

INVENTING CHINESE MODERNISM: THE ART AND DESIGN OF PANG XUNQIN

(HIUNKIN PANG), 1930s-1940s

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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As one of the first Chinese modernist artists to study painting in Paris in the 1920s, Pang Xunqin's art and design projects were profoundly influenced by both Western European and Chinese aesthetics. From the 1930s to 1940s, his output shifted from cosmopolitan Shanghai-based paintings to Guizhou Miao ethnic paintings to traditional Chinese and Art Deco-influenced industrial designs. Integrating historical context, Pang Xunqin's biography, and stylistic analyses, this thesis interprets how the artist's work transformed through particular social and political upheavals, including the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) and conflicts between vying political parties in China. Studying Pang Xunqin's overlooked artworks and designs and his attempts to invent a new Chinese art contributes cross-cultural perspectives to modern and contemporary art history.

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Xunqin and his wife Qiu Ti as well as corrected information about these albums.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Confronted with foreign invasions and revolutionary political changes, intellectuals and artists in 1930s-40s China launched a variety of cultural and artistic movements aimed at waking the masses, improving society, and revitalizing the nation.¹ Among the artists who were active during this period, Pang Xunqin (Hiunkin Pang² 庞薰 榘, 1906-1985), contributed greatly to the modern transformation of Chinese culture. One of the first self-proclaimed avant-garde artists, Pang Xunqin integrated Chinese and Western stylistic elements towards the development of a unique ideology of art and

¹ The cultural and artistic movements and associations include the Modern Woodcut Movement 中国新兴木刻版画运动 and the National Salvation Association 上海文化界救亡协会. Led by Lu Xun (who is introduced in Chapter 1 in this paper) through his Woodcut Training Class in 1931 and exhibitions, the Modern Woodcut Movement aimed to critique social reality with the participation of active young artists. Presenting vivid war scenes and the suffering of the people in black and white, their anti-Japanese works in realistic style were widely spread as propaganda posters. They encouraged the people's national spirit to save China and created a nationwide enthusiasm for studying woodcut prints. See Julia F. Andrews and Kuiyi Shen, *The Art of Modern China* (University of California Press, 2012), 82-89. The description of the goal of these movements and groups as stated by Julia F. Andrews and Kuiyi Shen: "Nevertheless, the threat of national annihilation led most artists, regardless of where they found themselves, to rethink the purposes of art and, whether temporarily or permanently, to put the national tragedy ahead of individual concerns. Thus the ambition of the urban modernist movements, the optimism of the new *guohua* (Chinese ink-and-color painting) groups, and even the revolutionary fervor of the modernist printmakers were all replaced by a new public face—one in which art reflected concern for the survival of their culture and nation," see Julia F. Andrews and Kuiyi Shen, *The Art of Modern China*, 116. For information about the National Salvation Association see *Ibid.*, 118.

² Hiunkin Pang is the name he signed on his paintings in Paris during 1925-1930. Thanks to Pang Xunqin's granddaughter Lin Yan 林延, she told me about this and the family tradition of using the Chinese character 庞 instead of 庞 in Pang Xunqin's last name on his branch of the Pang lineage (during my interview with her, June 30th, 2018). For the bibliography and the research in the footnote of this paper, I use 庞/庞 according to their original references. Born in 1961, as the third generation of the artists' family, Lin Yan followed her grandfather and mother's (Pang Tao 庞涛, born in 1934, she was the professor of oil painting in China's Central Academy of Fine Arts) artistic steps and was educated in Paris and the U.S., she is now living and working in New York City and Beijing, see her introduction and artworks on: <http://www.fougallery.com/lin-yan> and <http://www.linyan.us/>. The English translation of Pang Xunqin's artworks in this paper are based on his art album *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰榘, and some of the Chinese references' English names are my translation (such as *The Discourse of Art, Design, and Education* and *The Research of Chinese Motifs*).

design that aimed to raise public awareness of modern Chinese art and traditional Chinese culture. Despite Pang Xunqin's prolific cultural output, he still is not widely known within Chinese or Western academic circles, and there have been very few art historical studies in English on his work. Present scholarship on Pang Xunqin primarily concentrates on the artist's Storm Society 决澜社 activities, or elucidates how his 1930s-era paintings reflected social and political contexts. I extend these discussions by examining Pang Xunqin's stylistic developments, considering his 1940s-era industrial design³ as a culmination of earlier experiments with Shanghai-based paintings and Miao ethnic paintings. I argue that Pang Xunqin's industrial design most fully embodies his philosophies of Chinese modernism and interest in uniting art and life. This thesis expands our understanding of Pang Xunqin's practice by investigating how his art and design of the 1930s and 1940s transformed through the continuous fusing of Western European and Chinese art and culture. My research explores Pang Xunqin's work from three distinctive stages in his career: 1) his Shanghai-based paintings with the Storm Society in the 1930s, 2) his Miao ethnic paintings in the 1940s, and 3) his industrial designs in the 1940s. I aim to show how the work of Pang Xunqin, as a pioneering artist, designer, and art educator, not only epitomizes the fraught cultural and political collisions of Western European-influenced modernism and tradition in modern China, but also provides models for rethinking foreign-influenced Chinese art and design amidst volatile social contexts, thus offering timely ideas for improving cross-cultural exchanges.

Through his artistic experiments with the Storm Society and Miao ethnic paintings, Pang

³ This paper refers to his artworks as the "industrial design" rather than using the literal translation from Chinese, "arts and crafts," to express a supplementary sentiment of Western modernism versus the more traditional Chinese term "arts and crafts" since Pang Xunqin's design ideas were primarily inspired by his travel in France and Germany.

Xunqin constantly strove to invent a modern Chinese art, imaging a kind of utopia where art and life united. His apparent failures, including his inability to promote Western style paintings, the demise of the Storm Society, and critiques of his Miao ethnic paintings, actually played a crucial role in his utopian vision of Chinese modernism as an inclusive style (encompassing Western European, ethnic majority/Han, and ethnic minority/non-Han Chinese cultural influences). His industrial designs of the 1940s began to most fully realize his vision of Chinese modernism by synthesizing the art and design he encountered in Paris and his research on traditional Chinese art and Miao ethnic culture.

Previous academic monographs and articles including Ralph Croizier's "Post-Impressionists in Pre-War Shanghai: The Juelanshe (Storm Society) and the Fate of Modernism in Republic China," and Shu-mei Shih's *The Lure of the Modern: Writing Modernism in Semicolonial China, 1917-1937* focus on Pang Xunqin's 1930s-era art and its relationships with the socio-political context of Republican China (1911-1949) and the discourse of "modernism." In "Post-Impressionists in Pre-War Shanghai: The Juelanshe (Storm Society) and the Fate of Modernism in Republic China," Ralph Croizier analyzes the agenda of the Storm Society and intellectual consciousness towards "modernism." He states:

It was, however, too late or simply impossible for modernists to turn the central canons of their movement in the direction of serving national interest. As the crisis that would lead to war in the summer of 1937 deepened, the modernists' individualistic and foreign-based position became less and less tenable. This was apparent in the rising demands from critics and interested intellectuals that China's new art do two things: one, manifest a strong national character; two, be useful to the nation in its hour of peril. Nowhere have nationalism and utilitarianism been the strong points of modernist movements. The former flies in the face of modernism's disdain for tradition and its symbols; the latter negates the individualistic ethos of

modernism.⁴

Shu-mei Shih's *The Lure of the Modern: Writing Modernism in Semicolonial China, 1917-1937* investigates “modernism” during China’s Republican era (1911-1949), she argues: “In a perfect illustration of how ‘imperialism as ideological domination succeeds best without physical coercion’ through the colonization of consciousness, many Chinese writers valorized western modernism as the signifier for the modern and the tool to delegitimize traditional Chinese culture, binding modernism to a kind of masochistic denial.”⁵ Michael Sullivan’s *Art and Artists of Twentieth-Century China* and Julia Andrews and Kuiyi Shen’s *The Art of Modern China* provide profound analysis of modern Chinese art, including examinations of the Storm Society and Pang Xunqin’s artwork of the 1930s.⁶ Monographs such as Huang Chen’s *The Master Who Changed by the War—The Artistic Transformations of Pang Xunqin in Southwestern China during the Second Sino-Japanese War* and Lynn Pan’s *Shanghai Style: Art and Design Between the Wars* focus on the influence of the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) on Pang Xunqin’s artworks and the Storm Society.⁷ Xiaoqing Zhu’s Ph.D. dissertation “Pang Xunqin (1906-1985) – A Chinese Avant-Garde’s Metamorphosis, 1925-1946, and

⁴ See Ralph Croizier, “Post-Impressionists in Pre-War Shanghai: The Juelanshe (Storm Society) and the Fate of Modernism in Republican China” in *Modernity in Asian Art*, ed. John Clark, (Sydney, Australia: Wild Peony Ltd, 1993), 150.

⁵ See Shu-mei Shih, *The Lure of the Modern Writing Modernism in Semicolonial China, 1917-1937*, (University of California Press, 2001), 14.

⁶ See Michael, Sullivan, *Art and Artists of Twentieth-Century China* (University of California Press, 1996), 62-64. He also mentions Pang Xunqin’s research about Miao ethnic minority, see *Ibid.*, 95. See also Julia F. Andrews and Kuiyi Shen, *The Art of Modern China*, 74-79.

⁷ See Huang Chen 黄晨, *The Master Who Changed by The War—The Artistic Transformations of Pang Xunqin in Southwestern China during the Second Sino-Japanese War* 战争改变的大师——抗战时期庞熏栾在西南地区的艺术转型, (Chengdu: Sichuan Cishu Press 四川辞书出版社, 2015) and Lynn Pan, *Shanghai Style, Art and Design Between the Wars*, (Long River Press, 2008), 61-87.

Questions of ‘Authenticity’” examines Pang Xunqin’s life and work and addresses issues such as primitivism and hybridity within the cross-cultural context between West and East:

His deep-seated sense of nostalgia and yearning for a kind of purity that he discovered among the native Miao people...In these deceptively simple paintings, informed by the tradition of Chinese literati ink painting, Pang’s refusal to renounce perspective, proportion, and chiaroscuro, and most importantly, his evocation of various shades of colors – opaque, saturated, tinted, or shaded, some vibrant and some subdued – all these come together to break through and testify to a kind of synchronization, of the modern and the primitive, and of the East and the West.⁸

I build on this existing scholarship and reference primary Chinese-language sources, such as Pang Xunqin’s memoir *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* and monographs including *The Discourse of Art, Design, and Education* and *Hiunkin Pang*, edited by the artist’s daughter, Pang Tao.⁹ In addition, this thesis integrates my fieldwork conducted in Beijing, Shanghai and Changshu (Pang Xunqin’s hometown), including an insightful interview I conducted with Pang Tao and her daughter Lin Yan in Beijing.

In Chapter One, I illustrate how Pang Xunqin’s early studies and experiences in Paris and Shanghai oriented his understanding of art. During this stage, *Self Portrait with a Black Hat* (1929) reflects his embrace of Westernized art and lifestyles, as Pang fashioned himself as an “authentic” Parisian. *Such is Shanghai* (1931) epitomizes Pang’s

⁸ See Xiaoqing Zhu, “Pang Xunqin (1906-1985) – A Chinese Avant-Garde’s Metamorphosis, 1925-1946, and Questions of ‘Authenticity,’” Ph.D. Diss., (University of Maryland, 2009), 172-173.

⁹ Pang Xunqin’s memoir *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* records his life experience from his childhood (2 years old) to the age of 83. See Pang Xunqin’s memoir *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, (Beijing: Sanlian Bookstore 三联书店, 2005). During my interview with Lin Yan, she credited the art album *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹 as the primary resource with the most accurate details about Pang Xunqin’s art. See Hiunkin Pang, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, ed. Pang Tao 庞璿, (Phoenix Publishing Company: Jiangsu Education Publishing House 凤凰出版传媒集团: 江苏教育出版社, 2006). Pang Xunqin’s *The Discourse of Art, Design, and Education* contains articles about the Storm Society, his informal essays, and his articles on industrial design and education. See Pang Xunqin, *The Discourse of Art, Design, and Education* 论艺术, 设计, 美育, (Nanjing: Jiangsu Education Press 江苏教育出版社, 2007).

experiments of the early 1930s, especially his hybridizations of Western and Chinese cultural elements. The life and death of the avant-garde art collective – the Storm Society (1931-1935) – offers insight into a group of ambitious and desperate young radical artists, while also marking Pang’s own artistic transitions: from the utilization of Westernized styles towards the construction of new Chinese styles to the employment of Westernized styles towards a presentation of China’s social reality, as seen in *Untitled* (1934). Chapter Two explores Pang’s ethnic Miao paintings, which record his research and experience in Miao villages in Guizhou, and demonstrate his understandings and interweaving of Chinese ethnic culture and Western skills. *Orange Harvest* (1944/1945) and *Selling Wood* (1942) were created in reference to his experience in Guizhou from 1939-1940 when he was forced to move to the southwest part of China because of the Sino-Japanese War. His work and style greatly transformed at this stage as he began blending an interest in nation building and personal nostalgia towards the production of art to resist the Japanese invasion. During that period, he widely researched traditional Chinese decorations, crafts and ethnic minority Miao culture in Yunnan and Guizhou, and produced paintings and designs such as the *Case* (1941). These designs and Pang Xunqin’s research on decorative art/graphic design comprise the key works I present in Chapter Three, which analyzes Pang’s theories of industrial design, continued incorporation of traditional Chinese motifs and Western techniques, and evolving conceptualization of modern Chinese art and design blended with his self-identity.

CHAPTER II

ROMANTICIZING METROPOLITAN SHANGHAI DURING THE WAR PERIOD: PANG XUNQIN'S SHANGHAI-BASED PAINTINGS AND THE STORM SOCIETY

In the early twentieth Century, Western European modern art grew and developed to new heights. Paris, one of the world's most vibrant art centers during that period, was widely seen as a catalyst for masterpieces by renowned artists including Vincent Van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, and Pablo Picasso. A series of art movements and styles including Surrealism, Cubism, and Fauvism blossomed under the advocacy of passionate art practitioners. This milieu would go on to profoundly influence art practices around the world. Many Chinese artists who visited and studied in Paris in the 1920s embraced the new artistic styles they encountered, and aimed to import and adapt new artistic forms to local contexts within China. Somewhat paradoxically, the Chinese importation of Western European artistic forms intermingled with a new sense of nation-building formed in response to colonial invasions. While Pang Xunqin's early art in Shanghai delivered his practice on Western style art, his later paintings in Shanghai and other regions gropingly infused art with his concerns on the nation. This chapter begins by exploring the cultural context of modern China, and then investigates Pang Xunqin's philosophy as reflected in his early paintings and creation of the artistic "battlefield" known as the Storm Society.

The modern history of China can be traced back to 1840. Two years later, the Qing Dynasty (1644-1912) government lost the First Opium War (1840-1842) and was

forced to sign the Treaty of Nanjing¹⁰ which marked the beginning of semi-colonial rule in China by British colonizers. Aiming at waking the masses, improving society, and revitalizing the nation, intellectuals and artists launched a variety of cultural and artistic movements.¹¹ The New Culture Movement 新文化运动 (1915-1923), initiated by Chen Duxiu 陈独秀 (1879-1942) and inspired by the Western European Enlightenment, was considered as the most influential movement in early twentieth century China, and it inspired subsequent political and cultural movements including the May Fourth Movement 五四运动 (May 4th, 1919). With the participation of intellectuals who had absorbed Western culture and ideology, the New Culture Movement emphasized the significance of science and democracy while rejecting feudalism and Confucianism. One of its leaders, the most prestigious writer in China, Lu Xun 鲁迅 (1881-1936), fiercely but subtly criticized the morbid social reality and fatuous morality with the metaphor of “cannibalism” in *A Madman’s Diary* 狂人日记 published in the periodical *New Youth* 新青年¹²:

Everything requires careful consideration if one is to understand it. In ancient times, as I recollect, people often ate human beings, but I am rather hazy about it. I tried to look this up, but my history has no chronology, and scrawled all over each page are the words: “Virtue and Morality.” Since I could not sleep anyway, I

¹⁰ On August 29th, 1842 British and Qing representatives signed the Treaty of Nanjing which included thirteen articles. As part of this unequal treaty, the Qing government was forced to open five ports: Guangzhou, Fuzhou, Xiamen, Ningbo and Shanghai for commercial trading.

¹¹ These movements included: the Xinhai Revolution 辛亥革命 (1911-1912), which was led by Sun Yat-sen 孙中山 (1866-1925) to overthrow the Qing Dynasty; wars and revolutionary movements led by the Nationalist Party and generals to strike the early government of the Republic of China, the Beiyang Government 北洋政府 (1912-1928); wars between the Nanjing Nationalist government and local warlords (1916-1930); and the First Civil War (1927-1937) between the Communist Party and the Nationalist Party.

¹² *The New Youth* was founded by Chen Duxiu in Shanghai in 1915. It emphasized vernacular literature and social revolution against traditional Confucian values.

read intently half the night, until I began to see words between the lines, the whole book being filled with the two words – “Eat people.”¹³

In order to avoid being “eaten” by feudal thoughts and to wake the consciousness of masses, intellectuals like Chen Duxiu and Lu Xun argued that modifying the style of literature and art was the most effective way to foment cultural iconoclasm: “fine arts go hand in hand with morality.”¹⁴

Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培 (1868-1940), the president of Peking University and one of the most influential educators in modern China, proposed his slogan “Aesthetic Education as a Substitute for Religion” in 1917.¹⁵ With his passion for fine art education, he supported the establishment of the National Beiping Art Academy¹⁶ 国立北平艺术专科学校, and the National Hangzhou Art College 杭州国立艺术院,¹⁷ which provided professional art training in Chinese and Western art and facilitated the development of art in China. Inspired by Western ideology, numerous Chinese artists studied at Western European (especially French) or Japanese academies (which had already adopted Western artistic styles and techniques) and aimed to import these “new” forms of art into China. For instance, Li Shutong 李叔同 (1880-1942), the first Chinese oil painter to study in

¹³ *A Madman's Diary* 狂人日记 was written by Lu Xun in April 1918. For the English translation see *Selected Stories of Lu Hsun*, trans. Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1972), 10.

¹⁴ See Lü Peng, *A History of Art in 20th-Century China*, trans. Bruce G. Doar (Milano: Chart, 2010), 130.

¹⁵ Cai Yuanpei, *Aesthetic Education as a Substitute for Religion* 以美育代宗教书 in *New Youth*, Vol. 3, No. 6 (August 1917), see Ralph Croizier, “Post-Impressionists in Pre-War Shanghai: The Juelanshe (Storm Society) and the Fate of Modernism in Republican China,” 136.

¹⁶ Beiping was the old name of Beijing.

¹⁷ The National Beiping Art Academy (established in 1918) was the precursor of China's Central Academy of Fine Arts, and the National Hangzhou Art College (established in 1928) was the precursor of the China Academy of Art. See Xiaoqing Zhu, “Pang Xunqin (1906-1985) – A Chinese Avant-Garde's Metamorphosis, 1925-1946, and Questions of ‘Authenticity,’” 64.

Japan, adopted Kuroda Seiki's (1866-1924)¹⁸ impressionist style; Liu Haisu 刘海粟 (1896-1994), the founder of the Shanghai Art School in 1912, was fascinated by Post-Impressionism and Fauvism.¹⁹ Following these predecessors, Pang Xunqin (Fig. 1) and his peers comprised the second generation of artists to study Western art. They established the Storm Society in Shanghai and contributed their own artistic ideologies to modern Chinese art and literary circles with the intention of creating a new paradigm for Chinese art.

Pang Xunqin's Early Artistic Practice and Protest in 1930s Shanghai

The spirit of protest emerged from Pang Xunqin's childhood and youth, influencing his philosophy. Born in 1906 to one of the most prestigious feudal official and landholding families in Changshu,²⁰ Pang Xunqin and his family lived with immediate relatives on his grandfather's side in a traditional multigenerational home. This prestigious family legacy provided Pang Xunqin with great education opportunities and material resources, but it also pushed him away from home because of complex family relationships and hierarchy.²¹ Pang Xunqin received his first artistic training as a

¹⁸ Kuroda Seiki was a Japanese painter and art educator. He promoted the Western painting in Japan during late 19th century-early 20th century.

¹⁹ Ralph Croizier, "Post-Impressionists in Pre-War Shanghai: The Juelanshe (Storm Society) and the Fate of Modernism in Republican China," 137.

²⁰ Changshu 常熟市 is a historical and cultural city in Jiangsu Province. It is famous for the Yushan School 虞山派 of the Guqin (古琴, a seven-string Chinese musical instrument), calligraphy (prestigious calligraphers include Weng Tonghe 翁同龢 (1830-1904), the courtier and teacher for two emperors in late Qing Dynasty, whose family home is near Pang Xunqin's family home), painting and seal cutting.

²¹ Since Pang Xunqin's grandfather Pang Hongwen's 庞鸿文 younger brother Pang Hongshu 庞鸿书 did not have a son to inherit his lineage, Pang Hongwen sent his Pang Shuxue 庞树韡, Pang Xunqin's father, to be Pang Hongshu's son. The two families shared the same ancestral home. Pang Hongwen and his family lived on the west side of the house and Pang Hongshu lived on the east. The two brothers were both high ranking officials in the Qing government. After Pang Hongshu's death, his daughter sold his possessions and took most of his property. Pang Hongwen's other children also did not leave any property to Pang

child after he suffered a serious illness that unexpectedly caused him to temporarily lose his memory.²² After studying painting, Pang Xunqin regained his memory and continued to study art in primary school.²³ With his mother's support and the hope of his leaving the family house, Pang Xunqin passed the exam and entered Zhendan University 震旦大学 in 1921, also known as Aurora University, a French Catholic university in Shanghai. There, he studied French medicine. He challenged the Catholic theology taught at the university regarding evolution.²⁴ In 1924, he decided to leave after his teacher helped him cheat on the final exam. A priest yelled, "To tell you the truth, you Chinese could never become great artists!" after Pang told him that he decided to study art instead of medicine.²⁵ Simultaneously shamed and motivated by these words, Pang Xunqin quit medicine and decided to study art abroad as a protest against the brutal violence and racist attitudes he experienced in Shanghai.²⁶ Pang Xunqin protested against anything untruthful, unreasonable, and unequal, reflected in his father's last words to him: "You

Xunqin's father. Pang Xunqin's mother Jin Zhinian 金芝年 did not have legal rights since she did not bring enough dowry into her marriage, even though she had many insightful ideas, including sending Pang Xunqin to study painting and French. See Pang Xunqin's memoir *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 13-18. For Pang Xunqin's genealogy see Li Lixin 李立新, "The Chronicle of Pang Xunqin 庞薰栻年谱," published on the Pang Xunqin Art Museum and Changshu Art Museum website, 1992. <http://www.csart.org/m/view.php?aid=1836>.

²² Pang Xunqin 庞薰栻, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 22-23.

²³ Ibid., 24.

²⁴ Ibid., 25-35.

²⁵ An older medical student told Zhendan University staff that Pang Xunqin's father was the chief executive of a bank to make sure he would not be bullied for being so young, and the president and teachers treated Pang Xunqin extremely well. This confused Pang for a long time until he was told the truth after he returned China from Paris in 1930. The teacher's "help" in the final exam made Pang feel upset as his lackluster knowledge of medicine would be potential threat to his future patients. See Pang Xunqin 庞薰栻, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 28-36.

²⁶ Ibid., 36-38.

are an obstinate horse.”²⁷ His challenging of authority seen in his theological disagreements, his unwillingness to mock the calligraphy of the Tang Dynasty master Yan Zhenqing 颜真卿 (709-785)²⁸ and even his polite but adamant response “Sir, you will see” to the priest who doubted his pursuit of art. His intrinsic attitudes and strength regarding his art and life continued to drive his choices and artistic path during his years in Paris.

In August 1925, Pang Xunqin boarded a ship for Paris to follow his artistic dreams.²⁹ His study at the Académie Julian from 1925 to 1927, and the Académie de la Grande Chaumière from 1927 to 1929 greatly improved his skills and enhanced his connoisseurship. It also offered him opportunities to meet and make friends with artists all over the world. Vibrant art centers during this period, artists who studied in these two academies included Tarsila do Amaral (1886-1973), one of the leading Brazilian Modernists, and Swiss artist and sculptor Alberto Giacometti (1901-1966). Taking advantage of abundant resources and the constructive artistic atmosphere there, Pang Xunqin endeavored to explore and practice modern Western paintings by immersing himself into the Parisian lifestyle. *Self-Portrait with Black Hat* (Fig. 2) impressed many at Pang Xunqin’s solo art exhibition in September 1932.³⁰ This painting reflects his adoption of Western art and sartorial style as Pang fashioned himself as an “authentic” Parisian. His spirit of protest lurks in this painting through the black hat: a gift from an art

²⁷ Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 19.

²⁸ Ibid., 18.

²⁹ Ibid., 40.

³⁰ Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, ed. Pang Tao 庞涛, 9.

dealer that represents the lure of fame and money. Pang Xunqin refused the art dealer's invitation to help popularize his works because it would have restricted his artistic style.³¹ Pang Xunqin's friend Sanyu 常玉 (1895-1966), a Chinese-French artist living in Paris, warned him not to believe these art dealers.³²

Sanyu and his pursuit of freedom in art and life directly influenced Pang Xunqin's own attitudes. According to Pang Xunqin's memoir, at a very confusing time in his life in Paris, he visited Sanyu's atelier, where Sanyu suggested he not enter the *École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts*.³³ Pang Xunqin accepted Sanyu's advice and picked the *Académie de la Grande Chaumière*—the most influential art institution at the new art center Montparnasse in the 6th district of Paris after the World War I—where he was able to freely practice art techniques.³⁴ With an unrestricted artistic practice and unconventional style, Sanyu's art (Fig. 3) was remarkable for its rhythmic lines and pure colors. Pang Xunqin once commented that Sanyu's paintings were more interesting than Tsuguharu Fūjita's (a Japanese-French artist, 1886-1968), even though Fūjita was much more famous than Sanyu at that time.³⁵ Pang also mentioned that he began to use a Chinese brush, practicing lines as Sanyu often did at the *Académie de la Grande Chaumière*.³⁶ It is hard to imagine what would have happened if Pang Xunqin chose the

³¹ Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 81-83.

³² *Ibid.*, 83.

³³ *Ibid.*, 60-62.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 72-77.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 61.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 76.

École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, which offered traditional, academic-style training rather than the free atmosphere of the Académie de la Grande Chaumière.

Romanticizing Shanghai with the Reminiscence of Paris and the Storm Society's Life and Death

Although he enormously enjoyed his life in Paris, Pang's concerns about contributing to Chinese art had been growing, which motivated him to go back to his home country.³⁷ Returning to China in early 1930, Pang Xunqin restarted his art career in Shanghai. Rising as one of the fascinating modern metropolises on the world stage during 1920s-1930s, Shanghai was called “the Paris of the East” and “the New York of the West.”³⁸ Even in the midst of political turmoil, Shanghai became seen as a cosmopolitan wonderland that was infused with the most popular parts of Eastern and Western culture during that period.

Pang Xunqin's painting *Such Is Shanghai* (如此上海, or *Life's Riddle* 人生的哑谜) (Fig. 4) is a meaningful artistic creation which reflect both the bright and dark sides of 1930s' Shanghai from different perspectives and provided imaginative spaces for viewers to gain their own appreciation of the city. In *Such Is Shanghai*, every element was integrated together as an intriguing collage: a mask from the Beijing Opera is juxtaposed with a king from a Western playing card who holds a sword; an elegant and fashionable Chinese woman is thinking with her right hand holding her head; the female figure on the top left wears heavy coquettish makeup is similar to the prostitute character

³⁷ Pang Xunqin 庞薰棻, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 85-86, 95-96.

³⁸ *All about Shanghai and Environs – the 1934-35 Standard Guide Book* (Earnshaw Books, 2008), 1. All About Shanghai and Environs was first published in 1934.

in the 1930s' Shanghai film *Street Angel* (Fig. 5); poker cards, flowers and candles create a riddle of a surrealistic environment for viewers.

The overall tone of *Such Is Shanghai* is darker and heavier than *Such Is Paris* (1931) (Fig. 6),³⁹ another painting by Pang Xunqin that takes Paris, versus Shanghai, as its protagonist. *Times Pictorial* 时代画报 (December 1930) described *Such Is Paris*:

Paris is a city of vitality with the hustle and bustle: the laugh of women; cigarette of men... Mr. Pang came back from Paris recently, however, he did not forget Paris – the city attracted him so much. The street became silent, Paris appeared again with familiar city atmosphere. Mr. Pang took out his paper, colored it according to what he has seen and heard, then a vivid painting came out.⁴⁰

With the hope of bringing the atmosphere of Paris' art scene to Shanghai, Pang greatly anticipated his return to China. However, he did not foresee the stressful situation and unfair treatment that awaited him in Shanghai.⁴¹ In autumn 1930, he accepted an invitation to join the Taimeng Painting Society 苔蒙画会 (Société des Deux Mondes in French).⁴² As a precursor to the Storm Society, the Taimeng Painting Society existed less than four months before it was forced to shut down after Pang Xunqing joined because of

³⁹ Pang Xunqin's painting *Such Is Paris*, presents Western male and female figures, poker cards, modern style windows and fences, English letters, and a reference to the "Fountain" (1917) by Marcel Duchamp. These elements overlap with each other synthesizing Pang Xunqin's astute observations of Paris.

⁴⁰ Hu Rong 胡荣, *From the La Jeunesse to the Storm Society: A Study of Avant-garde Art in Modern China (1919-1935)* 从《新青年》到决澜社——中国现代先锋文艺研究 (1919-1935), (Shanghai: Fudan University Press 复旦大学出版社, 2012), 150.

⁴¹ Pang Xunqin and his associates were caught by police and forced to close the Taimeng Painting Society 苔蒙画会 because of political issues. He was later invited to a reception for a show of Chinese art by Mrs. E.O. Frith, one of the most active and eminent foreigners in the art circles of Shanghai. To Pang's surprise, he was treated poorly by the guests because of his humble black clothes. See Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 120-123, 123-126.

⁴² Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 120-121.

the leftist radicalism of its public statement that alarmed the authorities.⁴³ As art historian Michael Sullivan stated:

In 1928 P'ang Hsün-ch'in and a group of his friends had founded the Société des Deux Mondes to keep open the lifeline to Paris. In the stormy wilderness of Shanghai they felt very isolated, for the rich merchants (almost their only patrons) wanted only flattering portraits and the odd piece of ornamental sculpture. Unlike their Japanese counterparts, the Chinese middle class in the coastal cities felt no obligation to welcome Western art. Although some with their cars and radios were westernised in material ways, they never saw any good Western painting—there was none in the Chinese museums—and they naturally thought their own painting vastly superior.⁴⁴

I contend that Sullivan's analysis points directly to the gap between Pang Xunqin and his peers' art ambition and the reality in China, which predicted the failure of the Taimeng Painting Society, and it also alludes the later path of the Storm Society. Therefore, *Such Is Shanghai* expresses Pang Xunqin's disappointment at upper-class prejudices and his worries about the nation's future.

When artist and writer Ni Yide 倪貽德 (1901-1970) returned to Shanghai after his years spent studying art in Tokyo, he was eager to revitalize the Chinese art world and organize an art society.⁴⁵ “Aiming to change the uninspired nature of painting in China, his ideas converged with those of Pang Xunqin and together they founded the Storm Society (Fig. 7).”⁴⁶ The group held its first meeting at a restaurant in Shanghai on

⁴³ Lynn Pan, *Shanghai Style, Art and Design Between the Wars*, (Long River Press, 2008), 67.

⁴⁴ Michael Sullivan, *The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art*, (University of California Press, 1989), 182. 1928 may be incorrect according to Pang Xunqin's memoir, in which Pang Xunqin joined the Taimeng Painting Society in 1930 after his return from Paris. See Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 120-121.

⁴⁵ Julia F. Andrews and Kuiyi Shen, *The Art of Modern China*, 76.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

September 23, 1931.⁴⁷ Pang Xunqin, Ni Yide, Chen Chengbo 陈澄波 (1895-1948), Zhou Duo 周多 (1905-?), and Zeng Zhiliang 曾志良 (dates unknown) were the initial organizers who attended this meeting, and they chose the name “Storm Society” for their promising artistic revolution; they also set the date of January 1st, 1932 for their first exhibition.⁴⁸ The major members of this society were Pang Xunqin, Ni Yide, Zhou Duo, Wang Jiyuan 王济远 (1893-1975), Zhou Zhengtai 周真太 (?-1936), Duan Pingyou 段平佑 (1906-?), Zhang Xian 张弦 (1901-1936), Yang Taiyang 阳太阳 (1909-2009), Yang Qiuren 杨秋人 (1907-1983), and Schudy (Pang Xunqin’s first wife, pronounced Qiu Ti 邱堤 in their family, 1906-1958).⁴⁹ Other members randomly participated in exhibitions including Guan Liang 关良 (dates unknown), Liang Xihong 梁锡鸿 (1912-1982), Li Zhongsheng 李仲生 (1912-1984), Liang Baibo 梁白波 (dates unknown), Chen Chengbo and Zeng Zhiliang before they left Shanghai.⁵⁰ The October 1st, 1932 issue of *Art Periodical* 艺术旬刊 introduced the collective:

The Storm Society is a recently established avant-garde art society. It is a gathering of a number of progressive young artists. They all possess the sharp sensibility of modern men, in pursuit of a novel, unique art. They are all unsatisfied with the vulgarity, decadence, and weakness of China’s current art world, so they have gathered together to construct a new edifice and initiate a new era. This movement is like the Fauves, who appeared in the French art world in 1905, aiming to break the bonds of tradition, smash the fetters of the academic school, and create a free and independent world. Their goal is to research pure art in order to open a new road for the Chinese art world.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Julia F. Andrews and Kuiyi Shen, *The Art of Modern China*, 76.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid. According to my interview with Pang Xunqin’s granddaughter Lin Yan, the Chinese name of Schudy was pronounced Qiu Ti instead of Qiu Di (the original pronunciation for 邱堤) in their family.

⁵⁰ Julia F. Andrews and Kuiyi Shen, *The Art of Modern China*, 76.

⁵¹ Ibid.

While these artists were highly praised and seemed to share similar art beliefs, their art styles were quite different from each other because of their various backgrounds and artistic experience.

Among them, Ni Yide, Zhou Zhentai, Schudy, Yang Taiyang studied art in Japan, and Pang Xunqin, Zhang Xian spent their years in France; Wang Jiyuan went to Japan and France to improve his art skills while Duan Pingyou and Yang Qiuren never studied abroad before they joined the Storm Society.⁵² According to the article *The Group of the Storm Society* 决澜社的一群 written by Ni Yide, Pang Xunqin produced highly attractive *croquis*; Duan Pingyou's style was inspired by Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) and André Derain (1880-1954); Yang Qiuren and Yang Taiyang pursued forms inspired by Picasso and Giorgio de Chirico (1888-1978); and Zhang Xian first imitated the artworks of Edgar Degas (1834-1917) and Paul Cézanne (1839-1906) before being influenced by Henri Matisse (1869-1954) and André Derain.⁵³ In addition, as recorded by an article named "The Western Art Movement in China" 中国的洋画运动 published in the *Great Light Newspaper* 大光报 in 1948:

The artists in the Storm Society conducted research on various art styles which drew them to the Paris art circle, they refined and absorbed the essences of prestigious artists from many countries, and infused this study into their own indigenous artistic characteristics...Pang Xunqin pursued the decorative art's beauty; Ni Yide researched realism; The late member Zhang Xian made efforts to combine charms from Chinese painting and Western painting; Yang Taiyang created his style through examining art styles in Paris and Chinese painting; Yang Qiuren immersed himself in classical art...Schudy, Sheng Cijun and Liang Baibo,

⁵² *The Storm Society* 决澜社, ed. Wang Xiao 王骁, (Beijing: Culture and Art Press 文化艺术出版社, 2010), 45-231.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 15-16.

as women artists, their art portrayed the female identity reflecting the work of French women artists Marie Laurencin and Suzanne Valadon.⁵⁴

Written by Liang Xihong, this reminiscence reflects these group members' attempts to create a vital atmosphere embracing the modern art circle in Paris, while does not mention the reception of the public towards their art and the social and artistic background, which situates the Storm Society into an isolated art island. And this description emphasizes each artist's practicing trajectory or artistic counterpart without specifically clarifying their own thoughts and styles of art.

The first exhibition of the Storm Society ran October 9th to 16th, 1932, and simultaneously the *Storm Society Manifesto* was drafted by Ni Yide and published in the *Art Periodical* 艺术旬刊:

The atmosphere around us is stultifying; mundanity and vulgarity completely surround us. The dabbling of countless dullards, the clamour of myopic minds. Where has the genius of our antiquity gone? Where has the glory of our ancient history gone? Our entire art world today is decadent and diseased. We can no longer tolerate this compromising climate. We cannot simply allow [art] to die. Let us arise!

With passion like a whirlwind but reason like steel, let us create a world at the intersection of our color, line, and form! We recognize that painting is not an imitation of nature, and is not a dead repetition of a skeletal form. We want to use our very lives to nakedly express our straightforward spirit. We believe that art is never the slave of religion, nor is it an explication of literature. We want to freely, synthetically, construct a world of pure plastic form. We are disgusted by all old forms, old color, and revolted by all mundane low-class skill; We want to use new techniques to express the spirit of the new age. In the twentieth century, European art manifested a new atmosphere. The passionate voice of the Fauves, the distorted forms of the Cubists, the shock of Dadaism, the dreamscapes of

⁵⁴ *The Storm Society* 决澜社, ed. Wang Xiao 王骁, 18. Sheng Cijun 盛此君 (1914-1997) studied art in Shanghai and Japan. Marie Laurencin (1883-1956) was a French painter and printmaker. Born in France, Suzanne Valadon (1865-1938) was an art model and later became a painter. Ni Yide, Schudy and a number of other Storm Society members studied art in Japan. However, given the historical and political circumstances of Japanese imperialism in China, Japanese-influence on modern Chinese art is usually downplayed within mainland China. Western European styles are often cited as the primary influence on modern Chinese art.

Surrealism. [...] The twentieth-century Chinese art world must bring forth a new atmosphere.

Let us rise up!

With passion like a whirlwind but reason like steel. Let us create a world at the intersection of our color, line, and form!⁵⁵

Sharing some similarities with the *Manifesto of Futurism*,⁵⁶ this *Storm Society Manifesto* elaborately constructed a passionate and furious artistic atmosphere, which expressed the artists' ambitions, protests, and expectations that they would revolutionize the environment of Chinese art. However, the manifesto did not clearly define artistic boundaries. What should the new art look like? What was the vulgarity to which they referred? How Westernized was their art? Pang Xunqin himself wrote that he was not entirely clear on the Storm Society's intentions; the one thing he confirmed was that the members were dissatisfied with their current artistic climate and hoped to find a new path with support from each other.⁵⁷ The Storm Society's fourth exhibition in October 1935 had an air of gloom due to social turmoil caused by Japanese invasion.⁵⁸ Eventually, the Storm Society dissolved as the members could not make a living selling their art during the chaotic period, and the artists pursued divergent paths.⁵⁹ The Storm Society, during its brief duration, functioned like a temporary utopia that provided its artists with the

⁵⁵ Julia F. Andrews, Kuiyi Shen, *The Art of Modern China*, 77-78. The format of the manifesto was changed here. The original Chinese version see Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 131-132.

⁵⁶ The Manifesto of Futurism was written by the Italian poet F. T. Marinetti and published in 1909, from which Marinetti stressed a rejection of antiquities and traditions while celebrating modern technology and industry.

⁵⁷ Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 134-135.

⁵⁸ *The Raging Passion: The Modern Art Voice and The Storm and Stress Society* 狂飙激情 决澜社及现代主义艺术先声, ed. Li Chao 李超 and Xu Mingsong 徐明松 (Shanghai: The Splendid Article Press 上海锦绣文章出版社, 2008), 19.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 20.

freedom to create, the courage to escape from the disappointing art milieu, and the space to protest the pressures of social reality.

During the Storm Society period, Pang Xunqin's artistic style transformed, reflecting his changes in his life and he attempted to incorporate social and political metaphors into his art. *Untitled* (Fig. 8), displayed at an exhibition in 1935,⁶⁰ embodies this transformation. This painting sums up what Pang Xunqin understood as the social contradictions of modernity in China by juxtaposing a woman in the countryside and a huge mechanical press. Pang Xunqin explained: "The Chinese woman symbolizes the agriculture development of capitalist countries and China's backward agriculture. The three giant fingers push the press, representing imperialist invasion from abroad, reactionary politics and feudal powers."⁶¹ This critical artwork depicted metaphorical forces as a human hand manipulates the industrial machine to make a comparison between advanced, modern life in the West and stressful life in China. This reflected the Chinese people's struggles and their wish to revitalize the nation. Focusing on social and political damages caused by the Second Sino-Japanese War, Pang Xunqin's later artworks such as *Humanity Civilization?* (1938) and *Bombing* (1937) directly expressed his protest and anger through imagery of Japanese planes and bombs.

Throughout Pang Xunqin's artistic career, the pursuit of ornamentation and the beauty of pure color propelled most of his practice, and can be seen in his oil paintings, watercolor paintings, and industrial designs. This pursuit of art greatly affected his

⁶⁰ *The Raging Passion: The Modern Art Voice and The Storm and Stress Society* 狂飙激情 决澜社及现代主义艺术先声, ed. Li Chao 李超 and Xu Mingsong 徐明松, 70.

⁶¹ Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, ed. Pang Tao 庞涛, 24. See also Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 184. Pang Xunqin's Storm Society period works including *Such Is Shanghai*, *Such Is Paris*, and *Untitled* also foreground women as signifiers of cosmopolitan modernity.

personality and attitude towards life and his surrounding environment, and vice versa. Pang Xunqin's insistence on artistic experimentation and indifference to fame and wealth contributed to the process of critical thinking in his artwork. From the abstractly-realistic painting *Such Is Shanghai* to the firmly realistic painting *Untitled*, Pang Xunqin's art style and artistic ideology transformed with his practice in Paris and Shanghai during 1930s while his Shanghai-based art romanticized Shanghai as reminiscent of Paris, reflected in cosmopolitan signifiers, such as the poker cards, Beijing opera, and modern girls in *Such is Shanghai*. The life and death of the avant-garde art collective, the Storm Society, offers insight into a group of ambitious young radical artists, while marking Pang's own artistic transition: from the utilization of Westernized styles towards a presentation of China's social reality.

In *The Lure of the Modern: Writing Modernism in Semicolonial China, 1917-1937*, comparative literature scholar Shu-mei Shih argues, "the linear, temporal mode of thinking, in the local discursive context, was used to legitimize such major May Fourth enlightenment agendas as anti-traditionalism and cosmopolitanism, of which modernism was one important literary expression."⁶² The Storm Society, a key Shanghai-based modernist avant-garde art group, was shaped and characterized by this anti-traditionalist spirit of resistance. While the Storm Society ultimately failed, the temporary utopia the collective imagined created constituted a bold development in Chinese art. Pang Xunqin's commitment to cross-cultural aesthetics and nation-building amidst the Second Sino-Japanese War and China's communist revolution inspired his artistic transformations during the 1930s-1940s.

⁶² Shu-mei Shih, *The Lure of the Modern, Writing Modernism in Semicolonial China, 1917-1937*, 50.

CHAPTER III

DEPICTING “SERENITY” DURING THE SECOND SINO-JAPANESE WAR PERIOD: PANG XUNQIN’S MIAO ETHNIC PAINTINGS IN THE 1940s, AND THE CONTINUOUS ROMANTICIZATION OF GUIZHOU FROM SHANGHAI

The dissolution of the Storm Society in 1935 marked the end of the first self-proclaimed Chinese avant-garde art collective. For Pang Xunqin, however, the dissolution ushered in the artist’s second stage of stylistic transformation during the 1930s-1940s. From the year of 1931 when the Storm Society was officially established, Pang Xunqin began to express his feelings towards social and political issues. In Pang Xunqin’s *Son of the Earth* (1934) (Fig. 9), a dying child is held by a sorrowful peasant couple, presenting the distress of people who were suffering from drought and food shortages in southern China.⁶³ Along with the subsequent outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945)⁶⁴, more and more people lost their homelands and were involved in cruel warfare which extended from northeast and coastal areas to inner lands. Pang Xunqin, who was hired by the National Beiping Art Academy in 1936, had to flee to southern China with his family when Japanese troops invaded Beijing on July 7th, 1937.⁶⁵ After moving between several places, he was finally temporarily settled in Kunming, Yunnan Province and was designated by the National Central Museum (now

⁶³ Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, ed. Pang Tao 庞涛, 22.

⁶⁴ The Chinese government has officially revised the period of the Second Sino-Japanese War from 1937-1945 to 1931-1945, since the northeast region of China was invaded by Japanese armies on September 18th, 1931 (The September 18th Incident 九一八事变).

⁶⁵ Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, ed. Pang Tao 庞涛, 307.

the Nanjing Museum)⁶⁶ to participate in a research project examining ethnic Miao culture from the winter of 1938 to spring of 1939.⁶⁷ This chapter explores Pang Xunqin's Miao ethnic paintings created in Sichuan Province from 1940 to 1946 after completing his research in Guizhou. I investigate how the artist's paintings of this period recorded his research and experiences in Guizhou's Miao villages and demonstrated his interweaving of Chinese ethnic forms and Western techniques. I consider the landscapes of Pang Xunqin's Miao ethnic paintings as constituting an imagined utopia, romanticized by the peculiar geographic environment in Guizhou and Pang Xunqin's nostalgic sentiments inspired by sociopolitical realities. Acknowledging the artist's exiled position amidst a chaotic period of war, I argue that Pang Xunqin's idealized depictions of mountains, rivers, plants and the Miao people reflect a major stylistic shift from cosmopolitan criticality (seen in his paintings of the 1930s in Shanghai) to rural romanticism.

Locating Miao Culture in the Chinese Art Domain during the War Period of the 1940s

On July 7th, 1937, The Marco Polo Bridge Incident 卢沟桥事变 marked the beginning of Japan's full-scale invasion of China. Following the northeast areas' downfall, Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing and other cities were violently occupied and brutally destroyed by Japanese armies. A well-known Chinese writer in the Republican era, Lin Yutang 林语堂 (1895-1976) described the Second Sino-Japanese War as "the most terrible, the most inhuman, the most brutal, the most devastating war in all Asian's

⁶⁶ See the introduction on the Nanjing Museum website: http://www.njmuseum.com/EN/html/News_List_content@ClassID@7bd1caeb-3144-49bf-a682-844666a47c6e.html.

⁶⁷ Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, ed. Pang Tao 庞涛, 307.

history.”⁶⁸ When Pang Xunqin painted his *Bombing*⁶⁹ for the National Fine Arts Exhibition in Nanjing in 1937, he never thought that his imagination would become bloodcurdling reality in a few months.⁷⁰ As recorded in *The Japanese Crime and Dominance in Shanghai*:

On August 28th, 1937, Japanese planes bombed the Shanghai South Train Station on the Huhang Street 沪杭路. At that time, this station was fully filled with war refugees without any Chinese military institutions. In the afternoon, 12 Japanese planes dropped at least 8 bombs in this area, which caused 600-700 deaths of people. Scattered Heads and stumps of bodies, streams of blood on the soil, the cry of wounded...this misery could never be imagined.⁷¹

From 1937 to 1938, Pang Xunqin spent most of his time fleeing the war. After escaping from fallen Beijing and shortly staying in Shanghai, Pang Xunqin took a surviving bombed train with his colleagues and students of the National Beiping Art Academy and moved to southern China.⁷²

⁶⁸ Dick Wilson, *When Tigers Fight: The Story of the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1945*. (New York: The Viking Press, 1982), 1.

⁶⁹ See Hiunkin Pang, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, ed. Pang Tao 庞涛, 41, where Pang Xunqin states: “In 1937, Nanjing was to host the National Fine Arts Exhibition, and at first I was unwilling to submit work, but my school required that every professor have a work in the show, so under these circumstances I simply took a sheet of paper and made a watercolor sketch. The title then was “untitled” but in reality, it expressed opposition to the invasion. I painted a young mother holding a small child, and the background was planes dropping bombs. I never imagined that a few months later, the invading Japanese armies actually would bomb so many Chinese cities in this way.”

⁷⁰ Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, ed. Pang Tao 庞涛, 41.

⁷¹ Translated from Chinese in Zhang Quan 张铨, Zhuang Zhiling 庄志龄 and Chen Zhengqing 陈正卿, *The Japanese Crime and Dominance in Shanghai* 日军在上海的罪行与统治, (Shanghai People’s Publishing House, 2000), 96.

⁷² Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 149. From 1937 to 1938, Pang Xunqin’s moving routes included Beijing, Shanghai, Mt. Lu 庐山 of Jiangxi Province, Yuanling 沅陵 of Hunan Province and Kunming 昆明 of Yunnan Province.

After arriving in Kunming, Pang Xunqin got to know artists Liang Sicheng 梁思成 (1901-1972) and Liang Siyong 梁思永 (1904-1954).⁷³ They helped him get a job at the preparatory office of the National Central Museum 中央博物院 (the precursor of the Nanjing Museum). Here, he was able to explore Chinese historical relics and studied with other archaeologists and scholars.⁷⁴ Later, he was invited to research the art and traditions of Chinese ethnic minorities, especially ethnic Miao people 苗族 dwelling in the southwest frontier.

The designation of southwest China generally encompasses Chongqing, Sichuan Province, Guizhou Province, Yunnan Province, and Tibet. Amidst steep mountains, rivers, streams and other obstructions, people residing in these areas developed their own cultures, customs, languages, and even writing systems, which are different from Han Chinese traditions. Scattered among deep mountains and valleys as small groups, the number of people living in these frontier regions is far less than the Han majority,⁷⁵ and they are thus officially called ethnic minorities.

However, ethnic minority groups in southwest China such as Miao, Yao 瑶族, Yi 彝族, Dai 傣族, and Dong 侗族 were often misunderstood and regarded as mysterious or backward since they were isolated from eastern and central China, where people lacked knowledge and comprehension of them. The origin of Miao is also a debatable subject

⁷³ Liang Siyong, an outstanding Chinese archaeologist of the Neolithic period and Shang Dynasty, was the younger brother of Liang Sicheng, a prominent architect and architectural historian. Their father was Liang Qichao 梁启超 (1873-1929), a scholar and reformist in late Qing Dynasty.

⁷⁴ Pang Xunqin 庞薰棻, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 161-162, 176-180.

⁷⁵ According to the data collected by the Chinese government, the population of ethnic minorities accounts for 8.49% out of the whole population. See “The 2010 Major Data Bulletin of the 6th Nationwide Population Census” on the China Central People’s Government website: http://www.gov.cn/guoqing/2012-04/20/content_2582698.htm.

among historical and anthropological disciplines. According to the two earliest scholarly monographs about Miao—*The Investigation Report of Miao* written by Japanese anthropologist Torii Ryuzo (1870-1953) and *The Investigation Report of the Xiangxi Miao* by Chinese anthropologists Rui Yifu 芮逸夫 (1898-1991) and Ling Chunsheng 凌纯声 (1901-1981), the possible Miao origin includes the Three Miao Kingdom and ancient Mao 髦 people.⁷⁶ And the present name “Miao” is also transformed from the name “Mao” 猫, which was recorded during the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368).⁷⁷ The Chinese character Mao 猫 (literally means “cat”) has the left side component associated with dog 犬, thereby this name suggests a contemptuous and disparaging meaning and attitude from ancient Han people towards the Miao people, as well as representing an ethnographic distinction geographically and politically. Likewise, the ancient name Mao 猫, Yao 猺, Liao 獠, Tong 獐 and Gelao 玃 with dog-side components were picked by ancient Han rulers to describe the “wild” southwestern “Five Stream Man 五溪蛮” groups, in which the character Man 蛮 has the bottom component associated with insects

⁷⁶ See Torii Ryuzo, *The Investigation Report of Miao*, Chinese version originally published by the National Translation House 国立编译馆 in 1936, (Taipei: Nantian Publishing House 南天书局有限公司, 1978), 18-19. And Rui Yifu and Ling Chunsheng, *The Investigation Report of the Xiangxi Miao* 湘西苗族调查报告, (Taipei: Nantian Publishing House 南天书局有限公司, 1978), 1-14. See also the Chinese Central Government Website: http://www.gov.cn/guoqing/2015-07/23/content_2901564.htm, according to which Miao people dwelled in western Hunan Province and eastern Guizhou Province 2000 years ago. *The Investigation Report of Miao* was the earliest scholarly Miao monograph, it is written by Torii Ryuzo based on his field investigation in Southwest China in 1902. In his book, he gives the Three Miao Kingdom speculation of the Miao origin. *The Investigation Report of the Xiangxi Miao* is written by Rui Yifu and Ling Chunsheng, which records their field investigation in Xiangxi 湘西, or the west area of Hunan Province where Torii Ryuzo did not travel. It provides the speculation that Miao originated from the ancient Mao people based on Zhang Binglin’s 章炳麟 (1869-1936) theory. Zhang Binglin was a philologist and revolutionary against the Qing government.

⁷⁷ Rui Yifu and Ling Chunsheng, *The Investigation Report of the Xiangxi Miao* 湘西苗族调查报告, 11.

虫, indicating the symbolic marginalization of people who dominated areas outside of the central terrains of imperial Han territory.⁷⁸

The history of studying ethnic minorities or nearby foreigners led by the central imperial governors can be traced to the Southern Liang Dynasty (502-557), when Xiao Yi 萧绎 (c. 508-555), the seventh son of the Liang Emperor Wu, depicted and illustrated about thirty different ethnic minorities and foreign envoys living in Jingzhou 荆州 (his territory) on the scroll of the *Portraits of Periodical Offering* 职贡图 (ca. 540) (Fig. 10). In the Tang Dynasty (618-907), the court painter Yan Liben's 阎立本 (ca. 600-673) scroll *Tribute Bearers* 职贡图 (Tang Dynasty 618-907) (Fig. 11) recorded the spectacle of foreign envoy troops coming from southeastern Asia who were on their way to offer tributes to the emperor of the Tang Dynasty, which simultaneously rendered the exotic appearances of foreign envoys and their hierarchical status when contrasted with another scroll—*The Thirteen Emperors* 历代帝王图 (ca. second half of the 7th century) (Fig. 12), on which the thirteen emperors (from the Han Dynasty to Sui Dynasty) and their attendants look dignified with exquisite aulic robes and dresses. The “ethnic encyclopedia” *Qing Imperial Illustrations of Tributary Peoples* 皇清职贡图 (1751-1805) (Fig. 13) was assigned by the Emperor Qianlong 乾隆 (1711-1799) in 1751 to record detailed appearances of ethnic minorities (including Miao) and foreigners in his reign. And the *Miao Album* (ca. after 1797), a later Qing Dynasty compilation about the Miao minority of Guizhou Province comprises 82 categories of different Miao groups

⁷⁸ Ibid., 9. The character Yao 猺, Tong 獐 and Gelao 玃 were officially changed to 瑶, 壮, and 仡佬 as respective ethnic minorities' names in order to eliminate the negative meanings.

identifying their customs with poetic descriptions and their daily activity images.⁷⁹ The texts and pictorial illustrations of this Miao album (Fig. 14) feature numerous descriptions of cruel behaviors and odd customs as well as human figures depicted as child-like bodies without distinct gender appearances. The images present the remote “uncivilized” Miao group as a curiosity, and reflect the perceived superiority and confidence of the people in superior social positions like the Manchu rulers and Han majority of that period. According to the book, this album was created to manifest the power and prosperity of emperor Yongzheng 雍正 (1678-1735) as revealed in the commissioning edict of exploring ethnic minority groups in late 18th century. The manual was given to Qing officials who took power from the indigenous local officials *Tusi* 土司. The manual provided information about the populations and helped Qing officials take control of the distant southwestern part of the country, supporting an imperial decree, the so called *gaitu guiliu* policy 改土归流, which required that the centralized power take control of local administrations.⁸⁰

When hearing of Pang Xunqin’s new mission, some of his friends tried to persuade him not to accept this risky task, telling him stories of ethnic minorities chopping off human heads to pray for harvest before sowing, or producing poison with

⁷⁹ There were different versions of the Miao album during the Qing Dynasty, the earliest one was created “during the Late Yongzheng (r. 1723-35) or early Qianlong (r. 1736-96) periods.” See *The Art of Ethnography: A Chinese “Miao Album,”* trans. David M. Deal and Laura Hostetler, ed. Stevan Harrell (Seattle & London: University of Washington Press, 2006), xvii. The Date of the Miao album mentioned in this chapter see Ibid., xxii and lxii. The analysis of Miao albums and *Qing Imperial Illustrations of Tributary Peoples* as references for Pang Xunqin’s Miao ethnic paintings see also Xiaoqing Zhu, “Pang Xunqin (1906-1985) – A Chinese Avant-Garde’s Metamorphosis, 1925-1946, and Questions of ‘Authenticity,’” PhD diss., (University of Maryland, 2009), 176-180, and Yang Qingkang, “Pang Xunqin’s Wartime Paintings, 1937-1946,” Master of Philosophy thesis, (University of Hong Kong, 2017), 98-103.

⁸⁰ *The Art of Ethnography: A Chinese “Miao Album,”* trans. David M. Deal and Laura Hostetler, ed. Stevan Harrell, xxiii-xxiv.

noxious insects to kill people (*place the Gu* 放蛊).⁸¹ Being interested in ethnic minorities' cultures and ignoring those warnings, Pang Xunqin departed from Kunming to the neighboring Guiyang of Guizhou Province in November 1938.⁸² Taking the advice of two Miao students to not wear suits or Chinese tunics, the garb of government officials (since Miao people feared being forced to join the army by government), Pang Xunqin and his partner – Rui Yifu 芮逸夫, an expert on ethnic minorities' languages, began their research from mountainous suburbs of Guiyang.⁸³ At first, all of the Miao people hid as they approached the villages, but when Pang Xunqin and Rui Yifu showed amity to local children and women, and respected their customs by participating in a Miao funeral of the oldest person in their village, the researchers became welcomed by several Miao villages in Guiding 贵定, Anshun 安顺, Longli 龙里 and Huaxi 花溪 counties and Guiyang. Pang Xunqin and Rui Yifu were able to talk with locals, bought samples of Miao embroidery, recorded their customs and songs, and eventually made friends with them.⁸⁴

In Pang Xunqin's *Orange Harvest* (Fig. 15), two Miao women are depicted picking red oranges and wearing distinctive Miao clothes and headbands with elaborate embroidery. The woman on the left slightly stooped and twisted her body to stare at the woman next to her. She is wearing a headband decorated with geometric patterns, cantaloupe orange clothes, and a colorful flower-patterned apron with silver chains and

⁸¹ Pang Xunqin 庞薰棻, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 181.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 182.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 182-183.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 183-192.

buckles. On her right, a woman is holding a bamboo basket on her left shoulder and turning her head to respond to her partner. Although the decoration of her clothes is simpler, her arms are wrapped with finely embroidered half-sleeves and a huge silver bracelet is on her right wrist. They both have thin linear eyebrows; long, narrow large eyes; and delicate noses and lips. Their facial expressions present a blend of delight, peace and sorrow. According to Pang Xunqin's description of the Miao embroidery, their forms and colors were distinctive among different villages.⁸⁵ For instance, the Miao women in Guiyang mainly wore decorations on their backs and cuffs, and they preferred white, red, black and sometimes blue to create an elegant and delicate style. The Hua Miao 花苗 (literally flowery Miao, dwelled in mountains around Guiyang) and primarily embroidered white and red strings on black cloths.⁸⁶ Furthermore, Miao people believe silver, their primary and most valuable material utilized for accessories, has both ornamental and medical functions that would greatly benefit the human body.⁸⁷ Even though we cannot tell the relationship between these two women, the holistic image is filled with a harmonious and peaceful atmosphere.

In some ways, Pang Xunqin's *Orange Harvest* resembles Western European depictions of non-Western women, such as Paul Gauguin's *Two Tahitian Women* (1899) (Fig. 16), in which two topless local women are standing next to each other, holding indigenous flowers and fruits. Like Gauguin's painting, which focuses on the fresh and

⁸⁵ Pang Xunqin 庞薰棻, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 185-186.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ When I travelled to Miao villages in Xijiang 西江 of Guizhou, local people expressed their deep ancestral belief in the medical functions of silver as it can take away the dampness from the human body. They also use silver utensils also to kill bacteria.

naïve beauty of the Tahitian women in the French colonial territory, Pang Xunqin also inputs narratives of feminine beauty and “pureness” of the land in his Miao painting. Similar to the central government’s wish to smoothly incorporate ethnic minorities into the fledgling republic, Pang Xunqin wished to establish an artistic style of Chinese modernism that integrated Miao ethnic minority culture.⁸⁸ Pang Xunqin’s Miao paintings were supported by the National Central Museum, and as such they were inevitably bound to Chinese art history and national agenda.

As Pang Xunqin’s research partner Rui Yifu recorded in his *The Report on the Survey of Xiangxi Miao Ethnic Minority, Guizhou* was the main settlement of Miao groups during Republican China.⁸⁹ Living ancestrally in mountainous area, the Guizhou Miao branch had to dwell on mountain top terrains since they moved there later than other ethnic groups, which had already occupied the better lands on hillsides.⁹⁰ Given the harsh environment, Miao people learned to fully utilize their lands, cultivated various crops and trees on different terrains, and drew the natural elements into their unique philosophy towards religious, ritual events and entertainment.⁹¹ Translated from Miao language, *The Miao Ethnic Epics* vividly present a rich spiritual world from Miao

⁸⁸ When Pang Xunqin’s Miao paintings were recognized as neither Chinese nor Western painting in a national exhibition in Chongqing, he responded “These paintings were painted on Chinese silk with Chinese brush by a Chinese, and they depict the life of Chinese civilians, why did they (the exhibition committee) not admit that my Miao paintings belong to Chinese paintings? I never think my oil paintings are Western paintings.” See Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 201-202.

⁸⁹ Ling Chunsheng and Rui Yifu, *The Report on the Survey of Xiangxi Miao Ethnic Minority* 湘西苗族调查报告, 15.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 61.

people's imaginations.⁹² This Miao song album imbued every natural elements with life, humanized sun, moon, gold, silver, and animals such as butterflies and fish, which reflected Miao people's deep love and respect of their land and nature as well as their cosmology.⁹³ Born in Fenghuang county 凤凰县 of Hunan Province, the writer Shen Congwen's 沈从文 (1902-1988, he later confessed his Miao lineage in his *Autobiography of Congwen* in 1932) prestigious literary work *The Border Town* 边城 (finished in 1931) portrayed a scenic and frontier town Chadong 茶峒 of Xiangxi (the western Hunan Province), in which two young brothers gently compete with each other to show their implicit adoration to a girl. While this novel unrolls rustic customs and virtuous human personality from a mysterious "Peach Blossom Spring"⁹⁴ as an attraction to the public, it creates a serene and romanticized countryside dwelled with Han, Miao and other ethnic minorities out of the unstable and tense society, yet Shen did not indicate any character's ethnic identity here. In the *Shen Congwen's Novels and the Modernism*, the Chinese scholar Liu Hongtao 刘洪涛 considers that the "ignored" ethnic identity used in *The Border Town* and his middle and late period works is a literary usage to dissolve the ethnicity with a stress on locality.⁹⁵ And he further argues: "What Shen Congwen

⁹² *The Miao Ethnic Epics* 苗族史诗, trans. Ma Xueliang 马学良 and Jin Dan 今旦, (Beijing: Chinese Folk Art Publishing House 中国民间文艺出版社, 1983), 1.

⁹³ See *The Miao Ethnic Epics* 苗族史诗, trans. Ma Xueliang 马学良 and Jin Dan 今旦.

⁹⁴ *The Peach Blossom Spring* was created by Tao Yuanming 陶渊明 (365?-427) from the Eastern Jin Dynasty. It depicts a dream land of serenity and harmony hiding in a cave of a forest of peach blossoms. As a hermit and poet, Tao Yuanming borrowed this pure land trope to satirize the darkness and turbulence of the Eastern Jin regime.

⁹⁵ Liu Hongtao, *Shen Congwen's Novels and the Modernism* 沈從文小說與現代主義, (Taipei: Xiuwei Information and Technology co.LTD 秀威資訊科技股份有限公司, 2009), 116. Liu Hongtao (born in 1962) is a professor of comparative literature and world literature at the School of Chinese Language and Literature of the Beijing Normal University. His research fields include the overseas dissemination of

recognized on his identity is the lineage with the imaginary Miao heroes in his stories of Miao.....since the reality of Miao people, like Shen's women ancestors, was victim of discrimination.”⁹⁶ Compared to Shen Congwen's deliberate “overlook” of the Miao identity, Pang Xunqin's paintings embrace Miao features and in this way aim to integrate Miao culture in the modern Chinese art domain.

Picturing “Serenity” and Romanticizing Guizhou

Surprised and moved by the artistic creation and superb embroidering skills of Miao people, Pang Xunqin proclaimed to devote his efforts to benefit the [Miao] masses and shed the pursuit of personal fame.⁹⁷ He made it his primary goal to depict Miao people's daily lives and living environments, record their art and culture, and promote them within Chinese society. Pang Xunqin's *Mountain People in Guizhou* 贵州山民图 series and other Miao ethnic paintings, most of which were finished through 1940 to 1946, vividly represent ethnic minorities' (most of them are Miao people) daily activities and events such as fishing, harvesting, dancing and drinking.⁹⁸ In *Selling Wood* (Fig. 17), two Miao women arduously walk through spiraling mountain roads, carrying bundles of burning wood on their backs. Their slightly-bent heads and backs, hands positioned to balance loads of wood, and their plain clothes all reflect Miao people's austerity and

Chinese literature, world literature theory, the relationship between the Western and Eastern literature, and the modern and contemporary Chinese literature. See his introduction:

<http://wxy.bnu.edu.cn/szdw/bjwxysjwxyjs/200249.html>.

⁹⁶ Liu Hongtao, *Shen Congwen's Novels and the Modernism* 沈從文小說與現代主義, 118.

⁹⁷ Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 192-193.

⁹⁸ Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, ed. Pang Tao 庞涛, 146-173, 307 or 313-314 (English translation). Among all of the Miao ethnic paintings in this album (26 of them were painted in watercolor, 2 were painted in ink monochrome), the *Huangguoshu Waterfall* 黄果树瀑布 portrayed a Yi woman. *Dance for Qingmiao* 花溪青苗跳花 and the *Dance for Huamiao* 贵定花苗跳花 indicate their Miao identity in the titles, other paintings without specific illustrations are presumed to be Miao people paintings.

hardship of earning a living in the mountains. A gray hue visible on every element – including the mountains, human figures, artificial stone walls, and trees – harmoniously integrates the people with their natural environment, offering a tremendous contrast to the violence and chaos elsewhere. Xiaoqing Zhu describes one of Pang Xunqin’s Miao paintings, *Spreading a Net* (1946): “The vertical format and the empty space which suggests a vast body of water recalls the canonical Ni Zan-like Yuan landscape, vast and desolate.”⁹⁹ She recognizes the alienation in Pang’s composition, drawing a parallel with Ni Zan’s 倪瓚 (1301-1374)¹⁰⁰ paintings. Returning to the example of *Selling Wood*, the large amount of blank space in the foreground, middle-ground and background creates a misty visual effect which leads the viewers’ eyes to jump towards trees and mountaintops and simultaneously expand the dimensional depth of the whole painting.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Xiaoqing Zhu, “Pang Xunqin (1906-1985) – A Chinese Avant-Garde’s Metamorphosis, 1925-1946, and Questions of ‘Authenticity,’” 171.

¹⁰⁰ Ni Zan was a representative painter specializing in landscape painting in the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368). His paintings often invested a minimal volume of ink to create a desolate and “simple” artistic style.

¹⁰¹ Using faded washes to impose a multi-layer quality on the middle-ground mountains, the techniques of *Selling Wood* shares similarities with Yokoyama Taikan’s (1868-1958) Nihonga (Japanese painting) style, which flourished through 1900 to 1940. Absorbing both traditional Chinese influences (for example, the Chinese conventional theme of landscapes or plants) and modern Western techniques (for most of the Nihonga artists), Nihonga represents a pathway to restore Japanese traditions while resisting the modern input from internationalization. Inspired by Chinese mountain landscapes in the north and south, his painting scrolls *The Mountains of Yan* (1910) and *The Waters of Chou* (1910) “abandon line and use ink wash alone to express light, shade and volume, partly in the manner of Western watercolour.” His *Spring Dawn over the Holy Mountains of Chichibu* (1928) emphasizes the misty mountain landscape of the Chichibu Shrine with a sense of photographic quality. This landscape style in Pang’s Miao ethnic paintings may have been inspired by Nihonga artists, including Yokoyama, who visited Europe during the early twentieth century. Pang Xunqin met Japanese students and encountered Japanese art in Paris, and his first wife Schudy, studied oil painting in Japan. See Lawrence Smith, *Nihonga: Traditional Japanese Painting 1900-1940*, (British Museum Press in association with the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Yamatane Museum of Art, The Japan Foundation, 1991), 81. For Pang Xunqin’s connection with Japanese students see Xiaoqing Zhu, “Pang Xunqin (1906-1985) – A Chinese Avant-Garde’s Metamorphosis, 1925-1946, and Questions of ‘Authenticity,’” 33. Pang Xunqin visited a Japanese painting exhibition in Paris, which motivated him to go back to China and help Chinese art flourish, see Pang Xunqin 庞薰蕪, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 85-86.

While *Orange Harvest* and *Selling Wood* directly depict Miao Women's daily labor, a sense of alienation appears in the lack of eye contact and misty, graytoned landscapes. When depicting amusing themes, as in *Dance for Qing Miao* (1944) (Fig. 18) and *Drinking* (1941), alienation also appears in the sharp contrast between the Miao people's group celebration and gloomy landscapes. While integrating a sense of alienation amidst political turmoil, which was often seen in Southern Song (1127-1279) and Yuan Dynasties' (1279-1368) paintings,¹⁰² Pang Xunqin's Miao ethnic paintings also offer idealized, romanticized narratives aimed at increasing the credibility of Miao culture to outsiders. In *Orange Harvest*, the Miao women's lavish ornamentations contrast with the Miao people's everyday apparel, which would have more closely reflected their suffering from war and harsh climates. In reality, Miao women picking fruit would not adorn themselves with delicate embroidery and silver jewelry, reserved for festivals and marriages.¹⁰³ Pang Xunqin himself commented that his depictions of Miao people were less realistic and more self-expressive.¹⁰⁴

Pang Xunqin's *Archery* (1941) (Fig. 19) depicted four Miao men participating in archery. The artist painted a flying arrow and a small board attached to a slim tree trunk in the style of the nationalist project – *Qing Imperial Illustrations of Tributary Peoples*.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² See Ma Yuan's 马远 (1160-1225) *Man Watching Waterfall* 高士观瀑图 (c. late 12th - early 13th), Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York) and Ni Zan's *The Rongxi Studio* 容膝斋图 (c. 1372), National Palace Museum (Taipei).

¹⁰³ Miao people's austerity See Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 183-192.

¹⁰⁴ Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *Informal Essays of Pang Xunqin* 庞薰琹随笔, 4.

¹⁰⁵ This argument is based on Xiaoqing Zhu's survey, which confirms that Pang Xunqin knew the Miao albums and so did his research partner Rui Yifu. See Xiaoqing Zhu, "Pang Xunqin (1906-1985) – A Chinese Avant-Garde's Metamorphosis, 1925- 1946, and Questions of 'Authenticity,'" 179-180.

Clearly, the intention to create these Miao paintings differs from imperial uses, yet Pang's depicting Miao ethnic minority brought Miao art and culture into China's modern art repertoire. Pang Xunqin's research-oriented artistic practices also integrated his personal sentiments and nostalgia, romanticizing his Miao ethnic paintings and experiences in Guizhou. According to Pang Xunqin's writings for the introduction of his solo exhibition in Chengdu in 1943, his use of blue and gray tones was stimulated by the mountains and lakes in his beloved hometown—Changshu in Jiangsu Province.¹⁰⁶ Integrating human figures with detailed realistic presentations and personal emotions, Pang Xunqin's Miao ethnic paintings offer artistic records of the Chinese southwestern ethnic minority. However, situated between styles and intentions, these paintings faced criticism. In a national art exhibition held in Chongqing, critics dismissed two of Pang Xunqin's Miao paintings as belonging to neither the Western painting category nor the traditional Chinese painting category.¹⁰⁷ When Zhang Daofan (1897-1968) went to Pang Xunqin's fourth solo exhibition in Chongqing in October 1943, he publicly criticized the Miao ethnic paintings as “derogating the nation's entity 有伤国体.”¹⁰⁸ This position of Zhang Daofan, who was educated in London and Paris and served as the Nationalist Party's minister of propaganda (1942-1943) and minister of overseas affairs (1943-1944), reflected the reality of China, which superficially embraced Western influences, while lacking comprehension of the indigenous cultures.

¹⁰⁶ See the *Self Introduction* 自剖, published on the Chengdu Central Daily News on September 12th, 1943. Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *Informal Essays of Pang Xunqin* 庞薰琹随笔, 2.

¹⁰⁷ Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 200-202.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 203.

Pang Xunqin's artistic transformations from the 1930s to 1940s revealed his geographic relocations and the huge gap between China's modern capitalist cities and frontier rural agricultural lands. The Miao ethnic paintings depict southwest China's agricultural economy, natural features, and Miao people. Pang Xunqin also integrated themes of alienation and nostalgia through somber tones, while representing Miao women in an idealized, romanticized manner by interjecting lavish ornamentation into scenes of quotidian routine. Amidst civil war and Japan's invasion of China, Pang Xunqin, an artist in exile, aimed to elevate ethnic minority culture. The artist's inclusive conceptualization of national identity and nation-building would be further reflected in his subsequent industrial designs.

CHAPTER IV

SELF-IDENTITY AND EPOCH FEATURES IN PANG XUNQIN'S INDUSTRIAL DESIGN IN 1940s

After researching Miao culture and art in Guizhou Province, Pang Xunqin was forced to retreat again to Sichuan Province since the Japanese bombing attacks were becoming more and more fierce.¹⁰⁹ Introduced by his previous colleague Li Youhang 李有行 (1905-1982),¹¹⁰ who studied textile design in Lyons, France and once taught graphic design in National Beiping Art Academy, Pang Xunqin was able to acquire a teaching position at the Fine Art School in Sichuan Province 四川省立艺术专科学校.¹¹¹ To escape the disturbance caused by Japanese bombers, Pang Xunqin settled at the Jixiang Temple¹¹² in Pi County 郫县, where he created the *Arts and Crafts Collection* 工艺美术集 (1941) (Fig. 20) in the summer of 1941.¹¹³ This collection symbolizes a milestone on Pang Xunqin's artistic path since it combines his research of traditional Chinese dynastic decorations, his industrial designs and artistic skills developed in both

¹⁰⁹ Corrected information for Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, ed. Pang Tao 庞涛, 307, provided by Lin Yan.

¹¹⁰ Li Youhang was an educator in early Chinese industrial design, and the founder of the Fine Art School in Sichuan Province.

¹¹¹ Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 144-146, 194.

¹¹² "Jixiang Temple" was originally a nunnery and later was used as the site for a theater and drama school established by Xiong Foxi 熊佛西 (1900-1965), the founder of modern Chinese drama. After the theater and drama school was shut down, this site was reused as the other campus for the Fine Art School in Sichuan Province. See Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 194-195.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 195. Pang Xunqin added a few designs and an introduction and a catalogue for this collection in Chengdu in 1941. See Pang Xunqin, *The Discourse of Art, Design, and Education* 论艺术, 设计, 美育, 43.

China and France. Since this collection presents different views of thirty designed objects such as vases, pots, carpets and cases, it significantly marks the transformation of Pang Xunqin's personal artistic style from his paintings depicting Miao people's daily life to an "epochal" industrial design. In this chapter, I analyze Pang Xunqin's industrial designs as a synthesis of traditional Chinese decorative motifs and the artist's Western European-influenced modern style. I trace Pang Xunqin's experiences in Paris (1925-1930), which inspired his initial interest in decorative art, to his later industrial design educational practice spanning approximately forty years. Considering Pang Xunqin's industrial designs of the 1940s within the context of concurrent Chinese society, drastically shaped by Western and Japanese colonialism and conflicts between the Nationalist and Communist Parties, I argue that the industrial designs reflect related developments within Chinese history from ancient dynasties to the Republican era to socialist society.

Pang Xunqin's Initial Interest in Decorative Art

Pang Xunqin's interest in decorative art was sparked by the designs of his grandaunt's clothing.¹¹⁴ As Pang Xunqin recalls:

Every summer, my mom took out grandaunt's old clothes and hung them out in the sun (to make them dry and warm since South China is humid).....They inspired my studying of decorative art.....These old clothes had stylistic designs, pretty colors and embroideries on cuffs, collars and hems, which deeply attracted me.....I think colors for me are not only artistic preferences, they move me emotionally and constructed a dream world of aesthetics upon my childhood memory.¹¹⁵

Several years later, while visiting the Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes (International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts)

¹¹⁴ Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 25.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

in Paris in Autumn 1925,¹¹⁶ Pang Xunqin was intensely impressed by “the dazzling lights, harmonious color matchings and fashionable designs of furniture, carpets, curtains, and even machines.”¹¹⁷ This cutting-edge international art exposition opened up and broadened Pang Xunqin’s view of “art”—from just a few paintings to the every aspects of life.¹¹⁸ This first encounter with industrial design stimulated Pang Xunqin’s decision to apply to the École nationale supérieure des Arts Décoratifs. However, this art school did not accept any Chinese students,¹¹⁹ so he ultimately attended Académie Julian instead (as discussed in Chapter One).

Despite this initial setback, Pang Xunqin planned to one day introduce industrial design in China. At the moment he admired the exhibitions of the Paris Expo, he hoped to see a decorative art/industrial design college in China.¹²⁰ During his years studying abroad (1925-1930) in France, Pang Xunqin also witnessed the modernist revolution in architecture in Germany. Invited by his German friend, poet and dramatist Günter Eich (1907-1972), Pang Xunqin travelled to Berlin and Cologne, and visited several private suburban houses exploring the Bauhaus style which advocated minimalist and functional design and utilized modern materials such as steel and glass.¹²¹ While touring in France and Germany, Pang Xunqin learned about Western European modernist art and design.

¹¹⁶ Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 40-42. Pang Xunqin left for France in August 1925 from Shanghai by ship and spent thirty-six days at sea.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 42-43.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 43.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 43.

¹²¹ Ibid., 109-113.

In contrast to his peaceful and fun-filled life in Paris, Pang Xunqin had to face war after returning to China, and he tensely retreated to Kunming in winter 1938.¹²² Established as a new “cultural center” and a shelter accommodating prestigious cultural and educational institutions as well as specialists and scholars from various disciplines, Kunming at that time felt like another “Paris” for Pang Xunqin (even though Shanghai, one of the biggest metropolises in Republican China, was named “the Paris of the East”). Kunming provided Pang Xunqin with multiple opportunities and resources. Meeting scholars such as the brothers Liang Sicheng and Liang Siyong, Liang Sicheng’s first wife Lin Huiyin 林徽因¹²³ (1904-1955), Chen Mengjia 陈梦家¹²⁴ (1911-1966), Shen Congwen, Wang Tianmu 王天木¹²⁵ (1911-1992) and Wu Jinding 吴金鼎¹²⁶ (1901-1948), Pang Xunqin acquired knowledge of the pictorial brick stones of the Han Dynasty and potteries of the Neolithic period. He also worked for the Central Museum and painted

¹²² Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, ed. Pang Tao 庞璩, 307.

¹²³ Born in Fujian Province in 1904, Lin Huiyin was a talented writer and the first female architect in China. She completed degrees in England and the United States. After the establishment of the People’s Republic of China, she was hired as a professor at the Architecture Department of Tsinghua University. The projects that she participated in included the design of the National Emblem of China and the Monument to the People’s Heroes at the Tiananmen Square. She was also the aunt of Maya Lin 林璠 (born in 1959), the famous American-born Chinese architect who designed the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. See the Tsinghua Alumni Association website: <http://www.tsinghua.org.cn/publish/alumni/4000359/10008628.html>.

¹²⁴ Chen Mengjia was born in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province. He was a poet and archaeologist specializing in ancient Chinese characters. He lent several books of ancient Chinese decorative patterns to Pang Xunqin, most of them about bronze objects. See Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 161-162.

¹²⁵ Wang Tianmu, or Wang Zhenduo 王振铎, born in Baoding, Hebei Province, he was a museologist researching ancient technological and scientific devices. He introduced the pictorial bricks and stones of the Han dynasty to Pang Xunqin. See Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 162.

¹²⁶ Wu Jinding was an archaeologist born in Shandong Province. He excavated and found the Neolithic Longshan culture in China. He introduced the Neolithic Yangshao culture potteries to Pang Xunqin. See Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 162.

China Decoration Figure Collection 中国图案集,¹²⁷ the precursor to his *Arts and Crafts Collection*. Inspired by traditional Chinese culture from the bronze vessels of the Shang and Zhou Dynasty to the three-color potteries and textiles of the Tang Dynasty, *China Decoration Figure Collection* presents Chinese dynastic decorative designs combined with mythical figures and robust animals and other modern patterns. In this collection, Pang Xunqin's ideas towards industrial design emerged as in the *Beast Pattern* (1939) (Fig. 21), in which two pink beast patterns from the Warring States Period (475-221 BCE) were applied to the front view of a pot design;¹²⁸ and *A Pattern of Dancing Girls* (1939) (Fig. 22), in which two Tang Dynasty dancing girls wearing light grey dresses with blue sleeves were framed by three big and small circles mimicking the plate's form.¹²⁹

To realize China's Industrial Design

In *China Decoration Figure Collection*, mythical taotie 饕餮 (a monster mask motif) and coiling dragon 蟠龙 patterns, auspicious deer and bird motifs, fairyland and daily life scenes combine in colorful images. *Arts and Crafts Collection* surpasses the mere depicting of ancient decorative patterns, rather, it extracts the essential segments of traditions and applies them to everyday designs such as cases, pots, and tea trays. In *Case* (Fig. 23), the design shows a combination of three views of a jewelry or cosmetics case.

The black lacquer cover portrays a red-dressed woman sitting on the floor and looking

¹²⁷ The *China Decoration Figure Collection* has four volumes, every volume contains twenty-five pages, the whole collection has one hundred pages in total. This collection was greatly praised at a feast for the Southwest Associated University. See Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down 就是这样走过来的*, 161-162. See *China Decoration Figure Collection* in the *Pioneer of Figures: The Collection of Pang Xunqin's Pattern Art Exhibition* 图画先行：庞薰琹图案艺术精品展作品集, ed. Pang Xunqin Art Museum, (Hongkong: Qingfeng Xuan 清风轩 Art Press, 2013).

¹²⁸ *China Decoration Figure Collection* in the *Pioneer of Figures: The Collection of Pang Xunqin's Pattern Art Exhibition* 图画先行：庞薰琹图案艺术精品展作品集, ed. Pang Xunqin Art Museum, 52-53.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 142-143.

into a bronze mirror with a lacquer stand; her coiffed hair and elegant posture with an arm lifting and bending above her head indicates her upper-class social status. On her right side, an older-look attendant in a coarse blue dress is kneeling and bowing to hold the mirror for her. Interestingly, in the front view, Pang Xunqin integrated an ancient-look metal mask for the lock decoration, a bamboo-textured grid and colorful strings as handles. While the whole design of this case showcases a modern quality combining various materials in an innovative style, the traditional bamboo-weaving and string-weaving craft, and the women figures reference Chinese culture from ancient dynasties.

To establish court ladies' behaviors, the Eastern Jin (317-420 CE) painter Gu Kaizhi (345-406 CE) created the *Admonitions of the Instructress to the Court Ladies* 女史箴图 (c. 6th-8th) (Fig. 24) scroll referring to the text constructed by the Western Jin (265-316 CE) Marquis Zhanghua 张华 (232-300 CE) of Guangwu 广武 County.¹³⁰ On the left side in the fourth section of this scroll, an attendant is helping a court lady comb her hair and the lady herself is looking at the mirror and applying make-up from lacquer cosmetic boxes on the floor. Although Pang Xunqin's case design depicts a similar scene as in *The Admonitions Scroll*, which aimed to teach court ladies about appropriate royal behaviors and life philosophies, the case did not carry the same advice: "Everyone knows how to cultivate their appearance, but few know how to cultivate their nature. If one's

¹³⁰ See the Palace Museum Website, <https://www.dpm.org.cn/collection/paint/231643.html>. *The Admonitions Scroll* at the Palace Museum in Beijing is a Song Dynasty copy, and it has eleven painting sections. *The Admonitions Scroll* at the British Museum was considered to be "a work of the fifth to early seventh century," this copy has nine sections. See the British Museum website. For Pang Xunqin's introduction of Gu Kaizhi see Pang Xunqin, *The Research of Chinese Decorative Paintings through the Ages* 中国历代装饰画研究, (Shanghai People's Fine Arts Press 上海人民美术出版社, 1982), 49. For the analysis of the reference of Gu Kaizhi in Pang Xunqin's dancing lady painting see Yang Qingkang, "Pang Xunqin's Wartime Paintings, 1937-1946," Master of Philosophy thesis, (University of Hong Kong, 2017), 94.

nature is not cultivated, rites and proper behavior will become confused and erroneous.”¹³¹ Pang Xunqin selectively applied traditional Chinese motifs to modern design. The *Arts and Crafts Collection* includes thirty objects classified into earthenware, wool, lacquer, textile printing, applique, and porcelain. Most designs include reference to ancient or mythical animal figures such as turtles, phoenixes, Taotie and fish, as well as ancient people.¹³² *Case* uniquely locates women within a hierarchical social context. The design applies ancient court lady figures onto a modern design, which simultaneously hybridizes past traditional culture and the aspiration of the future design trends.

Pang Xunqin dreamt of developing industrial design in China beginning with his studies in Europe. After returning to Shanghai, he began to explore the artistic integration of nationality and decoration.¹³³ In addition to paintings, Pang Xunqin practiced graphic designs such as cover designs for the book *Chalot* (early 1930s) (Fig. 25) and monthly journal *Poetry Collection* 诗篇 (early 1930s), and advertisement designs for beer and cigarettes brands.¹³⁴ Furthermore, in 1933, Pang Xunqin established a short-lived advertising design company, the Great Bear Industrial and Commercial Art Organization 大熊工商业美术社 with Zhou Duo and Duan Pingyou—both art students in the Taimeng

¹³¹ The English translation here is from the Chinese Art History class, taught by Professor Charles Lachman, Winter 2019, University of Oregon. The original text in Chinese is: 人咸知修其容，而莫知饰其性；性之不饰，或愆礼正；斧之藻之，克念作圣。

¹³² Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, ed. Pang Tao 庞涛, 88-135.

¹³³ Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 118.

¹³⁴ *Chalot* was written by Philippe Soupault (A French writer, he founded the Surrealism movement with André Breton). Translated by Fu Lei. Pang Xunqin designed the fourth issue of the journal *Poetry Collection*, see details of the *Poetry Collection* in Xiaoqing Zhu, “Pang Xunqin (1906-1985) – A Chinese Avant-Garde’s Metamorphosis, 1925-1946, and Questions of ‘Authenticity,’” Ph.D. Diss., (University of Maryland, 2009), 114. For Pang Xunqin’s graphic designs see Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, ed. Pang Tao 庞涛, 50-51.

Society.¹³⁵ According to Pang Xunqin's own words, he spent hard times of unemployment from September 1930 to September 1936 until Li Youhang sent him the news through telegram that he had been hired by the National Beiping Art Academy;¹³⁶ meanwhile, he was greatly upset by what he considered to be the subpar artistic and social atmosphere in Shanghai.¹³⁷ Experiencing the torturous failures of the Taimeng Painting Society, his first solo exhibition,¹³⁸ the Great Bear Industrial and Commercial Art Organization, and the Storm Society, Pang Xunqin gradually transformed his painting styles and artistic understanding from mere personality-presenting to applying art and design in practical ways, "letting art go out of the ivory tower."¹³⁹ Pang Xunqin's industrial design mirror a new level of his self-orientation, as he consciously identified himself as an artist who utilized his knowledge of art to realize his goal of popularizing practical, applied art.

While in semi-colonial and ostentatious Shanghai, Pang Xunqin encountered the poor treatment of his Chinese compatriots and even endured a brutal beating by a British cop because of his Chinese identity.¹⁴⁰ As China was carved up by British, French,

¹³⁵ Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *The Discourse of Art, Design, and Education* 论艺术, 设计, 美育, 478-479.

¹³⁶ Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 143.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 135.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 132-135. Pang Xunqin's first solo exhibition was held during September 15th to 25th, 1932 at the Society of Chinese Art Study 中华学艺社 on the Aimaixian 爱麦虞限 Road in Shanghai. A few art students came and only one foreigner bought a painting during the exhibition. This exhibition was advertised on the Shanghai's local newspaper Shen Bao, a French newspaper and an English newspaper published his artworks and objective comments.

¹³⁹ Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *The Discourse of Art, Design, and Education* 论艺术, 设计, 美育, 478-479.

¹⁴⁰ See Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 37-38, 125-126. On May 30th, 1925, when Pang Xunqin went on the Tibetan Road to see the protest of Chinese students against foreign colonizers on the Nanjing Road in Shanghai, he was beat on the back by a British cop using a gunstock. And in this May Thirtieth Movement, 11 people were killed, many people were injured and

American, German, and Japanese, intense fears of wars and losing the country constituted a prevalent mental state for Chinese residents. Poet Wen Yiduo 闻一多 (1899-1946) embodied his concerns about colonization through the metaphor of family separation — mother China and her seven sons;¹⁴¹ musician Sinn Sing Hoi 冼星海 (1905-1945) composed the Yellow River Cantata encouraging Chinese people to unite and fight against Japanese invaders;¹⁴² and artist Pang Xunqin created his industrial design to promote the idea of retaining the essence of traditional Chinese aesthetics within modern lives.¹⁴³ In this sense, Pang Xunqin's designs share similarities with Yuan Dynasty paintings. For instance, Qian Xuan's 钱选 (1235-1305 CE) *Wang Xizhi Watching Geese*¹⁴⁴ (c. 1295) (Fig. 26) embraces the Eastern Jin value of rooting in traditional Chinese soil to artistically oppose the Yuan Dynasty's rule. In the 1930s-1940s, under the enthusiastic cry for saving the country and repelling the enemy, nation-building or

arrested by British cops, it triggered a wide strike among workers, students and merchants in Shanghai. See Shanghai archives http://www.archives.sh.cn/shjy/shzg/201606/t20160606_42721.html.

¹⁴¹ Wen Yiduo, a famous Chinese poet who graduated from the Tsinghua University and was educated at the Art Institute of Chicago. He created this famous poetry Song of the Seven Sons in March 1925 while he was studying in the U.S. "Seven sons" in this poetry include Macau, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Weihai Bay, Guangzhou Bay, Kowloon and Lüshun of Da Lian. Because of his counter- Nationalist Party speeches, he was assassinated by secret agents of the Nationalist Party in Kunming. He highly praised Pang Xunqin's paintings, especially the social issues-mirroring work *Road* 路 when they met in Kunming. See Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 176-178.

¹⁴² Sinn Sing Hoi is the Cantonese translation of Xian Xinghai. He studied music in Beijing, Shanghai and Paris. He first met with Pang Xunqin in Paris. See Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 136.

¹⁴³ Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *The Research of Chinese Decorative Paintings through the Ages* 中国历代装饰画研究, (Shanghai People's Fine Arts Press 上海人民美术出版社, 1982), 122.

¹⁴⁴ Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (Eastern Jin Dynasty, 303-361 CE), one of the most famous calligrapher in the Chinese history, it is said that his calligraphies were inspired by movements of geese. This painting was depicted in a blue and green antique landscape painting style, presents Wang Xizhi standing in a pavilion and watching geese. See Metropolitan Museum of Art website: <https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/1973.120.6/>.

“showing love for the nation,” became the primary theme of every aspect of artistic creation. Pang Xunqin’s industrial designs mark a crucial evolution in his artistic transformation whereupon he sought to apply traditional Chinese culture to modern designs for a new, strong, and sophisticated nation.

Arts and Crafts Collection won an award from the Ministry of Education in 1940. Soon after, art historian Michael Sullivan and his wife brought the collection back to England, but failed to publish it in London. The book was finally published in China in 1981, but remains unapplied and relatively unknown.¹⁴⁵ Not successfully promoted in China, Pang Xunqin’s industrial designs seem to repeat the fate of the Storm Society. Yet the artist’s commitment to industrial design eventually led to his establishment of the Central Academy of Arts and Crafts 中央工艺美术学院 (Now the Academy of Arts & Design of Tsinghua University) in 1956.¹⁴⁶

In Pang Xunqin’s *Self Introduction* for his solo exhibition in Chengdu on September 11th, 1943, he wrote:

I believe that a far more splendid artistic epoch than the Renaissance will arrive soon to our art world. Being like a shrimp in the sea, I feel perplexed and worried within the immediate context immersing in the conversation between East and West. I seek to embrace the culture of the East and West, however, I am too insignificant to achieve that. I can only like sand, perhaps, being swallowed by the flood of history even though my destiny is supposed to be like that. Nonetheless, maybe someday the worthless sand lying on the sea bed would be used to construct a shining road leading to my pursuit. And at that time, the sand could

¹⁴⁵ Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 195. This book was brought from China to England and the U.S. by Michael Sullivan (1916-2013), one of the first Western art historians who introduced modern Chinese art history. He frequently communicated with Pang Xunqin by mail during 1946-1949. See “Remembering Pang Xunqin” in *The Collection of Painting of Pang Xunqin* 庞薰琹画集, (Beijing: People’s Fine Arts Publishing House 人民美术出版社, 1998). The descriptions of the travel of *Arts and Crafts Collection* in Michael Sullivan’s article are different from Pang Xunqin’s memoir. Here I adopt Sullivan’s version since Pang Xunqin mentioned he could not precisely remember what happened to this book in his memoir.

¹⁴⁶ Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *This Is the Path I Traveled Down* 就是这样走过来的, 260-262.

smile and wordlessly watch people stepping through it and harvesting the fruit.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁷ Pang Xunqin 庞薰琹, *The Discourse of Art, Design, and Education* 论艺术,设计,美育, 46.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In 1930s-1940s China, a period of colonial occupation, wars, and turbulence, Pang Xunqin's artistic practice significantly transformed—from his early Shanghai-based painting to Miao ethnic paintings and to industrial designs. I consider Pang Xunqin's seemingly sudden stylistic changes as linked to external cultural forces that modified the artist's self-identity and his pursuit of combining Chinese and European cultures. Pang Xunqin devoted nearly his whole life to bridging traditional Chinese culture and western art and design. In researching this thesis, I traced Pang Xunqin's steps from his hometown of Changshu to Paris, Shanghai, Guiyang, and other cities and regions, considering how his relationships with these places impacted his paintings and designs. The artistic transformations from his Shanghai-based paintings to Miao ethnic paintings to industrial designs reflect Pang Xunqin's physical and psychological shifts amidst a time of war and massive social upheaval. While he continuously imbued his Shanghai-based paintings, Miao ethnic paintings, and industrial designs with utopian sentiments, Pang Xunqin also practically combined his experiences in China's eastern metropolis and southwestern countryside and his research on traditional Chinese aesthetics and ethnic minority cultures. Although his artistic attempts did not widely impress the public in China and even irritated some Nationalist Party officials, Pang Xunqin facilitated a fusion of artistic styles that transcended time and space, inventing an inclusive model of Chinese modernism that valued cross-cultural understanding.

APPENDIX: FIGURES



Figure 1
Pang Xunqin in Chengdu, 1943
Photographed by Michael Sullivan.
Image from Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, edited by Pang Tao 庞涛, 278.



Figure 2
Pang Xunqin, *Self Portrait with a Black Hat* 戴黑帽的自画像, oil painting on canvas,
1929, lost in 1966.
Image from Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, edited by Pang Tao 庞涛, 9.



Figure 3

Sanyu, *Two Nudes on a Red Tapestry*
oil on board, 1950s, 101 x 121 cm.

Image from the Online Archives of Modern Chinese Art, The Li Ching Cultural and
Educational Foundation
<http://www.artofsanyu.org/>.



Figure 4

Pang Xunqin, *Such Is Shanghai* 如此上海 or *Life's Riddle* 人生的哑谜
watercolor on paper, 1931.
Lost in 1937.

Image from Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, edited by Pang Tao 庞涛, 19.



Figure 5
Still from *Street Angel* 马路天使, 1937.
Directed by Yuan Muzhi 袁牧之.

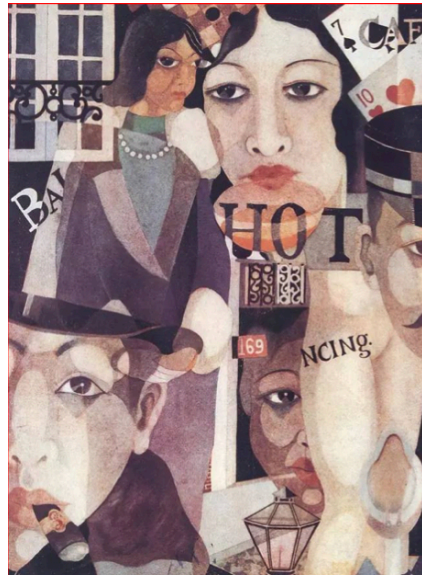


Figure 6
Pang Xunqin, *Such Is Paris* 如此巴黎, watercolor on paper, 1931.
Lost in 1937.
Image from Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, edited by Pang Tao 庞涛, 17.



Figure 7

Members of the Storm Society in Shanghai,

Front row from left: Pang Xunqin, Zhang Xian, Yang Taiyang

Back row from left: Zhou Duo, Yang Qiuren, Duan Pingyou, Ni Yide, 1933.

Image from Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, edited by Pang Tao 庞涛, 42.



Figure 8

Pang Xunqin, *Untitled* 无题, watercolor on paper, 1934.

Lost in 1966.

Image from Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, edited by Pang Tao 庞涛, 25.



Figure 9
 Pang Xunqin, *Son of the Earth* 地之子
 watercolor on paper, 1934. About 45x37 cm.
 Lost after 1940s.

Image from Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, edited by Pang Tao 庞涛, 23.



Figure 10
 Xiao Yi, *Portraits of Periodical Offering* 职贡图 (detail), the copy of Northern Song
 Dynasty (960-1279), the original painting was produced in ca. 540, Southern Liang
 Dynasty (502-557), 25x198 cm.

Collected by National Museum of China.
 Image from the official website of the National Library of China.



Figure 11

Attributed to Yan Liben, *Tribute Bearers* 职贡图 (detail), Tang Dynasty (618-907), ink and color on silk, 61.5x191 cm.

Collected by National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan.

Image from Nicole Vandier-Nicolas, *Chinese Painting: An Expression of a Civilization*, translated by Janet Seligman, (New York: Rizzoli, 1983), 40.



Figure 12

Attributed to Yan Liben, *The Thirteen Emperors* (detail), Tang Dynasty, second half of the 7th century, ink and color on silk, 51.3x531 cm.

Collected by Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Image from the official website of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



Figure 13

(Kayou) Zhongjia in *Qing Imperial Illustrations of Tributary Peoples*, ca. 1751-1805, ink and color on paper.

Collected by National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan.

Image from *The Art of Ethnography: A Chinese "Miao Album,"* translated by David M. Deal and Laura Hostetler, edited by Stevan Harrell, xix.

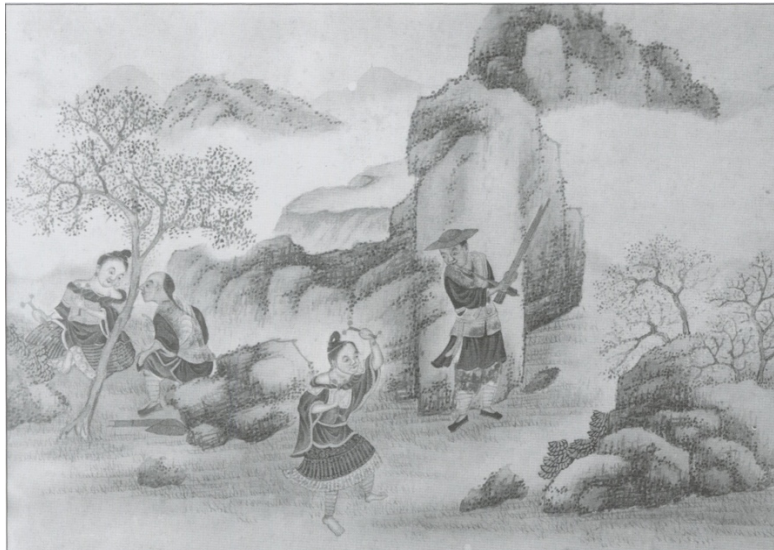


Figure 14

Hua Miao 花苗

Miao Album of Guizhou, ca. after 1797, Qing Dynasty (1644-1912)

Image from *The Art of Ethnography: A Chinese "Miao Album,"* 26.



Figure 15

Pang Xunqin, *Orange Harvest* 橘红时节
watercolor on paper, autumn 1944/spring 1945, 43x35 cm.

Collected by Pang Xunqin Art Museum

Image from Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, edited by Pang Tao 庞涛, 151.



Figure 16

Paul Gauguin, *Two Tahitian Women*, oil painting on canvas, 1899, 94x72.4 cm.

Collected by Metropolitan Museum, New York.

Image from the official website of the Metropolitan Museum, New York.



Figure 17

Pang Xunqin, *Selling Wood* 卖柴

Watercolor on silk, 1942, 40x33.5 cm.

Collected by Pang Xunqin Art Museum.

Image from Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, edited by Pang Tao 庞涛, 155.



Figure 18

Pang Xunqin, *Dance for Qingmiao* 花溪青苗跳花

Watercolor on silk, 1944, 66x45 cm.

Collected by Pang Xunqin Art Museum.

Image from Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, edited by Pang Tao 庞涛, 158.



Figure 19

Pang Xunqin, *Archery* 射牌

Watercolor on silk, 1941, 40x33.5 cm.

Collected by Pang Xunqin Art Museum.

Image from Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, edited by Pang Tao 庞涛, 157.



Figure 20

Pang Xunqin, *The Cover of the Arts and Crafts Collection*

Color on paper, 1941, 39.5 x29.5 cm.

Collected by Pang Xunqin Art Museum.

Image from Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang* 庞薰琹, edited by Pang Tao 庞涛, 89.

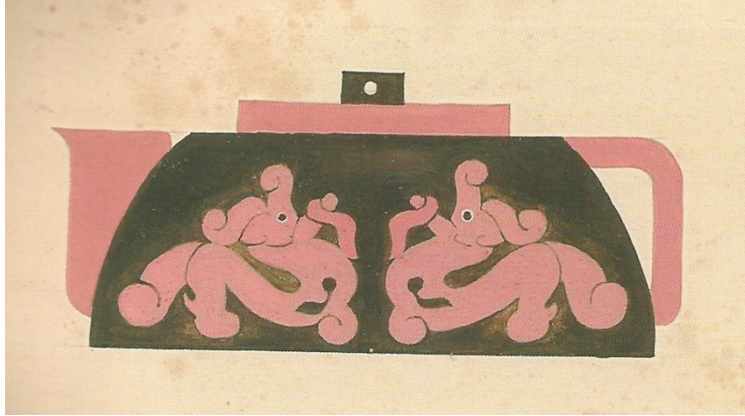


Figure 21

Pang Xunqin, *Beast Patterns* (detail) in *China Decoration Figure Collection* (II) 24
Color on paper, 1939, 27.5x25 cm.

Collected by Pang Xunqin Art Msueum.

Image from *Pioneer of Figures: The Collection of Pang Xunqin's Pattern Art Exhibition*
图画先行：庞薰琹图案艺术精品展作品集, edited by Pang Xunqin Art Museum 庞薰
琹美术馆 and Changshu Pang Xunqin Research Society 常熟市庞薰琹研究会, 53.



Figure 22

Pang Xunqin, *A Pattern of Dancing Girls* (detail) in *China Decoration Figure Collection*
(II) 18

Color on paper, 1939, 27.5x25 cm.

Collected by Pang Xunqin Art Museum.

Image from *Pioneer of Figures: The Collection of Pang Xunqin's Pattern Art Exhibition*
图画先行：庞薰琹图案艺术精品展作品集, edited by Pang Xunqin Art Museum 庞薰
琹美术馆 and Changshu Pang Xunqin Research Society 常熟市庞薰琹研究会, 143.



Figure 23

Pang Xunqin, *Case 匣*

Color on paper, 1941.

Collected by Pang Xunqin Art Museum.

Image from Hiunkin Pang 庞薰莱, *Hiunkin Pang 庞薰莱*, edited by Pang Tao 庞涛, 111.



Figure 24

After Gu Kaizhi, *Admonitions of the Court Instructress 女史箴图* (detail)

Ink and color on silk, 6th-8th century, 24.37x343.75 cm.

Collected by British Museum.

Image from the official website of the British Museum.



Figure 25
 Pang Xunqin, Book Cover Design of *Chalot*, 1933.
 Collected by Pang Xunqin Art Museum.

Image from Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹, *Hiunkin Pang 庞薰琹*, edited by Pang Tao 庞涛, 50.



Figure 26
 Qian Xuan, *Wang Xizhi Watching Geese* 王羲之观鹅图 (detail)
 Ink, color and gold on paper, ca. 1295, 23.2x92.7 cm.
 Collected by Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Image from the official website of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

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