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Reforming Connoisseurship: State and Collectors in Shanghai in the 1950s and 1960s

Abstract This paper examines the relationship between the state and art collectors during the 1950s and 1960s in Shanghai. It explores how the state gained control over art and collecting, by building state museums, by co-opting connoisseurs and their collections, and by extending "socialist transformation" to the antiquities market in 1956. However, state control was far from complete, and some trade in antiquities continued outside of official channels. To crack down on this illegal trade, cultural authorities in Shanghai launched a Five-Antis Campaign in 1964 to punish alleged art speculators. Through its cultural institutions and political campaigns, the state controlled culture but did not monopolize it.

Keywords Shanghai Museum, Five-Antis campaign, art collectors

Every year, when Shanghai's rainy season ended and just as the hottest days of summer began, Qian Jingtang 钱镜塘 (1908–83) would busy himself with the airing of his paintings.[1] Though by the 1960s, the collector had already donated thousands of items to local museums, he still had such a vast collection that it took over a month to cycle through all of it. Every morning, Qian would take a batch of paintings, hang them all around the thirty-six square meter living room of his Western-style garden villa, and direct an electric fan at them. After the annual ritual, as his grandson Qian Daoming 钱道明 remembered, the artwork displayed in the stately family home on Maoming Road returned to its normal

[1] Qian Jingtang was a native of Haining in Zhejiang province. He was also known as Qian Dexin, and in old age called Juyin laoren. In his twenties, he came to Shanghai and opened an antiquities shop called Liu Ying Tang, gaining recognition as an authenticator of paintings. He made two significant donations to the Shanghai Museum in 1958 and 1962, and sold an additional portion of his collection to the state in 1979. Ma Chengyuan, Huang Xuanfeng, and Li Junjie, *Shanghai wenwu bowuguan zhi*, 489. This gazetteer will henceforth be abbreviated *SHWWBWGZ*. Please note alternate dates for his year of birth; Zheng Zhong lists 1906 and Tang Yonggang lists 1907.

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order: paintings were hung according to the season, with lotus flowers for summer and plum blossoms for winter.[2]

Though Qian Jingtang began his career as a collector and an art dealer in the Republican Period (1912–49), both his collection and his practice of connoisseurship persisted in the early years of the People's Republic (1949–). One episode may serve as an example: when Qian spotted a Wang Shigu 王石谷 (1632–1717) work in the home of the painter Liu Haisu 刘海粟, he immediately bought it for the asking price of sixteen bars of gold.[3] Though the painting was eventually donated to the Zhejiang Provincial Museum, an act that expressed Qian's patriotism toward the new state and his fondness for his native place. Qian first enjoyed the painting as a connoisseur: he researched it, invited the artists Wu Hufan 吴湖帆 and Zhang Zongxiang 张宗祥 to add their colophons, and had it carefully mounted by a Shanghai Museum technician, Yan Guirong 严桂荣.[4] This anecdote shows that despite the Mao era's extension of control over the art trade, some elements of connoisseurship continued. Even though the state prohibited private transactions after the "socialist transformation" of the market in 1956, Qian Jingtang and the members of his circle continued to exchange artwork; the cultural practices that cultivated connoisseurship remained in place. To crack down on this underground market, the state launched a political campaign in 1964, which would eventually implicate Qian Jingtang, another collector named Sun Boyuan 孙伯渊 (1898–1984), and a dozen other art dealers.[5]

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[2] Tang Yonggang, "Haishang jiancang mingjia: Qian Jingtang yanjiu," 171. I am particularly indebted to two parts of the appendices in this master's thesis, including an index of Qian Jingtang's donations and a series of oral histories.

[3] This story about this painting, *Zhuyu chuidiao xiaojing*, is related in numerous accounts, including that of Zheng Zhong, *Haishang shoucang shijia*, 127–28. Though Yan Guirong remembered this as an incident that dated to the 1960s, and Qian Daoming described this incident as occurring in "about the 1950s or 1960s," Tang Yonggang suggests that the purchase took place in the 1940s. This item was acquired by the Zhejiang Provincial Museum in 1956, so it must have been a legal exchange that predated socialist transformation. Tang Yonggang, "Haishang jiancang mingjia," 75, 157, 171.

[4] Tang Yonggang, "Haishang jiancang mingjia," 171. Prosopography is beyond the scope of this paper, but it should be recognized that these circles were very close, and Qian Jingtang and Sun Boyuan moved in the same circles. Tang Yonggang identifies Wu Hufan as the center of this circle, 41.

[5] Sun Boyuan (1898–1984) was a native of Suzhou. His father, Sun Nianqiao, was a stone carver and also mounted stone engravings for his living. After Sun lost his father at age 13, he took over the family shop. As a young man, he was mentored by his sister's husband, the painter Lu Yifei (1908–97), as well as many other scholars and collectors in Suzhou, many of whom lived next to each other. In the wartime period, he fled to Shanghai with his collection. After 1949 he donated part of his collection to the state, including items to the Palace Museum and to the Shanghai Museum's library. During the Cultural Revolution the remainder of his collection was confiscated and he and family moved to a one-room attic. In

This article, based on materials from the Shanghai Municipal Archive, studies the transformation of art collecting and connoisseurship in the early years of the People's Republic of China.[6] It examines the ways in which the state consolidated its control over the art market, including the establishment of museums, the co-optation of connoisseurs and their collections, and the extension of "socialist transformation" to the antiquities market in 1956.[7] This process suggests that by the late 1950s the state had gained both control and legitimacy as a collector, as evinced by major gifts such as the 1958 donation of the best of Qian Jingtang's paintings.[8] However, while state control was powerful, it was not complete, and political campaigns served as an additional strategy for reforming connoisseurship. The second half of the article examines one such movement, the Shanghai Museum's 1964 Five-Antis Campaign.[9] Like the Five-Antis Campaign of the early 1950s, this attack on art speculation was a way

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1980 he made a second series of donations to the Shanghai Museum. Altogether, he donated over 4,000 items to the state. Zheng Zhong, *Haishang shoucang shijia*, 182–96. His first series of donations are reported in the *Wenhui Daily*, Oct. 13, 1956, 2 and the posthumous donations by his son are reported Mar. 20, 1986, 4. See also *SHWWBWGZ*, 483–84. It should be noted that Suzhou was historically an influential center of collecting, see Craig Clunas, *Superfluous Things*, 163.

[6] The primary finds from the Shanghai Municipal Archive (henceforth, SMA) used here include B1: *Shanghai shi renmin zhengfu*, B3: *Shanghai shi renmin weiyuanhui, wenhua jiaoyu bangongshi*, B6: *Shanghai shi renmin weiyuanhui cailiangmao bangongshi*, B9: *Shanghai shi renmin weiyuanhui, wenyi bangongshi*, B105: *Shanghai shi jiaoyuju*, B123: *Shanghai shi diyi shangyeju*, and B172: *Shanghai shi wenhuaju*. It should be noted that SMA B172–1–866, which focuses on the 1964 Five Antis Campaign, has been eliminated from the public record and classified as restricted (*kongzhi*).

[7] A number of words can be used to describe the art objects discussed in this article, as reflected in the primary sources themselves. *Wenwu*, or cultural relic, is the broadest term and is either used as a category or in conjunction with another phrase. The 1964 political campaign against collectors, for example, targets speculation in *wenwu* and *shuhua*, or calligraphy and painting. In this paper I will retain "cultural relic" for *wenwu*, as in Cultural Relic Work Unit, and use "art" as a general term that covers *wenwu shuhua*, and "antiquities" for *guwan*, as in Antiquities Market. It should be noted that in this study the primary concern was paintings, *shuhua* or *huihua*. Craig Clunas has traced the words used to discuss art in imperial times, and notes that *gudong* was a way to refer to paintings and things as commodities. See Craig Clunas, *Superfluous Things*, 87–88. Similarly, collector and connoisseur (*shoucangjia*) are positive words that emphasize the art, while antiquities dealer (*guwanshang*) or broker (*juanke*) are negative words that emphasize its commodification.

[8] According to *SHWWBWGZ*, in 1958 and 1962 Qian Jingtang donated 174 paintings to the Shanghai Museum. Tang Yonggang's index lists 172, of which 165 were donated in 1958. If we take a recent catalogue (*Qian Jingtang juanzeng: Shanghai bowuguan shuhua jingpin ji*) as an example of the best of his collection, and compare this 2003 catalogue with Tang's acquisition records, we find that of the 90 selected paintings (*huihua*), at least 63 of them came from the 1958 donation. This number may be higher, as I may have failed to identify all of the alternate names of painters and paintings.

[9] This Five-Antis campaign targeted graft and embezzlement, speculation, extravagance, dispersionism, and bureaucraticism, and had been launched in February of 1963 as an urban

to gain control of art as a commodity; a group of dealers and "unreformed capitalists" were identified for illegal and speculative activities, they were subject to political education, and their crimes were punished with heavy fines. On the eve of the Cultural Revolution, when the remainder of Qian's collection was taken away in sixteen truckloads, the 1964 Five-Antis Campaign demonstrates that collectors such as Qian, the networks they maintained, and the knowledge that they wielded prevented the state from having a complete monopoly on culture.

State Collecting in the Early PRC

Private connoisseurship in China, as practiced by Qian Jingtang and others in his circle, has a long history. As Craig Clunas has shown, art collecting was a quintessential elite pastime; but, with the commercialization of society in the Ming period (1368–1644), collecting became a possibility for a growing moneyed elite, leading to the publication of connoisseurship texts that explained how to appreciate art, in order to separate the connoisseurs (*shangjian*) from the amateurs (*haoshi*).[10] In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as Shana Brown demonstrates, Chinese intellectuals refashioned the practice of antiquarianism as a modern science, viewing it as a tool for reform. With the 1911 Revolution and the establishment of the Chinese republic, the study of antiquity and the development of fields such as archaeology became linked with the preservation of national patrimony.[11]

The state also has a history of collecting; imperial collections were symbols of

counterpart to the four clean-ups campaign in the countryside. See Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution: The Coming of the Cataclysm, 1961–1966*, 336. It has been suggested to me that in September 1964, when the Shanghai Party Committee began the attack on art speculation, may be too late to be considered the Five-Antis Campaign, and should instead be considered part of the four clean-ups period. However, I will retain the Five-Antis label because the documents refer to the policies and directives of the Five-Antis, and because it was acknowledged that this campaign was late in coming to the Antiquities Market, SMA B3–2–139, 24–26. Also, it should be noted that the Public Security Bureau had arrested Qian Jingtang in 1963, so the Five-Antis label may have been a useful framework to link his punishment with the reformation of the Antiquities Market, SMA B3–2–139, 47. Finally, according to one account Five-Antis campaigns continued until the end of 1965, eventually involving 1,800 enterprises. See *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo guoshi quanjian*, vol. 3, 3046–47.

[10] Craig Clunas, *Superfluous Things*, 86–88. On merchants as collectors, 15, on what a collection might have comprised, 106. Clunas writes that from the middle of the sixteenth century collecting "shifted its role from being a personal predilection… to being an essential form of consumption which was central to the maintenance of elite status. In the late Ming and Qing periods it was no longer acceptable not to be a 'lover of antiquity'," 108.

[11] Shana J. Brown, *Pastimes: From Art and Antiquarianism to Modern Chinese Historiography*.

political legitimacy, and the regimes of the Republican Period also created state museums and developed a system of cultural relics law.[12] When the Communist government came to power in 1949, it inherited both a system of museums built in the Republican era and the attendant association between cultural preservation and political legitimacy. Even as troops entered Beijing, for example, they were under strict orders to avoid damaging the Forbidden City and other cultural historic sites (*wenhua guji*). The establishment of the new state brought a centralized bureaucracy for cultural relics, with the poet Guo Moruo as head of a Ministry of Culture that supervised a National Bureau of Cultural Relics (Wenwuju).[13] Unlike its Nationalist predecessor, whose ability to implement its cultural relics law was inhibited by war and fragmented control, the new Communist government had both far-reaching power and an ideology that defined art and culture as the property of the people.

Shanghai was a crucial node in the national cultural relics bureaucracy, recognized as a historically important center for both art trade and art export. The site was made all the more crucial because of its wartime experience, as the elite of the surrounding regions fled to the city's international concessions with their art collections.[14] Just as the Central Military Commission issued directives to protect the Forbidden City, so too did the Shanghai Military Commission provide notices to gather ancient cultural relics that were the "treasures of national culture and precious materials of national history."[15] General Chen Yi, who led the New Fourth Army into Shanghai, became mayor and presided over the creation of the city's cultural institutions. The pre-1949 Shanghai Municipal Museum was taken over and its leadership preserved intact; after a brief stint as the Shanghai Municipal History Museum, the new Shanghai Museum opened in

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[12] For a history of imperial collecting, see Jeannette Shambaugh Elliott, *The Odyssey of China's Imperial Art Treasures*. For Republican Period cultural relics law, see the *Zhonghua minguo shi dang'an ziliao huibian* volumes entitled "*wenhua*." Even the Wang Jingwei government incorporated cultural relics protection into its political ideology; see Zhu Minyi, *Xingzheng yuan wenwu baoguan weiyuanhui*.

[13] The former directive of the Central Military Commission is reproduced in *Zhongguo gongchandang xuanchuan gongzuo wenxian xuanbian*, 772–73. For an analysis of the cultural relics bureaucracy, see Jocelyne Fresnais, *La protection du patrimoine en République populaire de Chine: 1949–1999.*

[14] Tang Yonggang explains that Beijing, Tianjin, and Shanghai formed the nexus for art collecting and study in the Republican period, "Haishang jiancang mingjia," 38–39. That these three centers persisted in the Mao era is evident in the archival record, which shows Beijing and Tianjin buyers continuing to come to Shanghai, even after socialist transformation.

[15] SMA B1–2–245, 10. This document is dated Jul. 20, 1949. Collection eventually entailed a broad range of activities, from district-level collection of local artifacts to municipal level calls for revolutionary cultural relics. See the Huangpu Municipal Archive, N41–1–1087, 7–8. Interestingly, it also resulted in the creation of an ad-hoc committee on the sorting of objects left behind by the Japanese (*Chuli Riben guihuan wenwu weiyuanhui*), though this did not result in much of cultural value. *SHWWBWGZ*, 374–75.

December of 1952.[16] Four months after the liberation of Shanghai, the Shanghai Military Control Committee established a Cultural Relics Commission on September 17, 1949, which was placed under the Shanghai Municipal Government in January of the following year.[17] The museum and the Cultural Relics Commission, together with the Shanghai Bureau of Culture, were responsible for carrying out national regulations for cultural preservation, which included the protection of historic and revolutionary sites and the collection of artifacts.[18]

From its inception, much of the initial momentum behind Shanghai's cultural bureaucracy came from the political patronage of Chen Yi. The Shanghai Museum opened in the racetrack building on People's Square because Chen Yi had removed the military offices that had occupied the building.[19] It was Chen Yi who personally allocated funding from the Bureau of Finance to allow the purchasing of important cultural relics.[20] And, even after Chen left Shanghai to become Foreign Minister in 1958, he repeatedly returned to tour the museum, bringing with him key officials like Zhou Enlai and Kang Sheng.[21]

Though political patronage and economic support were necessary to the establishment of the museum, they were not sufficient to build a collection; the Shanghai Museum's collections depended on art expertise and relationships with Shanghai's connoisseurs and collectors. It was the connoisseurs who knew how to evaluate art, from its authenticity to its historical value, and it was the connoisseurs who had access to the networks of artists, collectors, and dealers that had been established long before 1949. Since it is the very nature of connoisseurship to combine the study of art with its collection, many of these individuals were one and the same. The study of art requires its collection; artists frequently exchange pieces, and buying and selling are part of cultivating one's taste and one's collection. Though the museum in the early 1950s set about recruiting and educating a new group of cultural workers, it was the older

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[16] SMA B105–1–65, 3. The new Shanghai Municipal History Museum was reported open on May 31, 1949.

[17] The Cultural Relics Commission was first called the *Shanghai shi gudai wenwu guanli weiyuanhui*, and was named the *Shanghai shi wenwu guanli weiyuanhui* in January 1950. Over the course of the 1950s it was renamed the *Shanghai shi renmin zhengfu wenwu guanli weiyuanhui* (1953.8), the *Shanghai shi wenwu baoguan weiyuanhui* (1955.4), and incorporated into the Shanghai Museum (1960.2), *SHWWBWGZ*, 370–71.

[18] See, for example, SMA B172–4–67, 1.

[19] Zheng Zhong, *Bowuguan yu shoucangjia*, 43.

[20] Ibid., 37.

[21] Ibid., 188–89. Chen Yi's interest in the Shanghai Museum is often recounted as a way of memorialization and today, as Zheng Zhong reports, is part of museum lore. However, having the attention of municipal and central leaders has been critical even up to and including the museum's renovation and new building in the reform era.

generation of art experts who contributed their cultural knowledge to form the collections of the PRC. These art experts—themselves artists and collectors—aided the state in cultivating relationships with other connoisseurs and encouraging them to donate their collections. In the period before 1956 when a collector could sell to a private party, to an antiquities dealer, or to the state, the museum's art experts served as crucial go-betweens. The painter Xie Zhiliu 谢稚柳 (1910–97), for example, used his reputation and relationships to purchase paintings on behalf of the Shanghai Museum and the Cultural Relics Commission. The fact that the Shanghai Museum today accounts for over 90% of its collection from private collectors suggests that access to networks of connoisseurs was central to its development.

Who were these collectors, and what were their motivations for either donating or selling their art collections to the state? Returning to the story of Qian Jingtang, we find an individual of modest background whose father's interest in collecting influenced his early childhood.[22] Apprenticed to the silk industry in the 1920s, he began to collect art in his free time. A turning point occurred in the early 1930s when he sold his family property and moved to Shanghai, eventually using his savings to begin a business selling paintings. It is clear that during this period he saw himself as both collector and patriot; from 1935 to 1948 he hosted forty-two exhibitions, the proceeds of which went toward patriotic causes such as buying medical supplies for the war effort.[23] Qian was prolific in both collecting and authentication; by his contemporaries' accounts he had an excellent eye, and by his grandson's account he had examined over 50,000 paintings in his lifetime.[24] He donated almost 4,000 paintings before his death, and when he passed away in 1983 his daughter and his grandson divided the remaining 2,000 paintings by drawing lots.[25]

Though in the 1964 campaign the state would accuse Qian of offloading his cheapest pieces to museums in order to curry political favor, several facts substantiate the conclusion that his donations were generous and motivated by patriotism and local pride. He donated much more than he sold, and the vast majority of his donations occurred in the late 1950s (before he was arrested twice in the 1960s). Furthermore, he donated some of his best art in this early period,

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[22] Although some authors, including Zheng Zhong, claim that Qian's family were local officials in the Qing era, Tang Yonggang has found no record of the grandfather Qian Liqun in Qing documents or local gazetteers. Also, although biographies link Qian with the Five Dynasties founder Qian Liu, Tang Yonggang has also found no genealogical evidence for this. Tang Yonggang, "Haishang jiancang mingjia," 15–16.

[23] Tang Yonggang, "Haishang jiancang mingjia," 39–40, 136–38, and 161.

[24] See Zheng Zhong, *Haishang shoucang shijia*, 124, and Tang Yonggang, "Haishang jiancang mingjia," 169.

[25] Zheng Zhong, *Haishang shoucang shijia*, 124.

and many of the donations went to local museums.[26] Yet despite gifting a significant portion of his collection to the state, Qian Jingtang retained thousands of paintings and continued to style himself a collector. He continued to buy and sell paintings for his livelihood, even after the practice was outlawed in 1956.[27] He also began making an index of the items he had collected, hiring a photographer at his own expense. Like connoisseurs of times past, Qian came up with a literary title for his collection, calling his index the *Juyin laoren guoyanlu* (Records of [art] seen by the gentleman of the hidden chrysanthemum).[28] Clearly, Qian Jingtang's personal story neither fits the state's narrative of simple patriotic donation that circulates today, nor the story of the upright collector wronged by the Cultural Revolution, as presented in his grandson's writings and interviews.

To look at donors as a group may be even more difficult, in part because the Shanghai Museum's archives and acquisition records are closed to the public. However, Zheng Zhong 郑重, a *Wenhui Daily* reporter who had the museum beat, wrote biographies of Shanghai collectors in the early 2000s and was given access to the archives in order to do so. While these short biographies were written to underscore the collectors' relationships with the museum and they often highlight collectors' patriotism, a survey of the forty-five collectors nonetheless allows us to examine them as a group.[29]

The group of forty-five collectors is diverse. Their ages in 1949 ranged from

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[26] For example, in Tang Yonggang's index, in the Shanghai Museum's collection, 165 of the 172 paintings came from the 1958 donation (calligraphy donations are not dated). Of the Zhejiang Museum's collection, nine of ten categories of donation were made in 1956 (101 calligraphies, 63 letters, 182 paintings, and 679 other items) while only 38 were sold to the museum in 1965. Of the Zhejiang Provincial Jiaxing Museum's collection, 66 items were donated in 1959 and 56 in 1980/81. At the Zhejiang Provincial Haining Museum, 72 items were donated in 1958, 13 were not dated. At the Nanjing Museum, 37 items were donated between 1961–64, at the Guangdong Museum 46 items were donated at an unspecified date, and at the Guangzhou Art Museum 13 items were donated at an unspecified date. Between 1994–2005, 101 items were sold at auction.

[27] This fact is corroborated by two separate interviews conducted by Tang Yonggang in 2005. In an interview with the grandson, Qian Daoming, he explained that after liberation his grandfather's identity (*shenfen*) did not change, and he still primarily dealt in paintings (*shuhua jingying*). Even after there were no longer any shops, "my grandfather himself still did this, he had his own circle; everybody was this way, having a tacit understanding (*xinzhao buxuan*), outside of paintings he did not want to bother with anything else," 174. The Shanghai Museum technician Yan Guirong was more explicit, saying "At that time after socialist transformation, everybody went to work in the daytime, and this kind of business was conducted at night in private, at home, you could not openly do this… [Qian Jingtang] all along did this on his own." Tang Yonggang "Haishang jiancang mingjia," 167–68.

[28] Tang Yonggang, "Haishang jiancang mingjia," 158 and 178. This index was confiscated and lost during the Cultural Revolution.

[29] Zheng Zhong, *Haishang shoucang shijia*. Here, I do not include his biographies of overseas Chinese donors.

38–75, and most had already been established in their professions by that time. They were from a variety of places, but many of them came from Zhejiang or Jiangsu provinces. Some came from families of artists and collectors, and others had made their fortunes in industry and banking in the Republican era. Some had studied overseas, at least a few had been government officials, and many had prominent positions in businesses ranging from railways and real estate, pharmaceuticals and electronics, and the industries of coal, cement, cotton, and textiles. From this group of collectors at least 14, or one-third, served the new People's Republic in some kind of cultural capacity, and at least 9 of them were similarly co-opted as the politically correct "national bourgeoisie" or as members of the Chinese People's Consultative Congress.[30] The objects they collected ranged from rare books to paintings and calligraphy; some specialized in particular historical periods, some focused on a genre, and some collected more widely. Many of them donated historically significant collections ranging from several hundred objects to several thousand, and at least 16 of them were officially recognized for their contributions (some posthumously, in the 1980s). Though it is difficult to make generalizations, some observations are clear: collectors were also experts (and many chose to serve PRC as consultants), members of the cultural elite of pre-1949 China were often also members of the economic elite, and at least up until the 1957 Anti-Rightist Movement, the state chose to co-opt the cultural elite and their collections.

In the biographies, a donation to the Shanghai Museum or the Cultural Relics Commission was often portrayed as a patriotic act; the donor was awarded a certificate and significant donations were often honored with a special exhibition. In 1959, for example, on the ten-year anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic, the museum held an exhibition on the progress of cultural relics work in Shanghai. As the *Wenhui Daily* explained, the display of that exhibit included the certificates given to collectors to demonstrate that donors were "moved by the cultural relics policies of the Party" and felt that their collections would be the safest in the state museum.[31] The donors' desire to use a gift to demonstrate patriotism is evinced in the choices that some of them made. For example, the widow of Gu Zeyang 顾则扬 donated part of the Suzhou 苏州 family's collection to the Cultural Relics Commission in 1952, and immediately took her

[30] It should be noted that the information in these biographies is not exhaustive. Written as human interest-type biographies, Zheng Zhong did not necessarily include information, including exact dates of donation, in a systematic fashion. Tang Yonggang has offered any alternate way to categorize these collectors, explaining that there were five groups: former Qing officials, descendants of eminent Jiangnan families, industrialists, artists, and merchants who were also collectors (Qian Jingtang and Sun Boyuan fall into this category), "Haishang jiancang mingjia," 40.

[31] Xu Jiren and Peng Jian'an, "Wenwu chongsheng," *Wenhui bao*, May 31, 1959, 3. See also "Shanghai bowuguan xintian yipi zhengui wenwu," *Guangming ribao*, Nov. 10, 1961, 1.

modest honorarium and donated it to the cause of the Korean War.[32] Another donor, Sun Yufeng 孙煜峰, made his 1964 donation in honor of China's first atomic bomb.[33] Expressions of patriotism and declarations of the legitimacy of the state as steward of China's cultural relics are evident in the language that accompanied donations; as the sons of the collector Wu Fangsheng 吴芳生 stated in a speech accompanying a 1961 donation, they had "realized that these ancient paintings are the creation of our nation's forebears, and belong to the nation's culture. And through our recent study of the Party and state's policies for protecting the nation's cultural heritage, we have learned that the cultural relics left to us by our ancestors are properly the people's property."[34] Such public statements, preserved in the archival record of the Shanghai Museum, demonstrate that donors were adept at repeating the state's definition of art as the people's property.

Yet the patterns of donations, again compiled from the biographies, suggest that the motivations behind such gestures and statements were more complex. Using the 45 collectors and the dates for which a donation is mentioned, it is possible to see several clusters of donations.

1949: 5 donations	1956: 3 donations	1962: 5 donations
1950: 3 donations	1957: 4 donations	1963: 2 donations
1951: 5 donations	1958: 1 donation	1964: 1 donation
1952: 2 donations	1959: 5 donations	1966: 1 donation
1954: 2 donations	1960: 5 donations	1973: 1 donation
1955: 1 donation	1961: 3 donations	Post-1976: 17 donations

During and immediately after the founding of the PRC, there was a first cluster of donations. As with the case of the widow of Gu Zeyang, such donations may have been made to demonstrate patriotism for PRC. They were also, as the official gazetteer explains, the result of economic hardship after the first Five-Antis campaign.[35] After 1956, donations picked up once again, perhaps because private trade had been cut off, perhaps to demonstrate political loyalty in the wake of the Anti-Rightist campaign (in which collectors were prime targets), and perhaps because of the economic stress following the Great Leap. In the biographies written by Zheng Zhong, one sees visits to collectors in which museum officials would express concern over their recent financial distress; in

[32] *Guoyunlou shuhua jicui*, 1–19.
[33] Zheng Zhong, *Haishang shoucang shijia*, 244.
[34] Ibid., 241.
[35] *SHWWBWGZ*, 423.

addition to offering funds, the museum was also able to arrange work assignments or university places for children. The cluster of donations made immediately after the Cultural Revolution reflects the donation of objects confiscated during the period, sometimes by descendants of those who did not live to see the revolution's conclusion.[36] Though this data is incomplete, individual donors who made more than one donation did so in a staggered way, releasing their collections when it served their political or economic interests. This pattern suggests that one's art collections were a resource, and that donors exchanged cultural capital for political or economic capital. From this we see that though Qian Jingtang was later made an example, he was not typical. Most donors did not have his resources; Qian could afford to make large donations in one fell swoop while retaining thousands of pieces, and it seems that the only time he tried to parlay his collection for material benefit was after the Cultural Revolution, when he offered his collection of Ming letters in exchange for a place to live.[37]

The Art Market and Socialist Transformation

The socialist transformation of Shanghai's art and antiquities market from private to public can be seen in two phases, one that culminated in 1956 and a second that ended in 1965. In the Republican era, Shanghai was a center for trade in art and antiquities; at its height in the 1930s, the shops that clustered around the area of today's Guangdong Road numbered 210 and there were also several same-trade associations.[38] After 1949, a new Shanghai Antiquities Trade Association was established in May of 1950 and thirteen new shops sprang up between 1949–51. Yet, greater restrictions on exports led to the market gradually contracting, and by 1955, many shops had closed, some of the proprietors went into other businesses, and a few were prosecuted for illegally exporting antiquities in June 1955. Thus it was an already reduced and chastened art market that faced socialist transformation in 1956.[39]

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[36] For more on this subject, see Denise Ho, "Revolutionizing Antiquity: The Shanghai Cultural Bureaucracy in the Cultural Revolution, 1966–1968," 687–705.

[37] This collection was confiscated during the Cultural Revolution and kept by the Shanghai Museum. After the Cultural Revolution, Qian asked the Shanghai Museum to help him resolve his housing issue, but the museum was unable to help him. After Qian's death his grandson entrusted it to Beijing's Jiade Auction House, and in 2002 the Shanghai Museum bought it at auction for 9,000,000 *yuan*. Zheng Zhong, *Haishang shoucang shijia*, 131. In the same year the Shanghai guji chubanshe published the letters as *Qian Jingtang shoucang Mingdai mingren chidu*. See also *Wenhui Daily*, Oct. 25 and Nov. 11, 2002.

[38] *SHWWBWGZ*, 424–27.

[39] Ibid., 427.

The 1955 reports from the Shanghai Bureau of Culture and the People's Committee Office on Culture and Art provide a sketch of the art market on the eve of socialist transformation, as well as policies for its reduction and reform. In 1954, when investigations began, there were 163 antiquities dealers whose business concentrated in the Antiquities Market and the China Antiquities Market. The People's Committee observed that since the effect of greater customs restrictions in 1952, many of the antiquities dealers had turned to the manufacture of replicas or other handicrafts that could be exported. Others focused on domestic trade, purchasing objects from Shanghai residents, collectors, auctioneers, dealers from other cities, and each other. Of the buyers in this new market, collectors themselves were few, though institutions from outside of Shanghai, visiting foreigners, and overseas Chinese continued to purchase from the markets. The People's Committee remarked that though the Five-Antis campaign resulted in decreased smuggling, especially to Hong Kong, there were still objects confiscated at customs.[40] In identifying problems within the market, the report explained that the pathway of trade was unclear, the future of the antiquities trade was unclear (as was the future of the dealers), and the scope of the trade was unclear. Most of all, it was difficult to distinguish between collectors and dealers.[41] In a follow-up report, the Bureau of Culture concluded that the existence of the market facilitated the continued scattering of cultural relics, it also encouraged grave-robbing, and had a bad influence on protecting cultural relics.[42] On the eve of the conversion to joint management, Shanghai authorities found the antiquities market to be both ill-supervised and badly understood.

As Feng Xiaocai has shown, Shanghai faced a "high tide of joint (public-private) management conversion" (*gongsi heying qiye*) in late 1955, one that abandoned the previous gradual approach in order to respond to Mao Zedong's call to extinguish capitalism, reflected in the Politburo's November 1955 resolution to implement joint management by the end of 1957.[43] The Shanghai Party Committee responded with a series of meetings, which resulted in companies applying for joint management status. On January 20, 1956, the Shanghai government announced that all private enterprises had been converted

[40] SMA B9–2–25, 3–6. There was, however, the competing desire to use exports to gain foreign currency. The Bureau of Culture report, which is more detailed, explains how exporters tried to pass off real items as replicas, and old items as new ones. SMA B9–2–11, 148.

[41] SMA B9–2–25, 6–7. Officials pointed out that rent in the antiquities market was so cheap (2–3 *yuan* per month) and because tea was provided for free, the antiquities market had turned into a big teahouse.

[42] SMA B9–2–11, 152.

[43] Feng Xiaocai, "Rushing Toward Socialism: The Transformation and Death of Private Business Enterprises in Shanghai, 1949–1956," 249–50.

to joint management.[44] On the same day, the Shanghai Antiquities Trade Association was placed under the Shanghai Number One Trade Bureau and likewise the Shanghai Antiquities Market (Shanghai guwan shichang) was subsumed under the same bureau, to be managed by the Shanghai Trade Trust Company.[45] To mark the conversion to public-private management, three months later the Cultural Relics Commission put on an exhibition entitled "Illegal Antiquities Merchants Rob and Transport Ancient Antiquities."[46]

Thus converted, the Shanghai Antiquities Market continued to function up until the Cultural Revolution. It served to provide cultural relics to the various culture-related departments in Shanghai, an estimated 2,190 pieces between 1959 and 1962. In addition, it also provided replicas for export, to the annual sum of 50,000–60,000 *yuan*.[47] As the Shanghai Museum reported in 1965, the Shanghai Antiquities Market continued to run as four branch stores and employed 165 people. Staff included workers, private owners (those with capitalization of over 2,000 *yuan*), and small owners (those with capitalization under 2,000 *yuan*). The biggest of the four stores administered the rest, though each shop was responsible for its own accounting and profits and losses. The shops sold cultural relics, paintings, and old coins, and therefore also employed workers who specialized in the repair of porcelain, jade, lacquer ware, embroidery, scrolls, etc.[48] In many ways the Shanghai Antiquities Market functioned like any other type of enterprise; it followed the instructions of commerce authorities in buying products to stabilize the market, and it also sold items for a profit. In addition, it functioned as a souvenir shop for foreign visitors, prioritizing foreign sales and sales to official groups. As a node in a centrally planned economy, the Antiquities Market could be allocated raw materials—such as gold—by the state. For example, though the Antiquities Market no longer sold jewelry, the state recognized that foreign visitors liked to buy inlay jewelry, and provided gold from the People's Bank for that purpose.[49]

In 1965, the Antiquities Market was completely taken over by the state, and renamed the Shanghai Municipal Antiquities Market (Shanghai shi guwan shichang). In this final stage of socialist transformation, the shops merged all of their finances and could no longer operate independently; they could not contact foreigners, nor could they approach Shanghai residents to purchase their antiquities. Other adjustments, including transferring jewelry to a market for

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[44] Ibid., 253.
[45] *SHWWBWGZ*, 427–29.
[46] SMA B9–2–46, 10.
[47] SMA B123–5–144, 83.
[48] SMA B172–1–866, 26–27.
[49] Ibid., 28. Inlay jewelry was sold at one shop in the city, and apparently made up 10% of the store's sales.

foreigners, the absorption of the jade workshop into the Bureau of Handicrafts, and the removal of historic replicas to the Bureau of Culture, further streamlined the process of state takeover.[50]

Though the process of socialist transformation, especially as related in the gazetteer, appears to have been a smooth and gradual expansion of state control, archival documents point to a number of issues. As the Bureau of Culture reported in 1963, there were still cultural relics that circulated outside of the state-controlled market, and some collectors were unwilling to sell to the market.[51] At the same time, the Duoyunxuan 朵云轩 Market was believed to be withholding items from the state; the Bureau reported that even though "in the past that shop has provided a certain number of cultural relics to the Commission and to the Shanghai Museum…the shop still retains the better paintings and doesn't give [them] purchasing priority."[52] The disconnect between the market and the state manifested itself in a number of problems; the price of items was unclear, different state agencies (including purchasers from out of town) competed to buy objects, and museum officials felt that the functioning of the market actually prevented them from obtaining objects for their research needs. In one 1963 case, a collector offered a Zhao Zi'ang 赵子昂 (1254–1322) calligraphy for 1,000 *yuan*, and the market prepared a 600 *yuan* counteroffer, but the Shanghai Museum stepped in to buy it for 1,700 *yuan*. Beijing and Tianjin dealers were also coming to Shanghai and disrupting the market; a collector in 1962 offered up a Ming dynasty Ding Yunpeng 丁云鹏 (1547–1628) painting, for which the market offered 800 *yuan*. When Beijing's Cultural Relics Market offered 1,200 *yuan*, the collector insisted upon 1,600.[53] Though Shanghai's Number One Trade Bureau painted an idealized picture of the reformed Antiquities Market, in which the imperialist compradors and capitalists customers had been replaced with foreign friends and Chinese intellectuals, where "the face of business and the style of management has undergone a fundamental change," the market was far from transparent.[54] Despite socialist transformation, the state continued to face issues within and without; the market divided among its own interests, and outside of the market, art continued to circulate. As the Shanghai Museum's Party branch began to investigate, it found that collectors and dealers were meeting in parks and restaurants, buying and selling paintings under the cover of a "Tuesday Tea Society."[55] In facing such a

[50] Ibid., 29.
[51] SMA B123–5–1704, 116. The shop also refused to copy and send its work plans or reports to the Bureau of Culture.
[52] Ibid., 116.
[53] SMA B123–5–144, 84.
[54] SMA B123–1–1523, 32–33. This phenomenon was also reported in *Neibu cankao* on Feb. 19, 1963, "Wenwu gushu shougou zhong you diqu fengsuo xianxiang."
[55] SMA B172–1–866, 7 and 11.

challenge, the new Five-Antis campaign may have given the state an opportunity to strike against the art collectors and dealers themselves.

The Campaign Against Art Speculation

In September of 1964, in response to the recommendations of the Ministry of Culture's Xu Pingyu 徐平羽 in Beijing, the Shanghai Party Committee directed the creation of a work team to address speculation in art.[56] Though investigations into individual cases had already been undertaken earlier that year, this was an effort to bring together the resources of multiple work units. Led by Shen Zhiyu 沈之瑜, the Party secretary at the Shanghai Museum, the Leadership Small Group for Attacking the Speculative Sale of Cultural Relics and Paintings (henceforth "Leadership Group") was comprised of members from the Shanghai Museum, the Shanghai Academy of Chinese Painting, the Duoyunxuan Market, the Antiquities Market, and the Public Security Bureau. As the Leadership Group explained in the introduction to their work plan, their target was a group of art traders who had evaded socialist transformation and continued to engage in underground activities. These art traders, the Leadership Group alleged, sold and speculated in art, met regularly with each other, and had even involved state cadres in their activities. Such activities, explained the report, amounted to an attack on socialism; the art traders profited illegally, they corrupted state cadres, their sales inflated the prices of the state's own purchases, and the underground market (by stimulating grave robbing) was said to be affecting agricultural production in the countryside.

Further, the Leadership Group charged that these art traders were only pretending to be connoisseurs. In fact, many of them had no employment in PRC and therefore were not supervised by a work unit nor obliged to participate in political movements. Unsupervised by work units, municipal bureaus, or their residential districts, these art traders had maintained their so-called capitalist thinking. To punish them, the Leadership Group concluded, was to attack unreformed capitalism and fulfill the directives of the Socialist Education

[56] The Shanghai Museum had sent representatives to meet with the Vice Minister of Culture, Xu Pingyu. SMA B172–1–866, 9. This was not the first occurrence of a Five-Antis Campaign in the museum. In 1952, during the first Five-Antis Campaign, over thirty (of 140 workers in the Shanghai Cultural Relics Commission) were accused of corruption. The painter Xie Zhiliu was identified as one of the primary targets, and was accused of using the pretense of public collecting for his own private collection. During this campaign Sun Boyuan was also implicated as a seller. *Wenhui Daily*, Mar. 1, 1952, 2. In the final report 57 people were found guilty of corruption. In 1984, on Xie's request, his case was reopened and the Shanghai People's Court removed (*chexiao*) the former judgment. Zheng Zhong, *Bowuguan yu shoucangjia*, 121–26.

Movement.[57]

To carry out the campaign, the Leadership Group designated members to form a unit for gathering evidence (*cailiao zu*), organizing materials according to individuals and creating a separate dossier for each art trader. To facilitate the collection of evidence from all quarters, the Leadership Group encouraged its member units to mobilize the masses in a Five Antis-Campaign, though it also warned that the masses in cultural relics work units likely had complicated relationships with the art dealers themselves.[58] According to their preliminary analysis, the Leadership Group designated two types of art traders. Firstly, there were those engaged in trading art, profiting from such sales, evading taxes, and inflating the prices at which the state could buy them. Sometimes this art trade involved forging paintings, which were then sold to other collectors as authentic. The second group of people was formed of accomplices, individuals who ran underground workshops for the mounting of scrolls; these workshops were sites for the crime of counterfeiting, and they were also guilty of evading taxes. In investigating the art traders, the Leadership Group set out guidelines to evaluate the severity of crimes:

1. Distinguish between those who only purchased, those who had sold a small amount, and those who had not made great profits from those who had bought and sold in large quantities, making significant profits.
2. Distinguish between those art traders who had profited before the 1956 socialist transformation, and those who had continued to trade after 1956.
3. Distinguish between first and repeat offenders, leaders and ordinary people, light and serious circumstances, and the repentant and the recalcitrant.[59]

As the campaign against the art traders unfolded, officials followed these guidelines in sorting the alleged offenders. Twelve art traders were considered together and subjected to political education, whereas two suspected of "serious circumstances" were arrested and their cases dealt with individually. In February of 1965, after five months of investigation, the Leadership Group convened a discussion with the twelve art traders and concluded that the majority of cases were not serious. Shen Zhiyu of the Shanghai Museum began the meeting by discussing the meaning of class struggle in the cultural relics market, and explained the importance of protecting the motherland's cultural relics. Eight of the art traders came forward to make speeches, offering a self-criticism of their

[57] SMA B3–2–139, 23.
[58] Ibid., 24–26.
[59] SMA B3–2–139, 22–24.

own activities as "going the capitalist road." Several declared that they had evaded taxes, had acted illegally, and pledged not to do so hereafter. One of the art traders, Wang Jianfu 王健辅, was visibly nervous and returned the following day to explain that he had indeed engaged in the sale of cultural relics.[60] After the meeting concluded, members of the Leadership Group sat down to examine the dossiers of the twelve. Together with the Bureau of Propaganda, the Bureau for the Administration of Industry and Commerce, the Bureau of Culture, and the Bureau of Taxes, they dismissed the cases of eight of the twelve; these art traders had made good explanations, did not have serious circumstances, and had demonstrated repentance and reform.[61]

The four remaining dossiers stayed open. The case of Xiang Jihan 项季翰 remained under investigation, as it involved transactions exceeding 4,000 *yuan* since 1961, and because he was alleged to have used the home of a retired worker to conduct his art trade.[62] Ma Dehong 马德宏 was labeled an unreformed capitalist, someone who had evaded taxes on over 10,000 *yuan* in transactions; he was also suspected for smuggling paintings to Hong Kong. Tang Jisheng's 唐吉生 file also remained open; in addition to evading taxes on profits made on transactions with the state, he was retained for questioning in the case of Qian Jingtang. Finally, Qian Jiuding 钱九鼎 was still suspected for his ties to state purchasers within the Antiquities Market. The Leadership Group concluded by turning the four cases over to Shanghai's Bureau of Industry and Commerce and the Bureau of Taxes.[63] This handover implied that the political work had been concluded and the cultural expertise of the Leadership Group was no longer called for; it only remained for the tax authorities to close the cases.

A much more detailed investigation, however, was reserved for two individuals, Qian Jingtang and Sun Boyuan. If the twelve art traders at the February 1965 meeting were characterized in the main as having "light circumstances," the cases of Qian and Sun were distinguished in both scale and severity. Indeed, when the Leadership Group was founded they specifically planned to integrate all forces to investigate and deal with the Qian and Sun files. Starting with dossiers handed over by Luwan District, the Leadership Group focused on interrogating individuals to build each case.

In the case of Qian Jingtang, officials in Luwan District had been compiling evidence for several years. As early as 1961, a trader by the name of Chen Wenbao 陈文豹 had informed against him, and in late 1963 Luwan public

[60] SMA B172–1–866, 37–38.
[61] Ibid., 38.
[62] For a sense of scale, the average state worker's wage at this time ranged from 40 to 60 *yuan* per month. Elizabeth J. Perry and Li Xun, *Proletarian Power: Shanghai in the Cultural Revolution*, 109.
[63] SMA B172–1–866, 38–39.

security officials wrote to the district's People's Committee to have him arrested. The Bureau of Culture identified him as an influential leader in art trade, someone who could be made an example for others. The Luwan People's Committee made a further investigation and handed their findings over to the Leadership Group in 1964.[64] This file already marked Qian Jingtang as an "antiquities merchant" and called his a case of "class struggle in art collecting."[65]

The preliminary report on Qian Jingtang related his background as a merchant of paintings. Before Liberation, he ran a shop called The Hall of Six Jades 六莹堂 and built his family fortune by means of allegedly illegal measures, including the manufacture of fake paintings.[66] After Liberation, the report continued, Qian posed as a connoisseur whose collections were purely for private enjoyment, while actually engaging in illegal activities. The Luwan People's Committee collected information from the Shanghai Cultural Relics Commission and the Shanghai Museum, and concluded that Qian's activities included speculating, fraud, spreading rumors, corrupting workers, and deceiving the state. As an example of speculation, the Cultural Relics Commission provided evidence that Qian had sold them a Ming dynasty Xie Ruming 谢汝明 scroll for 1,000 *yuan* in August of 1957, over fourteen times his original purchasing price. From 1951 to 1960, the report claimed, Qian had instigated the creation of fake paintings, defrauding Jiangsu provincial Vice Governor Liu Guojun 刘国钧 of tens of thousands of *yuan*. According to this account, Qian bought cheap fragments of paintings from the Antiquities Market, had them mounted by workers in the museum, and passed them off as authentic. In such transactions Qian allegedly went through an intermediary, Chen Wenbao (the person who later informed on him), who would seal the deal after Qian appeared to "authenticate" the paintings. All told, Governor Liu bought between 700 and 800 such paintings, to the tune of 60,000–70,000 *yuan*.[67]

In addition to speculation and fraudulence, Qian Jingtang was accused of undermining the relationship between collectors and the state. By trying to convince collectors to sell to him, he negatively affected the work of the state's cultural relics industry. For example, he was quoted scaring the collector Yang Wen'e 杨文萼, "When the museum sees that you have good cultural relics, they'll want to buy it at a low price; if you don't sell you'll get the hat (of a rightist). Otherwise, you'll be urged to make a donation; if you don't donate it'll be said that your ideology isn't good." Qian supposedly counseled the collector Yang to hold off on his sales or sell them to private individuals (like Governor Liu), saying, "Don't sell your cultural relics, wait for Chiang [Kai-shek] to return

[64] SMA B3–2–139, 46–47.
[65] SMA B3–2–139, 43.
[66] On the history of manufacturing fakes, see Craig Clunas, *Superfluous Things*, especially 109–15.
[67] SMA B3–2–139, 44.

and then you can sell them for good money."[68] Finally, the Luwan People's Committee determined that Qian had deceived the museum into thinking he was a great donor, taking the most ordinary of his paintings and giving them to the Zhejiang Provincial Museum and the Guangdong Provincial Museum. These "donations" to the state were in fact a fraudulent way of gaining political capital, painting over his collector's face with feigned political progress.[69] By the logic of the People's Committee, Qian had not only corrupted state cadres like Liu Guojun, but the entire cultural relics system had been cheated, decorating Qian with prizes for donating paintings that were only his leftovers.[70]

By February of 1965, when the Leadership Group reported to the Municipal People's Committee and the Bureaus of Propaganda and Culture, they had collected a number of individual testimonies that implicated Qian Jingtang still further. This process was facilitated by Qian's arrest and a search of his house that revealed his account books. Knowledge of Qian's arrest also prompted his associates to come forward; both Liu Jingji 刘靖基, an art dealer, and Lu Yifei 陆抑非, of the Shanghai Chinese Painting Academy, overcame initial reticence once they learned that Qian was already in custody.

From the account books and Liu Jingji's testimony, the Leadership Group ascertained that from 1953 to 1964, Liu had purchased 321 paintings from Qian Jingtang, for a total of 124,740 *yuan*. Twenty-eight paintings were over 1,000 *yuan*, and the Leadership Group suggested that Qian had not paid taxes on these transactions. Liu also confirmed the Luwan's District's suspicion that Qian had an underground workshop; according to Liu's testimony Qian had helped Yan Guirong of the Shanghai Museum to create a shop that facilitated his own sale of paintings.[71] Perhaps the most damning part of Liu's account was a listing of Qian Jingtang's counterrevolutionary statements. Though part of Liu's statement confirmed that Qian cautioned collectors from selling to the state, the bulk of

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[68] SMA B3–2–139, 45. It is difficult to determine whether collectors received a fair price for their objects. Chen Yi had explicitly directed the Shanghai Museum to pay a fair price, but anecdotal evidence suggests that the museum bought objects at a fraction of their asking price. For example, Yan Guirong remembers that Qian Jingtang had asked for 50,000 *yuan* for one painting, and received 10,000 *yuan*. Tang Yonggang, "Haishang jiancang mingjia," 157–58.

[69] SMA B3–2–139, 45–46.

[70] SMA B3–2–139, 46. As mentioned above, this was patently untrue. If what the Shanghai Museum currently considers to be the best of Qian's collection is any standard, the majority of his best works were donated in 1958, *Qian Jingtang juanzeng: Shanghai bowuguan shuhua jingpin ji.*

[71] Yan Guirong (1920–2011) was a native of Zhenjiang, Jiangsu province. He was from a landlord family, and his father had a paper business. He went to Shanghai at age 15 to apprentice with a scroll-mounting studio, where he served a three-year apprenticeship. Yan joined the Shanghai Museum at age 40, and in the course of various movements was labeled a rightist. He was responsible for mounting all of Qian's collection. Having "no feelings for the Shanghai Museum," he retired at age 58 and went to work for the Palace Museum. Tang Yonggang, "Haishang jiancang mingjia," 155–56.

these "counterrevolutionary statements" were critiques of socialism and the Party. He was alleged to have said, "Socialism lacks freedom; there isn't a way out." In the famine that followed the Great Leap Forward, he said, "The People's Communes have gotten so that they don't have enough to eat. They don't even have vegetables, so everyone has dropsy, it truly can't go on!" Liu reported that, by contrast, Qian was delighted when a free market returned for the peasants. Qian was said to have criticized the Party and market conditions, saying "Only the high-ranking Party cadres can eat well, live well, and dress well!" Suspicious of ration coupons, he faulted both *renminbi* and ration coupons of losing value, suggesting instead that it was better to hang onto one's paintings.[72]

The other testimonies gathered by the Leadership Group supported the charges against Qian Jingtang. Lu Yifei of the Shanghai Chinese Painting Academy confessed that between 1957 and 1963 he had forged several flower and bird paintings. Each year, Lu was called to a workshop in the back of the Qian family household, where he would work on the paintings; in most cases he added color or connected the lines. A very small number, Lu explained, involved adding to the paintings themselves; to one he added an extra swallow and leaves to the willow, on a second a day lily sprout next to a rock, in a third each bare branch gained a bird, and on a fourth an ink painting became a color painting.[73]

At the same time the Leadership Group gathered information on Qian, they were also building a case against Sun Boyuan, another art trader who had built his fortune before 1949. Before the war with Japan, Sun and his two brothers had formed a partnership in Suzhou to open an antique shop called the Hall of Collecting Treasures (Jibaozhai 集宝斋). The Leadership Group extended their investigation to Suzhou, from which they returned with evidence to accuse Sun not only of art dealing but of selling Chinese treasures to the Japanese invaders. A 1937 newspaper article from Suzhou, for example, hinted at an affiliation between Sun and the Japanese consul to Suzhou. After the fall of the city, further connections between Sun and the Japanese were alleged; it was claimed that Sun went about with travel passes from the Japanese, that he served as a consultant on cultural relics, and that he even received packages of opium for his services.[74] From Shanghai, Sun continued to trade in cultural relics during wartime, and became Shanghai's biggest paintings dealer. After the Communists came to power, Sun continued to deal in paintings, allegedly bribing museum officials like Xie Zhiliu (with a Bada Shanren 八大山人 work and a ham from Jinhua 金华) and acting as a go-between to sell the paintings of collectors in financial distress.[75]

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[72] SMA B172–1–866, 31.
[73] Ibid., 34.
[74] Ibid., 43.
[75] Ibid.

Like Qian, Sun was accused of speculation and continued sale after 1956. Also in a similar vein, he had allegedly assisted in the fabrication and sale of fake paintings, facilitating the 1953 sale to the Shanghai Museum of a forged Song Jiyan 宋季延 painting of pear blossoms and mandarin fish, and removing an inscription from a faked Song dynasty Zhao Chang 赵昌 (730–814) pomegranate-and-magpie piece in 1954 (to sell it as an uninscribed painting).[76] Against Sun Boyuan there was also the accusation of smuggling; the Leadership Group noted that Sun had connections with one Xu Bojiao 徐伯郊, who had been implicated of smuggling, though it did not appear that they had direct evidence that Sun had himself smuggled artwork. On August 17, 1965, the Leadership Group transferred Sun Boyuan's investigation to the Huangpu District tax bureau, so that he could be properly taxed for the paintings sold since 1957.[77]

Less than two weeks later the Leadership Group concluded their case against Qian Jingtang. Perhaps because Qian had been arrested, and the conclusion of his punishment was necessary to allow his release, the Leadership Group reported the final details to the Party Committee and the Bureaus of Propaganda and Culture. Six conditions were attached to Qian's release on August 26. For selling jewelry, Qian was required to repay 1,000 *yuan* in profit and pay a fine of 3,000 *yuan*. For the post-1957 sale of paintings to private individuals, 55,412 *yuan* (or 50%) would be confiscated. For the 224 paintings Qian had purchased after 1957, they would be purchased by the state according to market price.[78] For paintings that Qian had purchased before 1957, they would be recorded and thereafter to be sold only to state or public-private work units. Qian's collection of seals, including both counterfeit and real seals, would be confiscated. Finally, Qian was barred from wearing the "hat" of a speculator, and the news of his arrest was publicized among his neighbors.[79]

According to these conditions, even after the state purchased his family jewelry and the post-1957 paintings, Qian still owed a fine of over 40,000 *yuan* on cultural relics and paintings sold after 1957. He was given until October 15 of that year to repay the fine. When the Luwan District Administrative Department for Industry and Commerce announced the conditions to Qian, he accepted and stated that upon his release he would immediately set forth to borrow money, selling the remainder of his collections if necessary. In its final note that closed the case on Qian Jingtang, the Leadership Group noted that Qian would probably

[76] SMA B172–1–866, 51.
[77] Ibid., 44 and 42.
[78] These 224 paintings were assessed and purchased by the state's Antiquities Market for a total of 13,7133 *yuan* (and taxed at 11.5%). The jewelry confiscated from Qian's home was purchased at state-fixed prices and assessed at 4,960 *yuan* (not including a diamond ring, whose price had not yet been determined). SMA B172–1–866, 53.
[79] SMA B172–1–866, 53.

go to Nanjing, Beijing, Hangzhou, Guangzhou, and other cities to sell his paintings to state museums. In anticipation of this, the Leadership Group wrote letters to its sister museums to forewarn them of Qian's straitened circumstance; knowing this, the museums could control their purchase price and ensure that Qian paid taxes on his sale.[80] The coda to this story explains the aberration in Qian's record. Of the thousands of items Qian Jingtang donated over his lifetime, only one series is dated 1965, and that set of thirty-eight Ming and Qing paintings is marked "sold" to the Zhejiang Provincial Museum.[81] Thereafter, Qian had only one season to air his remaining paintings before the Red Guards came for his collection and his index that was eventually lost. Paraded through the streets in humiliation, Qian eventually lost his home, and his family—like the paintings—also scattered.[82]

Assessing the 1964 Five-Antis Campaign

It is difficult to assess the meaning of the 1964 Five-Antis Campaign. The public record has made no mention of Qian and Sun's cases, and the Chinese blogosphere tends to focus on the Cultural Revolution. The file of this Five-Antis Campaign has been deleted from the electronic finding aid of the Shanghai Municipal Archive since the files have been digitized, and the records of the Shanghai Museum and the Cultural Relics Commission are not open to the public. And, though the articles about Qian on the internet and the oral histories about his life suggest that he was rehabilitated in the era of reform (*pingfan*), my informant in the Shanghai Museum confirms that though in 1978 the Shanghai Public Security Bureau rescinded the accusation, this is not tantamount to rehabilitation.[83] The former lack of information and the latter elision may serve a number of purposes. In the former, the file may be restricted to prevent Qian's daughter—who fought his son and grandson over his estate for over eight

[80] Ibid., 54.

[81] Tang Yonggang, "Haishang jiancang mingjia," 75–80.

[82] Interestingly, almost all recent writers focus on the objects themselves (especially the sixteen truckloads of art) rather than Qian's personal suffering during the Cultural Revolution. Only one blogger wrote about Qian being paraded in the streets with a dunce cap. See http://yishujia.findart.com.cn/150848-bk.html, accessed Jul. 6, 2012. Yan Guirong and Qian Daoming separately remember that the process of the house search lasted seven days, beginning Sep. 4, 1966. Tang Yonggang, "Haishang jiancang mingjia," 165 and 175.

[83] Yan Guirong recalls that when Qian was rehabilitated (*pingfan*), the state returned 360,000 *yuan* to him. Tang Yonggang lists 1977 as the year of rehabilitation, and explains that at the time the state returned 2,000 items and provided 300,000 *yuan* in restitution. Tang Yonggang, "Haishang jiancang mingjia," 130, 165, and 175.

years—from seeking redress.[84] In the latter case, it may be more comforting for the family and admirers to think of Qian as rehabilitated, but the state can maintain that Qian was guilty of economic crimes.

For we do know that Qian Jingtang continued to buy and sell paintings, and that he was aided by others in his circle, including the Shanghai Museum's Yan Guirong. His continued sales were also unlawful and Qian continued his pattern of tax evasion. To some extent, the state's accusations regarding speculation were true, however, they rest on shakier ground. If earning a profit on a legal transaction to a state entity was a crime, then surely these men were guilty. In the original report on Qian Jingtang, for example, he was condemned for having sold a painting to the Cultural Relics Commission for 1,000 *yuan* in 1957.[85] Though he had originally paid 70 *yuan* (at an unspecified date), he legally sold it to the state, presumably for what the state determined it was worth. As for the suggestions of smuggling, these too were difficult to determine. At the end of the day the best the Leadership Group could come up with was Sun Boyuan's alleged association with someone else who had been found to have engaged in smuggling. Of the charges against Qian and Sun, perhaps the most difficult to evaluate is the alleged fraud and creation of fake paintings. Though both were accused of abetting the fabrication of fakes, Qian of having an underground workshop and Sun of creating two fakes in 1952 and 1955, these cases were all built on individual testimonies. It is possible that in uncovering Yan's underground workshop, investigators also discovered scraps of historical paintings—which are necessary for the repair of others—and this provided physical evidence of the alleged fabrication.[86]

Much of the guilt in these cases was already determined through a political standpoint. Hence, it was necessary for the Leadership Group to trace Sun's pre-1949 alleged association with the Japanese and with Chinese collaborators, to establish that he was both a traitor to the nation and merited his capitalist class-label.[87] Likewise, the establishment of Qian's identity as a counterrevolutionary rested as much on his reported "counterrevolutionary words" as on his

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[84] Qian Jingtang had one son and one daughter, and became estranged from his daughter during the Cultural Revolution. She eventually moved to the United States. See Tang Yonggang, "Haishang jiancang mingjia," 174, and Zheng Zhong, *Haishang shoucang shijia*, 123.

[85] SMA B3–2–139, 44.

[86] In Tang Yonggang's oral histories, Yan explains some of the details of scroll-mounting and repair, 155. It should be pointed out that in the history of creating fakes, fabricating paintings was the easiest to do, because it required little technology and most of the educated elite had also been trained in calligraphy and painting. This point, combined with the fact that paintings were among the easiest things to smuggle, probably accounts for this focus on paintings and calligraphy. See Craig Clunas, *Superfluous Things*, 112.

[87] SMA B172–1–866, 42.

actions. As excerpted above, Qian's statements were critical of the new regime; he observed that people were hungry, that Party cadres had extra privileges, and that prices were going up. Though all of these observations were true, they were called "counterrevolutionary," "slander," and "nonsense."[88] As Julia Strauss has argued, campaigns in Maoist China did not distinguish between "historical questions" and "political questions," and saying or even thinking something "counterrevolutionary" was enough evidence to be targeted as such.[89] Artists and collectors were often targets for political campaigns, and it seems that even officials saw the accusations as inevitable. When the painter Xie Zhiliu was made a target of the first Five-Antis campaign, for example, Mayor Chen Yi personally came to the Cultural Relics Commission to inquire after his wellbeing, requesting that they "not go overboard" in his case.[90] It probably did not help that Qian's lifestyle matched that of the stereotypical capitalist: he engaged in no labor, he lived in a Western-style garden villa with servants, and when he saw a painting he liked he was able to pay for it with bars of gold.

In the end, this was a political campaign with an economic target. Qian and Sun were punished for the economic crimes of illegal trade in paintings and tax evasion on their profit. Recalling Qian Jingtang's imprisonment and the conditions for his release, his punishments and fines were all based on the prices for paintings bought or sold after 1957. The Leadership Group also compiled a list of paintings that Sun Boyuan had sold after 1957.[91] If this illegal market was indeed as the Leadership Group described, it is not difficult to understand why. For individuals like Qian and Sun, their cultural knowledge, their own collections, and their collectors' networks were their last remaining assets. As older men with bad class backgrounds, they had few other resources. Sun, then sixty-seven, had an unemployed son at home who was alleged to be helping his father speculate in art. The other collectors in the network had also fallen upon hard times, and an underground market provided an alternative to selling one's

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[88] Ibid., 31.

[89] Julia Strauss, "Morality, Coercion, and State Building by Campaign in the Early PRC: Regime Consolidation and After, 1949–1956," 55–56.

[90] Zheng Zhong, *Bowuguan yu shoucangjia*, 124. The quotation here is "Nimen bu yao ba ta gaode tai guofen le."

[91] I was unable to determine how the Leadership Group arrived at the final numbers for Qian Jingtang. The only specific references in the Leadership Group's reports were to the seizure of his accounts books (which included paintings sold between 1952 and 1956), the testimony of Liu Jingji (who offered a list of 321 paintings he purchased from Qin between 1953–1964, though without dates for the acquisition of each painting), and the testimony of art trader Wu Bicheng, who stated that at an unspecified date, Qian bought 40 paintings from a deceased collector called Gu Juliu. Wu Bicheng also testified that Sun Boyuan had bought 45 paintings since 1960. The Leadership Group eventually compiled a list of paintings sold by Sun Boyuan after 1957. SMA B172–1–866, 44–50.

collections to the state. Qian's "counterrevolutionary" statement that neither *renminbi* nor ration coupons were dependable, and his recommendation that keeping paintings was safer, suggests that art had become its own kind of currency. The state, for its part, wished to incorporate these cultural assets, and to that end political campaigns against the art collectors served as a vehicle to nationalize private collection.

Conclusion: State and Collectors

Today, collectors like Sun Boyuan (d. 1984) and Qian Jingtang (d. 1983) are remembered among the pantheon of collectors whose collections comprise the Shanghai Museum.[92] From the local gazetteer to the district consultative congress, from biographical sketches in newspapers to art blogs on the internet, they are celebrated. Sun Boyuan is no longer remembered as a cultural traitor, but as a patriotic protector of cultural relics. In wartime, he scrimped on his own clothing and food, and sold some of his own collection, in order to buy other cultural relics that were on the market. To protect his collection, he fled Suzhou for the French Concession in Shanghai. His trading during this period was to preserve, following two principles: not to sell to foreigners and only to buy (and not resell) the best objects. Sun is remembered for his donations to PRC, donating an unmatched collection of stone rubbings to the Shanghai Cultural Relics Commission and the Shanghai Museum, first in 1960 and then in 1980. After his death in 1984 the two institutions sent a letter of condolences that read, in part,

> In his life Comrade Sun was a famous cultural relics collector, and loved socialist cultural relics work. In order to develop the motherland's cultural heritage, after Liberation he came forward of his own accord to donate his collection of over 4,000 stele inscriptions to the Cultural Relics Commission…. Sun Boyuan's precious spirit should be studied and remembered by the workers in cultural relics and museums.[93]

As for the case of Qian Jingtang, pieces of his collection have reappeared at auction in China, with their provenance attesting to their historical and cultural

[92] See, for example, current Director Cheng Xiejun's preface to *Qian Jingtang juanzeng: Shanghai bowuguan shuhua jingpin ji.*

[93] Zheng Zhong, *Haishang shoucang shijia*, 184–88. See also the Luwan District Zhengxie website, "Wenwu zhuanjia Sun Boyuan."

value.[94] Indeed, collecting as an outlet for China's new rich has seen such a boom in the last few years that China's collectors are not simply affecting the domestic market for Chinese art, but they wield considerable power over the world's art market.[95]

This study of the Shanghai art market has demonstrated that collecting art and antiquities continued in the Maoist period, despite the state's attempts to extend control through the socialist transformation of the art market and political campaigns which targeted collectors and traders. This is not to say that the Maoist state did not gain extensive control over the exchange of antiquities. The cultural relics bureaucracy did succeed in building a system of state museums, a series of controls to prevent smuggling, and a public-private market that acted as a channel to state museums. By eliminating many of the middlemen whose cultural expertise and connections could disturb market prices, the state reinforced its monopoly. Yet collecting continued, from the approved customers at the official market, to the connoisseurs who continued to buy and sell among their circle, to cadres and officials who bought art for their own enjoyment or to represent an elite status that the Communist State had failed to completely discredit.[96] Part of the reason why the state may have been unable to eliminate collecting is that it was unable to detach the social and cultural value of connoisseurship from the objects themselves.

A second explanation for the limits on the state's control over culture is that the value of the objects was difficult to determine. Though many connoisseurs became consultants or workers in the museum, their knowledge and experience remained their own.[97] Through their own desire to collect, or through their ability to authenticate paintings, Qian Jingtang and others could affect market prices. An example of the regime's inability to fully possess for itself the broad knowledge maintained by connoisseurs is the release of artists from their

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[94] See for example the *Wenhui Daily*, May 16, 12, May 29, 9, Nov. 24, 12 and Nov. 28, 12, 1998. See also Hu Xilin, "Qian Jingtang he ta shoucang de yantai."

[95] Kelly Crow, "The China Factor," *The Wall Street Journal*, Oct. 6, 2011.

[96] The case of officials taking objects from Cultural Revolution confiscations is now well-known, with the example of Kang Sheng being the most notorious. This phenomenon seems to have been fairly widespread, and predated the Cultural Revolution. For example, the head of the Hangzhou Bureau of Culture Sun Xiaoquan, was later found to have "borrowed" artwork from Qian Jingtang and never given it back, and helping himself to a large number of paintings during the Cultural Revolution. *Wenhui Daily*, Feb. 23, 1982, 1. In imperial times, art was also found in the collections of corrupt officials, such as in the case of Grand Secretary Yan Song (1480–1565), whose antiquities were absorbed into the storehouses of the Imperial Household. Craig Clunas, *Superfluous Things*, 46–48.

[97] Of course, they did transmit knowledge as well. Ironically, one of Sun Boyuan's students, for example, Wan Yuren, was a member of the Wenwu qingli xiaozu during the Cultural Revolution. http://news.xinhuanet.com/mrdx/2011-09/16/c_131142133.htm, accessed Jul. 6, 2012.

Cultural Revolution ox-pens, in order to provide knowledge or authentication of a piece of art.[98] The archival record shows that even within its own system of public-private markets, the value of a cultural relic was difficult to determine. In the 1963 reports on the Antiquities Market, officials observed that even within the state apparatus work units competed with each other on the price of objects. In fact, as the Bureau of Culture reported, the Antiquities Market itself manipulated prices, "not only does it sometimes purchase at high prices, it doesn't follow the laws on profit to sell." For example, in one case the Antiquities Market was presented with a Warring States rubbing. After the Cultural Relics Commission provided evidence that it was authentic, the Antiquities Market bought it for 50 *yuan* and sold it to the Cultural Relics Commission for 260 *yuan*. Moreover, sometimes the Antiquities Market refused to sell to the Cultural Relics Commission, instead turning to higher bidders in markets elsewhere.[99] Thus the charge that private collectors were speculating and manipulating the market could have easily been leveled against the state's own market and found to be true. Indeed, the divergence in interests between the museums and the state's markets persisted into the Cultural Revolution, when both parties were involved in sorting Red Guard confiscations and fought over their preservation or export.

Finally, perhaps the state was unable to fully control collecting because collecting is an inherent part of connoisseurship. In Ming times, as Craig Clunas has pointed out, some of the most important connoisseurs were also merchants.[100] In many of the recent accounts of Qian Jingtang's life, it is stressed that he was not an antiquities merchant; he was truly a collector.[101] It was simply not possible to only buy without selling, and thus Qian's method of "using paintings to cultivate other paintings" (*yihua yanghua*) was the way in which he broadened his knowledge. As Yan Guirong explained, "without collecting you couldn't speak of authentication."[102] The fact that Qian was recognized as having such a good eye may be attributed to the sheer number of items that passed through the hands of the Gentleman of the Hidden

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[98] Xie Zhiliu, for example, was released from his ox-pen in 1969 to authenticate a Wang Xizhi (303–61) calligraphy, the "Shangyu Script," http://news.xinhuanet.com/mrdx/2011-09/16/c_131142133.htm and http://www.shangyuribao.cn/sydaily/2005/yswh/091105.htm, accessed Jul. 6, 2012. This anecdote is also recounted in Zheng Zhong, *Xie Zhiliu: The Man and His Art*, 93–97.

[99] SMA B123–5–144, 51–52.

[100] Craig Clunas, *Superfluous Things*, 15.

[101] For some examples, see Zheng Zhong, *Haishang shoucang shijia*, 133 or *Wenhui Daily*, Dec. 17, 2001, 25. This same characterization is used to describe Sun as well, though there is much less writing on his work as a collector. Zheng Zhong, *Haishang shoucang shijia*, 191.

[102] Tang Yonggang, "Haishang jiancang mingjia," 159. Yan also explained that "at that time all collectors also did business in paintings, using paintings to cultivate other paintings."

Chrysanthemum.[103] Qian may have sold some paintings in the Mao period in order to sustain his livelihood, but he was also adding to his lifelong index, continuing the connoisseurship practice that had defined his life. The socialist transformation of the art market did not end Qian's connoisseurship, but the Cultural Revolution finally did. Ironically, it was sorting collections from the Red Guard confiscations that provided the education for the new generation of Shanghai Museum workers and others in the cultural bureaucracy.[104] In that moment private collections were truly in the state's control, and the ability to examine hundreds of cultural relics in one day produced cultural knowledge in a revolutionary way: connoisseurship without collecting.

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Abbreviations

SHWWBWGZ: *Shanghai wenwu bowuguanzhi* (Gazetteer of Shanghai's cultural relics and museums)

SMA: Shanghai Municipal Archives

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[103] Today Qian Jingtang is even held up as an example of one who combined investment, collecting, and authentication. Readers of the *Wenhui Daily* who might want to buy antiquities are first exhorted to love collecting, then invest, and cultivate one's own authentication skills. *Wenhui Daily*, Dec. 8, 1999, 25.

[104] See for example, Ye Yilou, "Jianding dajia Zhu Nianci."

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