

© 2007 by The University of Chicago
All rights reserved. Published 2007.
The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL
The University of Chicago Press, Ltd., London

NO CAPTION NEEDED

ICONIC PHOTOGRAPHS, PUBLIC CULTURE,
AND LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

ROBERT HARIMAN AND JOHN LOUIS LUCAITES

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

Chicago and London

ROBERT HARIMAN is professor in the department of communication studies at Northwestern University.

JOHN LOUIS LUCAITES is associate professor in the department of communication and culture at Indiana University.

The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 60637
The University of Chicago Press, Ltd., London
© 2007 by The University of Chicago
All rights reserved. Published 2007
Printed in the United States of America

16 15 14 13 12 11 10 09 08 07 1 2 3 4 5

ISBN-13: 978-0-226-31606-2 (cloth)

ISBN-10: 0-226-31606-8 (cloth)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Hariman, Robert.

No caption needed : iconic photographs, public culture, and liberal democracy /
Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaites.

p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN-13: 978-0-226-31606-2 (cloth : alk. paper)

ISBN-10: 0-226-31606-8 (cloth : alk. paper) 1. Popular culture—United States—
History. 2. Political culture—United States—History. 3. Photographs—Political
aspects—United States—History. 4. Visual communication—Political aspects—
United States—History. 5. Rhetoric—Political aspects—United States—History.
6. Mass media—Political aspects—United States—History. 7. Democracy—United
States—History. 8. United States—Politics and government—1945-1989. 9. United
States—Politics and government—1989- 10. Photojournalism—United States—

20th century. I. Lucaites, John Louis. II. Title

E169.12.H369 2007

306.0973—dc22

2006026049

© The paper used in this
publication meets the minimum requirements
of the American National Standard
for Information Sciences—Permanence
of Paper for Printed Library Materials,
ANSI Z39.48-1992.

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

vii

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ix

1

INTRODUCTION

1

2

PUBLIC CULTURE, ICONS, AND ICONOCLASTS

25

3

THE BORDERS OF THE GENRE

Migrant Mother and the Times Square Kiss

49

4

PERFORMING CIVIC IDENTITY

Flag Raisings at Iwo Jima and Ground Zero

93

5

DISSENT AND EMOTIONAL MANAGEMENT

Kent State

137

6

TRAUMA AND PUBLIC MEMORY

Accidental Napalm

171

7

LIBERAL REPRESENTATION AND GLOBAL ORDER

Tiananmen Square

208

8

RITUALIZING MODERNITY'S GAMBLE

The *Hindenburg* and *Challenger* Explosions

243

9

CONCLUSION

Visual Democracy

287

NOTES

307

INDEX

401

ILLUSTRATIONS

- 1 "Migrant Mother," 1936 · 54
- 2 "Billboard on U.S. Highway 99 in California," 1937 · 56
- 3 William Adolphe Bougeureau, *Charity*, 1865 · 57
- 4 Florence Thompson and her daughters, 1979 · 64
- 5 "Migrant Mother of Wal-Mart," cover, *Nation*, January 3, 2005 · 66
- 6 "Times Square Kiss," 1945 · 68
- 7 Cover, *Life*, April 19, 1943 · 71
- 8 JCPenney Hunt Club advertisement, 1998 · 75
- 9 "A Sentimental Journey: America in the '40s" · 76
- 10 Disney Store, Times Square, New York, 2002 · 78
- 11 "Two Sailors Kissing," cover, *New Yorker*, June 17, 1996 · 79
- 12 "VJ Day Is Replayed," 2005 · 83
- 13 "Raising the Flag on Mount Suribachi," 1945 · 96
- 14 "Marines Pose in front of the Flag They Just Raised on Mount Suribachi," 1945 · 97
- 15 George Eastman House membership brochure, 2002 · 104
- 16 Mural of the Flag Raising, D-Day Museum, New Orleans, LA, 2004 · 108
- 17 Allstate Insurance advertisement, 2002 · 110
- 18 Waveland Cafe, Des Moines, Iowa, 2001 · 118

LIBERAL REPRESENTATION AND GLOBAL ORDER

TIANANMEN SQUARE

For most people, knowledge of foreign affairs depends almost completely on mass media coverage of distant places and opaque cultures. On any other topic such as crime, welfare, taxes, or education, media reports of government policy are likely to overlap with ordinary experience. That experience might be as simple as leaving one's car unlocked without incident, standing in a checkout line as food stamps are cashed, balancing a checkbook, or paying a textbook fee. By contrast, representations of world politics are comprehensively mediated and largely incapable of being tested directly. Photojournalism becomes especially influential in this context, for it records features of the world that seem to be apprehensible at a glance. The newsprint may report a swirl of competing statements, while what can be seen becomes the equivalent of a reality check. This is the point, therefore, where the relationship between photojournalism, public opinion, and ideology is strongest. Iconic photographs can shape public understanding of foreign affairs by framing historic events according to familiar cultural assumptions that can double as means for ideological control. The iconic photo featured in this

chapter demonstrates how a fundamental tension within modern societies is at the heart of the historical transformation known as "globalization."

The liberal-democratic societies were the big winners in the competition for economic and political power in the twentieth century.¹ Currently, they are the societies that exercise the greatest influence over development of the emerging global order of advanced, large-scale, corporate economic networks supported by state-of-the-art technologies in communications, transportation, data management, and so forth. They also are case studies in the contradiction between liberal self-assertion and democratic norms: for example, when corporations benefiting from the manifold legal and civil advantages of the democratic nation-state ship their jobs overseas and shelter profits offshore, they are advancing their own interests at the public expense. This tension can peak in respect to China, a society experiencing both liberalization and democratic reforms while under an authoritarian government that oversees the biggest underdeveloped market in the world. Finding the right balance between liberal and democratic practices, and doing so in respect to Chinese traditions, may be the key to successful modernization and the achievement of a "Chinese Century." Such considerations are not likely to be part of the external pressures of globalization, however. There is little doubt that liberalization is in the interest of those already dominant outside of China, but democratization is a more open question. The incorporation of Chinese citizens into a global order of individual rights and open markets is one thing, while continued national determination through popular movements may be another.

The popular protest in China's Tiananmen Square provides a near-perfect case study in the tension between a democratic spectacle and liberal conventions of representation. We shall argue that the iconic photo from the protest in Tiananmen Square subordinates Chinese democratic self-determination to a liberal vision of global order. This imbalance occurs through the photo's aesthetic conventions, which displace democratic forms of political display and activate a cultural modernism that reinforces individualism and apolitical social organization. Thus, the photo can be a progressive celebration of human rights while also limiting the political imagination regarding alternative and perhaps better versions of a global society.

ICONIC HISTORY

The drama in Tiananmen Square began as a series of demonstrations memorializing the reformer Hu Yaobang in mid-April, 1989.² By organizing around the Monument to the People's Heroes in the square, the demonstrators de-

fined themselves as the heirs of the demonstration of May 4, 1919, that had inaugurated the political movements defining modern China. After a series of clashes with the police, on April 21 students began a continuous occupation of the square. Over the following weeks the protest mushroomed into a prolonged confrontation between students and urban workers on the one side and the Chinese government on the other. Events soon exceeded the abilities of the leaders on either side: government officials refused to meet with student leaders, a *People's Daily* editorial condemned the students in language reminiscent of a previous persecution, demonstrators participated in hunger strikes, and by May 29 one million people were marching and milling about in the square in violation of a government order to disperse.

During the next few days the crowds melted away, leaving a much smaller cohort still camped in the square, but the escalation toward violence continued. Increased deployment of troops was met by organized resistance throughout the city, often by workers and other citizens. An advance of several thousand soldiers into the square on the morning of June 3 followed the past month's pattern of confrontation, standoff, and military retreat. Then, the deluge: in the evening, new troops launched a sustained, violent assault to clear the streets and the square. Tanks crashed through barricades as automatic weapons were fired into the crowds and at the fleeing demonstrators. Hundreds were killed—some mashed by tanks or other heavy vehicles—while many others were wounded. Sporadic violence continued for several days, but the public protest was broken, and in the following weeks thousands of demonstrators or other dissidents were imprisoned, some to be executed.

The first icon of the demonstration was a thirty-seven-foot tall statue crafted by art students and modeled on the Statue of Liberty (fig. 38). Labeled the Goddess of Democracy (a revealing shift in nomenclature) by the demonstrators and positioned facing the government's giant portrait of Mao, various photos and live coverage of the statue were featured prominently and for obvious reasons in the U.S. media.³ The statue would be a fitting representation of the event, but for reasons that may not be obvious: seemingly a direct insertion of Western ideals into Chinese public culture, it was in fact intentionally altered to reflect a process of appropriation.⁴ Although seemingly a universal symbol of liberty, it became festooned with flags, banners, flowers, and other signs that defined the monument within a cultural milieu largely illegible to the Western audience. Ironically, the statue also continued a civic republican tradition of figural representation that has become antique in the West. The Goddess still is included in some montages commemorating the event, but its status as a marker of democratic ideals has largely been displaced.⁵



FIGURE 38. "Goddess of Democracy," 1989 (photographer unknown).

The dominant image today is of a man standing before a row of tanks. Because the scene was recorded in several photographs and two video clips, initial coverage and reproductions include a number of variations on this image reflecting, among other things, small changes in the man's stance from one second to the next. Three photographs of the event have dominated circulation. The first, by Jeffrey Widener (AP), is a middle distance shot of four tanks that includes a lamppost in the foreground and a city bus in the upper part of the frame.⁶ The second, by Charles Cole (UPI), is more of a close-up that fills the frame fully across the diagonal with three tanks and the front bumper of the fourth.⁷ The third (fig. 39), by Stuart Franklin (Magnum), is a long-distance shot that includes more of the street and the city bus (though it often is cropped out of the picture in publication).⁸ In addition, each photo has been cropped in various ways and had its color tones altered in reproduction. Initially, the Widener photograph was most frequently printed in U.S. newspapers, an effect, we assume, of its availability on the AP wire. The Cole image appeared in *Newsweek* and may have appeared more often outside the United States because of its UPI distribution. *Time* magazine used the Franklin photograph on its June 19, 1989, cover, along with a two-page blowup of the picture on the inside of the magazine, and subsequently it has been used most often in appropriations that mark the anniversary of the event or serve as parodies. We suspect that the wide circulation of the Franklin image has at least something to do with the fact that Time-Life has dubbed it the picture



FIGURE 39. "Tiananmen Square," 1989 (Stuart Franklin, photographer). Magnum Photos.

of choice and reproduced it countless times in its numerous histories and retrospectives on photography and the twentieth century.

We focus on the Franklin image in our analysis primarily because its design features locate it at the midpoint between the Widener and Cole images. The man is facing the tank in a resolutely balanced stance and holding items in both hands in Cole and Franklin, but not in Widener. He is directly in front of the tank in Cole and Franklin but set back several paces in Widener, and the crosswalk and directional vectors are evident in Widener and Franklin but not in Cole. There are four tanks in Widener and Franklin, but not in Cole. There is a bare foreground and a bus in the background in Cole and Franklin but not in Widener. Thus, the Franklin photograph is one that shares the most—and most important—elements found in any two of the three images. We also hope to show that where it is at the extreme end of a range, as with the long depth of field, it is the strongest articulation of designs central to all three. Even so, the important issue is *not* which of the three images is most iconic. All three images continue to circulate, they are used interchangeably with one another to reference the same event, and nobody seems to care enough about the differences to comment on them.

The several photographs all show the same scene: An anonymous figure in black pants and a white shirt faces standard battle tanks in the generic camouflage used by every modern army.⁹ He has positioned himself in front

of the lead tank to stop its forward movement. The tank has stopped but its commander remains within; it could lurch forward to crush the man, yet there is no indication of any movement on either side. To Western observers, it is the premier image of the dramatic events in Tiananmen Square. "There is only one streetscene in China worth remembering in Western eyes. . . . this streetscene was transformed into iconography. . . . The man and the tank would live on beyond the few tense moments of the encounter to become a permanent and universal symbol."¹⁰

Nor should that be surprising, for the image had the benefit of a media blitz. As David Perlmutter has documented, video and still images of the man before the tank dominated newscasts, newspaper and newsmagazine coverage, and public commentary (including a speech by President George H. W. Bush).¹¹ The photograph appeared as early as June 5 on the front page of the *Los Angeles Times*, which reprinted it in the same space the next day; on June 6 it appeared on the front pages of newspapers across the country, including the *New York Times*, and when it didn't appear on the front page it appeared on the inside, usually paired with a sidebar article emphasizing the "Measure of Defiance."¹² Some papers, such as the *Times*, also reprinted stills from video broadcast on *ABC Evening News*. The image subsequently was featured in *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News and World Report*.¹³ Indeed, it quickly became the framing device for both journalistic and political representation of the Tiananmen protest.

In subsequent years, the image has dominated visual histories, particularly those produced in the public media, and has become a stock image at Web sites and on posters in English, Chinese, and French advocating dissent.¹⁴ According to Perlmutter, "The image of the man blocking the tanks has become the supericon of Tiananmen," and, according to Richard Gordon, it is "one of the defining iconic images of the 20th century, like a monument in a vast public square created by television."¹⁵ This ascension culminated in the unknown man's selection by *Time* as one of the twenty most influential "leaders and revolutionaries" of the twentieth century.¹⁶ He was, of course, neither a leader nor a revolutionary, and Perlmutter's argument seems inescapable: the iconic status of the photo was a product of the Western media elite.

This photographic icon also has displaced the Monument to the People's Heroes that was the point of origin for the protest in Tiananmen Square. As Wu Hung has stated, the demonstrations and massacre combined to redeem the memorial site as "a living monument that wove people's recollections of their struggle and death into a whole. Surrounding it a new public emerged."¹⁷ The difference between the two monuments, one stone and the other photographic, is a difference not only between Chinese and Western understand-

ing of the events in Tiananmen Square, but also between the national articulation of Chinese public culture and a global public sphere constituted by the Western media.¹⁸ As the image of the man and the tank achieved iconic status it has acquired the ability to structure collective memory, advance an ideology, and organize or disable resources for political action. As we shall see, the photo of the man and the tank constitutes liberalism as the dominant mentality for an emerging global order.

Before taking another step, however, we should acknowledge that our interpretation confounds a virtual experience important to progressive politics. As a sharp reviewer noted, "I still want to see the anonymous man as a hero, in whom I can invest all my desires to oppose authority, and your reading tries to rob me of that pleasure."¹⁹ So it does, but not to deny that use of the photo. The man is standing up to authority—literally, courageously, remarkably so. The photograph is an inspiring performance of democratic dissent. It is not a photo with a single message, however. Widespread appeal depends on the articulation of multiple and often contradictory meanings in a deceptively simple manner, while iconic images achieve that status because their formal simplicity carries a complex array of codes that together equip the viewer to negotiate deep contradictions in public culture. The obvious tension in the Tiananmen icon between the individual citizen and state authority is really there, and it also is the dramatic vehicle for managing other tensions between relatively liberal or democratic conceptions of citizenship, between realist and idealist conceptions of political power, between national and global definitions of civil society, and more. This complexity, and with it, the dominant ideological orientation of the photo, can only be revealed by explicating a series of transcriptions. These intertwined codes begin in the compositional design but can be traced outward along lines of appropriation into possible habits of reception. Reception occurs in the world in which one lives, and so the photograph ultimately becomes a parable for understanding the world around it. One can still stand up to state power—or at least admire those who do—but understanding the iconic photo requires that one also face up to one's own mythology. After all, the man is still standing there only in the photo.

SEEING LIKE A STATE

Tiananmen Square has been central to the rise of modern China and the scene of violent suppressions of democratic speech. Since we know that both the man and the tanks are Chinese, and that they are facing each other in Tiananmen Square following weeks of popular demonstrations on behalf of

democratization and other governmental reforms, the photograph becomes a record of that historical event and by extension of a process of political transformation underway in China and throughout the world.²⁰

This political drama provides the most obvious context for the photograph. The man confronting the row of tanks is a picture of contrasts: the lone civilian versus the army; the vulnerable human body versus mechanized armor; "human hope and courage challenging the remorseless machinery of state power."²¹ These dramatic differences lead directly to the predominant appropriation of the photo as a critique of authoritarian regimes and a celebration of liberal-democratic values. The image's reprise of a dramatic conflict between freedom and oppression is only one in a series of transcriptions, however. Although situated at the center of the composition, it does not comprise the only order of perception activated by the composition as a whole.

The key to our analysis of this image is to see that the dramatic standoff is positioned within a modernist perspective toward pictorial space. This larger aesthetic frame unfolds from the vantage of the photographer, who is above and at some distance from the scene. From this vantage, one looks down on the scene from a safe place that is not included within it; the tank commander has no knowledge of the camera.²² The tanks are still impersonal, but so is the scene as a whole. The viewer is disconnected from the scene, positioned as a distant spectator who can neither be harmed by nor affect the action unfolding below. The viewer of the picture acquires the neutral, "objective" stance of the camera.²³ As James C. Scott has demonstrated, whenever we view unfolding events with an objective detachment afforded by a purportedly neutral point of view, we are "seeing like a state." By contrast with the swirl of people and banners around the Goddess of Democracy in the Square, this scene is highly legible to the Western viewer. "Legibility implies a viewer whose place is central and whose vision is synoptic. . . . This privileged vantage point is typical of all institutional settings where command and control of complex human activities is paramount."²⁴ The authoritarian state that is positioned within the picture is subordinated to the individual standing freely before it, but both of these alternatives are subordinated to the modernist scheme of representation that dominated governmental and most other institutional practices in both capitalist and socialist regimes in the late-twentieth century.

Thus, it is not surprising that the photograph depicts an event unfolding in an open, almost completely deserted public space. The field on which the man and tank are positioned is a model of the abstraction characterizing modernist design: it is a flat, uniform, concrete surface of a city street, de-

signed for modern transportation technologies such as the bus visible at the upper border of some versions of the photograph. It is devoid of any place to sit, congregate, or talk, and its dimensions are not to “human scale,” that is, for personal transactions, but rather built to accommodate the flow of vehicular traffic. The traffic pattern is evident from the only symbols on the surface: straight, parallel lines in white or yellow and white directional vectors that are either straight or at right angles. There is no ornamentation, and there are no words. Take out the representational figures in the center, and you have a modernist painting in the tradition of Piet Mondrian.

Of course, the photograph combines abstraction and figural representation; as it does so, it activates additional codes of modern political order. The photographic angle makes the man’s act of political protest an exercise in disciplinary power: a constitution of the subject through controlled use of the body within a zone of surveillance.²⁵ Historically, the liberal public sphere was largely oblivious to the disciplinary society emerging at the same time in the same networks, and disciplinary power often operates without direct confrontation with the agencies of public opinion. (So it is that theorists of each formation can largely talk past one another.) In this photo, there is a clear overlay of the two orders as neatly sutured transcriptions: a silent body in public view generates the authority of public opinion in opposition to the state’s use of force, while disciplinary technologies of urban design and visual representation frame the scene as if it were being viewed from an observational tower. The full extension of this logic is that the global media become a panoptic technology: not there but there, not visible in the local scene but keeping it under observation.

This elite perspective also characterizes the realist style of political representation, which has been the dominant means for rationalizing power in international relations. By withdrawing emotionally from the swirl of events to assume a topographical perspective, the prince—or political analyst—sees the historical event as a tableau determined by “an abstract world of forces (functionally equivalent, socially barren entities like military units or nation-states or transnational corporations).”²⁶ This perspective is defined as much or more by what it excludes as by what it features. The banners, costumes, and swirl of bodies creating a carnival atmosphere in the square, the songs, parades, and other forms of public emotionality, the pamphlets, speeches, and constant din of talk all are replaced by an empty, regimented space marked by force flow vectors and dominated by the organized deployment of uniform, interchangeable military machines. The one visible human being in the scene also conforms perfectly to dictates of this style, for he is a model of self-control. “One survives in this world through strategic calculation of

others’ capacity to act and through rational control of oneself.”²⁷ Standing erect, poised, overcoming the natural impulse to flee from danger, acutely gauging the will of the unseen tank commander opposing him, the man’s bold act of heroism also is an incarnation of realism’s rational actor. His immobile, balanced stance and the clean lines of his modern, black-and-white attire provide aesthetic confirmation of this attitude.²⁸ More to the point, this rational self-control by the individual, which in turn is part of a larger mentality of viewing political reality in respect solely to calculations of self-interest and power, constrains identification with the Chinese reform movement. Rather than being pulled inside the mass demonstrations for popular democracy, this realist transcription of the event highlights individual calculation of risk and rational self-control while viewing political reality in terms of abstract projections of power.

Additional elements of the photo reinforce this realist mentality. Any photograph is silent, but this one is a portrait of political action without speech. (Actually, a crowd of onlookers was shouting throughout the scene, but that was not recorded by the photograph.) Tanks are not exactly built for negotiation, while they perfectly embody the essential definition of the modern state—its monopoly on force. The man is silent, using his body rather than his voice in a gesture that converts vocal protest to nonviolent resistance, a recognizable form of political action capable of balancing material coercion—for a moment. The scene’s composition provides an allegory for the profound imbalance within the realist view of the world between force and morality. Moral, social, or cultural constraint on force is always precarious, held in place by the good will that is a sure casualty in violent or prolonged conflict. The man stops the tanks, and his symbolic power (e.g., his capacity to represent national identity, citizenship, civic rights, or the value of the individual person) temporarily, precariously, is capable of balancing the coercive power that was moving toward him. These symbolic values are represented through an absence: the empty space at his back that at once corresponds to the real, material tanks on the other side and predicts the inevitability of his giving way to their advance. The composition itself is predictive, as the tanks already have advanced across most of the pictorial field along the lines and vectors on the street indicating the forward direction of the traffic. As those lines correspond to the right-to-left diagonal line across the picture frame, they connote movement from their starting point toward their destination behind the man (and behind and to the side of the viewer, who may not be targeted but is being outflanked). The message seems clear: in this confrontation, force will prevail.

This conclusion is the more plausible because the only figure shown is

male. One man stands against a mechanized army unit, the epitome of masculine power. This ideological grammar provides an additional basis for realist projections, as ideas of pluralism, cooperation between different social groups, and dialogue become less evident in a monotonic system, and conventional norms of rationality, emotional control, and hierarchical command are reinforced. It also may underscore the extent to which the photograph portrays the Chinese government as a threat rather than an actual perpetrator of violence. Tanks such as those stopping here had been churning through the square to destroy whoever had not left fast enough, and other pictures of the aftermath of that violence depict government-induced disorder while eliciting identification with the pain and relative innocence of the victims. The iconic photo, however, remains a gestural dance of masculine display. Within this gendered space, as in realism itself, there is far more attention paid to threats than to actual violence (which often proves embarrassing, if only because it reveals hidden complexities in motive and response). And this focus on *potential* violence gives a particular shape to the event. On the one hand, it is the preferred modality of state power: more efficient, less accountable, less capable of unintended consequences such as martyrdom, more transferable across the entire state apparatus of procedures and officials. On the other hand, it increases and inflects the man's representative power. It becomes easier to see him as a figure of revolution rather than of gradual change, a precursor to dramatic reversal of the picture's vectors rather than an endogenous transformation of a complex system. In short, a world of masculine display is a world of force fields and threats, of pushing and backing down rather than negotiating, and of imposition and resistance rather than mutual change. A photograph celebrating democratic revolution reproduces the act of seeing like a state, a perspective that supports hardliners on each side of the Chinese conflict while overlooking less legible, more encultured forms of democratic reform.

The realist transcription is not sovereign, however, in part due to the visual syntax of the photograph. The tanks are moving through the pictorial frame along the upper-right to lower-left diagonal, that is, from the new to the old and from the ideal to the real.²⁹ The tank has crossed the midline, moving into the past and perhaps taking the nation-state with it. The man stands short of the midline but his line of sight orients the viewer on the vector extending into the new and the ideal; he is a figure of unrealized potential. Thus, the photo is a literal depiction of realism and a prophetic representation of liberalism. According to that allegory, arbitrary authority cannot stand against the innate human desire for freedom and the rule of law. The tank's hesitation portends the eventual triumph of liberalism and

individual self-determination. The man's vulnerability keeps the door open to the continued need for force, however, particularly when both liberalism and realism contrast themselves to mass movements, power vacuums, and other harbingers of anarchy. Individual freedom and a world of forces, self-determination and rational calculation, an authoritarian present and a liberal future—these potentially difficult conjunctions are smoothed over by their aesthetic coordination within the conventions of modernism.³⁰ What remains is not contradiction but rather a complex representation that can mediate differences between two Western discourses of political order and account for immediate events while projecting long-term transformation. Force prevails in the photo, but it will not prevail over time, the time of modernization.

Any representation is a partial record of its object, but modernist representation is based on especially severe reductions in information. Whether for the purpose of artistic autonomy or rational administration, the approach is the same: surface variation, local knowledge, provisional arrangements, mixed categories, and social complexity are all subordinated to processes of reduction and abstraction, and when geared toward production, to processes of standardization and regimentation.³¹ With few exceptions, the orientation is toward the universal rather than the parochial, the geometric rather than the organic, the functional rather than what is customary, an "international style" in architectural design and bureaucratic practices rather than attention to cultural differences and vernacular politics.³² And, as Scott remarks, "The carriers of high modernism tended to see rational order in remarkably visual aesthetic terms. For them, an efficient, rationally organized city, village, or farm was a city that *looked* regimented and orderly in a geometrical sense."³³ This way of seeing allows the agent to identify economies in resource use that serve specific interests, and especially the interest of administrative control.

The extent of representational reduction achieved by the tank photo is evident only in respect to its context as that is defined by other accounts and especially other photos and video clips of the events in the square.³⁴ Although the photograph cannot be faulted merely for not being a picture of something else—it is a record of what was in fact in place before the lens of the camera—its subsequent stature in collective memory gives its aesthetic principles additional significance. It may be that the high modernism of the picture gives it particular leverage as a means of remembrance; it is, after all, already somewhat abstract and schematic, and its grid pattern regimentation of the visual field is formally consistent with its figural content of a man exercising great self-discipline before a military column.³⁵ The tonality of the

photo further reinforces this schematic orientation. Both scientific representation and the abstract coding used by sociocultural elites are optimized by black-and-white values, while the naturalistic coding familiar to everyone is optimized with moderate color tones.³⁶ The photo typically is presented in print and electronic media in these mixed tones or in black and white, while the most widely available poster also is in black and white.

The major variation is a poster that adds a brilliant red background and golden text in Chinese ideograms and in English to praise the man's courage (fig. 40).³⁷ This exception confirms the rule: the picture is given a sensory orientation that creates emotional identification through aesthetic norms defining Chinese political culture. Note also the change in point of view. Now the viewer is positioned on the street behind and below the man, while the tank barrel looms above. Although the man now is larger, as befits his foregrounding as a symbol of civic virtue, the point of view makes the tank more dangerous to both the man and the viewer.³⁸ The viewer now is in the position of those bystanders not in the iconic photo, a position of direct participation in the historical event and of personal endangerment. By contrast, the steep vertical downward angle of the iconic photo places "the social world at the feet of the viewer, so to speak; knowledge is power."³⁹ Thus, the iconic image aligns muted sensation with the visual angle of disengaged observation. In the poster's reworking of that image, the viewer becomes a virtual participant in the demonstration and can experience the fear that makes courage necessary. And while the poster retains the modern dress and anonymity of the citizen before the tank, it fuses that basis for transnational identification with the national language and political traditions of Chinese culture.

This comparison underscores how the panoptic point of view and related design features of this iconic image actually produce a distorted view of the political action on the street. Note what is lost when attention is turned from the historical event of the demonstration to the tableau of the man before the tank. From a day when one million people were congregating in the square, this photograph shows only a single person. Instead of a crowd milling about amorphously amidst tents, kites, flowers, food vendors, impromptu stages, and cultural icons, an individual is standing still in a perfectly balanced posture in an empty public space. Instead of posters, wall signs, banners, and flags, there are the abstract vectors of traffic control. Instead of noise, sirens, and the smells of food, garbage, and urine, there is silence and a general anesthesia of sensory engagement. Instead of parades and a constant flow of motorbikes, ambulances, trucks, and other vehicles, there are tanks stopped in a broad but deserted street. Instead of displays of public emotionalism, there

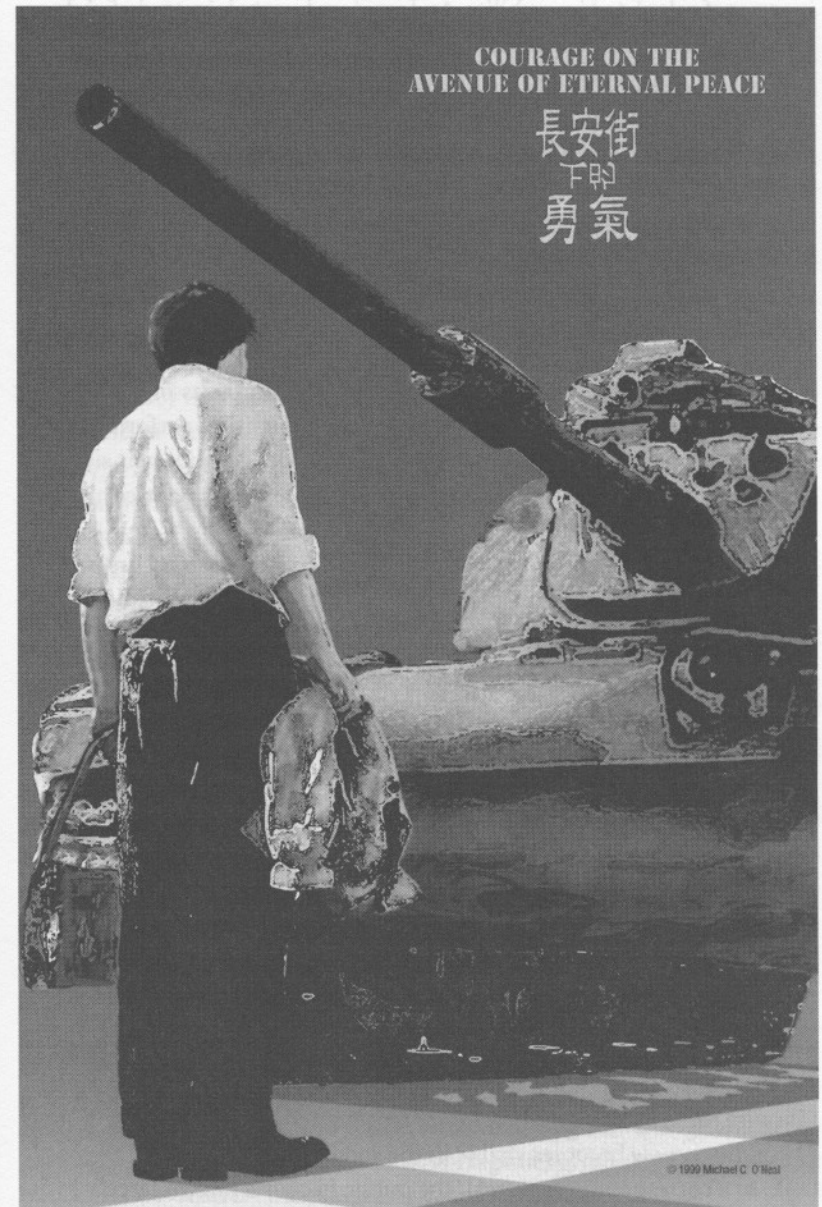


FIGURE 40. "Courage on the Avenue of Eternal Peace," 1999, poster (Michael C. O'Neal, artist). Courtesy of Michael C. O'Neal.

is an act of calculated immobility. And, as already noted, instead of violence there is merely the threat of violence.

It is crucial to remember that these differences in representation are not merely matters of taste; they are endorsements of different modes of political agency. Jeffrey Wasserstrom's observation on student protests in Shanghai puts the point clearly: "What made these protests so powerful was their efficacy as *symbolic performances* that questioned, subverted, and ultimately undermined official rituals and spectacles. Lacking economic clout and generally shunning violence, students had to rely primarily upon their ability to move an audience. This they did through the use of oratory, song, gestures, and other forms of symbolic actions. In short, they made all the techniques actors use in aesthetic forms of drama serve the purposes of the *political theater* of the street."⁴⁰ The symbolic resources for political performance are some of the most basic forms of democratic knowledge, and their suppression in the realm of representation then underwrites other political modalities such as money or guns.

We must also acknowledge, however, that this reduction occurs primarily over time as one image displaces others. It was not the immediate effect of the photograph. The contrast with the events surrounding the scene depicted was at the time experienced as a continuous and mutually validating flow of events. The extensive reduction accomplished within the pictorial frame occurred amidst a welter of information that was already known and a sense of historical change that was being experienced and celebrated. Although this iconic image encourages a loss of information and alteration of political agency within public memory, it also will carry traces of the original context that are fundamental to its dynamic ambivalence regarding democratic and liberal ideals. Thus, the condensation within the iconic image is experienced as an intensification of experience, and it works to organize that experience.

The intensification of experience occurs by concentrating the energies generated by an event into specific, concrete images. There is no focus to a crowd, but our attention naturally zeros in on a lone figure in a square. Likewise, the government, heretofore represented only through long shots of buildings, now becomes visible in the condensation symbol of the battle tank. In a corresponding reversal, the public becomes known largely by its absence—an empty street, emptied because people have been fleeing from danger. In their place stands only the man, the individuated aggregate capable of both representing collective experience and eliciting identification from an audience habituated to individualism. The impulse to focus on the individual in liberal representation is underscored by the fact that there are

a number of photos of groups of Chinese citizens stopping army vehicles—these successful acts of resistance had been occurring for several days—but there is only one photo of an individual acting by himself, yet that is the one that became iconic.⁴¹

This reduction of a month-long mass demonstration before government buildings to a single moment in which a lone individual stands up to a tank condenses the entire conflict into an image of exquisite drama; information is lost, but in its place is the potential for a celebration of political liberty. This potential should not be underestimated. A compensatory shift from the material reality of power to a celebration of the possibility of future freedoms may be one way in which the photo continues to underwrite democratic polity. Democracy may always require an unreasonable amount of hope of the sort found in idealistic performances of individual dissent, and liberal democracy may require a strong association of political expression with individual self-assertion. This figure of dissent need not stand in a modernist space, however.

The photo alters experience not merely by suppressing facts but rather through the construction of a political scenario.⁴² Through reduction of the Chinese demonstration to this iconic moment, the photograph transforms the event from an episode in Chinese national history into a parable about the future global order. This transformation flows out of what is left after the reduction: in place of the pluralism evident in the square, there remains only an iconography of modernism. In place of calls for public accountability and democratic participation in governance, there is a symbol of personal liberty and individual rights. Instead of a massed public confronting an enclaved leadership, there is the categorical difference between the individual and the state. In this scenario, political action occurs within a modernist terrain in which state power and calculations of risk still predominate. The fundamental historical question is whether Western liberalism will achieve global hegemony, and the key to this drama is to give individuals the leverage that comes from voluntary participation and coverage by the Western media. Change is achieved through the actions of ordinary people acting as individual entrepreneurs, and it goes without saying that change will occur gradually while still-muscular totalitarian regimes grind slowly to a halt and ponder how to redirect their large, awkward machinery.

To summarize thus far, the iconic photo of the man standing before the tank is a paradigmatic case of modernist simplification. Through a series of reductions and intensifications of the political conflict erupting in Tiananmen Square, the photo restructures that conflict on the terms most legible and reassuring within a Western narrative of the continued expan-

sion of modern technologies, open markets, and liberal ideals throughout the world. The universal validity of those scientific, economic, and political principles is implied by their depiction within the modernist “international style” of representation and by their extension without modification across the globe. These processes are evident in a photo that carries only the most muted sign of Chinese identity—the star on the army tank—while being constituted throughout by characteristic signs and figures of modernism. In this narrative, the state contracts to its most elemental functions while economic activity and a corresponding individualism expand without limit except as they are channeled by modern technologies of production, transportation, and communication.⁴³ The image could be taken—and has been taken—anywhere in the world.

The photo’s simplification of the Chinese conflict can have such comprehensive implications because it reproduces one of the fundamental achievements of modernization. As Scott observes, the development of the modern state required a comprehensive standardization of names, measures, jurisdictions, currencies, languages, and other signifying practices previously under local control. In every case, standardization was accomplished through simplification and in conjunction with “that other revolutionary political simplification of the modern era: the concept of a uniform, homogeneous citizenship.” Taking France as his leading example, Scott argues that “in place of a welter of incommensurable small communities, familiar to their inhabitants but mystifying to outsiders, there would rise a single national society perfectly legible from the center. The proponents of this vision well understood that what was at stake was not merely administrative convenience but also the transformation of a people. . . . The abstract grid of equal citizenship would create a new reality: The French citizen.”⁴⁴

A similar transformation is created on the grid of that Beijing street. In place of the welter of signs, most of them unreadable to those outside of China, and a dense, mass gathering that cannot be taken in as a whole, there is a transparent, perfectly legible depiction of a modern individual standing in an empty, uniform public space before a generic symbol of routinized state power. The photo has in a stroke transformed Chinese political identity into the “uniform, homogeneous citizenship” of the modern era. This is a layered transformation: it converts one (or more) forms of Chinese citizenship into another; it seamlessly integrates Chinese citizenship into a universal order of human rights (such that this citizenship, like any state currency, is convertible with any other); it elevates all civic identity into this universal form that now applies primarily to the global order rather than to any specific nation.⁴⁵ What once was the basis for the transformation of France from

a premodern collage of local prerogatives into the uniform jurisdiction of a modern state, now becomes the basis for transforming national identities into the uniform economy of rights in a global order. And just as the earlier change in Europe was accomplished through the standardization of names, languages, and measures, so does the global order work through a standardization of signs. This common emphasis on matters of representation does not extend to continued administrative centralization, however. The center of the global order is the lens of the camera.

THE LIBERAL FUTURE

Modernism has always been about the future. Despite the differences between, say, Italian futurists and the German Bauhaus, a common denominator was elite management of mass societies through the technologies and production values of the machine age. The perceived opposition was a democratic irrationality. As Le Corbusier, the representative figure of modern design declared, “It is a question of building which is at the root of the social unrest of today; Architecture or Revolution. . . . Revolution can be avoided.”⁴⁶

This rationalizing of historical change always depended on the capacity to transport the design principles of modernism across cultural borders. An international style should be the same style and the infrastructure of a modern civilization should be based on the same technologies and engineering whether one is in New York, São Paulo, or Tehran. People have a vexing habit of preferring their own way of life, however, and so the modernist project encounters continual frustrations. It is just at this point, the problem of extending modernism, that modern visual media play a decisive role. As Scott remarks, “One response to this frustration is a retreat to the realm of appearances and miniatures—to model cities and Potemkin villages, as it were. . . . The effect of this retreat is to create a small, relatively self-contained, utopian space where high-modernist aspirations might more nearly be realized.”⁴⁷ Scott defines the definitive cases as the theme park and museum, and the expansion and likely effects of these media in first world societies is well documented. But there is another, much cheaper and more portable example of a “small, relatively self-contained, utopian space”: the photograph. Here the aesthetic effect of miniaturization is perfectly realized and completely normative.⁴⁸ When the photo’s composition is itself a model of modernist design, its predictive potency becomes enormous: “Just as the architectural drawing, the model, and the map are ways of dealing with a larger reality that is not easily grasped or manageable in its entirety, the miniaturization of high-modernist development offers a visually complete example of what the

future looks like.”⁴⁹ When a democratic revolution is compressed into a man and a tank seen at a distance—miniature figures that could be toys—and that surface is a plane surface marked as a grid—as if it were a game board—then a complex, partially illegible historical process has been represented as a model of the modern world’s characteristic social order. Once again, the future is a modern future, achieved by modern technologies projecting the continued extension in space and time of universal values, values that are known to be universal because legible, transportable, and rational.

This use of the photographic icon to define the future is evident in other media portrayals of the Tiananmen Square protest. The documentary film *The Gate of Heavenly Peace* is a fitting example due to both its overall excellence and its use of the tank photo as a framing shot.⁵⁰ The narrative begins with action shots of the carnage and casualties along with interviewees reacting to the attack by the army, follows with video footage of the man’s encounter with the tank, then with similar tape from a state “news” voice-over that emphasizes the tank commander’s restraint, and then again a bit later with the original clip to frame the rest of the film.⁵¹ As the story develops, three basic political alternatives emerge: the authoritarian state, the popular democracy movement, and a doctrine of individual self-realization. The state is represented by its army and by officials who divide into two, mutually limiting camps of hardliners and reformers. The popular movement of students, workers, and intellectuals likewise splits into two contradictory camps of pragmatic pluralists and neo-authoritarian demagogues. The third alternative of liberalism cannot be paralyzed by division because it already is completely dispersed into an unknown number of individual lives. These individuals include most prominently an articulate pop singer who celebrates self-expression and the mother of a murdered boy who emphasizes the importance of taking small steps individually to achieve reform.

By the end of the film, the state has lost all legitimacy and popular democracy has failed. The swirling montage of the opening shots of the demonstrators fade into memory, while the thrice-performed iconic standoff between the individual and the state remains the elemental political scenario awaiting resolution. The film ends with pictures of the boy who was killed while observing the demonstration. Like the man before the tank, he was not a demonstrator, just someone caught up in the event. More poignantly yet, he was only a boy, a figure of potential unencumbered by the responsibilities of adult life.⁵² His mother says, “Should we simply wait for another chance to start a Democracy Movement like 1989? Would that save China? I don’t think so. The only way to change our situation is for each one of us to make a personal effort. Every small action counts.” The narrator concurs: “When

people abandon hope for a perfect future and faith in great leaders, they are returned to the common dilemmas of humanity. And there—in personal responsibility, in civility, in making sacred the duties of ordinary life—a path may be found.”⁵³ Popular democracy has been transcribed into the “utopian” political theory that was the standard categorization of Communism by the West during the Cold War. Genuine, justifiable political emotion has been depicted as unrealistic desire, and public grief over the loss of both lives and freedom has been reduced to the experience of a single person’s private mourning.⁵⁴ Liberalism is the practical alternative—the only alternative for a real world. Ironically, one utopian project has been criticized by means of another: the use of visual imagery to imagine that another messy “cultural revolution” in Chinese democratization can be avoided through management by modern technologies and incorporation into the global economy. The last shot of the film is not of a demonstration, nor of the million people protesting in the square, nor of their leaders speaking before them. It is the picture, as from the family photo album, of the boy’s face.

The film and the iconic photo articulate a common narrative of the ascent of liberalism in a global context. Each sublimates an interrupted democratic movement into the projection of a liberal future. This projection also is evident from how the iconic photo often is placed in a story and in its relationship to other photos from the crackdown. *China: From the Long March to Tiananmen Square* provides one illustration.⁵⁵ The front cover of the book gives the Goddess of Democracy pride of place. The history culminates in images of the massacre, followed by a last chapter entitled “Aftermath” that ends in the image of the tank. The back cover is a single image that serves as an additional articulation of the iconic photo: another tank is parked on an overpass, beneath which a young, heterosexual couple sits on a bicycle, already on their way to starting a happy private life by quietly slipping unnoticed and unaccompanied by others beneath the gaze of the state. As in the iconic image, the quiet revolution that is prophesized is set within a modernist composition of geometric lines and empty spaces. A similar sequence occurs on the Web page Tiananmen Square 1989: images of various acts of public protest are followed by the carnage, then the tank, and finally the couple under the bridge. The sequence reduces and transforms a history of democratic dissent into the individual pursuit of happiness.⁵⁶

Our point is not that the complexity expected of a China expert is missing from public documentary media, but rather that another culture’s articulation of democratic self-assertion has been reconstituted according to the aesthetic and political conventions of the Western audience. These images fulfill Anne Norton’s observation that “liberalism has become the common

sense of the American people, a set of principles unconsciously adhered to, a set of conventions so deeply held that they appear (when they appear at all) to be no more than common sense."⁵⁷ Instead of a possible "second center" for the emergence of a global culture, we see another version of ourselves. Instead of a more hybrid modernity, we see the familiar patterns of modernization. Instead of a deep yearning for democracy, we see an open space for individual self-assertion.

The modernist image is itself a complex design that is open to varied uses, however. The modern simplifications of uniform measures and uniform rights were both liberatory and the infrastructure of a comprehensive extension of disciplinary power. Likewise, modernist representation can articulate individual rights while it subordinates those forms of cultural identity that don't fit into its scheme of legibility. The universal constitution of Chinese citizenship reassures the Western audience that the global society will develop on familiar terms, yet it certainly is a progressive development for those dissidents who are in exile, and there is no question that China needs more liberty, not less. Rather than decide between choices that are not mutually exclusive, it is more useful to consider how this iconic photo organizes all political ideas within the projection of a social order.

As a complex articulation of modern life, liberalism has developed in conjunction with the rise of the bourgeois public sphere. Liberal individual, public forum, rational deliberation, self-assertion, and enlightened pursuit of happiness all fit together as a coherent pattern of motivation: the actor, scene, agency, act, and purpose comprising the modern ideal of political action.⁵⁸ The iconic photo from Beijing, like other icons, provides performative enactment of key features of the public sphere. Unlike the others, in this image the public has a minimalist definition. The scene is a large, urban street, an open field for the movement of strangers. It is a public space in the sense that it is created and maintained by the state for the operation of civil society. Notice, for example, the bus, the standard vehicle of public transportation, that appears in some versions of the photograph. The state thus operates domestically as a neutral infrastructure for the movement of people, goods, and services. That infrastructure includes public spaces through which strangers can move without being impeded by any obligation to interact with one another. This is not a public space in a stronger sense signified by Tiananmen Square, however, which, like village commons throughout China, was designated as the place where the people would recognize one another as a people, celebrate the common enterprise or deliberate about the distribution of common resources, and call citizens to civic duties while holding leaders accountable to civic obligations.⁵⁹ It is, instead, the abstract

space of modernist urban design, intended to allow the society to function with maximum efficiency.

On this neutral field there are the figures of the man and the tank(s). The man is anonymous, and he is dressed as any man in a modern city might be dressed at some time during the week. He is devoid of personal identity and social position in just the way that all are subject to the traffic laws. The public realm will operate like the public streets, a zone of regulations through which people move without notice to conduct their private business. None of this is a source of nobility, of course. That comes from his opposition with the tank. He is denominated by this difference: the opposite of the impersonal state machinery following orders must be the private individual exercising his personal liberty. The full articulation of this opposition fills out the model of the public sphere: civil society is opposed to the state; the surest check on abuses of state power is the public accountability that comes from the revelation of state actions in the public media; the individual, who cannot resist state violence, can be protected if there is an intermediate realm of public opinion that has the capacity to influence state action and be influenced by individuals.⁶⁰

So far, so good, but there is a significant deviation from the classical model as well. The significant shift comes from a feature the man shares with the tank opposite him: just as that tank (unlike others that day) is only a form of potential violence, so is the man a symbol of the potential for democratic culture. Essential elements of public life are in place but the public sphere is largely empty, only a potential space for development. The photo gives us a model of the public sphere as it has been projected onto the developing world. This is a world the U.S. audience knows largely through photojournalism and according to the assumption that Catherine Lutz and Jane Collins have identified succinctly: "Their present is our past" and our present is their future.⁶¹ As this assumption is inflected by modernist aesthetics, the public sphere within China will emerge only as China becomes the leading edge of an expanding global public culture having uniform citizenship and technologies of communication. There is one worldwide network of public media, one universal definition of human rights, and only one version of modernity. The photo is of a transitional scene into a new world order; it is a picture of the future.

Neither government official nor demonstrator, the man is unmarked politically. He still signifies, of course, but now by the jacket and bag he holds in his hands. These items appear functional and altogether ordinary, characterizing him as someone who meets his own needs and defines himself through the acquisition and use of consumer goods.⁶² These humble items articulate

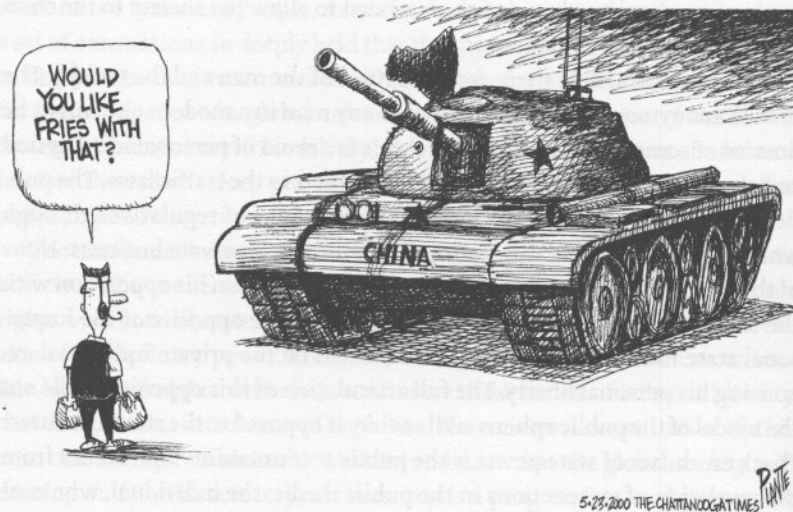


FIGURE 41. "Would You Like Fries with That?" 2000, editorial cartoon (Bruce Plante, cartoonist). Reproduced by permission of Bruce Plante / The Chattanooga Times Free Press.

both dimensions of contemporary liberalism: the ordinary person's pursuit of happiness in a world of personal liberty and free choice, and the economic interest in freeing all activity from any restrictions on market behavior. The Chinese are not likely to buy U.S. tanks, but they could be buying American jackets, drinks, CDs, life insurance, and mass media programming, so the corporate interest in market expansion is perfectly fused with the self-interest of the Chinese consumer. Likewise, the man's subsequent retreat into private life may be the loss for the realm of civic participation, but he will continue to shop.

This shift from the political to the economic sense of liberalism is perfectly captured in two subsequent appropriations of the photo by editorial cartoonists. In the first drawing (fig. 41), the man becomes a franchise food clerk who asks the tank, "Would you like fries with that?"⁶³ In the second (fig. 42), a protestor at the World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle confronts the tank dressed in a turtle costume, which now has a driver popping out of the hatch to speak. The driver is wearing a business suit labeled "US," and he says, "We believe that entry into the WTO will push China towards democratic reform."⁶⁴ These successive reversals lay out the logic of globalization with brilliant clarity. In the first cartoon, the heroic citizen becomes a hapless little guy trying to do his job. (Note also the nice touches of replacing the bag and jacket with sacks of food and the addition of a headset. Those small, handheld items in the photo are large enough to be recognized as signs of

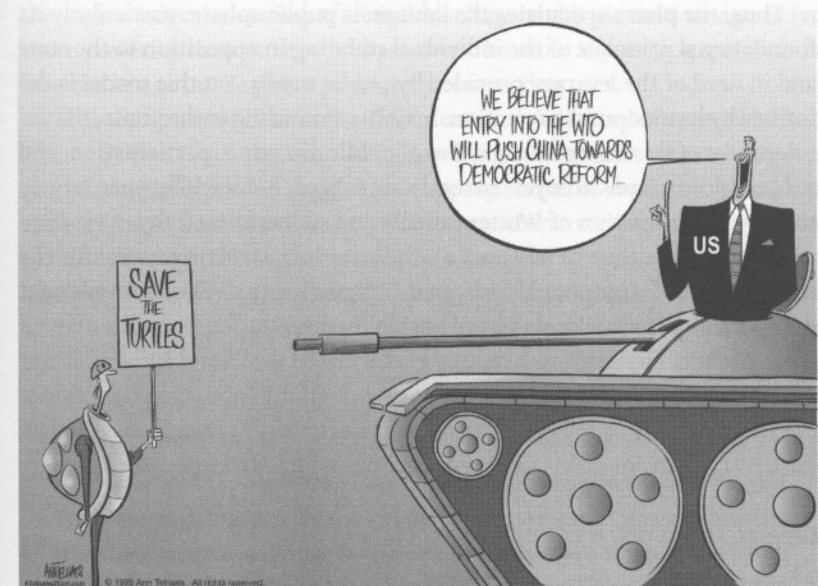


FIGURE 42. "Save the Turtles," 1999, editorial cartoon (Ann Telnaes, cartoonist). Copyright 1999 Ann Telnaes. Reprint permission granted by Ann Telnaes in conjunction with the Cartoonist Group. All rights reserved.

consumption, and communications technologies are always part of the new global order.) He speaks, but only to mouth a programmed catchphrase, while democratic dissent has become an appeal by American corporations for the China market and the global future is one in which all are free to sell and consume American popular culture. The full political implications are brought out by the irony in the second cartoon. An even more hapless figure stands before the tank—wearing a turtle suit is not going to save anyone—and now the United States is the oppressive regime willing to use force to silence dissent on behalf of order. In case we might miss the point, the speaker's demeanor makes it clear that economic liberalization is an end unto itself that includes no commitment to "democratic reform" in China or Seattle or anywhere else. Democracy is no more secure in the global order run by the major economic powers and their police agencies, the nation-states, than it was in Tiananmen Square.⁶⁵ The parodic depiction of this difficult-to-visualize political problem is possible because of the complexity of the iconic photo that supplies the rhetorical commonplace for the cartoon's public statement. The historical association with democratic dissent, the deep structure of modern liberal assumptions, and the subordination of the one to the other shape audience response in both the original photo and its appropriations.

Thus, the photo articulates the bourgeois public sphere, particularly its foundational principle of the individual standing in opposition to the state and in need of the leverage provided by public media. Yet this model is deformed by its modernist projection. In China, according to the photo, the development of this intermediate realm of public discourse, participation, and accountability is possible yet currently unrealized. But it will happen largely through the operation of Western media and economic activity. As it happens, it will continue to rely on a disciplinary infrastructure useful for the management of large populations, an infrastructure that relies on modernist designs and visual technologies to control bodies, traffic, and state actions alike. At the center of this procedural grid is placed the liberal individual: unencumbered except as he chooses to be so, essentially anonymous, confronting the state only to tell it to stay out of private life.⁶⁶ Other forms of civic identity remain possible, but they are at odds with both large-scale management and the individual's pursuit of happiness in private life. As the cartoons suggest, in this new world order democratic dissent looks ridiculous.

CITIZENS AND CONSUMERS

The photo's reproduction of the aesthetic conventions of global modernism leaves only empty space and a sovereign individual as the means for democratic polity. The question then becomes, what will be most likely to be valued in such a world? As Geremie Barmé argues, "Comrades have become consumers without necessarily also developing into citizens."⁶⁷ The global economy requires that individuals be consumers, and the question of democratization is merely whether it is necessary for that outcome. The image of a lone individual stopping a tank in its tracks contrasts liberal values and those of the totalitarian state, but it also deflects awareness that democratic norms can be at the mercy of market forces. The image is iconic in part because it so concisely embodies both the public interest and individual autonomy, but it does not suggest that they need be valued equally.

All is not lost, however. The pathos of the editorial cartoons depends on the photo's iconic status as the marker of a democratic revolution. If the revolution failed, at least the photograph preserves one beautiful moment of heroic dissent. If the dissent failed on the ground—neither the tanks nor the government crackdown were stopped—it nonetheless endures as a long-running civic performance in U.S. public culture. The Tiananmen icon is neither democratic nor liberal but rather both at once. The question is not whether one orientation is the more fundamental to the rhetorical power of the image. We are arguing that *both* patterns of definition are there, and that

the high modernist coding of liberal ideology in the pictorial design is far more powerful than most would assume. The more interesting question is how the image can be put to potentially contrasting uses.

This tension is evident in the Tiananmen icon's history of appropriation. Although one should be wary of categorizing such a wide range of artistry, several examples should suggest how appropriation of the iconic photo has traveled from Cold War democratization to liberal consumerism within a global economy. The best example of its "original" use may be *Time* magazine's coverage of May/June 1989. *Time* devoted four consecutive cover stories to the events in the square, culminating in the June 19 cover that featured the tank photo. The photo is reproduced as a two-page spread to introduce the feature story, while additional coverage includes vivid images of the conflict. The story begins as a caption to the iconic photo:

One man against an army. The power of the people versus the power of the gun. There he stood, implausibly resolute in his thin white shirt, an unknown Chinese man facing down a lumbering column of tanks. For a moment that will be long remembered, the lone man defined the struggle of China's citizens. "Why are you here?" he shouted at the silent steel hulk. "You have done nothing but create misery. My city is in chaos because of you."

The brief encounter between the man and the tank captured an epochal event in the lives of 1.1 billion Chinese. The state clanking with menace, swiveling right and left with uncertainty, is halted in its tracks because the people got in its way, and because it got in theirs.⁶⁸

The textual emphasis clearly is on a democratic revolution against the Communist state. The man stands for the Chinese people, who are citizens acting collectively, and the state is silent while he is given the power of speech. This description continues the story, developed across the month of feature coverage, that Communism was being transformed from within.⁶⁹ The cover puts the tank above the headline, "Revolt against Communism: China, Poland, USSR" (the last three words separated by stars). Within, "Defiance rocks the Communist world. China resists while Moscow and Warsaw struggle to reform."⁷⁰ At the top of the feature story, directly above the lead tank, the single word "Communism" (in red) signals this historical context, while the text within notes that "it was a well-established truism of the 20th century that a Communist regime is a military regime in disguise. The disguise came off in Hungary in 1956, in Czechoslovakia in 1968, in Poland in 1981—and in China last week."⁷¹ The tank icon may have been favored by the prominence of tank photos in the visual history of twentieth-century Europe; it certainly filled out this Cold War narrative better than any other

photo in the *Time* montage.⁷² If a man will stand up to a tank, and the tank will stop, then we clearly are nearing the end of the historical trajectory of the totalitarian state. Likewise, even as the magazine reports on the Chinese government's obliteration of public dissent, the iconic photo provides the final, definitive representation of the event as a moment of successful democratic self-determination.

Time has since changed its tune. The commemoration of the man before the tank today as one of the twentieth century's "leaders and revolutionaries" is artfully consistent with the early coverage, but the story has become one of values and aspirations that can be realized without political action, in part due to the power of the image in a global communication environment. "The man who stood before a column of tanks near Tiananmen Square—June 5, 1989—may have impressed his image on the global memory more vividly, more intimately than even Sun Yat-sen did. Almost certainly he was seen in his moment of self-transcendence by more people than ever laid eyes on Winston Churchill, Albert Einstein and James Joyce combined."⁷³ Self-transcendence and service as "an Unknown Soldier in the struggle for human rights" are good things, but they are not the same thing as a successful democracy. Indeed, "nine years after the June 4 incident, moreover, it's unclear how much the agitators for democracy actually achieved," while *Time* pins its hopes on the "technology" of fax machines, television, and the Internet that can allow the Chinese "to claim and disseminate an economic freedom they could not get politically." Thus, the "unknown Chinese man" who represented "the power of the people" in the initial coverage of the event has been separated from other failed demonstrators and rehabilitated as a stateless, universalized "Unknown Soldier of a new Republic of the Image," wherever that is. The commemoration largely acquiesces to the regime's refusal to accept democratic reform, while it emphasizes the icon's embodiment of liberal ideals.

Others have taken up where *Time* began, while the general direction seems to be down the same road. The photo is the lead image for a number of Web sites protesting Chinese authoritarianism, and on posters bearing slogans on behalf of democratization and people's movements.⁷⁴ When China lobbied to host the Olympics, editorial cartoonists drew on the tank icon frequently. The visual similarity between Olympic rings and tank tread assemblies was put to good use, and was possible because the icon had already made the battle tank a premier symbol of the Chinese government. In one of Patrick Chappatte's cartoons, the man appears somewhat older and perhaps more westernized in his features as he stands before the Olympic-ringed tank that looms large over him.⁷⁵ *Time* has passed and the Chinese regime may be

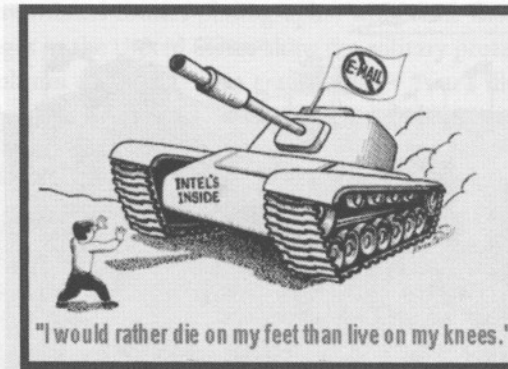


FIGURE 43. "Intel's Inside," cartoon, n.d. (Ken Hamidi, cartoonist). Courtesy of Ken Hamidi.

adept at using the Olympics to cover over history, but it still will be bad news for the little guy. This simple message is enhanced by the artist's improvisations, which supply darker tones while shifting perspective to place the viewer closer to the man and below the tank. In a more recent cartoon, Chappatte has the tank squashing a lone demonstrator whose hand is still visible from underneath its treads as he drops a sign that says "Tibet."⁷⁶ Again, the artistic inflection is telling: because the direction of the tank is reversed so that it is driving from the given into the space of the new, the authoritarian state—and not the demonstrator's ideals—dominates history. As with *Time*'s coverage in 1989, the icon is a template of democratic revolution, but now on behalf of a movement whose prospects are increasingly bleak.⁷⁷ Other cartoonists have used equally sophisticated designs. Don Wright fuses the iconic shot with a less well-known image of demonstrators lying smashed amid wrecked bicycles, placing them before a panel of Olympic judges.⁷⁸ The smiling judges hold up cards that each say "10" as they look down on the broken figure who is labeled "Human Rights." Behind him looms the tank, and the judging table says "2008 Olympics," where, we are to conclude, violent suppression of human rights will be an Olympic event.

These emphases carry through other uses of the icon, particularly as it is taken farther afield. *Time* magazine's reconstruction of the photo seems to draw on a deep correspondence between globalization, communications technology, and human rights, although not everyone is so optimistic about the relationship between the three. A vernacular cartoon (fig. 43) clearly questions the idea of unified progress. The tank, now without the markings of the nation-state and labeled "Intel's Inside," comes from a Web site dedicated to confronting Intel's "predatory" employment practices.⁷⁹ In this image the

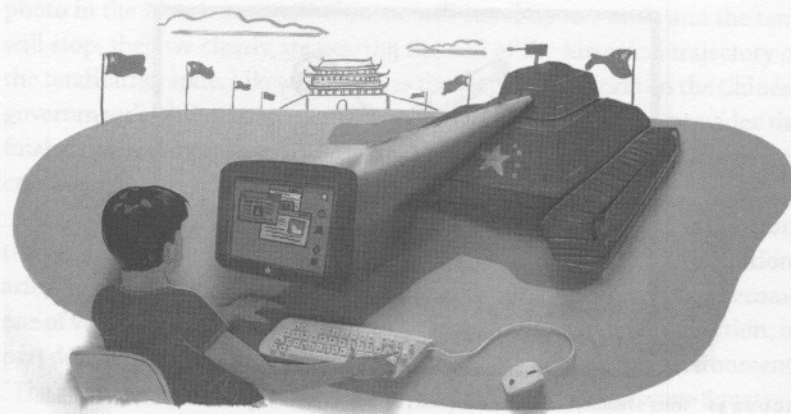


FIGURE 44. "Google under the Gun," 2006, illustration (David Wheeler, illustrator). Reproduced by permission of David Wheeler.

tank is about to roll over the man, who would rather "die on my feet than live on my knees," while the tank's flag bans e-mail, marking the digital medium as a valuable but endangered mode of democratic communication. The multinational corporation thus assumes the power and tyrannical disposition of the nation-state, while the monopoly on force becomes a monopoly on modern technology.⁸⁰ This remake of the iconic image transfers the idea and ideals of democratic revolution from the public to the private sector. Consistent with Habermas's concept of "refeudalization," the cartoon argues that the commercial corporation can become a tyranny within liberal civil society.⁸¹ Intel controls ordinary people by suppressing their rights to free speech and free association; such rights can be restored only by creating transparency and democratic processes within the corporation. This is a tough sell in the United States, which may be why the advocate draws on the iconic image. Whatever the image does for the cause, the appropriation highlights its relevance for engaging the issues of a global society developed by Western institutions and technologies and dominated by multinational corporations.

The story came full circle when *Time* reported on Google's decision to impose Chinese government censorship on its Web searches in China. The title "Google Under the Gun" was illustrated by a drawing (fig. 44) of the iconic standoff, this time with the man sitting at a computer terminal placed inside the barrel of the tank.⁸² The illustration probably was prompted by the fact that the leading example of the censorship as it was reported in the United States was a comparison of Google Images searches in each country for "Tiananmen Square." As the *New York Times* demonstrated, screens in China

showed conventional tourist photographs, while "the first five results on Google Images in the United States show the solitary protestor in the path of a tank column during the 1989 crackdown."⁸³ *Time's* illustration of the story may be a perfect synthesis of its earlier and later stories, and so of the democratic and liberal inflections of the image. The artistic license largely was used to enhance the earlier coding. These changes include coloring the tank red, moving the star to the front of the machine, elongating the barrel, putting it aggressively into the personal space of the man, and changing the point of view to bring the viewer closer to the man's experience of the tank's power. The tank is linked by the color red to the flags and building by which the state defines the square, while the man is linked to the space itself by the brown tints used to color his chair, shirt, skin, and the ground under and around the tank. Red becomes the color of the Chinese state, and if brown can be a color of the common people, then the man becomes the figural embodiment of a more democratic definition of the public square.

The illustration is not only democratic, however, as the scene also represents *Time's* later substitution of digital technologies for democratic politics as the means of change. The man is no longer standing in a public square but sitting in the private space defined by keyboard, screen, and mouse. He is not standing up to the tank but staring into a virtual environment of icons and other images that happen to be encased anachronistically in the tank's mechanical apparatus. The liberal individual who should be free to move unhindered through a global communications medium is being intruded upon by an overbearing state. The government, like its tank, should provide for collective security, not intrude into the private sphere and restrict personal liberties. Free access to information is the key factor in *Time's* vision of a global civil society, which will work by aggregating individual preferences in a "new Republic of the Image." Once again, a prior democratic moment becomes the background for a liberal future that is as capable of displacing the progressive ideal as fulfilling it.

The Tiananmen Square icon's other appropriations are further evidence of its range. These include the \$8,000 question on "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire," a "Daily Show" spoof of such contests, a Michael Jackson World Tour poster, an ad campaign by the Partnership for a Drug Free America, a T-shirt, and the 2004 Super Bowl. Some of these suggest a general drift from historical reference to more vague yet immediate bases for identification. How else could the image be the first one up for the American Moments group of posters at AllPosters.com?⁸⁴ A Chinese citizen taking a stand in China without any connection with or support from the United States becomes the incarnation of something American.

The 2004 Super Bowl video lead-in to the halftime show, produced by MTV, is a fine example of the dual articulation and general tendency in appropriations of the Tiananmen icon. The clip has a series of individuals urging that the viewers “choose to” fight, vote, speak out, and otherwise get involved. The tank image flashes briefly between Muhammad Ali saying “Choose to fight” and someone else saying “Choose to vote”; thus, in the blink of an eye it mediates a transition from realist force to liberal rule of law. Prior to the icon but not immediately so someone says “Choose to take a stand.” The video ends with a young woman onstage in the stadium shouting, “Houston, choose to party!”⁸⁵ The shift from videotape of historical icons to live performance in real time completes the displacement of speaking out and voting by partying. Politics is reduced to the personal enjoyment of commercial consumption.

MTV can misuse anything, of course, but more explicit parodies suggest that the halftime show was not completely out of line. Two Web-based video-cartoons called “Tiananmen Square Man” are illustrative. In the first cartoon, the man puts down a boom box and starts break dancing in front of the tank. In the second cartoon, a man and boy are playing baseball as the tanks pull up, while captions allude to *America’s Funniest Home Videos*, a TV show and visual genre devoted to private life. The boy then lines a pitch into the mid-section of the man in front of the tank, who collapses. (Oops! He can stop a tank, but not a carom out of the private sphere.) The parody takes the liberalism in the photo to absurd extensions, but not to activities out of line with the individual pursuit of happiness. Vernacular alterations of the photo at other satirical Web sites push the point: the icon carries both an affirmation of democratic values and an embodiment of personal liberty that, when realized, quickly leads people away from solidarity.⁸⁶ An artist’s concluding note inadvertently contains a further irony regarding the photo’s frame of reference: “Relax I’m just having some fun; if you’re going to complain you better be more active in the political arena than me (and I’m a member of Amnesty International, Red Cross and Greenpeace, seriously.)”⁸⁷ Any conflict between individualism and political commitment? Not when your politics consist of membership in three international organizations.

On the other hand, we also need to be open to the possibility that this appropriation and others can be forms of *metis*, the tactical adjustment to dominant forces celebrated by theorists of resistance such as Scott and Michel de Certeau.⁸⁸ As Dutton argues, this possibility for tactical redirection of the image also qualifies the critique of its commodification.⁸⁹ Perhaps one can see both in an episode of *The Simpsons* where Marge stops a tank in direct allusion to the icon.⁹⁰ Due to *The Simpsons*’ consistent portrayal of how American

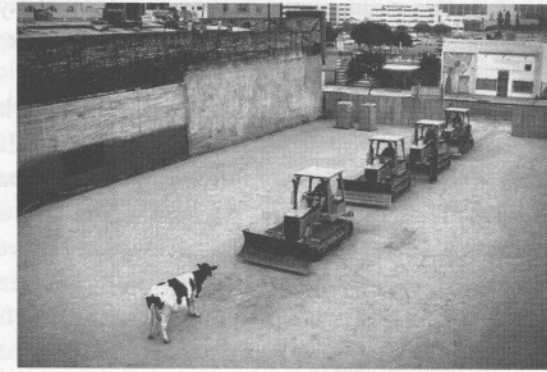


FIGURE 45. Chick-fil-A advertisement, 2004. Advertising image used by permission from Chick-fil-A, Inc., and The Richards Group.

society encourages selfishness and greed, recourse to the Tiananmen Square icon is one way to keep the democratic ideal alive.⁹¹ Even that, however, depends on a well-developed sense of parody.

The range of appropriations suggest, first, that the power of this iconic image comes from its being a performance of both democratic virtue and liberal autonomy; second, that it can be “tilted” one way or the other through both reproduction and reception; and third, that the historical trajectory is toward the liberal inflection. These claims can be illustrated by our concluding example, a television advertisement that moves through masterful, mildly parodic imitation of the iconic image to achieve what may be an all-too-accurate articulation of liberal-democratic identity. Since 1995, the Chick-fil-A corporation has been running a clever ad campaign that features cows trying to persuade the public to limit its consumption of hamburgers. Unable to speak, the cows still can hold up signs that say “Eat Mor Chikin” and otherwise try to influence those streaming through fast-food restaurants. But everyone knows that those cows are facing a tough battle as McDonald’s alone consumes almost one billion pounds of U.S. beef each year.⁹² Perhaps the cows need a heroic example; if so, he (she, actually) appeared during the telecast of the 2002 Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl: a single cow stands before a bulldozer to stop it from leveling an area where a burger shack is to be built. A sign says, “Coming Soon: Circus Burger” and pitches a thirty-two-ounce burger. The cow moves back and forth to counter the bulldozer’s attempts to get around it—imitating the video clip of the original confrontation—and then, in case there’s any doubt about the allusion, the last shot (fig. 45) has four bulldozers lined up, with the cow and tanks on the left-to-right diagonal and seen from above right center in the exact position and perspective as

in the iconic photo.⁹³ The ad closes with a shot of graffiti that says “Eat Mor Chikin.”⁹⁴ Like oppressed peoples everywhere, cows have to retake the public square.

A lot is going on here. The ad presumes that the iconic shot has become part of a widely shared cultural literacy; Peach Bowl ads are not cheap, so few risks will be taken regarding audience comprehension. There apparently also is no risk of a breach of decorum whereby the appropriation would impugn the audience’s emotional bond with the original image and provoke a patriotic backlash if taken too lightly. And the ad’s light touch is remarkable. It enacts a sure sense of parody, but not to diminish the original. Instead, the shift from seriousness to silliness elevates the other side of the comparison, making the cow’s cause a matter worthy of public support. In fact, there is nothing in the scene that suggests any reason for eating chicken rather than beef. Instead, the imitation of the Tiananmen Square standoff imports a political scenario that in turn redefines all involved in fast-food consumption. The burger chains are now in the position of the Chinese government, an aging, rigidly conventional regime seeking only to maintain mass conformity to maintain power. The anonymous cow represents everyone’s interest in breaking corporate control of a consumer society. Willing to challenge entrenched power, Chick-fil-A restaurants provide the gateway to a new future of expanded choices. While one is chuckling along with the ad, eating chicken becomes an act of democratic empowerment.

Of course, this is nuts. Shifting one’s preferences from one fast-food chain to another is not going to revitalize American democracy. The ad’s sophistication speaks volumes about liberal-democratic identity construction, however. Key features of public dissent are recreated within a comic frame that allows one to enjoy them without actually becoming in any way committed to political action. Instead, identification occurs entirely with regard to a topography of private life: the viewer makes choices about small-scale consumer consumption—where to drive through tonight?—that supposedly are choices between social conformity or individual self-expression. Cows cannot speak and consumers are not likely to speak out, but the comic imitation of a silent act of public protest makes consumption appear to be a public act. The democratic mythos of representing the will of the people to challenge authoritarian power becomes a vehicle for motivating completely individuated acts within private life.

The ad, like all the appropriations, draws on both the drama of the lone individual facing the tank and on the tension between the liberal and democratic implications of his action. The first motif sets the play, and the second accounts for its relevance. The shift from democratic representation to

individual liberty in visual appropriations and verbal interpretations of the iconic image can occur so seamlessly, without risk of objection, because both elements of liberal-democratic political culture are embodied in the same composition. The logic of the Chick-fil-A homage is clear, however. For all its wit, the fact remains that the audience is brought to identify with a cow. The bulldozers are not going to be stopped, in part because the cow is never going to speak. The allure of graffiti—the voice of the people!—aside, the sole representative of dissent in the ad is speechless and inevitably so. Resistance for someone who identifies with that position can only consist of standing up to machines sure to destroy them, or—and here’s the shift—through acts of consumption that are imagined to be countercultural but are actually just a transfer of disposable income from one cash register to another. The ad really is amusing, but laughter in popular culture can mask a deep fatalism about individual powerlessness. The Chick-fil-A/Tiananmen Square ad both taps and manages this condition. How else could we smile along when the brutal suppression of a popular movement is remembered as an argument to eat at a fast-food franchise?

Of course, the ad is not the problem, and the Tiananmen Square icon is justifiably iconic. As the ad makes quite clear, however, iconic images exist because they are far more than literal representations of current events. The ad can draw on the iconic template because it already has become established as a parable deeply appropriate to liberal-democratic public culture. A single individual dared to stop a tank, and the tank stopped, revealing the profound legitimacy of individual action, which was at once representative of the will of the people and an assertion of inalienable human rights. This individual appears to the Western audience as a universal figure: he is defined by a modernist aesthetic, which in turn confers an undifferentiated citizenship, and anyone can identify with the heroism of his act because he was doing it alone, anonymously, as a private individual on his way home from work. The simplified and disciplined public culture that is projected aesthetically has normative implications: it is supposed to be both the destiny of Chinese democratization and the model for any public culture in the emerging global society of transnational economic and communications networks.⁹⁵

We shouldn’t romanticize indigenous development—Chinese democracy could not only be less liberal but also less democratic than one would wish—but it does hold out the possibility of a richer global civil society. Stated otherwise, a decidedly democratic global society would produce a heteronomous modernity, while a global liberalism is more likely to produce the homogeneous social order of late-modern design.⁹⁶ The iconic image from Tiananmen Square obscures the idea that there might be alternative forms of modern-

ization and that a global society could develop according to a different logic than expansion of and assimilation into Western liberal-democratic culture. Thus, the risk is the same whether relying on the iconic photo or the liberal civil society it implies: despite the richness that is there, the result is a loss of information.⁹⁷ So it is that modernist representation can obstruct solving the problems modern civilization is likely to face.⁹⁸ The man stopping the tank can be a model of democratic dissent or an example of liberal hegemony, symbol of a new world order and a masking of its true cost.

As Norton has remarked, "Representation is not merely a form of governance, it is also the means we use to create ourselves in a new world order."⁹⁹ This iconic photo is one means for creating a global public culture that is a liberal-democratic culture. For most viewers of the photo, this will be a culture in which freedom is experienced primarily through retail consumption. As citizens develop into consumers, they can forget what it means to be citizens. To remember that, they can look to the iconic photo from Tiananmen Square, but they will need other images as well. The choice between the individual and the authoritarian state is an easy one, but either way you get the empty street.

8

RITUALIZING MODERNITY'S GAMBLE

THE HINDENBURG AND CHALLENGER EXPLOSIONS

Leopards break into the temple and drink to the dregs what is in the sacrificial pitchers; this is repeated over and over again; finally it can be calculated in advance, and it becomes a part of the ceremony.

Franz Kafka, "Leopards in the Temple"¹

Any society develops technologies that increase control over nature and thereby create new dependencies and more complex networks of contingency and chance. Modern societies achieve astonishing technological development, including the ability to fly, and a corresponding awareness of how easily the individual can be subject to forces beyond one's control. Likewise, the increasingly rational organization of large sectors of society carries with it greater awareness of the role of chance in determining individual outcomes; a market society pretends that this condition is a virtue. This paradoxical condition has to be managed, and it provides opportunities for manipulation.

both sides). The problem is compounded when it is associated with the distinction between verbal and visual media. Although such distinctions may apply at specific historical moments, and although much more could be said about the relationships between history and memory in public discourse, we hope our analysis demonstrates how iconic photographs can both have the aura of a *lieu de mémoire* and direct critical reflection. For discussion of the uses of "memory" in historiography, see Kerwin Lee Klein, "On the Emergence of *Memory* in Historical Discourse," *Representations* 69 (2000): 127-50.

CHAPTER SEVEN

- 1 Benjamin R. Barber, *Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 3.
- 2 Craig Calhoun, *Neither Gods nor Emperors: Students and the Struggle for Democracy in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Craig Dietrich, *People's China: a Brief History*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); George Black and Rogin Munro, *Black Hands of Beijing: Lives of Defiance in China's Democracy Movement* (New York: John Wiley, 1993); Chu-Yuan Cheng, *Behind the Tiananmen Massacre* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, Inc., 1990); Human Rights in China, *Children of the Dragon: The Story of Tiananmen Square* (New York: Macmillan, 1990); Tony Saich, *The Chinese People's Movement: Perspectives on Spring 1989* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1990); Associated Press, *China: From the Long March to Tiananmen Square* (New York: Henry Holt, 1990); Scott Simmie and Bob Nixon, *Tiananmen Square* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1989); Donald Morrison, ed., *Massacre in Beijing: China's Struggle for Democracy* (New York: Warner, 1989). Chronologies are available in Saich, *The Chinese People's Movement and Massacre in Beijing*.
- 3 See, e.g., *Time*, June 12, 1989, 27. Recent use includes the Virtual Museum of China '89, May 1989 (part 2), China News Digest International, <http://museums.cnd.org/China89/8905-2.html>; A Peaceful People Movement in Tian'anmen Square 1989, Silicon Valley for Democracy in China, <http://www.christusrex.org/www1/svdc/goddess.html>; Tiananmen Square Multimedia Exhibit, History Wiz, <http://www.historywiz.com/goddess.htm>; Melinda Liu, "The Goddess of Democracy," *Media Studies Journal* (winter 1999): 120-21. The statue's demolition is shown in *The Gate of Heavenly Peace*, directed by Carma Hinton and Richard Gordon, Long Bow Group, 1995.
- 4 Wu Hung reports on the students' decision to not make a literal reproduction of the American model, as had been done in Shanghai, in "Tiananmen Square: A Political History of Monuments," *Representations* 35 (1991): 110. Tsao Tsing-yuan provides a more detailed account of the statue's synthesis of several artistic models, in "The Birth of the Goddess of Democracy," in *Popular Protest and Political Culture in Modern China*, 2nd ed., ed. Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom and Elizabeth J. Perry (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994), 140-47. Thus, the goddess exemplifies one form of the art of rhetoric: skills of appropriation and adaptation, a sophisticated perspective on culture and nationality, and heteronomic modernity (albeit on a Western model).
- 5 This is not to deny the iconic status of the Goddess. (How could a goddess not be iconic?) The image clearly meets our four criteria for selection, not least in its range of appropriations. These include Web images, book covers, posters, figurines, stat-

- ues, an oil painting that then is used within an animated artwork, a T-shirt, and a pendant. There is a difference in degree between the two images, however: for most Western public media and audiences, the man before the tank is the dominant representation of the events in Tiananmen Square. We also believe it is the one that is used to mediate a wider range of issues, perhaps because it also mediates the deeper contradiction within U.S. public culture. A similar comparison can be made with the images of the Statue of Liberty and the firefighters at ground zero following September 11, 2001 (see chapter 4 above). In each case, the statue may be too straightforward a symbol to become a dominant icon. Or it might be antiquated: the statue is an obviously artistic medium, while photography, film, and video are thought to be transparent; it engages in figural representation, contrary to norms of abstraction and realism in modern arts; and it appeals to hope rather than cynicism.
- 6 It appeared initially on the front page of the *Los Angeles Times*, June 5, 1989. It can be seen online at "Tanks in Tiananmen Square," HistoryWiz, <http://www.historywiz.com/tiananmen-mm.htm>.
 - 7 It appeared in some newspapers on June 6 (e.g., *Indianapolis Star*, June 6, 1989, A4) and most prominently in *Newsweek*, June 19, 1989, 19. It can be seen online at Photo District News: Twentieth Anniversary, http://pdngallery.com/20years/photojournalism/04_charlie_cole.html. Cole's description of the photo is at BBC News, "Picture Power: Tiananmen Stand-off," <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/4313282.stm>.
 - 8 The photo is one from several rolls taken on June 5, 1989 by Stuart Franklin from the balcony of the Beijing hotel on Changan Boulevard overlooking the square. (Cole's photo also was taken from Franklin's balcony.) It appeared most prominently on the cover of *Time*, June 19, 1989 and as part of a two-page spread on the inside of the magazine (10-11). For a full-page color reproduction of this image, see Richard Lacayo and George Russell, *Eyewitness: 150 Years of Photojournalism*, 2nd ed. (New York: Time, 1995), 164. A slightly smaller cropping in black and white is widely available as a poster; it also appears on a T-shirt and a range of other media. An array of five shots from Franklin's roll that show the beginning, middle, and end of the confrontation is in Human Rights in China, *Children of the Dragon*, 189-93. Related images from the Stuart Franklin portfolio can be seen online at www.magnumphotos.com.
 - 9 For discussion of the man's identity, see David D. Perlmutter, *Photojournalism and Foreign Policy: Icons of Outrage in International Crises* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1998), 75-77. Like Perlmutter, we are skeptical of claims that the man is known to be "Wang Weilin" or any other specific individual. The man is often generically identified as a student, but it is more likely that he was a worker. "My dissident friends and I did our very best to find the man in the photo, but to no avail. . . . If he'd been a student, our networks would have found him." Report of an interview with Wang Dan. Robin, *Photos of the Century*, no. 88. Craig Calhoun identifies him as "a twenty-six-year-old printer" who "apparently was arrested several days later" (*Neither Gods nor Emperors*, 143); he provides no support for either claim. Because the man's actual cultural designation is not legible in the photo, his generic modern dress then keys the dominant frame of reference. On the role of black dress in the ascendancy of modernity, see John Harvey, *Men in Black* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995). We believe that a similar generalization might apply to the tanks: their only specific marking is the dull red star that is not unlike the red insignia on Soviet tanks or the dull blue and

- white star on U.S. tanks, and the Chinese T-59 is a variant on the Soviet T-55, which has been used as well by a number of other countries. Retrofit and gun conversion packages are available from the British companies Oceonics Vehicle Technology and Royal Ordnance Nottingham. See Christopher Foss, *Jane's Main Battle Tanks*, 2nd ed. (United Kingdom: Jane's Publishing Company, 1986), 11–14, 88–94, 163, 185–86. The iconic photo graces a technical display of tank technology at the Federation of American Scientists, Military Analysis Network, Type 80 Specifications, <http://www.fas.org/man/dod-101/sys/land/row/type-80.htm>.
- 10 Michael Dutton, ed., *Streetlife China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 17. Dutton specifies the symbol as one “of resistance to terror” that captures all that the West abhorred about Chinese Communism. We hope to demonstrate that, as some of our sources attest, a wider range of meanings is available. There is no doubt, however, that the image is valued because it “fits so nicely with the story we [Westerners] expect to see.” Richard Gordon, “One Act, Many Meanings,” *Media Studies Journal* (winter 1999): 82.
 - 11 Perlmutter, *Photojournalism and Foreign Policy*, 66–71.
 - 12 “Bush Halts Military Sales to China,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 5, 1989, 1 and “China Teeters on Edge of Civil War as Rival Forces Mobilize,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 6, 1989, 1; “A Drama within a Drama on the Streets of Beijing,” *New York Times*, June 6, 1989, 1; “China on the Brink of Civil War,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 6, 1989, 1; “Unrest Spreads Across China,” *Chicago Tribune*, June 6, 1989, 1, and Lewis M. Simons, “One Man’s Courage Faces Down a Row of Tanks,” *Chicago Tribune*, June 6, 1989, 4; “Tank Face-Off,” *Times-Picayune*, June 6, 1989, 1; “Measure of Defiance,” *Indianapolis Star*, June 6, 1989, A4; James Barron, “One Man Can Make a Difference: This One Jostled Briefly with Goliath,” *New York Times*, June 6, 1989, 15.
 - 13 “Revolt against Communism,” *Time*, June 19, 1989; “Reign of Terror,” *Newsweek*, June 19, 1989; “History through a Cloudy Lens,” *U.S. News and World Report*, June 19, 1989, 18–19.
 - 14 The photo is included in the following visual histories, among others: Lacayo and Russell, *Eyewitness: 150 Years of Photojournalism*, 164; Vicki Goldberg, *The Power of Photography: How Photographs Changed Our Lives* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1991), 251; *Great Images of the Twentieth Century: The Photographs That Define Our Times* (New York: Time Books, 1999), 16; Richard B. Stolley, ed., *Our Century in Pictures* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1999), 375, and *Our Century in Pictures for Young People* (Boston: Little, Brown, 2000), 203; Marie-Monique Robin, *The Photos of the Century: 100 Historic Moments* (Cologne: Evergreen, 1999), no. 88; Peter Stepan, *Photos That Changed the World* (Munich: Prestel, 2000), 162–63; *Time*, *Great Events of the 20th Century* (New York: Time, 1997), 52. It is used on many Web sites as the only or key visual representation of the protest: e.g., History Wiz, “Tiananmen Square,” Tiananmen, April–June 1989, Christus Rex et Redemptor Mundi <http://www.christusrex.org/www1/sdc/tiananmen.html>; Tiananmen Square Chinese Democracy Movement, 14th Anniversary, June 4 1989, <http://www.geocities.com/dreayedick/tian10.htm>; CNN.com, May 28, 1999, “The Lingering Legacy of Tiananmen Square,” <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/asiapcf/9905/28/tiananmen.legacy/>; and The Freedom Forum, May 26, 1999, “Nearly 10 years on, bloody crackdown at Tiananmen Square stirs vigorous debate,” <http://www.freedomforum.org/>. Other examples include the only image on the English-language main page of ChinaAffairs.Org, <http://www.chinaaffairs.org/english/index.html> (the

- words “freedom,” “democracy,” “human rights” flash above it, while below are the main links for shopping); and at least nine book covers: *Beijing Spring 1989*, *China at Forty*, *Song of Heaven* (which remediates John Haddock’s “Screenshots” rendition of the image, Isometric Screenshots for the 20th Century, <http://www.whitelead.com/jrh/screenshots/>), *Song of Tiananmen Square*, *Tiananmen Diary*, *Tiananmen Papers*, *Tiananmen 10 Years On*, 1989: *The Year the World Changed*, *Human Rights in World Politics*. It is used regularly as a visual caption for stories about protest and/or anniversaries of the event on the World Wide Web. It has been reproduced also as an illustration within a graph of the annual attendance at Tiananmen Square vigils. At Sinomania!, a government site, it is shown as one of three images that may be “the most famous images of China from the Twentieth Century and all three share a bleak and detached view. Pictures have power and the absence of positive high-impact images of China is one of the main reasons people today don’t understand China.” Fact about China: China and Chinese, http://www.sinomania.com/facts_about_china/china_is_land.html. (The main page to this site also offers a “perspective” on “Tiananmen 15 Years Later” that compares the clearing of the square with the U.S. Army’s destruction of the squatters’ camp of veterans outside of the U.S. Capitol on July 28, 1932—a comparison which we have never seen in the U.S. press—and with the Kent State killings that hyperlink to the John Filo image discussed in chapter 5. See <http://www.sinomania.com/CHINANEWS/tiananmen.htm>.) The photo also appears in varied vernacular sites, e.g., as the first image of a visual/verbal poem by Johnny Hughes, “Tiananmen Square,” 1999–2000, http://www.johnnyhughes.com/tiananmen_square.htm.
- 15 Perlmutter, *Photojournalism and Foreign Policy*, 66; Gordon, “One Act, Many Meanings,” 82.
 - 16 *Time*, “The Unknown Rebel,” April 13, 1998, at <http://www.time.com/time/time100/leaders/profile/rebel.html>. For related hyperbole, the image was used to mark one of the top hundred greatest events of the century, and one of three from the 1980s, at Countdown: Greatest Achievements of the 20th Century, TLC/Discovery.com.
 - 17 Hung, “Tiananmen Square,” 104.
 - 18 *Time* magazine coverage reflects this shift. The monument is featured in their first cover story on the demonstrations in the square (May 29, 1989, 37), the Goddess appears in the June 12th issue (27), and the tank photograph is on the cover and as a two-page spread beginning the cover story of the June 19 issue (10–11).
 - 19 Jon Simons, correspondence with the authors, Dec. 10, 2001.
 - 20 Commentators occasionally compare the image to other scenes of democratic revolution. “It is a sister image to the famous photograph of the suppression of the Prague Spring (see page 120), albeit more distanced and less emotional.” Stepan, *Photos That Changed the World*, 162.
 - 21 The quoted text is from the narration in *The Gate of Heavenly Peace*. The transcript is available at “The Film,” <http://tsquare.tv/film/transcript01.html>. It also is used in Gordon, “One Act, Many Meanings,” 83. The emphasis on the individual assertion of liberty is evident in many appropriations of the image: see, for example, the billboard by the Foundation for a Better Life, “Sometimes it’s a lone voice,” <http://www.forbetterlife.org/main.asp?section=billboards&language=eng>. See also the prominence given the photo at the Liberty Tree, where it is available on the main page and as a poster, <http://www.liberty-tree.org/ltn/tiananmen-square.html>. “Our ‘politics,’

such as they are, are in the classical liberal tradition of John Locke, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and Edmund Burke. We believe in maximizing personal and economic liberties and minimizing the power of the state.”

- 22 Note Stuart Franklin’s comment that “It really isn’t a great picture, because I was much too far away.” Robin, *Photos of the Century*, n.p. The pertinent norm of photojournalism, especially in respect to war or revolution, is that the photographer should be in the middle of the action, a virtual participant, in contrast to the distant or posed compositions of most other professional photography. See Susan D. Moeller, *Shooting War: Photography and the American Combat Experience* (New York: Basic Books, 1989), 9. Perlmutter notes the unusual distance for the Tiananmen icon and concludes that “no icon is immaculately conceived” (*Photojournalism and Foreign Policy*, 80). We also should mention that Franklin’s comment displaces another criterion for good photojournalism, which is that the image should be somewhat implausible. See Howard Chapnik, foreword, in Marianne Fulton, *Eyes of Time: Photojournalism in America*, International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House (Boston: Little, Brown, 1988), x–xii. The Tiananmen shot is doubly so: first, the man stands in front of the tank and the tank does not crush him; second, he steps out of private life to perform a heroic act on behalf of the people.
- 23 It also is consistent with the conventions of newspaper design. The authoritative history of the subject charts transformation of the twentieth-century newspaper through successive stages of design to culminate in the “late modern” phase of the 1980s and 1990s characterized by an “aesthetic of modernism.” Kevin G. Barnhurst and John Nerone, *The Form of News: A History* (New York: Guilford, 2001). See also Kevin G. Barnhurst, *Seeing the Newspaper* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1994), 174 ff.
- 24 James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 79.
- 25 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1979).
- 26 Robert Hariman, *Political Style: The Artistry of Power* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 36.
- 27 Hariman, *Political Style*, 36.
- 28 Note also that the video version of the incident shown in *The Gate of Heavenly Peace* reveals a more complicated political scenario: while the close-in shot leaves a larger, visual field outside the frame, the tank attempts to maneuver around the man, who dodges back and forth to stay in front of it, and then clambers on board to talk to the crew through a viewing slit. All this activity appears ad hoc, aesthetically ragged, perhaps impulsive. In this view, historical action is a matter of micropolitical interactions that develop through improvisation and talk among people whose perspectives are likely to reflect their standpoints within the event. Likewise, opinions and actions can be changed by speaking with other citizens. Note also the corresponding shifts in role: instead of the individual opposed to the state, there is a worker talking with a soldier who is a fellow citizen. Instead of forcing a confrontation, the worker is trying to engage the soldier in political dialogue, which had been a strategy of the reform movement. Such alternative narratives are lost to the suppression of speech characteristic of realist doctrine and modernist design.
- 29 Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen, *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 186–202.

- 30 Scholars in international relations are accustomed to seeing realism and liberalism defined as opposing theories of world politics. From that perspective, the analysis in this paper then will appear confused or ignorant. To avoid this misunderstanding, it is important to specify the level of analysis: We are not making claims about theoretical arguments in the social sciences. We are examining one instance of how realism and liberalism function as political discourses within public media. When political ideas operate in the “real world” of political actors speaking among themselves and before others to persuade, manipulate, rationalize, and otherwise use speech and other symbolic forms as modes of action, they typically use varied and often seemingly contradictory appeals. They do so because they have to address multiple audiences, represent multiple constituencies, provide flexible responses to contingent events, and so forth. Moreover, these potential contradictions often are managed through incorporation into encompassing norms of representation. So it is that liberalism and realism can be conjoined within a common modernism. We also think that this perspective raises interesting questions about the conduct of international relations theory, such as whether that theory can be so neatly separated from the discourses of world politics, and whether liberalism and realism have more similarities than differences as theoretical projects. There is no doubt that theoretical explanation can provide insight into the operation and failures of political discourse; we believe that the reverse also holds. See also Francis A. Beer and Robert Hariman, eds., *Post-Realism: The Rhetorical Turn in International Relations* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1996).
- 31 Criticisms of modernist aesthetics now are legion. In part due to our emphasis on the conventions of modernist visual art, we have been influenced most directly by Scott and by Charles Jencks, *What Is Postmodernism?* 4th ed. (London: Academy Editions, 1996), and *Late-Modern Architecture and Other Essays* (New York: Rizzoli, 1980). See also Brian Wallis, ed., *Art after Modernism: Rethinking Representation* (New York: New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1984).
- 32 It should be made clear that we are referring to a particular articulation of cultural modernism and not to every painting, sculpture, design, or manifesto bearing the name. Modernism has included powerful critiques of modernity itself, not least through its development of the avant-garde, and one also should acknowledge the Frankfurt school argument that modern art provided a critical moment within modernity precisely because that art was abstract. Fair enough, but these counter-movements pertain far more to high culture than they do to mainstream dissemination of modernism through the design professions and the mass media. The difference becomes more acute as one historicizes: the avant-garde is dead, abstraction’s critical function has been neutralized by ubiquity, while late-modern design acquires expanded influence as a political aesthetic when coupled with processes of globalization. The difference is particularly evident in the iconic photo in question: Whatever else modernist aesthetics can do—including the deep explorations of individual subjectivity that have been produced—those variants are not in the picture. There is not one modernism, but the various articulations are not equally manifest in any one case or in the media generally. Using high modernist design to represent citizenship in the news media makes some actions more intelligible and others less so; we attempt to show how that is so.
- 33 Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 4.

- 34 The coverage in *Newsweek* is illustrative. The June 12th cover screams “Bloodbath,” and the June 19th cover declares a “Reign of Terror.” Both covers and the other photos accompanying the story document the carnage in vivid, emotionally powerful images. The tank photo is captioned, “A single student standing in front of a tank: Among the indelible images of the upheaval in Tiananmen, a lone demonstrator blocks an armored column on Changan Avenue.” It is the last visual record of the confrontation in the streets and followed by portraits of establishment leaders and military police. By contrast with prior images, it is dispassionate, measured, and orderly. This reduction also functions as a transition within the magazine’s visual narrative from past to present, from popular protest to official power, from domestic upheaval to global actors.
- 35 This modernism is also evident in the photo’s conformity with the most basic sense of journalistic objectivity: it is a balanced presentation of two sides of a conflict. This norm, which is at the center of the professional standards of print journalism and the standard practice of the mainstream press, is much easier to follow in print than through action photography. Like legibility, it is a norm created by the institutionalization of writing. By contrast, most photos are not balanced portrayals of an event, which is why they can function so well as arguments. Once objectivity is parsed into a range of articulations from myth to one criterion among many, it becomes less of a concern. Critique of its overemphasis includes David T. Z. Mindich, *Just the Facts: How “Objectivity” Came to Define American Journalism* (New York: New York University Press, 1998). On the relationship between writing and norms of rationality and objectivity, see Jack Goody, *The Logic of Writing and the Organization of Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).
- 36 Kress and van Leeuwen, *Reading Images*, 165–71.
- 37 “Courage on the Avenue of Eternal Peace,” by Michael C. O’Neal. It is showcased at Freed Ads, <http://www.freedomads.org/live/entries.php?id=75>. Reproductions include “Freedom Hero: Tiananmen Square,” by Pat Keeton and Jeanne Meyers, <http://www.myhero.com/myhero/hero.asp?hero=tiananmenSquare>. Interestingly, both sites mistakenly identify the poster with the international human rights organization Amnesty International.
- 38 O’Neal’s wife Patricia remarks, “When I asked him why he did it this way, he replied, ‘When I saw the man stand before the tanks during the Tiananmen Square incident, I was moved to honor his bravery. The famous photographs we’ve all seen blinded me for years as to how to approach this subject. Then it came to me, put the viewer at street level, down there were [sic] the tanks were. This perspective allowed me to suggest the abusive power and danger of the government while being juxtaposed against the heroic scale of what this man did that June day on the Avenue of Eternal Peace.’” Tiananmen Square Demonstrations and Massacre Forum, <http://pub5.bravenet.com/forum/395236120/fetch/69690/>. Confirmed by Mr. O’Neal in correspondence with the authors.
- 39 Kress and van Leeuwen, *Reading Images*, 146.
- 40 Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, *Student Protests in Twentieth-Century China: The View from Shanghai* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 5. See also Esherick and Wasserstrom, “Acting out Democracy: Political Theatre in Modern China,” in *Popular Protest and Political Culture in Modern China*, 32–69.

- 41 The point is accented by a photograph of hundreds of “[protestors] facing lines of troops backed up by tanks at an entrance to Tiananmen Square” that appears in the *New York Times* on June 6, 1989, A14, the same day that the tank photograph was on the front page. Here we have an image of a “democratic” revolution, but of course this photo fades from memory and the public eye. As far as we know it has never been reprinted.
- 42 The concept of a political scenario comes from Lance Bennett, *The Political Mind and the Political Environment* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1975), 51–78, and also “Political Scenarios and the Nature of Politics,” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 8 (1975): 23–42. Barbara Koziak relies on the concept, although not Bennett’s formulation, in *Retrieving Political Emotion: Thumos, Aristotle, and Gender* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 3. Bennett demonstrates how political judgment can depend on a paradigmatic scene constituting a worldview, while Koziak takes the analysis beyond Bennett’s cognitive orientation. We discuss Koziak’s model briefly in chapter 5. In both cases, an important point is that people don’t act on the basis of information but rather on the basis of models of political action. These models are vernacular forms of political theory that simplify, generalize, and otherwise serve as machines for sifting information. Successful models are those that can manage complexity and minimize conflict on behalf of a particular interest, which they do in part by foreclosing on recognition of alternatives. We emphasize how photographs can alternately project or challenge particular scenarios.
- 43 Likewise, “The ‘place’ of citizenship is abstracted from the physical forum of collective action and relocated into the individual bodies of private persons. The ‘place’ of democracy, conversely, is abstracted from those same bodies and delegated to representative government and bureaucracy located elsewhere.” John Hartley, *The Politics of Pictures: The Creation of the Public in the Age of Popular Media* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 41. Hartley sees a common transformation being wrought through modernist architecture and modern media.
- 44 Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 32.
- 45 What drops out of this transformation is the recognition of any translation problem between the Western idea of human rights and Chinese political culture. See Xia Yong, “Human Rights and Chinese Tradition,” in *Streetlife China*, 23–41. But too much can be made of these differences, and we don’t want to disregard the image’s inspirational value. “Mickey Spiegel, a China specialist at Human Rights Watch in New York City . . . has hung the photograph in every office she has occupied since 1989.” Dana Clavo, “Indelible Images: Profile in Courage,” *Smithsonian*, Jan. 2004, 18.
- 46 Le Corbusier, “Towards a New Architecture,” trans. Fredrick Etchells, <http://www.cis.vt.edu/modernworld/d/LeCorb.html>. Le Corbusier uses both terms ambiguously: “architecture” refers to both the outmoded styles of the past and to the new designs for the modern age; “revolution” refers to both modern architecture’s radical break with the past and to the social unrest created by a mismatch between industrialization and a lack of modernist social engineering. By the end of the article, “architecture” has become modern architecture, and “revolution” the masses taking historical change into their own hands to create a “catastrophe.” Note also that Bauhaus slogan, “Art and Technology—A New Unity” applies directly to photography as the preferred medium for modernist representation of the social order.

- 47 Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 256.
- 48 Walter Benjamin glimpsed the relationship in his discussion of photographing works of art. “In the final effect, the mechanical methods of reproduction are a technology of miniaturization and help man to a degree of mastery over the works without which they no longer are useful.” “A Short History of Photography,” in *Classic Essays on Photography*, ed. Alan Trachtenberg (New Haven, CT: Leete’s Island Books, 1980), 212.
- 49 Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 258.
- 50 *The Gate of Heavenly Peace*. The Web site maintained by the Long Bow Group on the film summarizes and provides some references regarding discussion of the film, as well as additional information and links regarding the protest and government actions, <http://tsquare.tv/>.
- 51 The film’s use of the photo is further evidence of its iconic status: it is used to orient the Western viewer to the historical event—“a moment that would come to symbolize the hope and the tragedy of those spring days”—and its appropriation in other media is highlighted. *The Gate of Heavenly Peace—Transcript*. Another example of this “titular” function is provided by the Vanderbilt Television News Archives, which uses the video clip of the confrontation in the introduction to its tapes while newscaster Dan Rather intones that pictures are the essence of the news.
- 52 This focus on the young masculine body may be a convention of liberal depictions of Chinese democracy. Note, for example, the cover and concluding images in *Children of the Dragon*. First, three young men, two of them bare-chested, and then one, bare-chested and holding up both arms, fists clenched, in a gesture of masculine strength and triumph as he stands on a high railing. (He is supported by another man, although one who is not recognizable in part due to the clothing that is billowing out away from the higher man’s torso; both are wearing black in the black and white photo.) There is another reduction as well: from the red flag and Chinese ideograms displayed in the first photo, to one whose culture, like his shirt, has been cast aside to be blown away from him by the winds of change.
- 53 *The Gate of Heavenly Peace—Transcript*.
- 54 Contrast this deflection of public mourning with Hung’s observation that a vital, grassroots, dissident public emerged in Beijing in 1976 through the experience of grieving together over the death of Zhou Enlai (“Tiananmen Square,” 102–4). The public may have required rational-critical debate (occurring in private settings), but it emerged from public mourning mediated by visual arts (the monument in the square, the wreaths and banners placed there, etc.). Such “sentimental” acts may be far more important to democratic life than is acknowledged; if so, their suppression within modernist schemes of representation is incipiently antidemocratic.
- 55 Associated Press, *China: From the Long March to Tiananmen Square*.
- 56 Tiananmen Square 1989, New York Times on the Web, Feb. 14, 2006, <http://www.nytimes.com/library/world/asia/tsquare-china-index-pix.1.html>. The picture of the couple standing beneath the bridge appears in a number of places, including the *New York Times*, June 6, 1989, A16, above two screen shots from the ABC News, one of the lone individual climbing on top of the tank in Tiananmen Square to talk with the driver, and the other of a group of observers shuttling the man off to safety.
- 57 Anne Norton, *Republic of Signs: Liberal Theory and American Popular Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 1.

- 58 Kenneth Burke, *A Grammar of Motives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), xv–xxiii.
- 59 Hung, “A Political History of Monuments,” 90. These squares were very much under the control of the dominant authorities, yet also open to both “official” and “vernacular” articulations. See John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992). Hung’s article provides a companion piece of sorts to ours. He identifies how “the Square has been and will continue to be a prime visual means of political rhetoric in modern China to address the public and actually to constitute the public itself” (85), and he emphasizes how public emotionality was essential to the emergence of the democracy movement within that space. We identify how a visual image taken to represent the political conflict in the square has become a means for constituting a global public controlled by the absence of emotional display. See also Calhoun, *Neither Gods nor Emperors*, 188; Jonathan Spence, “The Gate and the Square,” in *Human Rights in China, Children of the Dragon*, 16–37.
- 60 China scholars have yet to reach a consensus regarding the existence, nature, and extent of a public culture in China. Discussion of these questions includes the symposium “Public Sphere”/“Civil Society” in China?” in *Modern China* 19 (1993), and Wang Hui and Leo Ou-fan Lee with Michael J. Fischer, “Is the Public Sphere Unspeakable in Chinese? Can Public Spaces (gonggong kongjian) Lead to Public Spheres?” *Public Culture* 6 (1994): 597–605. We believe the problem goes beyond differences between East and West. First, it is difficult to observe Habermas’s model in China because it never has existed anywhere strictly on its own terms. Public cultures in the West have developed through and been modulated by oral and visual media, social networks, emotional habits, and other elements of civic association that Habermas doesn’t recognize or value. From our perspective, the question to be asked is whether any particular image or text communicates resources that might actually be important for the emergence or development of public media, public opinion, public accountability, public interests, and the like. Where high modernist norms and liberal preoccupations dominate, the prospects are slim.
- 61 Catherine A. Lutz and Jane L. Collins, *Reading National Geographic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 125. Other comparisons with the magazine’s imperial logic also apply: for example, minimizing the man’s Chinese identity aligns him with Americans who see themselves “as no longer in possession of a culture but as holding on to history through their scientific advancements and their power to influence the evolutionary advance of other peoples to democracy and market economies” (108). *Time* claims the same: “The protesters got around official restrictions by communicating with friends abroad via fax; they followed their own progress—unrecorded on Chinese TV—by watching themselves on foreigners’ satellite sets in the Beijing Hotel; and in subsequent years they have used the Internet—and their Western training—to claim and disseminate an economic freedom they could not get politically.” Iyer, “The Unknown Rebel.”
- 62 This interpretation follows Norton’s argument in *Republic of Signs* that liberalism has both enacted itself and reached a limit condition in consumer consumption. Note also Iyer’s description in “The Unknown Rebel”: “A small, unexceptional figure in slacks and white shirt, carrying what looks to be his shopping.” It seems that style is the man, and his style is that of the ordinary consumer.

- 63 Bruce Plante for the *Chattanooga Times*, reprinted in the *Washington Post National Weekly Edition*, June 5, 2000.
- 64 Ann Telnaes, National/Syndicated, Dec. 2, 1999, at cagle.slate.msn.com/news/WTO/wto13.asp. This emphasis on global capitalism is also evident in a Lurie cartoon that has an “unemployed American” standing before a row of tanks whose gun barrels are dollar signs; the tanks are labeled “US Jobs Going Abroad.” *Washington Post National Weekly Edition*, Feb. 9–15, 2004, 27. The substitution of the United States for China keys a Fritz Behrendt cartoon for the *De Telegraaf* of Amsterdam, Netherlands: Hans Blix of the United Nations stands in front of the tank, which has US on the side and Bush looking out of the turret. Blix’s briefcase is on the ground as he leans against the tank, straining futilely to stop the juggernaut of U.S. foreign policy. See also the Bruce MacKinnon cartoon of February 26, 2003, which places a dove of peace on the road before a tank that has “W” (for George W. Bush) on the turret, <http://zone.artizans.com/images/previews/MAC703.pvw.jpg>. Other examples include at least two (depending on the extent of the allusion) cartoons by Nick Anderson that place Bush in the tank, as well as two by Signe Wilkinson that have the U.S. tank looming ominously over an Iraqi child and a father and child. Archived at <http://www.cartoonistgroup.com/>.
- 65 Another example is provided by a Canadian cartoon of a kid with punk hair holding a squeegee and a bucket for washing car windows and standing before a tank commanded by a smiling Mike Harris, the prime minister of Ontario. Bado, *Journal LeDroit*, Ottawa, Canada, May 27, 1999, Artizans, <http://zone.artizans.com/product.htm?pid=235>. The issue was the banning of squeegees from the streets of the province. The tank may appear American to some viewers, as Harris has been raked for “Americanization” of the province. “The Revolution is over! Ontario is now just another American State, and The Premier just another U.S. Governor.” Harrisicide 2001, The Americanization of Ontario, <http://members.tripod.com/harrisicide/harrisicide.htm>.
- 66 Our language here draws directly on Michael J. Sandel, “The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self,” *Political Theory* 12 (1984): 81–96, and *Democracy’s Discontent: America in Search of a Public Philosophy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996). Sandel provides succinct statement of the problem we are addressing: “The global media and markets that shape our lives beckon us to a world beyond boundaries and belonging. But the civic resources we need to master these forces, or at least to contend with them, are still to be found in the places and stories, memories and meanings, incidents and identities, that situate us in the world and give our lives their moral particularity” (349).
- 67 Geremie R. Barmé, *In the Red: On Contemporary Chinese Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), xiv. Stated otherwise, liberalism can develop along more than one track. As Lauren Berlant has argued, one alternative is an “infantile” citizenship in a privatized public sphere that was normalized in the United States during the Reagan-Bush era. *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997).
- 68 Strobe Talbott, “Defiance,” *Time*, June 19, 1989, 10.
- 69 The May 29 cover proclaims “China in Turmoil,” with a picture of a student shouting (or singing or speaking loudly) as a representative figure of democratic protest. *Time* couples the story with an overblown report of how the demonstration complicated

- Gorbachev’s scheduled meeting with the regime. As the events develop, *Time* relies more and more on a Cold War narrative of the Communist bloc contending with the values of the West. The June 5 cover proclaims “People Power” and then “Beijing: Defying Dictatorship” and “Moscow: Demanding Democracy” positioned below on each side of a star, out of which a Chinese and Russian demonstrator each thrusts an arm. The story within is that “Two giants of Communism witness a surge of people power” (2). The June 12 cover screams “Massacre in Beijing” over a bloody street scene, but the story is linked with reports on debates over and within the Soviet Union. The narrative peaks with the cover of June 19. By June 26, the story is receding: Kevin Costner (“Smart, Sexy, and on a Roll”) is on the cover, which also announces “China’s Big Lie.” The “Orwellian” (2) label is both accurate and a perfect final touch. The events have been contained within the narrative and familiar roles have been restored on both sides of the East-West divide.
- 70 *Time*, June 19, 1989, 2.
- 71 *Ibid.*, 12.
- 72 See Stepan, *Photos That Changed the World*, 162. The Goddess of Democracy also fits the narrative, particularly the photograph of the statue facing the large picture of Mao in the Square. *Time* apparently didn’t have that shot, as it had used a different one on June 12, 1989 (29). That confrontation with Mao is on the cover of *China: From the Long March to Tiananmen Square*.
- 73 This is an odd list that may appear to be merely an attempt to aggregate different audiences, but there is a logic to it. Sun Yat-sen is the only pre-Communist Chinese reformer well-known in the West, and Churchill is the most famous non-American political leader of a democracy. Einstein is a common reference for modern science and photographs of his face have been widely reproduced in U.S. media. James Joyce is a representative figure of literary modernism—at least for those who frequent chain bookstores. This pantheon of great men exemplifies the political, scientific, and cultural achievements characterizing modernity as a transnational process of global transformation.
- 74 See O’Neal’s poster and also the poster for the Global Petition Campaign for the 10th Anniversary of June 4 Tiananmen (the text alternates in English and ideograms) at Tiananmen Square Chinese Democracy Movement 14th Anniversary—June 4 1989, <http://www.geocities.com/dredehyedick/tian10.htm>. See also the photo on the main page of Free Tibet for Democracy in China, <http://www.grafixnpix.com/buddha.htm>. See also Ann Telnaes’s cartoon that has the man holding up a sign that says, “Keep Hong Kong Free” before a tank that says “You can trust us.” *Washington Post National Weekly Edition*, July 21–27, 2003, 15.
- 75 Patrick Chappatte, *Tribune de Genève* [Geneva, Switzerland], 1993. See also a later cartoon by the same artist that was published in *L’Hebdo* [Lausanne, Switzerland], Feb. 1997. Chappatte mutates the tank into a wheelchair with treads, driven by an aged Deng. The demonstrator is gone, but the viewer is positioned in his place. The tank still symbolizes the Chinese state, which will not be toppled by popular movements but may succumb to the ills of gerontocracy. Both cartoons are archived at Globe Cartoon, China in Editorial Cartoons, Part 1: Deng’s Legacy, <http://www.globe-cartoon.com/china/timeline.html>.
- 76 Patrick Chappatte, *Le Temps*, July 2001, <http://www.globecartoon.com/china/timeline2.html>. There are actually two versions of the cartoon, one of which adds

- "Candidate City" under "Beijing 2008"; this version is cataloged at <http://www.cagle.com/politicalcartoons/pccartoons/archives/chappatte.asp?Action=GetImage>. More interesting is the additional caption that is supplied at the [globecartoon.com](http://www.globecartoon.com) digital gallery of the artist's China cartoons: "And the winner is . . . *Human Rights?* Beijing gets the 2008 Olympics." Obviously, the iconic template can be interpreted in regard to both national self-determination and individual autonomy.
- 77 The jaded recognition that the image represents a courage that is no longer plausible is evident in another, highly sophisticated appropriation. On an episode of the television show *ER* a disgruntled patient commandeers a tank and is in the process of driving it through Chicago to the hospital to blow up one of the doctors. At one point the targeted doctor is somewhat nervous and suggests to the hospital administrator that maybe it would be best if he were to leave for the day. The administrator says: "Yeah, good idea. Why don't you go out on Lake Shore Drive and play Tiananmen Square." *ER*, "Forgive and Forget," season 10, episode 176016, NBC network, Feb. 26, 2004. The icon remains an image of courage, but not one that a sane person would imitate, and liberals don't display courage except by staying at their jobs.
- 78 Don Wright, *Palm Beach Post*, reprinted in the *Washington Post National Weekly Edition*, July 30–Aug. 12, 2001, 28.
- 79 Cartoon by Ken Hamidi, Face Intel, <http://www.faceintel.com>. The label is a play on the advertising slogan, "Intel Inside." Note also how the illustration shifts the point of view to enhance the viewer's sense of danger.
- 80 Others use the tank icon to similar effect. These include a digital poster with the word INFOWAR stamped across it in red. See *The Concordat in the Info War*, <http://www.nada.kth.se/~asa/InfoWar/infowar.html>.
- 81 "This cartoon was my idea when I was campaigning against Intel, while my case was going through Supreme Court of California. Probably you are familiar with *Intel v. Hamidi*. They stopped me from sending informational, educational, and supportive e-mails to 35,000 Intel employees. Obviously I borrowed the theme from the man stopping the tank in Tiananmen Square. My idea was to show that Intel in US is acting as a dictator as Chinese government was doing in China. Cartoon was very effective and clearly conveyed the message of tyranny and oppression to readers." Ken Hamidi, correspondence with the authors, Feb. 12, 2006. Face Intel maintains an archive of articles on the case. On refeudalization, see Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989), 142.
- 82 Lev Grossman and Hannah Beech, "Google Under the Gun," *Time*, February 13, 53–54.
- 83 "One Search Subject, Two Results: Tiananmen Square," multimedia display for Joseph Kahn, "So Long, Dalai Lama: Google Adapts to China," *New York Times*, Feb. 12, 2006, <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/12/weekinreview/12kahn.html?ex=1141448400&en=6c657b6e5e547f2c&ei=5070>.
- 84 AllPosters.com, Americana, American Moments, http://www.allposters.com/-st/American-Moments-Posters_c958_s6600_.htm.
- 85 Video lead-in to the halftime show, 2004 Super Bowl, CBS network, Feb. 1, 2004.
- 86 Such parodies using Photoshop include a school crossing guard, traffic cop, basketball game, and a large rabbit and large cat each in place of the tank. In another animated cartoon, the man is replaced with a popular singer wailing at her microphone. Popular music has become one of the most pervasive modes for defining private

- life—it is a key variable used by colleges in matching dormitory roommates—and the substitution is a logical extension of the man's stand for personal liberty. On the other hand, the photo is part of a spoof that shows "a hate figure doing something nice"; the joke comes from the very low probability that the singer would put her life on the line for the common people. Challenge: Hate Figures Doing Nice Things, <http://www.b3ta.com/challenge>. See also the ubiquitous "Tourist of Death," Image Gallery, File 576 at <http://www.touristofdeath.com/>. Once again, the presence of an ordinary guy cuts the iconic aura down to size by aggressively reasserting the context of private life as it is constituted by snapshot photography. Even that can be flipped, however: On the August 4, 2004, *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, during a discussion of escalating oil prices, "Tiananmen Square guy" was shown standing up to a large SUV. As the tank becomes a symbol of excessive consumption directed by large corporations, the little guy again represents progressive advocacy. But, as in Telnaes's cartoon about the World Trade Organization protest in Seattle, such advocacy is essentially hapless. Perhaps this is why *Daily Show* writers continue to sport with the icon. In *America (the Book)*, for example, they cast the image alongside Mao Zedong, NBA basketball star Yao Ming, and actors Jackie Chan and Chow Yun Fat as "Chinese People Familiar to Average Americans"; on the following page they spoof the man as an "OCD sufferer who only felt comfortable standing in front of large objects." *America (the Book): A Citizen's Guide to Democracy Inaction* (New York: Warner Books, 2004), 190, 192.
- 87 Cheesy Movies: Tiananmen Square Man, <http://www2.eis.net.au/~nujak83/tia.htm> (no longer available online).
- 88 Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 309–41, and Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Randall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).
- 89 Dutton, *Streetlife China*, 6–7.
- 90 *The Simpsons*, "Brother's Little Helper," written by George Meyer and directed by Mark Kirkland, production code AABF22, original airdate on FOX: 3-Oct-1999.
- 91 There are other examples of this more democratic inflection. An editorial cartoon by Mike Luckovich replaced the man with antiwar protestor Cindy Sheehan, who at the time was leading a vigil outside Bush's ranch during his summer vacation. The lead tank was labeled "Bush & Co." *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, Aug. 14, 2005.
- 92 "McDonald's Supports U.S. Industry," *Cattle Buyers Weekly*, June 17, 2002.
- 93 The ad was designed by the Richards Group (Dallas, Texas). Account executive Katie Goodell states, "We actually referred to the spot as 'Tianamen Square' in the agency as it was being conceptualized" (personal communication with the authors, Jan. 28, 2003). It has been shown subsequently, including at least the 2005 Peach Bowl. Note that the ad's scrupulous attention to iconic detail does not extend as far as the cow, which is a dairy cow and so in no danger of being used for burgers. Presumably a Texas ad agency would know that, and also know that their ads have to rely on commonplaces rather than literal accuracy. By contrast, it is important that the original line of sight has been reproduced faithfully. Unlike those illustrations that shifted the viewer into a stance of participation and endangerment, the ad restores a sense of distance between spectator and political action. That distance serves the comic inflection essential to the ad's success, while habituating consumers to being above the scene of political conflict.
- 94 Eat Mor Chikin and the Chick-fil-A Cow are registered trademarks of CFA Properties, Inc.

- 95 By contrast, Chinese political advocacy continues as a story of collective protest and largely unreported military crackdowns. “Police statistics show the number of public protests reached nearly 60,000 in 2003, an increase of nearly 15 percent from 2002 and eight times the number a decade ago. Martial law and paramilitary troops are commonly needed to restore order when the police lose control.” Joseph Kahn, “China’s ‘Haves’ Stir the ‘Have Nots’ to Violence,” *New York Times*, Dec. 31, 2004, A1. Occasional coverage in U.S. media reveals that “restoring order” includes killing and, notably, also removing the “banners by the people” from village squares. More positively, in at least one incident, “China Admits ‘Wrong Action’ in Fatal Protest,” *Chicago Tribune*, Dec. 12, 2005, 4.
- 96 See also Calhoun, *Neither Gods nor Heroes*, 189–90.
- 97 The combination of strong liberalism and weak democracy could result in a global order increasingly less capable of recognizing and learning from the cultures it manages. As Scott has demonstrated, this loss of practical knowledge and adaptive skills can easily lead to extreme degradation of human and natural environments and ultimately to catastrophic collapse of the system. To prevent such outcomes, states and other organizations may need emotional and social resources that can be provided only in local cultures and that are not likely to be legible in modernist representation. More generally, democratic deliberation of any kind requires that citizens have models of civic relationships such as between speaker and audience or between citizens speaking together in a condition of equality, and pertinent political scenarios such as the scenes of public mourning or collective protest. Obviously, the tank photo provides a powerful model of confrontation and courage, yet it also displaces precisely those features that defined the Tiananmen protest as a democratic movement.
- 98 John Gray makes a similar claim about liberalism: “As the political theory of modernity, liberalism is ill-equipped to address the dilemmas of the postmodern period.” He adds, significantly, that “the liberal problem—which is that of specifying terms of peaceful coexistence among exponents of rival, and perhaps rationally incommensurable, world-views—is no less pressing than in early modern times.” *Liberalism*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 85. For the claim that the twenty-first century will increasingly be defined by a new class of political problems, see James A. Marone, *The Democratic Wish: Popular Participation and the Limits of American Government*, rev. ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); and F. R. Ankersmit, *Aesthetic Politics: Political Philosophy beyond Fact and Value* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996). Such problems can be defined by their high degree of complexity, low correspondence with established interest groups, and embeddedness in modern civilization; examples include resource depletion, culture depletion, and obsolescence of the human species.
- 99 Norton, *Republic of Signs*, 3.

CHAPTER EIGHT

- 1 Franz Kafka, “Leopards in the Temple,” *Parables and Paradoxes*, in *German and English* (New York: Schocken Books, 1958), 93.
- 2 There is an extensive literature devoted to the problematic of modern risk. See Mary Douglas and Aaron Wildavsky, *Risk and Culture: An Essay on the Selection of Technologi-*

- cal and Environmental Dangers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983); James Reason, *Human Error* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), *Managing the Risks of Organizational Accidents* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997); Charles Perrow, *Normal Accidents: Living with High-Risk Technologies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Cass Sunstein, *Risk and Reason: Safety, Law, and the Environment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Lee Clarke, *Worst Cases: Terror and Catastrophe in the Popular Imagination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006). See also Diane Vaughan, *The Challenger Launch Decision: Risky Technology, Culture, and Deviance at NASA* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).
- 3 R. Paine, “Danger and the No-Risk Thesis,” in *Catastrophe and Culture: The Anthropology of Disaster*, ed. M. Hoffman and A. Oliver-Smith (Sante Fe: School of American Research Press, 2002), 67–90.
- 4 As Michael Warner has refined that idea, “Disaster is popular because it is a way of making mass subjectivity available” and managing the anxieties about disembodied self-abstraction necessary for the liberal public sphere. “The Mass Public and the Mass Subject,” in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 377–401, especially 392–394. Frankly, we think the mass subject thesis only goes so far. For a counterpoint that still avoids romanticizing the public, one can look to Paul Virilio’s “accident museum.” In place of the carefully controlled “aesthetics of appearance” used to display scientific progress, Virilio celebrates the disaster’s exposure of the “unusual and yet inevitable” that is usually hidden by modern conventions of representation. The *Challenger* explosion is his central example. “The Accident Museum,” in Paul Virilio, *A Landscape of Events*, trans. Julie Rose (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000), 54–60. Virilio’s distinction between “normal” representation of technologies and disaster coverage is supported by Eleanor Singer and Phyllis M. Endreny, *Reporting on Risk: How the Mass Media Portray Accidents, Diseases, Disasters, and Other Hazards* (New York: Sage, 1993): “None of the stories about the space shuttle in our sample mentioned the possibility of harm to the crew. The shuttle was not defined by the media as entailing risk in 1984, prior to the *Challenger* explosion” (49). After the explosion, “this practice underwent significant change” (160).
- 5 Ann Larabee, *Decade of Disaster* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2000); Susanna M. Hoffman, “The Monster and the Mother: The Symbolism of Disaster,” in *Catastrophe and Culture*, 113–42; James R. Chiles, *Inviting Disaster: Lessons from the Edge of Technology* (New York: HarperBusiness, 2001).
- 6 Scott Adams, *The Dilbert Principle: A Cubicle’s-Eye View of Bosses, Meetings, Management Fads and Other Workplace Afflictions*, reprint ed. (New York: HarperBusiness, 1997). It is reproduced at a number of Web sites, usually without attribution.
- 7 Howard G. Dick and Douglas H. Robinson, *The Golden Age of the Great Passenger Airships: Graf Zeppelin and Hindenburg* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Press, 1985), 83–102; LZ-129 Hindenberg (n.d.), <http://www.ciderpresspottery.com/ZLA/greatzepps/german/Hindenburg.html>; John Toland, *The Great Dirigibles: Their Triumphs and Disasters* (New York: Dover Press, 1972), 9–12.
- 8 “British airship R101 is destroyed in crash and explosion in France: 46 aboard perish, 7 badly injured,” *New York Times*, Oct. 5, 1930, 1.
- 9 *The New York World Telegram* published twenty-one pictures of the explosion, while