mainland China then, even in the establishment of museums. As described by Alcock (1869), Forsyth (1912), Moule (1881) and Philip (1840a, 1840b), while the primary consideration of the Western states then was commerce and ownership of

Table 1.1 Some leading scholars who contributed to the founding and/or contents of early museums in China

Name	Nationality	Profession	Period in China	Main achievement
Andersson, Johan G. (1874–1960)	Swedish	Archaeologist and geologist	1914–24, 1937	Discovered the first Neolithic culture, the Yangshao culture in China; also conducted survey at Zhoukoudian leading to the discovery of Peking Man from 1926 onwards; participated in archaeological survey in northwest China in 1923–4; published many books, the most famous being <i>Children of the Yellow River</i> .
Black, Davidson (1884–1934)	Canadian	Palaeoanthropologist	1919–34	Played a key role in the discovery and research of Peking Man; founding director of the Cenozoic Research Laboratory of the Geological Survey of China in 1928.
Hedin, Sven Anders (1865–1952)	Swedish	Geographer and explorer	1893–7, 1899–1902, 1906–7, 1927–35	Led four expeditions in Central Asia, including areas of northwestern China, drawing over 500 maps, and collected many archaeological and scientific data.
Karlgren, Klas B.J. (1889–1978)	Swedish	Sinologist, founder of Swedish sinology	1910–12, 1922	Studied classical Chinese, 24 Chinese dialects, bronze antiquities, literatures, religions and rituals in China, translated Chinese classical literature into English, and published many books/articles on China studies and a Chinese dictionary.
Pryer, William Burgess (1843–90)	British	Entomologist	1870s	Founding director of the Museum of the North-China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society in Shanghai.
Weidenreich, Franze (1873–1948)	German	Anatomist and physical anthropologist	1935–41	Studied fossils of Peking Man and published several books on this topic.
Wylie, Alexander (1815–87)	British	Missionary and sinologist	1846–77	Founding member of the Shanghai Literary and Scientific Society in 1857.

Sources: Xia (1985); Knight (1997?).

territories and resources in China, the latter including minerals, silk, tea and other raw materials and products, the main goal of Western missionaries was to carry out God's order to 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature' (Anon. 1870: 44).

According to Lin R.Q. (2010), the idea of Christianity, specifically Nestorian Christianity, was introduced into China as early as AD 635. Bishop Giesen of the Roman Catholic Church, residing in Jinan City, Shandong Province, China in the 1910s, argued that missionary expeditions in Asia could be traced back to the thirteenth century and stated the goal of missions:

As the result of the mighty movement in the direction of Foreign Missions that swept over Christendom at the time of the Crusades, Missionaries of the Franciscan and Dominican Orders came to China. Missionary interest was especially directed to the great Tartar Kingdom by the siege of Leignitz in Silesia (1241) by the Mongols. There was, however, no Crusade preached against them, but an effort was made to Christianize them and so prevent the recurrence of their wild and warlike raids.

(E. Giesen 1912: 161, translated into English by W.M. Schultz)

So it seems that one of the objectives of expanding Christianity to Asia was to ensure the safety of Christian polities through cultural assimilation, or 'taming' the 'others'. After the crusades, Spanish St Francis Xavier, the founder of the Society of Jesus, attempted to enter China in 1552. Three decades later, in 1582, Italian Matteo Ricci SJ arrived in China followed by many more missionaries from various countries and different doctrines, who were able to convert some Chinese officials and gentry in the following decades (Lin R.Q. 2010; Wei Q.X. 1958).

Many scholars have studied the history of missionaries in China (e.g. Gu C.S. 1981; Gu Y.L. 1992; Hsia 2009; Latourette 1929; Lin R.Q. 2010; Lu S.Q. 1966; Michie 1893; Mungello 1994; National Archive Library and the Department of History, Fujian Normal University 1996; Wei Q.X. 1958; Zhang and Liu 1987), offering diverse views from both the Western and Chinese perspectives, and it is unnecessary to go into details here as the history of missionaries is not the focus of this book. However, it is worthwhile to briefly compare and analyse the relationship between the missionaries and the Chinese government and Chinese people before and after the 1860s, because the changed perceptions of the Chinese state and the people towards Western missionaries, along with the different social and political status of the latter after the 1860s, was one of the driving forces for the establishment of museums in mainland China.

When the early missionaries like Francis Xavier, Matteo Ricci and Alexander Valignani arrived in China in the sixteenth century, the Chinese state was still relatively powerful and could determine whether, when and where the missionaries could stay and do their work. The early missionaries were very cautious, worked extremely hard to learn Chinese languages and cultures, and conformed to Chinese customs as much as possible when practising Christianity. At the

beginning Fathers Ruggieri and Ricci even wore Buddhist monks' gowns and identified themselves as monks, although a few years later they dressed as Chinese scholars because of the bad reputation of the local monks (Ryan 1964). This 'localization' of dressing shows that the early missionaries, facing an unstable situation for their missionary work as the Chinese state could repel them at any time, blurred their 'foreign' identity by dressing as members of the Chinese literati in order to be accepted by the locals, so they could carry out their religious work.

For the same purpose, the early missionaries did not forbid Chinese converts to participate in Confucianism and other folk and state rituals (Lin R.Q. 2010), so their religious teaching did not cause direct conflicts between Christianity and local religions and was not viewed as very 'revolutionary' compared to those coming to China after the 1860s. More importantly, the early missionaries obtained Chinese rulers' endorsement by showing their abilities in astronomy, science and technology, which were useful for the emperors' governance, as stated by a group of high officials of the Qing Dynasty and endorsed by Emperor Kangxi (AD 1654–1722):

Westerners have come from tens of thousands of miles away and have been working on the calendar, making weapons and helping out with diplomatic duties in Russia. They have made a contribution and have not caused problems in different places.... Therefore, the churches and their religious activities should be allowed.

(Emperor Kangxi 1692, cited in Zhang and Liu 1987: 63³)

At that time, the Qing court apparently thought that the missionaries came to China because they admired the Chinese civilization and wanted to contribute to the Chinese state. As pointed out by Hu Shih (1934), missionaries coming to China before the nineteenth century were well-trained scholars and scientists, and their 'great learning, saintly devotion, and kindly manners soon won for them the attention and respect of Chinese scholars, of whom some became their friends, pupils, and converts to their religion' (Hu Shih 1934: 29). In summary, the missionaries in mainland China did not have profound political power and were not viewed as revolutionary, aggressive and/or subversive to the Chinese state, the gentry and/or the people before the 1840s.

Early missionaries mainly worked among the social elite (Lin R.Q. 2010). The French Jesuits did much better in the lower Yangzi River Valley, and by 1664 they preached in 11 provinces and converted 114,200 locals (Zhang and Liu 1987: 60). However, some converts among the Chinese officials had their secular purposes. Xu Guangqi (1562–1633), one of the earliest Chinese Christians and a scholar and prime minister of the late Ming Dynasty in the seventeenth century, wrote to his friend:

Buddhism has been in China 1800 years; but the moral and customs of the nation have continued to deteriorate, and the Buddhist faith has not been

able to produce men of good character. I am convinced that the Christian religion will be able to transform every man into a good and virtuous character, to elevate society to the high level of the best ages of classical antiquity, and to place the government and state upon the solid foundation of everlasting peace and order.

(Cited in Hu Shih 1934: 30)

Apparently, Xu converted to Christianity in order to help the governance of the Chinese state and society; it is unlikely that he would view Christianity as a superpower aiming to overthrow the Chinese state. This is very different from what was in the Western missionaries' minds.

The first serious conflict between missionaries and the Chinese state occurred in the early eighteenth century, as the former forbade Chinese converts to participate in rituals worshipping Confucius, Chinese emperors and their own ancestors. The event was called the Chinese Rites Controversy (Lin R.Q. 2010; Mungello 1994). When Carlo Tommaso de Tournon arrived in China in 1707 and announced the Pope's order forbidding Chinese Christians to participate in any non-Christian rituals, the same Emperor Kangxi viewed this as interference and a threat to the state's ruling power over its citizens, and the ever-expanding nature of Christianity organizations also caused much concern (Zhang and Liu 1987). Thus Emperor Kangxi ordered the deportation of the missionaries and forbade the Chinese from converting to Christianity. Many local Chinese converts also gave up Christianity at that time, as it was difficult for them to abandon Confucius and ancestor worship, as well as other folk and state rituals, or they would have become 'the others' within their own community (Lin R.Q. 2010). Because Christianity at that time was forcing the Chinese converts to make a choice between the Chinese culture and Christianity, it was viewed as 'alien' and caused resentments both in the government and among the non-Christian Chinese, as it was against the values and beliefs of the locals, while the Chinese state viewed this as interference and a threat to its political power.

After being defeated by British, French and other Western powers in the two Opium Wars, the Qing Dynasty (AD 1644–1911) had to sign the Treaty of Nanking (1842), the Treaty of Tianjin (1858) and a 'Supplementary Treaty of Peking' (1860), as well as other unequal treaties. Through these treaties, Hong Kong was ceded to Britain; some 300,000–400,000 square miles of land was ceded to Russia; the Qing Dynasty paid eight million taels of silver to Britain and France as indemnity; the opium trade was legalized; coastal cities were opened as trade ports to Western merchants; foreigners were allowed to purchase property; and extraterritorial rights were granted to foreigners in China (Hu Sheng 1991). Consequently, the Austrians, Belgians, English, French, Germans, Japanese and Russians established more than 30 concessions in 12 big cities in China, including Tianjin, Shanghai, Qingdao, Guangzhou, Xiamen and Hangzhou (Shang and Liu 1996). Thus, many missionaries of various Christian doctrines returned, or came from different Western countries, to China. In the early 1900s in Shantung Province alone, there were Roman Catholics and

Protestants, the latter including American Baptists, American Episcopalians, American Presbyterians from the north and south respectively, the Church of England, the Dutch Mission, the English Baptist Mission, the Weimar Mission, the United Methodist Mission, the Berlin Mission, Swedish Baptists, the Baptist Zenana Mission, the Light and Hope Mission, the Industrial Mission, etc. (Forsyth 1912). Because the above treaties allowed foreigners to purchase or accept land and properties in China (Shang and Liu 1996), churches, companies, hotels, schools and universities, as well as other public facilities, were built in these concessions, many of which were managed by missionaries and/or social elites from the West, including the earliest museums in Shanghai and Shandong (or Shantung). In other words, the treaties provided physical and legal grounds for the founding of the early museums by foreigners in China.⁴

The primary approaches and attitudes of missionaries before and after the 1840s differed significantly. Before the 1840s foreign missionaries were more or less 'controlled' or regulated by the Chinese state. They were more cautious and did not directly challenge local political and social power, which often consisted of the local gentry and officials of the Chinese state. However, after the 1840s, when they could expand with the political and even military support of the Western powers, some of the missionaries and their Chinese converts thought that they were 'superior' not only to the non-Christian Chinese people but also to the Chinese gentry and the state, and acted according to this perception. This social phenomenon, as well as its consequent impacts on the relations between China and the Western powers, were discussed in length in nine letters dispatched between the British missionaries in Beijing (Peking), the then British Minister in China, Sir Rutherford Alcock (1809–97), and the officials of the British government between December 1868 and July 1869 (Anon. 1870).

In these letters, the British Baptist Missionary Society in Beijing asked the British government to use forceful methods to support British missionaries in preaching in inland China, which was not open to foreigners even according to the unfair treaties. However, French missionaries had gone into inland China by adding a clause to the Chinese version of the Peking Treaty signed between China and France in 1860, 'which has no counterpart in the French text' and was an interpolation (Anon. 1870: 2). However, citing incidents in Che-foo, Wu-chang, Yang-chow, Chin-kiang and Taiwan, Alcock had noticed that the missionaries and their converts had set themselves above the Chinese state, 'and create an *imperium in imperio*' (Alcock 1869: 4, italic original), which had provoked Chinese hostility towards foreigners, and the Chinese authorities and people strongly opposed foreign missionaries' attempts to establish new domiciles in the interior. Thus, he did not recommend the British government to provide force to support the missionaries in this matter (Alcock 1869: 2).

The British missionaries did not agree. They blamed the opium trade and the military aggression of the West for Chinese hostility to foreigners, and argued that 'England, both in its lawful commerce, and its political interests, is only a gainer, never a loser, by the residence among the Chinese of the missionary families' (Anon. 1870: 7). However, they agreed with Alcock that Christianity

'is essentially revolutionary', which, as pointed out by Alcock, was 'a cause of implacable hostility' to the missionaries and their work (Anon. 1870: 27). Another letter from Mr Hammond of the British Foreign Office to the Bishop of Victoria, dated 13 November 1869, also discussed the 'injudicious conduct of the native converts to Christianity' (Anon. 1870: 13). In addition, the missionaries opposed ancestor worship and other Chinese rituals and customs, so they were viewed by the non-Christian Chinese as against traditional Chinese values and Confucianism, and as undermining, or even subverting, the social and ideological structure of the local community (Litzinger 1996; Lu S.Q. 1966; Thompson 1996; Wei Q.X. 1958: 357–9).

The Chinese government at that time was indeed not happy about the missionaries' work in China. A memorandum to Alcock, issued in July 1869 from the Tsung-li Yamen (an office in charge of foreign affairs) of the Qing government, complained that

[M]any missionaries have adopted the Chinese habit without obeying Chinese laws. They thus separate themselves from the people and manifest a superiority. Their converts, improving on this, oppress and insult those who are not of their faith, and learn to oppose the Government.

(Anon. 1870: 12)

As many scholars have discussed, the missionaries' efforts were not only for the advance of Christianity but also for that of the Western powers (e.g. Han 2001; Wei Q.X. 1958). When the first group of Jesuits arrived in China in 1688, one of their tasks was to 'glorify the French King' (Han 2001: 137) through providing knowledge of Western science and technology to the emperors of the Qing Dynasty. In the 1800s, Napoleon was very eager to revive missionary work in Asia, China included, so both Christianity and the French state could be benefited and English influence in this vast region could be weakened (Wei Q.X. 1958: 65–6). As France did not have great commercial interests in China compared to those of England, the French government in the 1840s wanted to use missionary work as a way to increase their influence in China (Wei Q.X. 1958: 317–23). In 1859 French missionaries wanted to build a church in Canton as 'one of the finest souvenirs of France in this distant land' and to 'counter balance the English influence' in the city (cited in Cohen 1963: 130). With the support of the French army and 300,000 francs provided by Napoleon for the project, the missionaries forced the Canton government to give the former site of the Chinese governor general's office for 'a large Gothic structure that loomed over the city as a visible symbol of French power' (Cohen 1963: 130). As pointed out by Wiest (2001a: 44), while the French missionaries believed that French civilization

had a very special role to fulfil in the divine plan of evangelization of the world, the governments of France too often equated the French civilizing role with colonial and economic expansion and regarded missionaries as

agents of their political interests abroad. Otherwise, why would an anticlerical government such as that of the Third Republic continue to promote abroad the French protectorate over all Catholic missions – formally ended with the French Separation Act between state and church of 1905 – and finance their schools and hospitals?

German missionaries conducted a survey on the natural resources in Shantung, which provided information for the German state to build concessions and obtain minerals in Shantung in the early twentieth century (Forsyth 1912). American missionaries also used their knowledge to serve their state, and some of them became diplomats of the USA in China after the 1840s (Wei Q.X. 1958: 64).

From the above data, it is clear that there was competition between missionaries of different doctrines, for example between the Church of England and the French Catholics, to strengthen the influence of their own creed by attracting and retaining more local converts using both coercive and soft power, and preaching in more regions in mainland China. Further, the presence of a group of missionaries in a region symbolized not only the presence of a doctrine of Christianity, but also the advance and influence of the state to which the missionaries belonged and by which they were supported. Thus, competition between Western missionaries was part of the competition between the Western states for power and influence in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century China in order to gain more economic, political and religious interests. This is why, even though the Jesuits were suppressed in France after the French Revolution, their activities in mainland China were supported by the French state (Han 2001). Finally, the missionaries' work in China was supported by the Western states and could directly confront local political institutions for their own economic, social and ideological interests, even 'empower' their Chinese converts to challenge the local people, Chinese gentry and the state (Cohen 1963: 127–31; Lu S.Q. 1966; Michie 1893; National Archive Library and the Department of History, Fujian Normal University 1996; Tsui 2000; Wei Q.X. 1958: 226), provoking hostility from both the Chinese gentry and the ordinary people towards foreigners, including missionaries. Therefore, missionaries had to find ways of preaching effectively, and the construction of museums was one of these methods, as will be discussed in Chapter 2.

Social discourses and movements

There were various powerful local and foreign social segments between 1840 and 1949 in China competing for control over political, social and financial resources, and for their positions in society in order to maximize their own interests and influence the lives of other social segments. The interaction, competition and negotiation of power between these social groups caused various social discourses and movements at that time, which were closely related to the founding of the early museums in mainland China.

Westernization for self-strengthening of the nation

Zhang Zhidong (1837–1909), one of the most powerful scholar-officials in the late nineteenth century, made it very clear: ‘In order to strengthen China and to save the Chinese learning, we must understand the Western learning’ (Zhang Z.D. 1898: 37). This, indeed, was the policy implemented by several leading members of the Qing court, as well as many scholar-officials and intellectuals, from the 1860s to the late 1890s in order to strengthen the nation, so this period is also called the ‘Qing Restoration’, or the ‘Self-Strengthening Movement’ (Fairbank and Goldman 2006), but in Chinese it was called *Yangwu Yundong*, which literally means ‘the Foreign Affairs Movement’.

Elements of this movement included the establishment of Western-style schools in 1904, in which geology, mathematics, education and other disciplines from the West were taught (Li X.Z. 2003), the construction of factories, post offices, railways and other public facilities, the introduction of technologies of mining, manufacturing weapons and other products, the abolition of the imperial national examination system in 1905, and the policy of sending talented young scholars to Europe to study (Fairbank and Goldman 2006; Qian 1995). Yan Fu even proposed the abandoning of Chinese culture, including the written language, and the adoption of everything from the West, or being completely ‘Westernized’ (Yan F. 1896). This is the anti-tradition discourse by scholars of the Doubting Antiquity School, which arose and became popular in mainland China at that time (Fairbank and Goldman 2006; Lu J.M. 2009), and established the ideological and academic foundation for many changes in China after the 1840s. It is unprecedented in the history of China that an assemblage of literati had such a strong desire to learn not only from their own culture but also from other cultures, and to contribute their knowledge to the people and the society.

Museums, being an institution in the West for education, were also part of this Westernization process. In the Hundred Days’ Reform Movement in 1898, founding museums was one of the items on the agenda of the new policy (Ma J.X. 1994). Though it could not be implemented owing to the failure of the Reform (Ma J.X. 1994), changes were certainly on the way. Zhang Jian, a scholar-official, established several schools and the first private museum in Nantong City, Jiangsu Province, in 1905. Details of Zhang Jian and his museum will be discussed in Chapter 3.

After the collapse of the Qing dynasty in 1911, the New Culture Movement occurred in 1915. It was initiated and carried out by Hu Shih (1891–1962), who studied at Cornell and Columbia universities in the USA, and many other Chinese scholars. The spirit of the New Culture Movement was to abandon, or be more critical of, traditional writings and teaching, and adopt plain, day-to-day Chinese (*baihua*) as the medium of communication, as well as sciences, politics and literature styles from the West (Fairbank and Goldman 2006; Qian 1995). The use of plain Chinese in the public domain since the twentieth century has been very important, as it broke the hegemony of classical Chinese, which could

only be understood after a lengthy formal education (Fairbank and Goldman 2006), thus excluding the majority of Chinese from public communication and discourse. Plain Chinese provided a medium that could be used in museums to effectively convey messages to the public, particularly to those who had received limited formal education.

Anti-foreignism and anti-Christianity

Contrary to the Chinese literati who embraced almost everything of Western culture, there was a growth of 'anti-foreignism' and 'anti-Christianity' in the same period in China (Cohen 1963), manifested through the hostility of the Chinese people, gentry and some officials towards foreigners, including missionaries, as well as their Chinese converts and followers. The Boxer Rebellion resulted from this political and social sentiment, but before and after the Boxer Rebellion there were many other small-scale conflicts and instances of bloodshed between Chinese people and/or Chinese officials, and foreigners. Lives and property of both Chinese and foreigners were lost, including those of some missionaries (e.g. Cohen 1963; Lin R.Q. 2010). Cohen (1963) argued that this social sentiment and discourse was mainly due to the influence of Confucianism and Daoism on Chinese intellectuals, some of whom vigorously objected to the 'alien' cultures and religions from the West. But he also admitted that the missionaries abused their position in China as they represented 'a significant threat to the authority of the local official', often demanded 'excessively large indemnities for injuries sustained', and interfered with local official affairs, forcing the Chinese officials to lock up local Chinese who spoke ill of Christianity (Cohen 1963: 127–8, 131–45).

As admitted by some contemporaneous foreign diplomats, missionaries and scholars (e.g. Michie 1893; Philip 1840a), Confucianism was not the main reason for the social sentiment at that time, although the idea of China being the 'centre of the world' did exist in Confucian teaching, and foreigners and foreign cultures were indeed viewed as 'barbarians'. Sinologists and historians have pointed out various causes for the rejection of foreign cultures by certain social segments in China after the 1840s, ranging from the incompatibility of the role of some missionaries as scholars and priests with the aggressiveness of the Western states, to the irreconcilable cultural difference and conflict, and the opium trade carried out by British merchants and supported by the British government (e.g. Lu S.Q. 1966; Michie 1893; Mungello 1994). Further, the behaviour of the Western armies in the two Opium Wars and succeeding events profoundly changed not only the relations and perceptions between China and the Western states, but also the relations between many Chinese and Westerners in mainland China. For example, Tho'Mas (1997) cited a vivid description of the sack of Chusan, a principal island of the Zhoushan archipelagos near the present city of Shanghai, in July 1840 during the first Opium War.

A more complete pillage could not be conceived than took place. Every house was broken open, every drawer and box ransacked, the streets strewn with fragments of furniture, pictures, tables, chairs, grain of all sorts – the whole set off by the dead or the living bodies of those who had been unable to leave the city from the wounds received from our merciless guns.... The plunder ceased only when there was nothing to take or destroy.

(Cited in Tho'Mas 1997)

When there were conflicts between the missionaries and local non-Christian Chinese, the representatives of the Western governments in China often challenged the Chinese government and sometimes demanded exaggerated compensation, as illustrated by the chaos and bloodshed of the French Jesuits and the local Chinese in Tianjin in 1870 (Alcock 1869; National Archive Library and the Department of History, Fujian Normal University 1996). Thus both the Western states and the missionaries were viewed as part of the invasive Western power. Christianity was 'inseparably associated with the humiliation of the empire' (Michie 1893: 5), and became a major target of the hostility of 'all classes' in China, 'since there is no part of the country where mobs cannot be set upon them [the missionaries]' (Michie 1893: 6–7; also Lu S.Q. 1966).

There have been many scholarly works on the Opium Wars and their consequences, as well as on the anti-foreignism and anti-Christianity in China at that time (e.g. Buoye *et al.* 2002; Cohen 1963; Huang D.S. 1966; Ku 2001; Lutz 2001; Wong 2002), so it is unnecessary to go into more details on this topic. But it should be noticed that the consequences of the two Opium Wars, the idea of Westernization and the anti-foreignism and anti-Christianity are all closely related to the founding of museums in mainland China.

Summary

The era between 1840 and 1949 is extremely important in the history of China, as it witnessed the most dramatic and turbulent changes. Faced with unprecedented power and penetration from the West, the traditional economic, social and political structures, ideas, teachings and institutions in mainland China were crushed or modified, and replaced by, or forced to adjust to, new ones from the West as responses of the Chinese state and the literati to the political and social crisis at that time. Economically, the Chinese bourgeoisie began to emerge; socially, some initial factors for a civil society, such as mass media and education not controlled by the government, also occurred; politically, the internal and external conflicts, as aforementioned, particularly the occurrence of the Communist Party and its conflict with the Nationalist Party (Fairbank and Goldman 2006), produced a great impact on Chinese culture and society. The abandonment of the imperial political system of more than 2000 years and the founding of the Republic of China in 1911–12, the abolition of the imperial examination system and the replacement of private teaching by public schools, and the introduction of technologies, ideas and many

public facilities from the West, all happened in this era. Social and ideological influences from the West further increased from 1912 to 1949, as there was 'an unprecedented influx of foreign goods, ideas, and ways, more comprehensive than at any earlier time' (Fairbank and Goldman 2006: 255). The occurrence of the museum as a modern institution is part of the big changes in mainland China during this era.

Some scholars have argued that this period is a transition from a traditional authority based on patrimonialism to a rational-legal authority, a process of modernization (Zarrow 2006), although traces of patrimonialism remain in the political domain after 1911. Others have argued that the discourse of 'modernization' implies a proposal for unilineal evolution and that caution is required regarding whether all the countries and/or societies should go through the same trajectory (Lewellen 2003). Zhang Binglin, a Chinese scholar living in nineteenth-century China, was probably one of the very few to think about this issue, to critique Western modernity, and to propose a 'cultural pluralism', arguing that China should develop its own way of modernization (Ma X. 2011). However, Zhang's argument has not attracted much attention ever since, not even in Chinese academia.

As the aforementioned data have illustrated, this period in China was an era of conflict and convergence of economic, political and ideological interests between the Chinese state and the Chinese people, the Chinese and the Western states, the Chinese state and people and the Western states and people, the religious and secular power within and between the Western and/or the Chinese state, within and between various religious teachings, and between Chinese people themselves, in mainland China. The states and the missionaries from the West played very influential, even decisive roles in all aspects in China. There were also many internal conflicts and dynamics between different segments and political parties within Chinese society. It is in this cultural context that the French, British and American social elites and missionaries established museums in Shanghai, Shandong and Tianjin from the 1860s to the 1920s, to serve their various needs.

This period also witnessed the occurrence of an unprecedented strong sense of nationalism, patriotism and citizenship in China. It was in this period that a collective identity of 'Chinese' was being constructed, mainly through the efforts of Chinese intellectuals and politicians, as a response to the political crisis and military failure, and as an implement of governance. As pointed out by Tsu (2005), a collective identity was necessary for the Chinese state to unify and mobilize Chinese people to fight against threats from outside. In this wave of revolution and discontinuity, in this period of constructing national identity and demarcating 'the others', the museum, a social institution that originated in the West, not only found its footing in China, but also produced substantial impacts on Chinese people and their societies.

Notes

- 1 The original text is in Chinese and was translated by the author.
- 2 The song became the national anthem of the PRC in 1949.
- 3 The original text was in Chinese and was translated by the author.
- 4 Sun Yat-sen and his Nationalist Party wanted to abolish the aforementioned unequal treaties (Wu T.C. 1957), and the Rights Recovery Movement arose for this purpose, but it did not last long owing to the Japanese invasion from 1931 to 1945 (Fairbank and Goldman 2006). It was in 1949 that the Communist Party of China established the People's Republic of China and abolished all the unequal treaties.

2 Missionaries and early museums

Though museums founded by missionaries are not mentioned in some works (e.g. Ma J.X. 1994; Wang H.J. 1990), it is generally agreed that the Zikawei Museum founded by the French Jesuits in Shanghai is the earliest museum in mainland China (SACH 1985; Leung 2000; Pao 1964). However, its founding year is in question. Père Savio (1882–1935), director of the Zikawei Museum from 1929 to 1933 (Piel 1939a), claimed that the museum was founded in 1868 when the founding director Père Heude arrived in Shanghai (Savio 1932). Père Piel, director of the Zikawei Museum in 1939, argued that ‘what constitutes a museum is the collection, not the walls’,¹ and reaffirmed the year 1868 as the founding year. This opinion has been accepted by other scholars (SACH 1985; Leung 2000; Pao 1964).

If collections alone are counted as defining a ‘museum’, then the history of museums needs to be rewritten, as antiquity collection can be traced back to approximately 3200 years ago in China (Lu T. L-D 2009), and at least to 2700 years ago by the Babylonian king in Western Asia (Bahn 1996). A major distinction between a private collector’s house and a traditional museum (vs ‘ecomuseum’) is whether the collection is open to the public in a stable and structured institution. Therefore, the founding of a museum should be marked at least by the establishment of the museum with a director, who will carry out necessary tasks, including the construction of its exhibition building, which provides an essential facility for the museum, and can illustrate the values and contents of the museum to the public.

As Savio (1932) stated, French Jesuit Père Pierre Heude arrived in Shanghai in 1868 and was appointed as museum director in 1872; the construction of the museum building began in 1882 and was completed in 1883. Thus, it is more convincing to set the year 1872 as the founding year of the first museum in mainland China, followed by the Shanghai Museum of the North-China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (the museum of the NCBRAS hereafter) founded in 1874, the Museum of the Shanghai Polytechnic Institution and Reading Room established by both Chinese and Western social elites in Shanghai in 1875, a small museum founded by American Presbyterians in Chefoo (or Zhibu) in Shandong Province in 1876, the Tsingchoufu museum founded by English Protestants in Shandong Province in 1887, and the first private museum,

founded by Chinese scholar and entrepreneur Zhang Jian in Nantong, Jiangsu Province, in 1905. The first national museum of China, the National Museum of Arts, Peiping, was founded in 1914, followed by the Museum of Antiquities, Nanking, in 1915, the Museum Hoang Ho Pai Ho, founded by another French Jesuit, Père Emile Licent, in 1922, and the National Palace Museum, Peiping, in 1924, etc. (Museum Association of China 1936; Forsyth 1912; Piel 1939a) (Figure 2.1). This chapter will focus on the Zikawei Museum, the early museums in Shandong and the Museum Hoang Ho Pai Ho in Tianjin, as they were all founded by Western missionaries and were very influential in contemporaneous mainland China, and some of them were also famous in Asia and Europe at that time. In addition, these museums have left their legacies not only in the field of museology but also in social sentiments in mainland China.

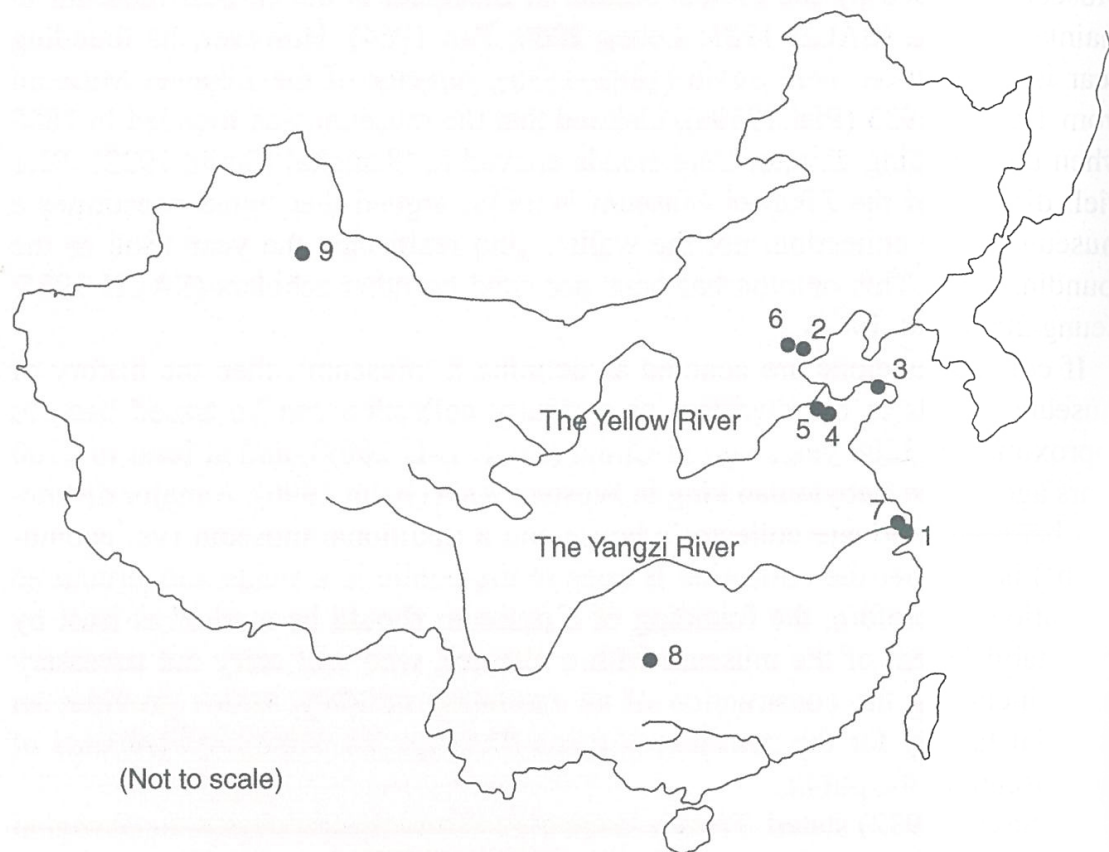


Figure 2.1 Museums discussed in the book.

Notes

- 1 The Zikawei Museum in Shanghai.
- 2 The Hoang Ho Pai Ho Museum in Tianjin.
- 3 The Cheboo Museum in Shandong.
- 4 The Bogutang in Qingzhou.
- 5 The Guangzhiyuan in Jinan.
- 6 The National Palace Museum in Beijing.
- 7 The Nantong Museum in Nantong.
- 8 The Ecomuseum in Guizhou.
- 9 The Grotto Museum in Gansu.

The Zikawei Museum in Shanghai

Why was the first museum established in Shanghai, instead of in Beijing or one of the other big cities in mainland China? To understand this question, it is necessary to briefly look at the political and social context of Shanghai, as well as the French Jesuits in Shanghai from the nineteenth century to the early twentieth century.

Nineteenth-century Shanghai

Located on the east coast where the Yangzi River (Changjiang) flows into the East Sea, Shanghai is the most populous city in China today. Archaeological discoveries indicate that the peopling of Shanghai began approximately 4400 years ago (Li *et al.* 1996). The geographic location of the city facilitates marine and territorial transportation, and the adjacent fertile and populated Yangzi Delta provides a market, rich natural and human resources, and goods and services for both import and export trading. Shanghai was a busy port for domestic and marine trading from the twelfth century onwards (Wu Y.P. 1994). It was also a centre for the trading of silk, cotton and other local products from the nineteenth to the early twentieth century in China, so it was described as 'gold in the Yangtze mud' and attracted many foreigners coming to make their fortune (Dong 2000: 19).

The British chose Shanghai as one of the targets of their military action in 1842, aiming at taking this city as a free-trading port. Other Western powers soon followed (Wu Y.P. 1994). As mentioned above, Shanghai, along with Guangzhou (Canton), Fuzhou (Foochow-fu), Ningbo and Xiamen (Amoy) in coastal China, was forced to open to foreigners through the Treaty of Nanking (1842) (Shang and Liu 1996).

According to Gu Y.L. (1992), the first British consul George Balfour came to Shanghai in 1843, and signed the Shanghai Land Regulations with representatives of the Qing Dynasty in 1845, establishing the British concession. In 1854 a joint concession of Britain, France and the USA was founded; in 1862 the French concession became independent (Gu Y.L. 1992).

Shanghai was also one of the initial landing places of the first European missionaries since the sixteenth century (de la Servière 1925). Three French Jesuits, Claude Gotteland, Benjamin Bruyère and François Estève, arrived in Shanghai in 1842. While the latter two were to carry out traditional missionary tasks, the assigned task for Gotteland, 'the superior of the group', was to 'resume the scientific and educational work of his predecessors', including the building of an observatory (Wiest 2001a: 44). More Jesuits came to Shanghai and the city became the centre for the Jesuits in nineteenth-century South China by 1848 (Gu Y.L. 1992; Ruan and Gao 1993).