The Voices of Good and Evil: What is Enlightenment?

Rereading Lu Xun’s “Towards a Refutation of the Voices of Evil”

Wang Hui, Tsinghua University Beijing

1. Foreword: Why should we re-read the text?

I will primarily discuss “Toward a Refutation of the Voices of Evil,” an early essay written by Lu Xun in classical Chinese prose style. It has been over a hundred years since the essay was first published in *Henan* magazine at the end of 1908. We first encountered Lu Xun’s texts in the Chinese Literature textbooks in Junior High school, and these texts were mostly his novels, prose, essays, prose poems, so on and so forth. Why do we have to read this particular essay that is written in classical prose style and thus extremely difficult to understand?

There are two different methods of reading a text. One is to treat the text as historical document: we could understand how the entire history progresses and develops by interrogation and research, tracking the text’s formation and its historical significance. Under such circumstance, the text basically serves as a clue for understanding history. This way of reading is most common in historical research, where a variety of theories and methodologies concerning reading historical documents have been developed. The other approach to a text, however, focuses more on the theoretical connotation of the text itself, and how the concept, scope and topic, which the text raises, influences the contemporary. In other words, the second approach is trans-historical and trans-temporal. Reading the classic texts, we usually apply both methods interchangeably, but with different emphasis. The reason for the classic texts to be deemed as classic is that the texts have significance that could transcend spaciality and temporality, and they have possibility for re-interpretation. If there were no different interpretations, the classics could not have been identified as classics. In *Wenshi tongyi* (General Principles of Historiography), Zhang Xuecheng regarded *zhuan* and *zhu* as the premise of the formation of classics.¹ In other words, the relationship between classics and *zhuan* & *zhu* is not a temporal one, as is often understood, that classics precede *zhuan* & *zhu*. Quite the contrary, classics could only become classics thanks to the *zhuan* & *zhu* composed by later generations. Otherwise, *Chunqiu* (Spring and Autumn Annals) would have been some useless official records baring no value at all; *Shijing* (The Book of Odes) would have been a collection of folk music; *I Ching* (Book of Changes) would have been a book of divination; and *Shangshu* (Book of Documents) would have done no more than providing clues for later generations to understand history. Therefore, it is not that classics engendered *zhuan* & *zhu*, but that *zhuan* & *zhu* facilitated the formation of classics. This is a genealogical view of classical texts.

A text’s rebirth is achieved through interpretation. Although a text may possess the potential for

¹ *Zhuan* and *zhu* are the notes and interpretations of classics.
transcending spatiality and temporality, it cannot voluntarily do so. Thus, a text's classicization, i.e. its becoming a text that is alive, is not only the consequence of interpretation, but is also to become an event itself. There is no inevitable successiveness between the text's emergence and the event of its becoming a contemporary classic. The relation between the text and the event of its classicization, therefore, has a two-fold significance: on the one hand, the event often happens coincidentally. If the text did not interpret the event, the event would be a coincidental event, and it could not formulate an event that could alter spatial and temporal relationship or meaning system. For example, if there had been no discussion of revolution and envisaging of the foundation of the Republic of China, the Wuchang Uprising would have been no more than one of the countless mutinies at the time. If there had not been Lenin and his comrades’ explanation and interpretation of Socialism, Self-determination of Peoples, and Imperialist Era, and the October Revolution would have merely been a limited armed mutiny or rebellion. In this regard, the text is not only the consequence of the event, but also the key element that catalyzes the event. On the other hand, the act of re-activating the text, or the phenomenon that the text is rejuvenated, is bound to emerge in a unique historical context. Once a text is created as a classical text, one that asserts influence and meaning onto our existence, the process and its consequence would generate new meaning and new action. In this sense, since meaning is generated through classicization, the classicization itself becomes an event.

Let’s get back to the question posed at the opening of this essay: now that many of Lu Xun’s works have already been deemed as the contemporary Chinese classics, why do we need to read such a difficult and unclassicized text? We should re-identify the essay’s themes and purposes after reading. The subtitle of the text indicates that this essay could be considered a unique answer to the question — “what is Enlightenment?” What is indeed Enlightenment? Is it national awakening or Cosmopolitanism? Is it Democratic Republic or individual self-sovereignty? Is it eradicating superstition, opposing religion or secularization? Is it the awareness of rights or the manifestation of immanence? In addition, who is the Enlightener? Is Enlightenment the elite’s call to the public, or the mutual stimulation between individuals? What is the medium of this calling or stimulation? “Toward a Refutation of the Voices of Evil” has offered unique answers to these questions.

2. Which kind of classical-style prose? Which kind of opposition?

Our first question should be approached from the text’s style. “Toward a Refutation of the Voices of Evil” is a prose written in the classical prose style (guwen). In order to understand the significance of such style, we need to know the social context of the publication of the essay. Lu Xun’s publication in Japan, all written in the classical prose style, could be divided into two periods, with a discrepancy between these two periods. The first period is around 1903, while the second is from 1907 to 1908. In around 1903, Lu Xun had five publications: the translational work of Ai Chen (abstracts from Victor Hugo’s Les Miserables), “Sibada zhi hun” (“The Soul of Sparta”), “Zhongguo dizhi luelun” (“A Brief Discussion of the Geology of China”), “Didi Lvxing” (excerpts from De La Terre a la Lune by Jules Verne) and “Shuo ri” (“On Radium”). These articles introduced new scientific discoveries and researched on the geological and mineral resources in China. In addition, their primary intention was to stimulate an emphasis on military affairs and a patriotic spirit. They were all published in the monthly journal titled Zhejiang Chao (The Tide of Zhejiang). Zhejiang Chao was founded by the Zhejiang Society in Tokyo, and Xu Shoushang, Lu Xun’s good friend, was well acquainted with this community and was

2 The Wuchang Uprising was the first revolt in the Revolution of 1911 in China, leading eventually to the fall of the Qing Dynasty and the founding of the Chinese Republic in 1912.

3 At the time, Chinese students who were studying in Japan tended to form organizations based on their origin. For example, Zhejiang Society was founded and formed by students who were from Zhejiang Province in China.
involved in the editing. Lu Xun's articles were written upon Xu's request, which was documented. As for the classical prose style, the articles written around 1903 are more fluent and reader friendly than those written later in 1907-1908, and they are closer to the wen yan style (literary Chinese).

Lu Xun's writing career in Japan reached its peak in 1907-1908, when he published five long essays and one translational work, all of which were published in the magazine Henan. The articles are: “History of Men” (No.1), “On the Power of Satanic Poetry” (No. 2 & No. 3), “Notes On the History of Science” (No. 5), “Concerning the Imbalance of Culture” (No.7), “On the Poetry of Petofi” (translation, No. 7), and “Toward a Refutation of the Voices of Evil” (No. 8). This was after Lu Xun decided to give up his medical education and switched to literature. He went back to Tokyo from Sendai, and experienced jimo (solitude) after the failure of founding Xin Sheng (New Birth). As for this solitude, it is exquisitely explained in Naban's Preface, and according to Lu Xun, the reason why he accepted Qian Xuantong's request to contribute to New Youth" was that he could sympathize with the pioneers' jimo (solitude). When we elaborate more on the “Toward the Refutation of the Voices of Evil,” we will see that the opening of the piece indicates that China is “the land of jimo.” However, in “Toward the Refutation of the Voices of Evil,” jimo describes a status, whereas in the Preface to Naban, jimo is a subjective feeling of “solitude,” i.e. a solitary feeling. But these two jimo are interconnected. Throughout Lu Xun's literary world, the resent of solitude or “silent China,” along with the attempt to break the solitude and the condition of “silence,” has remained the major theme.

Henan is the official publication of the Henan branch of Tongmenghui (Revolutionary Alliance). It was founded in December 1907 and was meant to advocate the revolution. Liu Jixue was Chief Editor and Zhang Zhongrui was the publisher. As to why Lu Xun wrote for Henan, there are two explanations. Kiyama Hideo, a Japanese scholar, claims “at the time, Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren mainly published in Henan, edited by Liu Shipei, who came to Japan immediately after Zhang Binglin.” In fact, Lu Xun had a close relationship with Zhang Taiyan [Zhang Binglin], and Liu had once been rather intimate with Zhang. Liu Shipei arrived at Tokyo in February 1907, and then approached Kotoku Shusui and other Anarchists in Japan. Liu later grew into an Anarchist himself. Liu, together with Zhang Ji, launched “Lecture Society on Socialism” (later renamed as Qimin Society), and he pointed out that:

Recently, Socialism has been popular in Western Europe, and has also been widely received in Japan, yet it has hardly reached the Chinese scholars. Although the wise have promoted Nationalism, they merely distinguish among different races, and do not take into the people's weal and woe into consideration. Even if the idea of Restoration could be indeed applied to actual practice, it has the potential of turning into ‘violence against violence.’ Some people share this view, and intend to study issues around Socialism by conducting inter-disciplinary research both in the East and the West, and learn more to feed the new information to our people. Yet meanwhile we had the fear that Socialism could not be popularized, and that is why we founded this society to discuss its principles and theory. Based on such principle, Tianyi (Heavenly Justice) was founded on June 10th, and it had altogether 19 issues published. The publication was originally the official publication of Women's Rights Recovery Association, and it advocates “revolution in women's sphere.” “In addition to revolution in women's sphere, we should also promote racial, political and economic revolutions, in order to break down the

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4  *New Youth* is a magazine founded in Shanghai in September 1915. This publication, which officially inaugurated China's New Culture Movement, drew together ideas which formed the third stage of thinking about evolutionary cosmology since the original reform movement of the 1890s.

5  The Tongmenghui (Revolutionary Alliance) was the coalition of revolutionary groups that led the anti-Manchu movement during the 1900s, culminating in the Revolution of 1911 which ended the Qing rule.


conventional society and apply the principle of equality—this is why it is called “tianyi,” which means the Providence’s intention. From the combined issue of Issue 8, 9 and 10, however, Tian Yi has changed its mission statement:


In April 1908, He Zhen and Liu Shipei established another publication Hengbao (Equity), whose principle was “to overthrow the government of men and to achieve Communism; to advocate non-militarization and Union strike; to record the sufferings of the people; to communicate with the labor associations throughout the world and the Republicans in favor of direct action.” These two publications, along with New Century, which was started by Wu Zhihui, Li Shizeng and Zhangji in France, are representative of the publications in the era of the Chinese Anarchism. One of the themes in “Toward a Refutation of the Voices of Evil” is a critique of the concept of “Cosmopolitan,” including the criticism against anarchism.

Kiyama Hideo did not specify or give proof of Liu Shipei’s involvement with Henan. It is likely that Kiyama has based his claims on Zhou Zuoren’s memoir, where Zhou said that the article was taken by Sun Zhudan. Sun Zhudan was the Director of Anhui branch of Tongmenghui, and he was in Japan because his murder conspiracy was unveiled in China. Sun was killed in the Revolution at the age of 29, with his body dismembered and thrown into the ocean. In Lu Xun’s Youth (Lu Xun de qingnian shidai), Zhou says in the spring of 1908, Xu Shoushang found a house and was about to rent it, but the rent was too high for Xu to afford all by himself. So he rented the house with four other people, including Lu Xun. The house was thus later named ‘Wu She’ (the House of Five). The already limited allowance was less than adequate, and at the time Lu Xun even did proof-editing to earn more money. It happened that I knew a friend named Sun Shuzhu back in Nanjing, and he was engaged in revolutionary movement. He came to visit us one day and said that the Chinese students from Henan Province were running a magazine and they were looking for contributors, and that was why he came to us for help. The magazine’s Chief editor was Liu Shenshu, as everyone knew. Thus we all wrote for the magazine, and Lu Xun contributed the most among us, … It could be said that whatever Lu Xun had intended to say in New Birth, was then translated onto Henan.

He attributed one chapter in Beida Ganjiu Lu to an account of Liu Shipei, and specifically claimed that he never directly communicated with Liu in Japan. Henan magazine started in December 1907, and Cheng Ke, Sun Zhudan and some others were involved in the editing. It was very likely that Liu was invited by them. In the revolutionary movement of the Chinese students in Tokyo, although the regional community was very crucial, the revolutionary provocation and mutual immerse were also prevalent, and thus the distinction among students from Henan, Anhui and Zhejiang provinces was not fixated.

“Toward a Refutation of the Voices of Evil” is an unfinished essay, which was published in the eighth issue of Henan on December 5th, 1908. Later Henan published the ninth issue—the last issue before Henan was closed down by the Japanese government. But the latter part of “Toward a Refutation of the Voices of Evil” was not published in the ninth issue. Based on the essay’s style, it could be inferred that Lu Xun should have finished the entire essay. It is very likely that Henan’s close-down caused the loss of the essay’s latter part. It may also be that Lu Xun never completed the essay, nor did he finalize it when

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8 “General Regulations,” Tianyi, combined issue of Issue 8, 9 and 10. August 9th, 1907, p. 1.
he left for China. This essay was not included in any of the collections that were published during Lu Xun’s lifetime, not even *jiwaiji shiyi*,9 which was collected and published by Yang Jiyun. The essay’s debut as a Lu Xun’s work was in *Supplement to Jiwaiji shiyi*,10 but Lu Xun had already passed away at the time. The essay’s publication was done by Xu Guangping and Tang Sou, who was my advisor. In Lu Xun studies all along, this essay has never been given much attention. Among Lu Xun’s earlier works of classical prose style, “On the Power of Mara Poetry” and “Concerning the Imbalance of Culture” are recognized as more significant, and thus have been interpreted more often. The only publication on “Toward a Refutation of the Voices of Evil” is a lecture delivered by Ito Toramaru, the Japanese scholar at the Chinese Department at Peking University. The lecture, titled “Religious View in Early Lu Xun: the Realition Between Superstition and Religion,”11 appeared in the November issue of *Lu Xun yanjiudongtai* (*Tendency in Lu Xun Research*)12 in 1989. Toramaru’s article discusses one of the topics in “Toward a Refutation of the Voices of Evil”, i.e. “the urgent task before us today is to rid ourselves of the hypocritical gentry; ‘superstition’ itself may remain!”13 The article is innovative and inspires my own discussion of Lu Xun’s essay.

As for these long prose and translational works that he wrote in Japan, Lu Xun had a declaration published in his first collection of prose *Fen* (*Tomb*) in 1926. He said that,

> I do not have any grand reasons for combining these writings, which are different in form, into one book. The first reason is that when I happened to read the few articles I wrote nearly twenty years ago, I couldn’t help asking: Did I write these? They seem to have been written by me. They were meant for Henan, and the magazine’s editor was rather weird—the longer the article, the more he paid. For example, ‘On the Power of Mara Poetry’ was close to a mere compilation of words. … He also fancied awkward sentences and archaic diction, as a legacy of Minbao. For the publication of this collection, although some changes are made for the typesetting and printing, the rest stayed the same. If these words were written by others, I would not refrain from persuading them to have the articles cut short, but since they are mine, I’d rather keep the way they are, and part of reason is that a writer is not necessarily progressive in a career, in the same way that a fifty-year-old is by no means bound to be better than a forty-nine-year-old. Another reason is that some poets that I wrote on are hardly mentioned any more, and I would prefer to keep them, because their very name used to inspire me a lot. Ever since the founding of Chinese Republic, I have forgotten them, yet now, they often reveal themselves in my thoughts.

In this passage, Lu Xun has touched upon a few crucial points, the first of which is the editor’s taste for long articles to the point that authors needed to compile words, and the second point is that the editor had a love for awkward sentences and archaic diction. Lu Xun also mentioned a few forgotten poets, such as George Byron, Percy Shelley, Petofi Sandor, Adam Mickiewicz, Henrik Ibsen and Friedrich Nietzsche. Some outstanding scholarship has already been done on the second key point. For example, in the 1980s, Kitaoka Masako, a Lu Xun scholar in Japan, published a book titled *Notes on the Sources for “On the Power of Mara Poetry,”* in which Kitaoka compared the Japanese and English materials with “On the Power of Mara Poetry” and located the source for Lu Xun’s citation, which includes Kimura Otaro’s *Biography of Byron* and Georg Brandes’ research on the Romanticists and Ibsen. Since the late Qing dynasty is an epoch of Enlightenment and revolution, without any sign of the contemporary concept of copyright, writers did not have to acknowledge their citations. Lu Xun considered this part of the practice of “a compilation of words,” yet this is not to say that the articles were solely copied

9 《集外集拾遗》
10 《〈集外集拾遗〉补编》
11 《早期鲁迅的宗教观——“迷信”与“科学”之关系》
12 《鲁迅研究动态》
13 伪士当去，迷信可存
from others. According to the comparative research conducted by Kitaoka Masako and Ito Toramaru, Lu Xun profoundly distinguished his own research on Byron, Nietzsche and Ibsen from his Japanese resources, and this indicated his unique observation and vision. In addition to “On the Power of Mara Poetry,” other essays such as “History of Men,” “Notes on the History of Science” and “Concerning the Imbalance of Culture” all had their respective resources and clearly manifested Lu Xun’s individual thoughts.

All of Lu Xun’s prose written in classical prose style has one characteristic—“a love for awkward sentences and archaic diction.” Compared with other texts written in 1903, these classical-prose-style essays indicate self-awareness of the very style of classical prose. As for “Toward a Refutation of the Voices of Evil,” it is very obscure and almost impossible to understand without the help of dictionaries, because Lu Xun utilized a large amount of archaic diction. Some of the vocabulary was seldom used in the classical prose after Song Dynasty, and most of them were from the documents of pre-Qin, Han to Wei and Sui to Tang dynasties. For example, “zhenchong” in its Classical sense refers to vespidae (family of wasp), and the word’s origin is in the Huainanzi. But in the essay, the word “zhenchong” means “wasp waist.” Lu Xun underwent tremendous trouble and spent a lot of time finding the classical diction to enunciate the contemporary women’s effort to obtain a Western style wasp waist. As Lu Xun put it, “the more archaic (the word), the better.” I consider these essays to be classical prose, as opposed to wen yan, also because it is a classical prose style that was intentionally created, and thus different from the wen yan, ba gu or the famous tongcheng verse. To understand the ideological contrast between these two different styles of classical prose, we need refer back to Zhang Taiyan and Minbao’s avocations of national legacy.

Minbao was launched in November 1905 and was intended as the official publication of tongmenghui, which was founded in July 1905. In June 1906, Zhang Taiyan was released from the Western Prison in Shanghai after three years of sentence because of the Subao case. He was then immediately transferred to Japan from Shanghai by the members of tongmenghui. Zhang thus became Chief Editor of Minbao from its sixth issue till the Japanese government closed it down in October 1908. Upon his arrival in Japan, Zhang was welcomed by tongmenghui with a welcome conference held in Huijin Hall, which was attended by 2,000 people. Zhang delivered a speech at the conference. In line with the anti-Manchu cause and restoration of Han, and saving the country through revolution, Zhang identified the two responsibilities shouldered by Chinese revolutionists at the time, “the first is to boost the confidence through religion and increase the citizens' ethics; the second is to stimulate nationalism through national legacy and heighten the citizens’ patriotism.”

“Toward a Refutation of the Voices of Evil” responded to these two missions raised by Zhang in various ways. As for establishing a religion, I will further discuss it in the session about the superstition and science in Lu Xun’s text. I will start with the issue of “stimulating nationalism through national legacy,” because national legacy is closely related to the classical prose style. The idea of proposing national legacy was not Zhang’s invention. The concept was introduced from Japan, and the publication National Legacy Studies already saw its first issue in 1905. National Legacy Studies was the official publication of National Legacy Reservation Organization, which was founded in 1903 and based in Shanghai. The publication’s chief editor was Deng Shi, and it defended Old Text School in Han

14 “Xianqin,” “hanwei” and “suitang” are the names of various epochs in Chinese history: xianqin was from 21st century B.C.E. to 221 B.C.E.; hanwei was from 206 B.C.E. to 581 A.D.; and suitang was from 581 to 907 A.D.

15 Huainanzi is a collection of writings of by courtiers under Liu An, prince of Huainan (179-122 B.C.E.). While the main philosophical thrust of this book is Taoist, it also brings together the Legalist, Confucian, and Yin-Yang schools of thought. Huainanzi contains a rich variety of classical Chinese ideas on aesthetics.

16 Subao is a newspaper founded in Shanghai in 1896. When Zhang Taiyan became one of its major contributors in 1903, Subao took on the revolutionary tone of anti-Qing government. On July 7th, 1903, Subao was closed down by the Qing government, and Zhang was imprisoned in Shanghai for 3 years.
Dynasty against defilement, while opposing “Confucius as reformation” and “New Text School” advocated by Kang Youwei. It resisted the Western influence by National Legacy and Chinese studies, while promoting and solidifying national integrity with the concept of “Aliens and Han,” which emerged during the transition between Song and Ming Dynasty, and a variety of national legacy studies. Its political orientation is revolutionary. When the National Legacy Preservation Association was established, Zhang was still in prison, but *National Legacy Studies* published Zhang’s four correspondences and prose composed in prison in the publication’s “compilation” session in its first, eighth and ninth issues. In *A Collection of Lectures* published in 1906, Zhang said that,

> What are we promoting national legacy for? It is not for making people to respect and believe in Confucianism, but for having people love and treasure the history of the race of Han. This history, in the word’s broad sense, could be divided into three parts: 1) language and literature, 2) regulations and system, and 3) people and their anecdotes. Recently, there have been some Europeanized people suggesting that the Chinese are far worse than the Westerners. These people gave up hope and abandoned themselves saying that China was doomed and the Yellow Race was predestined to extinction. They do not know of the strong characteristics of China, and when they could not find anything to love (since they do not know the lovable elements), their patriotism was waning day after day. If they did know China’s strengths, I believe that even if they were completely heartless, they would still maintain a patriotic spirit, which will be rapidly increasing.

Zhang highly praised the *daru* with national integrity living at the beginning of Qing Dynasty, and he particularly held Gu Yanwu and his textology in high esteem. In “Explaining the Republic of China,” Zhang drew the historical blueprint for the Chinese Republic, based on his historical study of the ancient concept of *wuji* and the system in Han Dynasty. In “The Theory of Simultaneous Evolutions,” he not only raised the argument of “the good evolves, and so does the bad” as a response to the teleological evolutionary historicism, but also considered the Chinese history after Song Dynasty as a completely retrogressive history which has “only retrogression and no evolution: the good retrogresses, and so does the bad.”

If we apply Zhang’s ideas to his thoughts on the language, we could understand why he engaged in the study of letters, promoted restoration (returning to the ancients) and would not spare a glance at the *wen yan* prose after the Song dynasty. If we follow Zhang’s logic of “national legacy” and Nationalism, we could reach the following two conclusions. Firstly, after Song Dynasty, the governments run by the Han People had an accumulated declining tendency and was constantly being invaded by other ethnic groups. As a result, the Chinese language was getting chaotic and mixed, and was losing its inherent liveliness and purity. Thus, the study of letters and restoring the classical vocabulary in daily use inevitably became the essential way of realizing Nationalism. Secondly, after Song dynasty, the *keju* system, also known as the system of Imperial Exam or Civil Exam, was further standardized. As a result, *wen yan* prose and *bagu* essays, which were both used in the Imperial Exam, interacted and infiltrated, the result of which was not an actual classical language, but a systematized and insubstantial language. In this regards, the classical prose style of “Toward a Refutation of the Voices of Evil” is an opposition to the *wen yan* style, i.e. an absolute negation of the current linguistic system. Lu Xun did not respect the classical prose style which looked up to the “Eight Masters” of classical prose in Tang and Song periods. Yet Lu Xun was not opposing *wen yan* style with *baihua* (vernacular Mandarin) per se, but rather using the classical prose before Song to oppose the classical prose formed with the

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17 The well-educated scholars with ethics.
18 Five mourning grades: the system divides the relatives and family members into 5 different categories according to their intimacy to the dead (not emotionally, but bloodily…), and people in different categories have different rules as to attending the funeral and mourning the dead.
19 The writings of the “Eight Masters” of the Tang and Song periods could be said to have their roots in the Confucian Classics. Even the examination essays had topics derived from the same Classics. They are supposed to demonstrate the classical style of writing.
standardization of *keju* system. *Wen yan* was not only an indicator of the social status of noblemen, but also a rhetorical device for the unnecessary and over-elaborate formality that they practiced in their daily life. In this sense, returning to the purer classical prose style is also a criticism and resistance against this specific class and their political culture after Song period.

The formalistic feature of “awkward sentences” and “archaic diction” implies the opposition between classical prose style and *wen yan* style, and moreover, it differs from *baihua* (vernacular) and the “new literary style” proposed by Liang Qichao. What exactly is the relationship between Lu Xun’s formalistic feature and Liang’s new literary style? In 1898, Qiu Tingliang initiated that “*baihua* (vernacular) is the essence of Reformation.” From then on, vernacular was put on the agenda of China’s cultural revolution in the 20th century, and a variety of newspapers in vernacular emerged as the time required. Meanwhile, Huang Zunxian initiated “revolution in the realm of verse,” with “my hand writes what I say, and how could the archaic bind me up” as his maxim. Inspired by the Reformation of Writing System in Japan, Wang Zhao and Lao Naixuan combined the *qieyun*20 rhyme system and the Western spelling system in order to figure out the unification of Chinese characters, *pinyin* and the pronunciation systems. A group of scholars led by Yan Fu were popularizing the Western Logic and other conceptions, while Liang Qichao took the lead with his so-called new literary style. In this reformation and revolution, there formed an opposition in the language and writing style: new vs. old, and vernacular vs. *wen yan*. Such binary status became the foundation of the rise of Vernacular Movement as part of the May Fourth Movement in a decade. As the representative of the vernacular literature during the May Fourth Movement and of the force fervently proposing to abolish the Chinese characters, how could Lu Xun “like composing awkward sentences and using archaic diction” in this era of Linguistic Revolution? The key to the answer lies in Lu Xun’s understanding of the classical prose style. He believed that the classical prose style was the colloquialism of the ancient population, and it is a completely different language from the *wen yan* after Song period. In terms of the relation between the classical prose style and the colloquialism, classical prose style and the colloquialized vernacular share uniformity—that they are both a rejection of the systematized *wen yan*.

“Toward a Refutation of the Voices of Evil” does not touch upon the anti-Manchu sentiment, and sharply criticizes Nationalism or “Animal patriotism,” but since its form of classical prose implies a content of anti-Manchu nationalism, it could still be regarded as a nationalist text. The form is the correlation of anti-Manchu cause, and of the Chinese studies and study of letters, which were the fruits of the anti-Manchu cause. Chinese studies, national legacy and classical prose style have dual functions. They firstly addressed the so-called “huxue,” i.e. the cultural genealogy and linguistic formation of the “other race’s” turmoil, Manchu included. The other addressee was the chaotic “Western learning” in the face of the Western onslaught. China was “corroded at the core and wavering spiritually,”21 and Lu Xun wanted to find the root. But “Toward a Refutation of the Voices of Evil” is not a purely nationalistic text, but a nationalistic text that is anti-nationalistic. Nor is the essay a Cosmopolitan text, but a Cosmopolitan text that is anti-Cosmopolitan. The text maintains a certain tension between its form and its content. It is not Lu Xun’s standpoint, but other schools’ contrasting assertions to use Cosmopolitanism in order to oppose Nationalism, or to oppose Cosmopolitanism through Nationalism. I will further develop this argument through textual analysis.

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20 *Qieyun* is a Chinese rhyme dictionary, published in 601 C.E. during the Sui Dynasty. It is translatable as “spelling rimes.” *Qieyun* did not directly record classical Chinese as a spoken language, but rather how Chinese characters should be pronounced. When classical Chinese poetry flowered during Tang Dynasty, *Qieyun* became the authoritative source for literary pronunciations and it repeatedly underwent revisions and enlargements.

21 本根剥丧，神气旁皇
3. “Speaking from the heart” and “silence” in China

“Toward a Refutation of Voices of Evil” has four major paragraphs and is divided into three sections. The first section is the first paragraph, the introduction of the essay. In terms of this introduction’s content, we need to ask: in the tide of Nationalism, Anti-Manchu Revolution and Republicanism, why did Lu Xun raise his ideological principles of xinsheng (true feelings), neiyao (illuminating thoughts), rengeyouji (each person possessing an individual identity) and zhenguiyuwo (manifesting one’s status as master of one’s own situation)? Lu’s ideological principle seems to be neither nationalistic nor Anti-Manchu revolutionary, nor is it Republican; yet on another level, it is indeed Anti-Manchu revolutionary, nationalistic and republican.

The second paragraph is the essay’s guiding argument, where Lu Xun put forward the objects of his criticism and his major claims. Lu Xun’s criticism was directed against “citizen” and “cosmopolitan.” In the late Qing dynasty, the ideas surrounding Nationalism were positively identified as knowledge of Enlightenment, and therefore the issue of nationalism/citizen-ism involves primary sub-topics as “eradication of superstition,” “worship of aggression,” and “doing one’s duty.” The issue of “Cosmopolitanism” also involves three aspects. The First is “unification of all writing systems,” which has already been previously discussed. The second is “abandoning the nation,” i.e. in an era of globalization, nation is no longer needed, nor is national boundary and sovereignty. In fact, all that related to the “national” should be discarded. This is in fact an antithesis of anarchism. The third aspect is “favoring unification,” which is to promote datong (Great Harmony, the confucian ideal of perfect society), and this means not only nations should be discarded, so should all the conventions. In Datong Shu (Book of Great Unity), Kang Youwei proposed a system: the world could be broken into small units according to the longitude and latitude in a modern scientific way (one degree of longitude and one degree of latitude). If we elect one Director in each unit, and break up each unit further into sub-unit, which would be in the charge of Director of Sub-unit, then this system would be formulated naturally in a historically conventional manner, just in the way that each village has Head of Village. Moreover, the longitude and latitude is a scientific way of dividing the world, and it makes the artificial division in tune with the rules and general knowledge. But what about the racial differences? Kang proposed interracial “breeding,” and according to him, the White should be taken as the most advanced species in the breeding process, i.e. everyone should try to breed into the White race. The theory of “favoring unification” is actually another confirmation of racism and hierarchism; because it supports the idea of turning different individuals into one race of man, or rather elevating them into one race, according to the current grading system.

The third and fourth paragraphs form the discussion session. “Toward a Refutation of Voices of Evil” is an unfinished text, in the same sense that for the “citizen,” the critique of Nationalism is not yet finished, because the essay has only criticized the two topics of “eradication of superstition” and “worship of aggression” (in fact, the second topic has not been extensively discussed), and it stops before touching upon the topic of “doing one’s duty.” Therefore, what we read here is only the section of criticism against Nationalism, completely lacking the criticism of “Cosmopolitanism.” However, the introduction cues the second topic—criticism of “unifying literature, abandoning nation, and promoting unity.” The analysis of the essay’s classical prose style provides insight into Lu Xun’s opinion upon “unifying literature,” while the style itself is a critique against “Cosmopolitanism” and a manifestation of differentiation and subjectivity.

Let’s start with the text’s first paragraph, the Preface, which contains a few keywords. One way of understanding these keywords and the core idea is to explain them in their textual, historical and
Corroded at the core and wavering spiritually, China seems destined to wither away amid the throes of internecine quarrelling among the heirs to her civilization. Yet throughout the empire not a word is spoken against this [state of affairs], silence reigns, and all channels are blocked. Rash doctrines have deluded the minds of the people, while scoundrels and demagogues heighten the pitch of their rhetorical daily. Poisonous words and violent deeds have become the order of the day, as if nothing short of the immediate collapse of the entire nation could sate them. Yet throughout the empire not a word is spoken against this, silence reigns, and all channels are blocked.

As I have not yet abandoned hope for the promise of the future, I remain eager to hear the true feelings of all thinking men and earnestly entreat them to share with me their illuminating thoughts. For such illuminating thoughts can provide the wherewithal to smash through darkness and silence, while the act of giving voice to [sincere] and deep-felt sentiments may well prove our deliverance from falsehood and chicanery. Such voices function in society like the roar of the night. While I do not expect such an achievement from the populace at large, I do cherish the hope that one or two men of foresight will take a stand, thus setting an example for the rest of us and affording our people a chance to escape their fate of degeneracy and subjugation. My hope, humble thought it may seem, may be compared to a single string on a broken lyre or a lonely star in the late autumn sky (108)…

[Human] sentiments are thus affected by seasonal change, sometimes resulting in grievances and conflicts. Yet no events, be they natural or human, can alter a man's true feelings so long as he speaks from the heart. If something runs counter to his beliefs, though the entire world might sing it with one voice, he cannot chime in. His speech must give substance to his own views, not circumscribe or contain them, because of the sheer forcefulness of the thoughts and ideas which illuminate his heart and stir his mind… Only when one speaks from the heart, manifesting one's status as master of one's own soul, can one become conscious of an individual identity. Only when each person possesses an individual identity will the public approach a complete awakening.

However, if everyone leans in the same direction and sings the same tune, this singing cannot come from the heart, it is mere chiming in with others, like the meshing of gears in a machine. Such a chorus is more disturbing to the ear than the rustling of leaves in a forest or the pathetic cry of birds because it emphasizes the profound silence in the background. Yet China at present is an all-too perfect example of such a silence (109).
desolate, just as Qu Yuan’s writing. In “Chuci-Yuanyou” (Far-off journey in Chuci), there is a sentence “Grieved by the wretched state of this world’s ways/ I wanted to float up and away from it,” which Zhu Xi explains in “Chuci jizhu (Interpretation of Chuci)” as “the far-off journey was Qu Yuan’s work. When he was exiled, he was upset. He belittled the universe, detested the vile of the secular and mourned over the limitedness of his life, so he composed this poem.” Zhu’s work also includes expressions of “nourishing your ethereal soul,” which was from Lao Zi (the founder of Taoism), whereas the account of “silence” correlates with Zhuangzi’s words of “Emptiness, stillness, limpidity, silence, inaction are the root of the ten thousand things.” According to Zhu Xi, “老子、屈子以人之精神言之，这其所谓营者，字与荧同，而为晶明光炯之意。其所谓魄，……杨子以日月之光明论之，则固以月之体质为魄，而日之光耀为魂也.” The hunpo (spirit) is an inner glory, which could be the origin of Lu Xun’s “illuminating thoughts.” Lu Xun’s account of “silence” is also influenced by Zhuangzi, yet it goes against Zhuangzi by defining silence as lacking “true feelings” and “illuminating thoughts.” While the Reformation was rigorously changing China, with the intellectuals in China learning from the world and the folk culture abandoning conventional concepts and pursuing new ideas, “our race has abandoned its spirit. Not even the promise of sincere voices nor illuminating thoughts is evident.” This only proved that China was a land of silence.

In Lu Xun’s passage as cited above, by repetition and replication, Lu Xun twice uses the expression “when silence reigns, the entire universe would disappear.” The expression of “the entire world would disappear” originates from “Classics of Changes, “Hexagam: Kun.” “When Heaven and Earth engage in transformation, the whole plant kingdom flourishes, but when Heaven and Earth are confined, the worthy person keeps hidden.” Kong Yingda says that “此一节明六四爻辞。‘天地变化’, 谓二气交通，生养万物，故草木蕃滋。‘天地闭，贤人隐’者，谓二气不相交通，天地否闭，贤人潜隐。天地通则 草木蕃，明天地闭草木不蕃；‘天地闭，贤人隐’，明天地则贤人出，互而相通.” The expression of “when Heaven and Earth are confined, the worthy person keeps hidden” is also often used to express the idea that there is no doctrine in the world and the virtuous would retire from office. When Lu Xun defines “when silence reigns” as “all channels of the universe are blocked,” it is implied that silence is the premise of the human world’s opening-up, i.e. breaking the silence. Similar expressions could also be found in “On the Power of Mara Poetry.” In that essay, in addition to “silence,” Lu Xun uses “desolate”, which comes from Li Sao, composed by Qu Yuan. If the entire world is dominated by an immense silence, then how could we understand the world as silent? “Silence” also refers to “the desolation of the human world.” It is not “lack of sound” that matches this silence and desolation, but “disorder” and “chaos.” In this sense, what Lu Xun means by silence is not quietude, and quite the contrary, Lu Xun’s silence is a disordered and chaotic world. But how could a disordered and chaotic world be a world of silence at the same time? The reason is that “true feelings” and “illuminating thoughts” are drowned in this chaos, and thus “silence.”

Then what voice is the “man’s voice” in the text? Lu Xun refers to yi’ershi, one or two men of foresight. The “one or two men of foresight” does not refer to the growing number of reformers and enlighteners who “boast familiarity with the principles,” but to the “men of learning with novel and
unique convictions and the subtlety, insight and critical distance,” i.e. the few wise who were loyal to
their own true feelings and illuminating thoughts. The concept of “true feelings” is rather crucial here.
Generally, true feelings and illuminating thoughts are correlated with immanence. Intertextually, the
discussion of the European Romanticism in “On the Power of Mara Poetry” and the account of
Romanticist and nihilist ideas of philosophy in “Concerning the Imbalance of Culture,” indicate that
these concepts fall into the domain of self and subject. In addition, “true feelings” has unique
etymologic implication. In “Asking the Deity (Wenshen)” in Exemplary Sayings (Fayan) written by Yang
Xiong in Han dynasty,

言不能达其心, 书不能达其言, 难矣哉! 惟圣人得言之解，得书之体。白日以照之，江河
以涤之，潺潺乎其无之篇也。面相之，辞相遇，求中心之所欲，通诸人之咄咄者，莫如
言。弥纶天下之事, 记久明远, 载古昔之幽幽, 传千里之悠悠者，莫如书。故言，心声也；
书，心画也。声画形，君子小人见矣。声画者，君子小人之所以动情乎！

Language could express true feelings, and therefore it becomes the tool to differentiate the upright
from the vile. But for most of the time, the relation between true feelings, xinhua and immanence is not
self-evident, and this is why Yi Shan says in “论诗绝句” that “心画心声总失真，文章宁复见为人。
高情千古《闲居赋》，争信安仁拜路尘。” Lu Xun also approached the issue from the
relationship between the language and true feelings, and the so-called silence is a status where language
is separated from feelings. The “one or two men of foresight,” therefore, are what Yang Xiong would
call “the saint,” i.e. those who could express their feelings through speech and writing and invoke
others’ feelings—“each person possesses an individual identity while manifesting one’s status as master
of one’s own soul.”

The “illuminating thoughts” could break the darkness, just as true feelings would draw us away from
“deceit and falsehood.” The darkness and falsehood do not belong to the world or the others, but to us
alone. The world was dominated by “silence,” only because of our falsehood and darkness, and
therefore, once we obtain true feelings, the so-called “the public’s complete awakening” would be
achieved,

Such voices of sincerity and deep-felt sentiments function in society like the roar of spring thunder
stirring the plants into bud, like the first light of dawn heralding the passing of the night.

When each person realizes his own identity and no longer drifts blindly with the tide, China will be
able to stand on her own feet.

In other words, the reformation of China and the world does not depend on the various external
revolution and innovation, but on an internal revolution. Zhang Taiyan’s formulation of similar issues
was an extension that traced the logical trajectory of Buddhism and Taoism, whereas Lu Xun’s
formulation seems to be focusing more on the inner spirit. If we read “Concerning the Imbalance of
Culture,” this Immanentism is associated with a number of European thinkers, such as Johann Gottlieb
Fichte, Arthur Schopenhauer, Friedrich Nietzsche and Soren Kierkegaard. The following passage could
also be explained in this light. But where do the “one or two men of foresight” come from?

30 [汉]扬雄撰，韩敬注，《法言注》，北京：中华书局，1992年版，第110页。If our words can’t articulate what’s in our heart
or if our writings don’t express our words, isn’t this difficult?...Only the junzi can explain his meaning.....Therefore: words are the
sound of the heart. Writing is a picture of the heart.When sounds and pictures [of the heart] take form, it will be seen [i.e. clear] who
is the junzi and who is the petty man. Sounds and pictures show us which feelings animate the junzi or the petty man.

31 人各有己，朕归于我

32 人群有是，乃如雷霆发于孟春，而百卉为之萌动，曙色东作，深夜逝矣.

33 人各有己，不随风波，而中国亦以立。
4. Who are the “one or two men of foresight”?

We should interpret the concept of “one or two men of foresight” in the context comprises true feelings and illuminating thoughts. An article titled “True Feelings” was once published in *National Legacy Studies* No. 28. It was written by Jin Yi, who also wrote the first six chapters of *Nie baibua* under the pseudo-name of Jin Songcen. Jin used the language of traditional medical studies, musicology, *The Book of Changes* and *Book of Songs* to make the claim that “men of foresight to a nation is like the liver and kidney to a man, and these men’s voices form a nation’s breathing.”

In the preface to *Stories from Abroad*, translated by Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren, Lu Xun says that,

> 按邦国时期，箝读其心声，以相度神思之所在，则此虽大海之微沤与，而性解思维，实属于此。

The era of *bangguo* (nation-state), originally referring to the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 B.C.E.) and the Period of Warring States (475-221 B.C.E.), adopts a broad meaning of an era when different nation states co-existed, as different from an era of unification. The word “era of *bangguo*” in this quotation, however, refers to the era that India and Poland were in, as described in *Stories from Abroad*. *Zhoudu* means reading, yet the character of *zhou* alludes to “zhouwen” in the Spring and Autumn Period, as well as the Warring States periods. “Zhouwen” is similar to the contemporary ethnical language (*minzu yu*), which expresses the “true feelings” of nation states. In this sense, “true feelings” does not refer to the feelings of one individual, but rather, the feelings that are associated with ethnicity and nation. Such idea is close to the Romanticist Nationalism. The brilliant minds, superman, or the Mara poets and voluntarism all belong in the category of “one or two men of foresight” who could invoke people’s inherent voice through their true feelings. That is why the true feelings of one or two men of foresight could simulate the voice that awakens the public.

According to Lu Xun’s elucidation in “Concerning the Imbalance of Culture,” the expression of “one or two men of foresight” stems from Max Stirner’s “the Ego and his own,” Thomas Carlyle’s “hero,” Nietzsche’s “superman,” and Kierkegaard’s conception of the single individual. However, considering the internal relations between true feelings and the nation state’s language, one or two men of foresight should not be interpreted as a single individual or superman, but as man who is vitally interrelated with the national/ethnic soul. Lu Xun emphasized that we should rely on such person to invoke the public—not to awaken them, but to stimulate them through self-expression. This “stimulation,” however, does not aim at “awakening” the public and then turning them into “citizens,” as Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao promoted; neither does it propose to “awaken” the public to transform them into “cosmopolitians,” as Wu Zhihui promoted. It is, according to Lu Xun, to inspire the public to become themselves—people that are able to express their true feelings. In this sense, what one or two men of foresight did is not to educate from top down, but rather, to stimulate others’ self-emergence through self-creation and self-expression. Lu Xun has explained this idea in “I do cherish the hope that one or two men of foresight will take a stand, thus setting an example for the rest of us and affording our people a chance to escape their fate of degeneracy and subjugation. My hope, humble though it may seem, may be compared to a single string on a broken *gauwu* (lyre) or a lonely star in the late autumn sky.”

34 夫士，国之肝肾，夫士之言，国之声息也

35 鲁迅：《域外小说集》序，《鲁迅全集》第十卷，第155页。

36 而属望一二士，立之为极，俾众瞻观，则人亦庶乎免沦没；望虽小陋，顾亦留独弦于槁梧，仰孤星于秋昊也。
Lu Xun saw the process of self-emergence and self-enlightenment as a process of getting rid of the natural condition. In the sentence “Only a peak as lofty as xumi (Mount Sumeru) or Mount Tai can withstand the buffeting of extrinsic forces,” xumi means the mountains in the Indian legend. “In ordinary cases, any action will produce a reaction. Changes are bound to occur whenever violent gales roar through a valley or the strong rays of the sun beat down upon a shallow river. This is due to the nature of matter.” The sentence means that Nature and its components’ intrinsic features change in accordance with their exterior. The following sentence “Though human beings are superior to other living things, they inevitably have their own particular emotional and physical reactions to the impact of external forces, like all other living in the summer; with the desolation of fall, their spirits sink; and as with the hibernation of creatures, in winter men’s thoughts grow solemn,” Lu Xun points out that the change of seasons has become the inherent change in us humans. The exterior/external could not determine our fate, because human beings are not and should not be an animal that simply follows the flow. Quite the contrary, man possesses inherent “illuminating thoughts,” “true feelings,” and independent will, and thus man is not determined by the exterior. When man all of a sudden voices out his/her unique voice (“once his words are uttered”), “their power could conceivably be greater than any other natural force. People in the empire will be awakened, and this awakening will usher in the urge to quran (rise out of the present situation).” Quran, i.e. looking around in terror, is defined by Lu Xun as “rising out of the present situation.” If we juxtapose this sentence with “when silence rules, all channels are blocked,” we could say that: when true feelings form, the blocked channels are open—this is the birth of man. In other words, true feelings are the starting point of world as a world.

5. “Master of one’s own soul” and “the public’s complete awakening”

The sentence that “only when one speaks from the heart, manifesting one’s status as zhen (master of one’s own soul), can one become conscious of an individual identity, and only when each person possesses an individual identity will the public approach a complete awakening” is key to understanding the essay’s theme. The imagery of an individual separated from the self originates from Q i w u l u n, written by Zhuangzi, who asks that “I do not know myself today, but do you know it?” and “the voices of heaven could take on various forms, yet their emergence and termination all came from their inherence. Who else could motivate the voices?” The prerequisite for self-belonging is the realistic world being a world where one is separated from the self. Zhen is a status which could be decided by oneself—a subjective status. The word zhen used to mean “I,” but after Qin and Han dynasty, zhen became the appellation exclusively used by Emperor. “Mastering one’s status as master of one’s own soul” means that attributing the subjectivity to the self, and thus freeing the self from the hierarchy under the monarchal regime. In monarchy, Emperor retains the superficial domination, while all the others could only define themselves through relating to zhen, and this system places both the emperor
and the individual in a master-servant relation. If we compare this passage with Sun Yat-sen’s account of the Revolution, we could see Lu Xun’s points more clearly. Sun says in *Three Principles of the People*:

> The regime used to be in the power of Emperor and out of the control of the people. Today we propose civil rights to place the regime in the people’s hands. What are the people turned into then? Since the Revolution, China has established the regime of civil rights, where everything should be decided by the people. Thus, the present politics could also be called ‘democracy.’ In other words, in a republican regime, the people are the Emperor.

Sun Yat-sen demanded that the political power transform from the Emperor to the people so as to formulate a democratic regime, while Lu Xun requested that each individual become *zhen*, i.e. each person comes to be a subject, antithetic not only to imperial authority, but also to democracy. In his opinion, “only when each person possesses an individual identity will the public approach a complete awakening.” In this perspective, Enlightenment is more than an issue of the transition of power—it is an issue of individual subjectivity.

Lu Xun’s text was situated in the context of anti-Manchu Revolution, when the issue of “self” (*zhen*) and the issue of “group” (*qun*) are closely interrelated. *Qun* was a critical conception in Yan Fu’s and Liang Qichao’s theories as well, since it was considered to have signal the birth of “society” as a concept. The concept of *qun* had been previously explained by Xunzi, a thinker and philosopher in Qin period, yet when it was applied in “Studies of *qun*,” which was Yan Fu’s translation of the “Western sociology,” the word’s definition was changed. Later on, *qun* was translated into “society” by Yan Fu, who decided to follow the Japanese translation. Such change happened when Yan Fu was translating *A Short History of Politics*, written by Edward Jenks. Originally, Yan was opposed to the idea of translating *qun* into society, because *qun*, traditionally, has ethical and cultural homogeneity, and it is organic, in the same way that an ethnic group/nation is deemed organic. In other words, *qun* is not merely an accumulation of individuals. “Society,” however, is different from *qun* in a sense that it is similar to the Japanese word “*kai*,” which means corporation—corporations within the framework of capitalism, constituted by individual atoms according to certain contractual relations. A society composed of individuals, as a compilation of atoms, cannot become an actual society. This is the reason why Yan Fu had used *qun* to translate *Society*.

Lu Xun put an emphasis on “each person possessing an individual identity,” which foregrounds the significance of individuals, yet meanwhile, “the public’s complete awakening” becomes the consequence of individual autonomy. *Qun* is an existential status with immanence. This immanence exists in the moment when each one could listen to his/her true feelings and exhibit his/her illuminating thoughts. Interpersonal relationship results from the mutual stimulation of true feelings and illuminating thoughts. This idea coincides with Lu Xun’s standpoint of language, i.e. language is more than a simple communicative tool and a set of things awaiting utilization, but a creative process, in that language is a manifestation provoked by each one’s engagement with his/her own immanence. Lu Xun was interested in revolution and social reform, yet reform, politics and social issues could only be resolved through a so-called issue of immanence, spirituality, individual identity, self-mastery, “true feelings and illuminating thoughts.” Lu Xun’s self-narration included the entire social politics, and without this inclusiveness as prerequisite, Lu Xun could not have abruptly made “each person possessing an individual identity” to precede “the public’s complete awakening.”

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46 人各有己, 而群之大觉近矣
47 人各有己
48 群之大觉
49 人各有己, 联归于我
Through “possessing an individual identity” and “manifesting one’s status as master of one’s own soul,” as well as through the concepts of “true feelings” and “illuminating thoughts,” Lu Xun distinguished between two different groups. One is where “if everyone leans in the same direction and sings the same tune, this singing cannot come from the heart, it is mere chiming in with others, like the meshing of gears in a machine,”\(^{51}\) and thus this group is more immobile than bird’s chiming and the tree’s rustling. “Such a chorus is more disturbing to the ear than the rustling of leaves in a forest or the pathetic cry of birds because it emphasizes the profound silence in the background.”\(^{52}\) In “Zhuangzi·Qiwu,” the sound of man is separated from the sound of earth and sky, whereas in Lu Xun’s text, “silence” is interpreted through the sound of tree and birds. What is implied in such a sharp criticism? At the time, despite the boisterous situation comprised of Yang-wu-pai (Self-Strengtheners),\(^{53}\) enlighteners, nationalists, cosmopolitans, anarchists, revolutionists and those who advocated “to save the country through science,” the final product was nonetheless a chaotic “silent China.” What is the reason?

Their souls are foul and barren and they parade about spreading wild hearsay in order to hoodwink the rest of society. Despite the growing number of people who boast familiarity with the principles of reform and the even greater increase in the ranks of their laughable hangers-on, these people do nothing to alleviate our desolation. In fact, the daily quantity of poison they produce is by itself sufficient to accelerate the decline and fall of China. One can but conclude that the misery they are bringing about is actually much worse than silence. Thus what is of primary value and offers us the greatest hope at present is that men of learning might appear with novel and unique convictions and the subtlety, insight, and critical distance necessary to insulate themselves from the presumptuous claims and rash deception that presently abound. These men would have to possess unwavering faith in their own principles and not let themselves be swayed either by the praise or the condemnation of society.\(^{54}\)

Lu Xun raised a keyword “faith” (xin), which is manifested on those who can speak according to their belief—“one or two men of foresight.” Lu Xun was not trying to argue whether science, republic or evolution was right or wrong, but was attempting to ask “do you believe in it or not.”

What is faith? Lu Xun, in the essay, said “if the world lauds them, the men of learning must not be taken in by its flattery; if society reviles them, they should not feel downhearted. People who wish to follow them will be allowed to do so, but if instead laughter and mockery are flung at them in the hope of isolating them, they should not take that to heart either.”\(^{55}\) The first part of the sentence is a direct quote from Zhuangzi’s “Carefree Wandering.” “Faith” is mutually implementing with “true feelings” and “illuminating thoughts,” in the sense that faith would not exist but for true feelings and illuminating thoughts. Lu Xun’s unique account starts here, where he temporarily lays out the disparity in socio-political views at the time, and approaches his criticism from the perspective whether or not the speaker has faith. This is why when he criticized or negated these various trends and thinkers, he was not refuting any specific socio-political view. For example, when he claimed these trends to have turned the

50 群之大党
51 若其靡然合趣，万喙同鸣，鸣又不揆诸心，仅从人而发若机栝
52 林籁也，鸟声也，恶浊扰攘，不若此也，此其增恶，盖视寂漠且愈甚矣
53 Yang-wu-pai is the Westernization group of the Qing government, and for some years, they followed the principle of “learning the barbarians’ skills in order to control the barbarian.” They had always fixed their sights on the great Western powers. They are also known as the “Westernizers.”
54 “灵府荒秽，徒炫耀耳食以罔当时” “故纵唱者万万，和者亿兆，亦足不足以破人界之荒凉，而鸩毒日投，适益以速中国之衰败，则其增恶，不较寂寞且愈甚与。故今之所谓所望，在有不和众嚣，独具我见之士，洞瞩幽隐，评隲文明，弗与妄惑者同其是非，惟向所信是语”
55 举世誉之而不加劝，举世毁之而不加沮，有从者则任其来，假其投以笑靥，使之孤立于世，亦无恪也
nation “tumult and clamor,” he was not opposing the republic, nor was he opposing the revolution or science. He was simply asking the question whether our mission was to abolish faith or to re-establish it upon one’s inherent true feelings and illuminating thoughts. This is essential to Lu Xun’s explication, and constitutes an idiosyncratic peculiarity in Lu Xun’s thoughts. In this regard, the second qun that he referred to is a qun where each one possesses his own identity—a nation of individuals (renguo) comprising people with faith.

6. What is language for: true feelings or instruments?

After analyzing the major theme of “Toward a Refutation of the Voices of Evil,” I will return to the question of form. If “true feelings” and “illuminating thoughts” are the essay’s motif, then how should we understand the relation between this motif and the essay’s classical prose style? When Lu Xun was composing the essay, the debate over language was an intrinsic part of the debate among nationalism, anarchism and communism. Generally there were two different language views: one of them defined language as a communicative tool, and the other saw language as self-expressive. While the former is the language view of cosmopolitan and universal instrumentalism, the latter is a language view that is attached to the nationalist and post-nationalist creativity and subjectivity (or inter-subjectivity). Kang Youwei comments in Datongshu that,

Language was created by man. Although every form would serve the purpose, we should select the easy and convenient ones that facilitate communication. Language is not like Mathematics, Law or Philosophy, which all have rules that have to be adhered to. For language, it is important to weed out the complex and the inferior and to unify according to one standard.

Language is communicative, and for the purpose of facilitating liaison, we should eliminate the complex and adopt the simple, abandon differentiation and obtain standardization. From the communicative perspective, different languages and dialects would impede communication. For example, if a northerner travels to Canton, Fujian or Shanghai, s/he would find it completely impossible to communicate. If dialects alone could be such an obstruction, let alone the difference between languages. Starting from this point, the anarchists not only required that the complex be eliminated and the simplified be adopted, they also suggested that Chinese characters be abolished entirely and that Esperanto be used. Wu Zhixiu said that,

Language and letters have only one function—for people to communicate with one another. Now that language is communicative, it should not be confined by efforts to be delicate, but should follow the natural pattern to be unique. It does not need human force to be unified. When wind blows, entities in nature would issue various sounds according to the shape of the entity in question. Similarly, there is no natural standard for unification that could be identified by the wise. In this way, things could progress and getting closer and closer to the unifying point, and this is where the evolutionary theory came from.

In the same article, he also commented that,

Theoretically speaking, language and letters are communicative… All the human beings in the
world today are qualified to communicate with each other. Yet their languages and letters are
different, and such difference results in the decrease in the mutual benefit in the communication.
This is indeed a shame for the entire human race. Isn’t it, therefore, the natural responsibility of
human beings to correct the situation?

Today the policy maker for the country understands the situation and promotes the unification of
languages and letters. He is not impeded by those who resent the foreign languages or those who
are in favor of reviving the classical languages in the writing... Within the boundary of a nation,
Japan has unified the language with the language of Jianghu; German and Austria have adopted the
Germanic language; England has used English; and France has utilized French. Meanwhile the
languages of Jiuzhou and Siguo (し 広く), Saxon, Scotland and many other places are lost as the
result of natural selection. It would be inappropriate to approach the issue from the racial
perspective. The elimination of the complex languages is purely a consequence of rational
selection. The more convenient a language is, the better it is able to function as a communicative
tool.

According to this language view centering on “language as communicative,” anarchists proposed that
“to cease the international war, we have to, first of all, apply Esperanto throughout the world, because
Esperanto is in fact the precursor of world peace and an anticipatory action prior to the execution of
universalism,”59 and that “If we want to push China closer to civilization, and popularize education
throughout the country, we have to abolish the current literature used in China and to adopt the
Esperanto.”60

Anarchists and Universalists claimed that their language view was based on equality, communication
and peace, yet it led to a negation of linguistic diversity and cultural differentiation, the latter of which
happened to be the core of a nationalistic language view. In Guixinshiji (Answer to the New Century),
Zhang Taiyan writes that:

> Letters are the signs of language, and language is the window to mind. Although language is
natural, it did not, however, come out of nowhere in the universe. It was created by man, and thus
is generally standardized through human affairs. Since there are discrepancies among activities in
human life, the languages cannot be the same.

Language is not a natural entity, but a human creation and inherent expression. Since men are different,
their inherent expressions are bound to be divergent. In “Interpretation of ‘Qiwulun,’” which Zhang
Taiyan wrote between 1910 and 1911, he explained Zhuangzi’s “Qiwulun” through the Yogachara
Buddhism. Zhang underlined that we should define equality based on difference, i.e. setting the
peculiarity of everything in the universe as the prerequisite and condition for equality. The modern
egalitarianism, in comparison, presumes the disappearance of difference between men, and considers
individual, national and citizen to be formally equal as a legal unit. Yet such equality presupposes the
elimination of differentiation. Wu Zhihui, the author of New Century, and Kang Youwei, author of
Datuangshu, differed in political views, but agreed on planning the world in a universal form. They
proposed unifying the world’s languages, either through vernacular or alphabetic system of writing. Yet
Zhang held the view of “equality through difference,” completely different from the egalitarianism in
form, and he set the differentiation in the world as the premise of his language theory.

Admittedly, a language theory, centered on specificity and subjectivity, is closely associated with
nationalism, it nevertheless has more complex connotation. The nationalistic language view connotes a
rejection of imperial languages. In the European nationalist movements, for example, Anglo-Saxon,
Italian, Germanic and French were used to resist Latin, and they are now used to resist English in an

59 欲求万国弥兵，必先使万国新语通行各国，盖万国新语，实求世界平和之先导也，亦即大同主义实行之张本也
60 苟吾辈而欲使中国日进于文明，教育普及全国，则非废弃目下中国之文字，而采用万国新语不可
era of Globalization. This nationalist resistance is centered on the differentiation of national languages. But this differentiation is not a natural entity, but an expression of national creativity. At the time of Zhang Taiyan and Lu Xun, there was also a trend of globalization, which wished everyone to use the same language so as to abolish cultural diversity and any other differentiation. Lu Xun's concept of “true feelings” underlines the relationship between language and the self, and this viewpoint coincides with Zhang Taiyan's idea that “language is window to mind,” which means that any voice that is unable to express the self is not true feelings, but chaos. In *The Lectures*, a collection of Zhang's speeches delivered on the welcome conference host by the Chinese students in Tokyo, Zhang said that,

> Greek poetry and the Rigveda—how are they compared to our Qu Yuan and Du Fu?

To us, literature in our own tongue would naturally outshine the others. It is a shame that the study of letters is on the downside, and literature is also in a lousy shape. If we propose the study of letters and achieve a literary renaissance, this power of patriotism and protecting the national character will glorify anything and anyone.

Each nation has a different language, in the same way that each person has a different inner world and his/her individual will. If language is man's creation, it is not only a communicative tool, but also the manifestation of inner feelings and wills. Language does not exist for the sake of communication alone, which is the product of creativity, of the interaction between will and feelings. But if languages were all drastically different and have no shared features between one another, how could the inter-subjective stimulation be possible?

The key to this question is to explain “differentiation.” Differentiation in reality is homorganic with the disproportionate order, and thus the modern egalitarianism is characterized by eliminating differentiation. Zhang Taiyan and Lu Xun's account of peculiarity is on the premise of equality, yet the two of them opposed eliminating differentiation, as the modern egalitarianism requires. Therefore, this peculiarity or difference is not confirmation of the realistic order or its differentiation (i.e. inequality), but an equality established on the premise of respecting the peculiarity, and deviant from the formalistic equality without any differentiation. In this regard, peculiarity and differentiation are defined in terms of ontology or ontology without noumenon. In other words, they are defined in accordance with a universalism that values diversity. There is no universality among individual subjects, because this universality could only exist when subjectivity disappears, and one could only establish one's universality and generality through negating subjectivity. That is why eliminating the differentiation in languages means eliminating the subjectivity of languages, and thus eliminating the premise of communication, i.e. the subject's very existence. The language here not only refers to the linguistic form as an objective being, but also refers to the way in which the subject expresses him or herself. As per Zhang Taiyan, the communicative language view eliminates and dispels the language's subjectivity, and thus formulates a negation of communication, when there is no communication but universality. Yet on the other hand, the inter-stimulating and subjective language view preinstalls the condition for the inter-subjective stimulation, i.e. equality with differentiation, whose prerequisite is an anti-truth universalistic theory that is inclusive and diverse.

Form-wise, the classical prose style is contrary not only to *wen yan*, but also to vernacular. How could we explain the relationship between the stylistic restoration and the historical turning point of literature, i.e. the literature revolution? Why would Lu Xun turn from a practitioner of classical prose style into a radical practitioner of language and literature revolution? The aforementioned discussions have already provided several clues to the answers: first of all, both classical prose style and vernacular saw *wen yan* and its related system as their opposition. Secondly, both advocates of classical prose style and vernacular considered the relation between language and inner feelings as the key to the innovation.

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61 Du Fu (712-770) was a prominent Chinese poet of the Tang Dynasty, and he is frequently considered to be the greatest of the Chinese poets of all times.
of language. Thirdly, advocates of classical prose style viewed classical prose as the vernacular in ancient times, whereas advocates of vernacular considered vernacular as contemporary, and in this regard, both started from the “voice theory” as exemplified in Lu Xun’s expression of “speaking from the heart.” Fourthly, the classical prose movement was devoted to creating an ethical language,” while the vernacular movement was dedicated to establishing a “national language,” and both maintained intimate relationship with the nationalist movements. In this perspective, Kiyama Hideo is right to evaluate the relation between “literature restoration” in late Qing dynasty and the “literature revolution” during May Fourth as a dialectical transformation, as opposed to a simplistic dichotomy.

7. When silence reigns: variation of citizen and cosmopolitan

Previously I have discussed the formality of “Toward a Refutation of the Voices of Evil,” and have demonstrated that such formality directly reflects the language view implied in “true feelings” and “illuminating thoughts,” and thus establishes a direct correlation between the form and the content. Before I proceed with further discussion, I would raise two questions for you to contemplate while reading and to analyze the text with the questions in mind. The text of the essay criticizes two primary concepts, the first of which is “citizen,” i.e. nationalism, and the second is “cosmopolitan,” i.e. Cosmopolitanism. I have argued that Lu Xun’s text is a nationalist outcome in the anti-Manchu era, but how could this nationalistic text meanwhile criticize nationalism? How are we to understand the self-negation as being included in the nationalism in contemporary China? The next question is: why doesn’t Lu Xun’s criticism against nationalism lead to cosmopolitanism, but contrarily formulates criticism against it? What is the premise of this two-fold criticism? Today we also face two trends, that of nationalism and of globalization. How could we learn from Lu Xun’s criticism?

The second paragraph states its theme at the outset that “after some inspection, the proposition being advanced at present may be divided into two major categories. The first suggest that a man should think of himself as guomin (a citizen of a particular nation), while the second conceives of the individual as a member of the world community.” The word guomin is borrowed from Japan, which is the Chinese translation of “nation.” In Liang Qichao’s translation, nationalism was interpreted as “citizen-ism,” and Sun Yat-sen translated it as “ethnicitism.” “Cosmopolitan” contains the conception of universalism, and also relates to anarchism. Lu Xun’s own theory is influenced by both anarchism and nationalism, but meanwhile, he also criticized both ideologies. He stated that “advocates of the first position (nationalism) may attempt to intimidate us with the prospect that China may well perish if their ideas are not implemented forthwith, while proponents of the second camp (cosmopolitanism) may similarly insinuate that failure to conform to their principles would be tantamount to a betrayal of civilization.”

Lu Xun viewed two opposing socio-political ideologies from an identical perspective, i.e. what he previously discussed “true feelings, illuminating thoughts, individual subjectivity, and master of one’s own soul.” Consequently, he realized that these two opposing ideologies were, in fact, in accordance with one another. Why? He explains that,

But the common goal of both camps (nationalism and cosmopolitanism), albeit inconsistently emphasized, is the elimination of all individuality in man, so that none dare differ from the next, and all dissolve into one great mass, as if all colors were overlaid with a film of murky black. Should any make bold and not obey, the lash of mass censure will be applied to attack and restrict them.
These two seemingly divergent assertions are identical in the sense of “elimination of all individuality in man.” He later positioned democratic formation in the same vision and realized that democratic form was also identical to the other two. Lu Xun therefore said that “the appearance of tyrants among the common people must also be dated from the present era,” and “now that the masses themselves shall rule by fiat, to whom can anyone turn for sympathy?” “In olden days, autocrats ruled over the masses, but the masses sometimes had opportunities to rebel against them or flee. Today, those who stand alone are made to suffer at the hands of the crowd and are denied the option of resistance. The public are quick to cry out in favor of freedom, but ‘freedom’ itself has never rung more hollow nor the concept appeared more haggard and worn.” If we situate this argument in the debate over China’s future political system among the revolutionists in late Qing dynasty, it would be apparent to see that Wang Jingwei and other followers of Sun Yat-sen took America’s representative democracy as the paradigm for future republic regime, while Zhang Taiyan stood in sharp opposition and resolutely resisted representative democracy in “Should We Implement Representative Government?” Lu Xun’s argument does not directly touch upon the blueprint for the system, and his analysis seems to be more in the field of political philosophy. To him, modern society is a new form of autocracy—the public’s autocracy and the media’s autocracy, a public dictatorship different from, but all the more severe and autocratic than, despotic dictatorship. Therefore, the lack of true feelings, illuminating thoughts, and one or two men of foresight, in politics, is the public’s autocracy.

The question is: Lu Xun aspired to the Republic, and these inclinations are evident in many of his oeuvres, but why was he so critical towards the political formation of the modern society? I used to call it anti-Modernist Modernism, i.e. he aspired to modernity, which he meanwhile criticized. In “Concerning the Imbalance of Culture,” Lu Xun specifically mentioned, “when the material is destroyed, the spiritual could be celebrated; and individuality should be asserted while the masses should be discarded.” The first half of the sentence criticizes the capitalistic materialism, while the second half denounces the political and social formation of the modern society—a society of the masses. In this perspective, we could, more or less, detect a Nietzschian tone. What are the grounds of nationalism and cosmopolitanism? They are science, evolution, civilization, and an irresistible universality, of which democracy is the political formation. Although today’s Chinese society is divergent from the Western society, both of them are conveying a message of popular dictatorship: a dictatorship that is of consumerism, of mass media and that is executed in the name of the masses. Lu Xun exclaimed, “if man loses his own identity/subjectivity, who could arise him?” When freedom is turned into a popular narrative, it has long gone.

8. Superstition and hypocritical gentry

Departing from true feelings, illuminating thoughts, and speaking the mind (baixin), Lu Xun reached the inference concerning “the hypocritical gentry” (weishi), that “the urgent task before us today is to rid
ourselves of the hypocritical gentry; ‘superstition’ itself may remain!” In the late Qing dynasty, China was in a so-called Era of Enlightenment and Era of Revolution. All those with ideals were engaging in the Enlightenment and Revolution, in criticizing the Chinese’s ignorance, and in promoting science, republic and civilization. It is precisely at this time, however, that Lu Xun started defending superstition. In fact, “eradication of superstition,” a proposition of Enlightenment, was one of the “voices of evil” that he intended to refute. Who are the hypocritical gentry? They are the ones who talked about “progress, citizen, cosmopolitan and globalization,” and who instructed the masses to do this or that. But why would Lu Xun defend superstition?

In this remark, Lu Xun proposed the idea of “true system of belief” (zhengxin), without which there would be no way to judge what superstition is, because without the legitimate faith, the very word of superstition would be rendered untenable.

As a response to the proposition of eradicating superstition during Enlightenment, Lu Xun endowed superstition with a completely different definition. He said that,

In this world, with the exception of the ignorant and simple-minded, men who are not satisfied with material life will inevitably have spiritual needs. In ancient times people in India thought that flashes of lightening amidst the dark clouds of a storm were a sign that the god of thunder was battling his enemies, hence, in this case, reverence was born of fear. Superstition is defined here as a metaphysical need, which transcends material life. That is why superstition was precisely the devout faith for our ancestry—it was an activity based on their inherent need. In this sense, the ancient superstition was actually true feelings, illuminating thoughts and speaking the mind. It is a transcendental need that is based upon true feelings, illuminating thoughts, and speaking the mind. This is Lu Xun’s first definition.

Lu Xun also tackled religion, which is closely related to superstition. Since late Qing dynasty, it has been prevalently believed that superstition and religion, which are interrelated, should be eradicated. The reason for this eradication is science, truth, progression and civilization. Therefore, superstition needs to be examined along with religion. As Lu Xun said, “in spite of the fact that ‘men of aspiration’ in China regard all this as superstition, I for one am of the opinion that such things are indicative of the desires of a people who sought to improve themselves by means of transcending a wholly relative and limited reality in order to enter the lofty realm of unlimited absolutes. The human heart requires something to fall back upon; without some form of faith, man cannot endure, hence the emergence of religion was inevitable.” In other words, man has the need for transcendence and for finding the reliable, and such human vulnerability generates a need for religion. “Religion were created by people out of a desire to improve themselves; no matter if they worship many gods or one god, tangible or

71 伪士当去，迷信可存，今日之急也 (113)
72 破迷信者，于今为烈，不特时蜚於士人之口，且哀然成巨帙矣。顾胥不语人以正信；正信不立，又乌从比校而知其迷妄也。
73 夫人在两间，若知识混沌，思虑简陋，斯无论已；倘其不安物质之生活，则自必有形上之需求。故吠陁之民，见天风烈雨，黤云如盘，奔电时作，则以为因陁罗〔印度神话中的雷神〕之与敌斗，为之栗然生虔敬念。
74 虽中国志士谓之迷，而吾则谓此乃向上之民，欲离是有限相对之现世，以趣无限绝对之至上者也。人心必有所凭依，非信无以立，宗教之作，不可或已矣.
intangible deities, the intention of fulfilling man’s spiritual need to lift himself up is still the same.” In it, “no matter if they worship many gods or one god” could refer to pantheism, monotheism or atheism, yet they concur on “the intention of fulfilling man’s spiritual need to lift himself up.” We need to pay attention to two claims. The first is that Lu Xun’s definition of religion and superstition is actually the definition of human transcendence, which is connected with the inner need, and this judgment is directly associated with the definition of “true system of belief.” Secondly, Lu Xun’s definition of religion and superstition is a product of modernist thoughts, in that he wasn’t situated inside religion, e.g. the Creation inside Christianity expounds the founding of religion. Quite the contrary, Lu Xun viewed both religion and superstition as man’s self-creation, an expansion of man’s inner needs. Therefore, Lu Xun’s views fall in the scope of modernist thoughts, as opposed to the traditional religious worldview.

9. Which religion and which politics?

The following passage is Lu Xun’s account of Chinese religion:

In the case of China, a universal reverence for natural phenomena has always been regarded as the basis of culture. Worship of heaven and earth was the foundation for the systematic development of rituals and ceremonies. The reverence for heaven and earth, extended to the countless host of material things, provided a basis for all wisdom and moral principles, as well as our state and clan systems. In fact, the extent of its influence cannot be measured. Because of this, Chinese people have always cherished their native place, no social classes ever formed, and people in the old days invested plants and rocks with mysterious properties and profound significance. The wide range of material objects revered in China in this manner was unparalleled in the world. This distinguishing trait has, however, been lost in the course of the countless deprivations the people have suffered. Today, it is found only in ancient written records and among some peasants who preserve the ways of their ancestors. It is next to impossible to find it among literati.

All things could be the objects of worship for the ancient Chinese, and this practice is different from that of Christianity and Hinduism. It was usually believed that the West or the Islamic society was religious, whereas Chinese civilization was secular in nature. Yet Lu Xun did not agree: he believed that China was not a secular society, and in fact, it was more religious than European or Islamic society, because in China, the national, familial and societal systems were all related to this primitive worship of all things in the universe. Lu Xun’s viewpoint could be seen as the source for a certain standpoint in the “East-West Civilization debate,” but the premises of the argument are entirely different. For example, in early 1915, Qian Zhixiu published “The Sino-West Cultural Theory of Wu Tingfang” in The Orient Magazine to introduce Wu Tingfang’s sino-west cultural theory. Wu underlined Asian culture’s superiority in his talk:

Its social system is widely known outside Asia. Religion is barely influential in the Western culture, whereas it is the societal basis in every Asian culture. The reason is that the white are practical and thus consider the financial issues to be the most critical in their lives, while the colored value the ethical issues. As far as I can see, the white do not know what peace and happiness is, since they are

75 宗教由来，本向上之民所自建，纵对象有多一虚实之别，而足充人心向上之需要则同然

76 顾吾中国，则夙以普崇万物文化本根，敬天礼地，实与法式，发育张大，整然不紊。覆载为之首，而次及于万汇，凡一切睿知义理与邦家民族之制，无不据是为基始焉。效果所著，大莫可名，以是而不轻旧乡，以是而不生阶级；他若虽一卉木竹石，视之均函有神閟性灵，玄义在中，不同凡品，其所崇爱之溥博，世未见有其匹也。顾民生多艰，是性日薄，洎夫今，乃仅能见诸古人之记，与气禀未失之农人；求之于士大夫，戛戛乎难得矣。

77 Wu Tingfang (1842-1922) was a Chinese diplomat and politician who served as Minister of Foreign Affairs and briefly as Acting Premier during the early years of the Chinese Republic, when Sun Yat-sen was temporarily absent.
too busy to enjoy themselves. The white position accumulating material wealth as their goal, and in contrast, my people perceive the morality as their life goal. The colored, compared to the irresponsible white, have more solid familial bond, and thus they are more sensitive to the social sensibility and have fewer sufferers among them.

Wu’s standpoint is based on a fundamental conceptual division between Europe and Asia, which is characterized by racial division. Based on this racial division, social system, religion and other lifestyle formulate the cultural division. The only common ground here is that both Lu Xun and Wu perceived China to be a religious society where religion is more prevalent.

If we contrast such observation of Chinese religion with the European Enlightenment’s notion, what could we get? Take Hegel as an example; fundamentally, he does not admit the fact that religion exists in China. In an opposition between philosophy and religion, of the classical Enlightenment tradition, Hegel states that,

To impute Pantheism instead of Atheism to Philosophy is part of the modern habit of mind—of the new piety and new theology. For them philosophy has too much of God—so much so, that, if we believe them, it asserts that God is everything and everything is God. This new theology, which makes religion only a subjective feeling and denies the knowledge of the divine nature, thus retains nothing more than a God in general without objective characteristics. Without interest of its own for the concrete, fulfilled notion of God, it treats it only as an interest which others once had, and hence treats what belongs to the doctrine of God’s concrete nature as something merely historical. The indeterminate God is to be found in all religions; every kind of piety—that of Hindu to asses, cows—or to dalai-lamas—that of the Egyptians to the ox—is always adoration of an object which, with all its absurdities, also contains the generic abstract, God in general. <Philosophy of Mind, 121>

He also claims that,

Since immediate knowledge is declared to be the criterion of truth, it follows, secondly, that all superstition or idolatry is expounded to be truth, and that an apology is prepared for any contents of the will, however unjust and immoral. It is because he believes in them, and not from the reasoning and syllogism of what is termed mediate knowledge, that the Indian finds God in the cow, the monkey, the Brahmin, or the Lama. <116>

The dichotomy of truth and superstition, and that of epistemology and faith are the most important principles of Enlightenment, and they are Hegel’s conceptual basis for categorizing the Oriental religion with other kinds of rudimentary superstition and idolatry. Lu Xun’s standpoint, however, is closer to embryology, in that he did not equate a “universal reverence for natural phenomena” with “oriental philosophy” which is criticized by Hegel. Lu Xun viewed this form of faith as the root for “all wisdom and moral principles, as well as our state and clan system.”78 In the tradition of Hegel and Weber, the aforementioned system is the product of rationalization, whose premise is breaking away from the early idolatry. Lu Xun, however, holds an oppositional opinion: the seemingly rational system is not only embryologically connected with the early religious idolatry, but this system and the idolatry are also mutually influential and sustaining.

If we examine Lu Xun’s religious view in the context of the religious revival in the late Qing dynasty, we could see its peculiarity. The Religious Revival in the late Qing dynasty had three primary trends. The first is to establish Confucianism, with Kang Youwei as its precursor. Kang wanted to set Confucian school of thoughts as a religion, with Confucius as it religious founder. But why Confucius? At the time, there were two mainstream thoughts—the Royalist and the Revolutionary. The Royalists believed that Confucius epitomized the culture. Qing Empire, ruled by ethnic minority as it was, also
followed the Confucianism. Therefore, setting Confucius as the basis of identification is the same as setting culture, as opposed to ethnicity, as the basis of identification. This practice could surpass the Manchu-Han antagonistic nationalist model, and establish an identification of the new China based on the all-inclusive Confucianism. The Revolutionist, however, discontented. Domestically, they needed anti-Manchu Revolution, while internationally, they emphasized the yellow race nationalism. They wanted to set Yellow Emperor as the one to revere. The worship of Yellow Emperor is associated with the worship of nationalism in late Qing dynasty and the Han ethnical issues. The worship of Confucianism and its founder, however, is associated with the argumentation of the legitimacy of later empires as Chinese empires, and is the foundation of new legitimism. This is a narrative of two different nationalisms.

In addition, according to Kang and Liang, Confucianism “does not discuss the unusual, the bold, the perverse or the supernatural,” which is in tune with the modern worldview, and Confucianism stresses superstition, which fits the modern system. Yet Zhang and Lu Xun were rather critical of Confucianism. Actually Lu Xun’s criticism of Confucianism wouldn’t unfold until the May Fourth, and at the time of composing “Toward a Refutation of the Voices of Evil,” Lu Xun seldom directly criticized Confucianism, which is apparent compared to Zhou Zuoren. At this point, Lu Xun was mainly criticizing Taoism, whereas Zhou Zuoren and Zhang Taiyan were opposing Confucianism. Why would Lu Xun criticize Taoism? Lu Xun viewed Taoism as upholding “letting things take their own course (a Taoist concept of human conduct), which is explained in “On the Power of Mara Poetry” that “the five-thousand-year interpretation of Laozi is for the purpose of not inspiring and stimulating the people’s mind.” The concept of “not to inspire and stimulate the people’s mind” also appears in “Toward a Refutation of the Voices of Evil,” and it means not to touch man’s innermost feelings. “The practice of not inspiring or stimulating the mind has turned man cold and immobile as withered wood and has caused them to do nothing. They interacted with the society with the determination of not achieving anything, and considered such principle to be the cause of peace.” This claim was echoed later in 1918, when Lu Xun reflected that “the root of China falls solely upon Taoism.” To Lu Xun, Taoism is the least strict religion, because it does not have strict religious discipline, nor does it have any legitimate faith. Similarly, Lu Xun approves of Hinayana Buddhism while deplores Mahayana Buddhism in China, in that the latter lacks intrinsic severity.

The second trend is Christianity. Christianity has its own doctrine, such as monotheism. At the time some proposed that Christianity be utilized to save China, and Sun Yat-sen was one of them. A Christian himself, Sun Yat-sen shared the idea that Christianity could assist reforming China. Zhang Taiyan and Lu Xun, on the other hand, held that each civilization had its intrinsic characteristics and roots, and thus initiating civilization solely according to Christianity would cause a lot of problems.

The third trend is Buddhism. Zhang Taiyan was the most important representative of this trend. Zhou Zuoren, in his memoir of attending the lectures at Minbao publishing house, described Zhang Taiyan: “in the summer, he sat on the ground, cross-legged, wearing only one long vest stripped to the waist and he had a little mustache. He lectured with a smile, combining sobriety with humor and looked like a maitreya in a temple.” In Minbao, Zhang published a considerable number of essays on Buddhism, for the purpose of proposing the revolutionary ethics. Speaking the mind, true feelings and illuminating thoughts, as mentioned in Lu Xun’s essay, are part of Zhang’s revolutionary thought, although they are ostensibly irrelevant. Zhang held the Buddhist doctrine in high esteem, and he believed that the Buddhism in China was very impure. He said that “the Buddhism today has a lot of impurity in it,

79 Yellow Emperor is a legendary Chinese sovereign and cultural hero who is considered in Chinese mythology to be the ancestor of all Han Chinese. Tradition holds that he reigned from 2697 B.C. to 2597 B.C. He emerged as a chief deity of Taoism during the Han dynasty (202 B.C. to 220 C.E.).
80 以不撄人心故，则必先自致槁木之心，立无为之治；以无为之化社会，而世即于太平。
Unlike Bon Religion, it has to be improved to be useful.” Zhang proposed to improve the old Buddhism with Huayan Buddhism and underlines the inward exploration. He thinks this is more competent than Christianity.

Lu Xun’s text is influenced by Zhang Taiyan: on the literary level, it is correlated with Zhang’s study of letters, and in terms of its content, it is also impacted by Zhang's essays written in the same period. For example, “Four Confusing Theories” and “On the Five Negations” are the text’s two main sources, and another is “On Establishing Religion.” Zhang argues that China’s foremost priority is to “inspire confidence through religion and increase the citizens’ sense of ethnicity,” and the next is to “invoke ethnicity through national legacy.” “Four Confusing Theories” opposes a world’s narrative that is purely based on scientific or evolutionary truth. Zhang says that, “our ancestors used to think reputation was sacred and untouched by human force, whereas today, man believes that principle, evolution, materialism and nature are sacred.”

Both are compelling, universal and irresistible rules. In the nationalism in late Qing dynasty, including Lu Xun’s thoughts, the ideology of evolution, of truth, of material and of nature was the most positive. For example, “History of the world,” which was published in Henan, is a detailed account of the evolution theory applied to human history. Lu Xun had an extraordinary knowledge in biology and geology; he had also studied anatomy, and thus knew of the human anatomy. He wrote “The Mineral Deposit in China,” which was very crucial in the literature on China’s mineral deposit, as well as in the literature of history of science. He also composed “Teaching History of Science.” Even in “On the Power of Mara Poetry,” by stating “evolution is like a speeding arrow, which cannot be stopped by anything in the world,” Lu Xun used the evolutionary theory to stimulate “survival competition.” Lu Xun went to Nanjing for school in 1898, and in around 1902, he read “Evolution and Ethics,” translated by Yan Fu, and started believing in the evolutionary theory, until the May Fourth Movement. Yet when Lu Xun introduced evolutionary theory to the public in 1907 and 1908, he nevertheless criticized this evolutionary and progressive thought. This seems to be a dilemma. He talked about anti-Manchu revolution and nationalism, yet he criticized nationalism—this is also a dilemma. Similarly, he talked about knowing the world, while criticizing universalism and cosmopolitanism, which is a dilemma as well. In other words, in his articles written around the same time, Lu Xun expressed some seemingly contradictory thoughts. Why did he have these thoughts, and how did he articulate them?

Zhang Taiyan’s theoretical logic, as demonstrated in “Four Confusing Theories,” “On the Five Negations,” and “On Establishing Religion,” is built upon the Buddhist philosophy. Yet Lu Xun’s narrative is very different from that of Zhang. Zhang, along with many people at the time, believed that there were three major religious forms throughout the world, i.e. pantheism, monotheism, and atheism. They drew an analogy between the three religious forms with three distinct government systems and thus correlate a narrative of religion with the narrative of the evolution of government system. In their analogy, pantheism is compared to the aristocratic polyarchy, monotheism to the monarchical autocracy, and atheism to the democratic republic. If we link the division among religions with the distinction among political systems, we could see that such a set of progressive narratives indeed came from the European modernism. Take Hegel’s philosophy of history for instance; with its progression from the Orient to Greece, Rome and even German Empire, it is also an evolution of government system. The various forms of politics become the units of historic progression. In late Qing dynasty, many associated pantheism, monotheism and atheism with the narrative of government system. Therefore, Buddhism’s emergence as atheism is correlated with the revolutionary republican thoughts. At the time, many were opposed to Zhang’s proposal of establishing a religion based on Buddhism, and their primary argument was that if a religion was established in China based on Buddhism, China would to
perish, because the Indians, despite their devout reverence to Buddhism, lost their nation. Zhang responded that it was because other than religion, India did not have any political or legal tradition. If a country had no political or legal system, whichever religion that the country followed, it would be conquered under Colonialism. China, however, had already established its political and legal systems, and thus with the aid of Buddhism, it would avoid India’s fate. In this regard, Zhang’s religious thought is closely associated with the issues of nation, system and politics.

Through these claims, we could see what Lu Xun was really aspiring to. “Universal reverence for natural phenomena,” implies a sense of pantheism, which diverges from Zhang Taiyan’s Buddhist theory. The following sentence is the key: “the reverence for heaven and earth, extended to the countless host of material things, provided a basis for all wisdom and moral principles, as well as our state and clan system.” The system, customs and nation of China are all connected to this worship. In other words, this is a religion that is closely associated with system and daily life, and thus there is no strict division between religion and system, or religion and secular life. Lu Xun is opposed to the evolutionary theory of religion, that religion evolves from pantheism to monotheism and then to atheism. In addition, he argues against deriving an evolutionary theory of political system from this syllogistic taxonomy of religion. Although this idea deviates from Zhang’s narrative, the two agree on drawing connection between religion and system. Moreover, Lu Xun underlines the significance of “true system of belief,” which interrelates with Zhang’s idea.

Lu Xun did not discuss religion and superstition from any particular religious form or any folk superstition. Quite the contrary, he interrogated religion and superstition from faith, which is the kernel of the issue. On the one hand, he emphasized the correlation between the system and the nature worship, which used to be the organizing force of Chinese society. On the other hand, since the primitive religion cannot effectively operate now, there is the need for establishing a new religion. Yet where should we start? The first place to attend to is “in ancient written records,” and the second place to look at is “among some peasants who preserve the ways of their ancestors.” Therefore, the ones who genuinely have faith are the villages and common peasants, who are contrary to the hypocrite gentry. The Enlightenment, democracy, freedom, science, civilization and progression that the hypocrite gentry promoted are unsubstantial and faithless. Lu Xun asked the question:

if some claim that the objects of the Chinese people’s veneration are confined to the corporeal and extend neither to the intangible, nor to a single almighty being, but rather to numerous images, and that their beliefs are all superstition and delusion, I wish to ask: why must a single god without form be regarded as the true god?

He meant to say that now that people in China worshiped everything in the universe, as opposed to one God, why should it be taken for granted that atheism and monotheism were the only legitimate worship? Lu Xun’s religious view is essentially disparate from pantheism, monotheism and atheism, and thus the systematic blueprint built upon Lu Xun’s religious view does not concern aristocracy, monarchy or republic. This is a religion that worships all things and a political system where each one has his/her individual identity.

83 凡一切睿知义理与邦国家族之制，无不据是为始基焉
84 仅能见诸古人之记录
85 与其素未失之农人
86 设有人，谓中国人之所崇拜者，不在无形而在实体，不在一宰而在百昌，斯其信崇，即为迷妄，则敢问无形一主，何以独为正神?
10. Superstition and Imagination

The modern man views the worship of nature as a rudimentary idolatry, and Lu Xun was against this idea, since he believed that superstition and religious faith was not only a product of transcendence, but also the source for imagination. As he wrote,

people, in their observation of phenomena and in their investigation of the material world, felt as if everything embodied some mysterious inspiration from which came poetry and song and all that is beautiful or ingenious. Those with an understanding of the ineffable today still make recourse to this point, yet China had already arrived at such an understanding some four thousand years ago. If these things are denounced as superstition, then what constitutes ‘true’ faith?... (They) came from poetry and song.87

What is indeed the relation between religious faith and poetry and song? In the following passage, he used a key word—shensi, from which we could sense the aforementioned relation. The word shensi, originated from Wenxin diaolng written by Liu Xie, refers to “imagination.”

Our ancestors said that ‘one could be in the sea, while the mind could travel to the military camps.’ This is imagination at work. The idea in literature could transcend spatiality and temporality. Therefore, the writer’s mind could travel through time in silence, and his vision could reach the far-away land without involving any motion. When a writer reads an article, he could hear the pleasant sound coming out of the literature, and when he flashes his eyes, he could see the changing scenes. it is the marvel of the imagination ingrained in literature that enables the writer’s mind to engage with the external world. Mind is the mater of heart, while it is mastered by individual will and ambience. The external world relies on eyes and ears for its access, yet it could be extensively elucidated through literature. If a writer could express himself rather actively, then the shape of the external world could get fully developed; but if the writer’s will and ambience gets barred, his mind will not hold.88

If we read the essay’s discussion on religion along with the elucidation of the Romanticist poets in “On the Power of Mara Poetry,” we could see that Lu Xun’s account of the Romanticists and that of religion are, in fact, two aspects of one same issue. In “On the Power of Mara Poetry,” Lu Xun named Shelley, Byron and other rigorous and rebellious poets as “new literary masters.” Since if there is a “new,” there has to be an “old,” who are the “old literary masters” then? They are the ancient precedents.

Throughout Chinese history, “on the basis of historical testimony, it is apparent that most damage to the fabric of society, to the nation and to the altars of our ancestors was, in fact, caused not by the rural peasantry and common folk, but by our faithless gentry.”89 The former’s daily life is interrelated with religious life, while the latter is devoted to breaking away from superstition, a.k.a. the absolute rationalization. Up to this point, what Lu Xun meant by “the urgent task before us today is to rid ourselves of the hypocritical gentry; ‘superstition’ itself may remain!”90 has been clearly manifested. The hypocrite gentry went with the stream, and although they were playing the role of enlighteners, they did not have faith. Superstition is the source of creativity, imagination, transcendence and humanity, but the hypocrite gentry claimed that “phosphorous is an element, not a will-o’-the wisp.”91 Since the ancestors

87 此即诗歌也，即美妙
88 古人云：“形在江海之上，心存魏阙之下”。神思之谓也。文之思也，其神远矣，故寂然凝虑，思接千载；悄焉动容，视通万里。吟咏之间，吐纳珠玉之声；眉睫之前，卷舒风云之色：其思理之致乎！故思理为妙，神与物游。神居胸臆，而志气统其关键；物沿耳目，而辞令管其枢机。枢机方通，则物无隐貌；关键将塞，则神有遁心。
89 墟社稷毁家庙者，征之历史，正多无信仰之士人，而乡曲小民无与。
90 伪士当去，迷信可存，今日之急也
91 磷，元素之一也；不为鬼火
mentioned dragon, which was proved nonexistent by archeology and biology, dragon was thus deemed as superstition. The hypocrite gentry did not understand that dragon was an imaginative creation by those who were in pursuit of upwards transcendence. Lu Xun further inquired: the emblem of Russia is eagle, and that of England is a monster, but why are not these emblems being condemned as the dragon of China was? The reason is that China is not as strong as the others, and the slander of dragon is purely snobbish. “Yet they themselves are the spiritual captives of others, and their faith lies not in their own hands;” this kind of idealist who “eradicates superstition” is no more than giving in to power and influence.

The hypocrite gentry, however, was not unique to China—it had pervaded the world since Enlightenment. “There are those who ridicule mythology. They slander the myths of Greece, Egypt and India alike, asserting that myths were invented merely as devices to dispel boredom and to amuse.” The modern people treated the ancient mythology as jokes, to which Lu Xun rebuked that,

Myths were originated by ancient peoples who, observing the wonders of nature, gave rein to their imagination and gave human form to their inventions. Their minds were filled with the mysteries of antiquity, bizarrely impressive. Though it is inappropriate to treat such tales as genuine, it is even more mistaken to ridicule them. The fact that ancient peoples had such rich imaginations would be a source of awe and inspiration to later ages. The arts and humanities of western Europe have been greatly enriched by myth and legend. Philosophy and literature have been strengthened and beautified in innumerable instances by the presence of these elements. If one desires to do an in-depth study of the Western humanities, mythology should be given priority, for if their myths are not understood, it will be impossible to appreciate their arts. If someone remains ignorant of their arts, how can he come to terms with the rest of their civilization?

The ancient mythology and imagination are marvelous, and it is unnecessary to believe in them with a modern scientific attitude. That said, it is more ridiculous to scorn them. If we do not attend to the Western mythology when learning about western civilization, we could never really understand the culture. “Corroded at the core and wavering spiritually” as China was, we need to find this root, which lies in the ancient inhabitants’ imagination, mythology, faith, superstition, religion, and their representation in literature, art and science.

11. Religion and anti-religious religion

The worship of all things breaks down the rigid distinction between the religious and the secular. Lu Xun maintained a life-long infatuation with the world of ghosts and spirits. For him, the hierarchical order in the world of spirits is the same with the order in reality. Spirits like the hanging woman and the ghost who summons souls to hell are an organic part of the folk and secular life. Lu Xun’s view on spirits, superstition and religion is purely modernistic. He quoted two European thinkers to expound and verify his religious view. One of them is a scientist, the other a philosopher. As he says, “there are, in fact, people in Europe who propose the creation of a religion based on science. The German scholar Ernst Haeckel, through his studies in biology, established monism.” Haeckel is a biologist, and in the article “History of Man” (1907), Lu Xun gives detailed account of Haeckel’s contribution to biology.

92 心夺于人，信不繇己
93 举其大略，首有嘲神话者，总希腊埃及印度，咸与谁笑，谓足作解颐之具。
94 夫神话之作，本于古民，睹天物之奇觚，则退神思而施以人化，想出古异，謙謙可观，虽信之失当，而嘲之则大感也。太古之民，神思如是，为后人者，当何惊异瑰大之；矧欧西艺文，多蒙其泽，思想文术，赖是而庄严美妙者，不知几何。倘欲诧西国人文，治此则其首事，盖不知神话，即莫由解其艺文，暗艺文者，于内部文明何获焉。
95 本根剥丧，神气旁皇
This essay supplements the previous narrative. “Through his studies in guanpin, he established monism—the theory that all phenomena in the universe arise from a single underlying principle.”97 Guanpin refers to biology, the monism of biology. “He proposed the dedication of a shrine to rationality, the true Trinity of the nineteenth century. What were its three components? Cheng (Truth), goodness, and beauty.”98 Cheng (truth) could also be translated into “reality.” Although Haeckel is a scientist, his domain could be turned into religion, because science originated from religion. Thus, “(Haeckel) believed that rites and ceremonies continued to have a function, that is, to enable people to cope with present-day realities and encourage them to make further advances.”99 Lu Xun views Haeckel as a religious figure of science, who is to “propose the dedication of a shrine to rationality.” The rationalization and standardization that we talk about today all point to religion in the discourse in Europe. But according to Lu Xun, rationalization is rebuilding faith, and ration becomes a religion in itself.

In addition to Haeckel, Lu Xun also mentions Nietzsche, who “on the other hand, adopted Darwin’s theories of evolution to attack Christianity and created an entirely different philosophy, that of Ubermensch or superman.” He continues that “the proposal of Haeckel and Nietzsche, albeit based on science, were still tainted by distinctly religious and fantastic elements, and thus implied an alteration in, not the elimination of faith.”100 Nietzsche applies evolutionary theory to explain “superman.” But he states that although the superman theory is ostensibly evolutionary and scientific, it is in fact infected with religious and illusionary conceptions. Nietzsche’s proposition is also to change religion, rather than eliminate it. This is Lu Xun’s interpretation of Nietzsche. To Lu Xun, a precursor of science is himself a believer. The “priests” of science, those who treat science as doctrine and axiom, are empty and lacking immanence, which makes these people “hypocrite gentry.” Since science is based on belief, it is homologous with religion and superstition. The opposition between them is thus the opposition between beliefs, not a distinction between faith and anti-faith. Lu Xun’s interpretation is also one of the modern society, in that we need to ask whether the modern society is one that is secularized, post-religious, post-faith and post-supernatural, or one that is reconstructing its faith?

If we combine Lu Xun’s inquiry of religion and his attack of the hypocrite gentry, we could gather his attitude towards the so-called secularization: people’s secular life does not have a strict distinction from the religious world. The villagers’ rituals, customs, ethics and system blend with the religious worship of all things. Yet the hypocrite gentry were attempting to destroy this secular life, which was in tune with faith, in the name of secularization. Therefore, to understand Lu Xun’s unique attitude towards religion and superstition, one needs to distinguish between the secular life and secularization, as opposed to depending upon the rigid antagonization of religion and secularization, which is the legacy of European Enlightenment. There is a mutualistic symbiosis between the religious extremism and the secularization.

12. “Animalistic jingoism” and “natural servility”

I shall discuss the last passage, which is criticism against aggression. Lu Xun said that “people who
follow the cult of aggression are like animals; they pay the highest respect to bestial nature, and they also possess a high quotient of natural servility. Where shall China’s ‘men of aspiration’ rank on this scale?” (116)\textsuperscript{101} In Lu Xun’s account, there is a master-servant structure. All that the servant cares about is to become a master to deprive others of their lives, and this is criticism against aggressive patriotism. Yet Lu Xun is not an anarchist, and for example, the following passage implies his struggle against anarchism:

The ancients lived together in groups; later, states were formed and borders delineated, within which people lived out the allotted span of their lives. Had they made the best possible use of natural conditions, devoted their efforts to the improvement of their livelihood and lived in harmony without warring with one another, they would have done well for themselves. Nor would this have been beyond their means to achieve. (116)\textsuperscript{102}

Both non-nationalists and anarchists see nation and borders as the cause for war, whereas Lu Xun held that men could live in close communities without having arguments, and that men were able to maintain peace within the community. In Lu Xun’s view, difference and discrepancy are not necessarily the causes for conflict, and thus it is more important to reform us and turn everyone into individuals who possess individual subjectivity and a sense of mastery over themselves, than to oppose nations and governments.

The contrast between the villagers and the heroes also composes Lu Xun’s basic structure for criticizing nationalism. He criticized the pan-Slavism in Russia, believing that this is the ruler’s doctrine, not the actual peasant’s belief. He expanded the opposition among men of aspiration, the rulers and the villagers to a general issue of nationalism and imperialism. He commented that,

(Tolstoy) argues that nothing in human life is more precious than self-sufficiency: each living on their own means. Rapine and aggression would have to be strictly forbidden. The common people are content to live in peace, he contends, and it is only the rulers who are fond of blood-letting, driving fort their subjects as they do to war, with the result that families are scattered and homes destroyed. The destitute and unwanted inundate the country, stranded without homes or a means of livelihood, thanks to the crimes of the politicians. How does he (Toystoy) propose this situation be remedied? The best way is to disobey orders.\textsuperscript{103}

“The best way is to disobey orders” is Toystoy’s words. Lu Xun, however, disagrees. He points out that traditionally, the Chinese people were content with farming and unwilling to stray from their native places. Those in high official posts strove to attain fame through meritorious service, while those out of office were always resentful and bemoaning the state of things. China took the greatest pride in the splendor and beauty of her achievements as a civilization; she never sought domination over neighboring tribes by dint of force, and her record of peace had been almost unparalleled in the world.

If a nation only has the peaceful nature without ability to fight bravely, wouldn’t it be conquered very soon?\textsuperscript{104}

In order to answer the question, Lu Xun proposes to distinguish animalistic jingoism from those who

\textsuperscript{101} 崇侵略者类有机，兽性其上也，最有奴子性，中国志士何隶乎？

\textsuperscript{102} 夫古民惟群，后乃成国，分幽疆界，生长于斯，使其用天之宜，食地之利，借自力以善生事，辑睦而不相攻，此盖至善，亦非不能也。

\textsuperscript{103} 其言谓人生之至可贵者，莫如自食力而生活，侵掠攻夺，足为大禁，下民无不乐平和，而在上者乃爱喋血，驱之出战，丧人民元，于是家室不完，无庇者遍全国，民失其所，政家之罪也。何以药之？莫如不奉命。（116）

\textsuperscript{104} 然中国则何如国矣，民乐耕稼，轻去其乡，上而好远功，在野者辄怨怼，凡所自诩，乃在文明之光华美大，而不借暴力以凌四夷，宝爱平和，天下鲜有。（117-118）
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worship the idea. Animalistic jingoists all emerged in powerful nations, such as Britain, Russia, Japan and other imperial countries, and they

seiz[ed] upon the theory of ‘natural selection’ to justify their deeds, attacked the weak and small in order to realize their aims or desires. They will know no satisfaction until the globe comes under their domination and all other peoples are made their subjects.105

In other words, they would not stop until they have turned all the other races into ashes. The men of aspiration in China, the nationalists, however, were not yet animalistic jingoists, because they had two characteristics that the animalistic jingoists lacked. “One is the way they worship powerful countries, and the other is the contempt in which they hold subjugated peoples.”106 While animalistic jingoists were practicing self-worship, the men of aspiration in China were admiring the powerful nations in the West, which is called the “worship of powerful countries.”

The ideology of “worshiping powerful countries” was very popular from 1900 to Xinhai Revolution,107 and even in contemporary China, the narrative of “the rise of a powerful nation” still has a market. In 1903, Chen Tianhua, an activist during the Revolution, defined imperialism as “a world where an opulent nation is turned into a land of slavery, and where the gods are degraded to servants” in “Alarm to Arouse the Age.” It was more prevalent, however, to view imperialism as the manifestation of “a national power too abundant to stay in.” Even Sun Yat-sen considered imperialism as “the last step in the development of nationalism.” Lu Xun pointed out that another consequence of worshiping the powerful country was the “contempt in which subjugated people are held.” Who are the subjugated people? They are those whose country has been conquered, such as the people in India and Poland.

Our ‘men of aspiration,’ however, do not think deeply about such matters. They compete in their praise of aggression and yearn to emulate the brute force of Russia and the might of Germany, as if these states were an Eden! For the fate of oppressed peoples with no one to turn to, such as the populations of India and Poland, they have nothing but the sort of cold contempt and sneering ridicule reserved for ‘fallen’ faces.108

These are the men of aspiration in China. During the Iraq War, so many men of aspiration praised highly America’s bombing and war in this small country, as if they turned themselves into Americans overnight. These people are, in fact, the secondary animalistic jingoists, i.e. the animalism jingoists who worship the animalism jingoism. They are the servile without true feelings and illuminating thoughts. Their definition of civilization is merely copycat, rather than an emergence from their own belief. Lu Xun also says that, China, too, has had a long history of suffering and oppression at the hands of stronger nations. Carrion kites are still circling overhead, even though we are not yet dead. As if our loss of territory were not enough of a blow, it is also accompanied by indemnities. Consequently, the people suffer from all forms of privation and the countryside is littered with the corpses of starvation victims. Hereafter we should amass the finest and most powerful weaponry to defend ourselves, in order to prevent serpents and wild beasts from devouring us. But this prescription applies only to self-defense. We should not imitate the behavior of aggressors by committing armed aggression against others. Why do we disapprove of aggression? Because we have put ourselves in the place of victims.
of aggression, and are enemies of animalistic jingoism.\textsuperscript{109}

This is a very critical transition. In a situation like this, we should oppose aggression and hegemony, rather than advocating them. The fundamental way is to “put ourselves in the place of victims of aggression,”\textsuperscript{110} so as to reach the public’s complete awakening (118). This public is not one of animalistic jingoism, but one that could sympathize with the invaded, the occupied, and the enslaved nations. “Poland and India are countries suffering the same lot as China. Although Poland has never had any intercourse with China, it is known that her people are sincere and freedom-loving. All sincere, freedom-loving people love Poland as a country symbolic of these two ideals. Can whose who are unwilling to be conquered afford NOT to mourn Poland?”\textsuperscript{111} (118) How could we coldly sneer at the invaded nations? How could we not empathize with them and feel their misery?

India has been in communication with us since ancient times and has rendered us great favors and services. Our philosophies, religions, codes of morality, literature and art have, without exception, gained richly from contact with India in a way that defies comparison. We are even closer than brothers. So if danger has befallen either of these two countries (India and Poland), we Chinese ought at least to feel a tinge of melancholy about their fates. If these nations should collapse, we ought to weep for them. Similarly, if they are spared calamities, we should thank heaven for its blessings and pray for divine protection in the future to ensure that they, as well as ourselves, may survive into the limitless future.

But our ‘men of aspiration’ today overlook this notion. They simply assert that all such countries have fallen into their present state through their own weakness, and toss in various other defamations to boot. That so blind and absurd an attitude can exist in China is probably due to the fact that we have repeatedly been made to taste fire and the blade, and have cowered beneath the heel of power and despotism for so long. As a result, we have lost our original character and our ability to feel sympathy for others has been worn away; all that remains in our hearts is the urge to fawn on the powerful and show contempt for the weak! Thus, generally speaking, those who sing the praises of militarism have, through their prolonged submission to power and despotism, gradually nurtured a sense of servility in themselves. They have forgotten their origins, joined the cult of aggression, and are truly the lowest of the low. Those who merely echo others and have no ideas of their own may be considered somewhat better.

There are also people who fall into neither of these categories, who occasionally exhibit the characteristics of our pre-human ancestors. I have seen several instances of this sort of thinking reflected in the poetry of this group, where they take especial pride in the fact that Kaiser Wilhelm II referred to China as the ‘Yellow Peril’…\textsuperscript{112}

The Japan-Russia War accelerated the rise of nationalism among the yellow race. These nationalists of the yellow race cited Kaiser Wilhelm II’s proclamation of the “Yellow Peril” as evidence of their power. “What a pity it is that China, herself a victim of aggression, has thus far failed to reflect upon her own priorities!”\textsuperscript{113} The nationalists admired aggression, admired power and ridiculed the weak, but failed to detect the great civilization buried in the weak nations’ relics. Yet we had no awareness of such

\textsuperscript{109}夫吾华士之苦于强暴，亦已久矣，未至陈尸，鹫鸟先集，丧地不足，益以金资，而人亦为之哭饿野死。而今而后，所当有兵坚盾，净土其身。身者封豕长蛇，荐食上国；然此则所以自卫而已，非效侵略之行，非将以侵略人也。尚未侵略者何？曰反诸己也，兽性者之故也。118

\textsuperscript{110}反诸己也

\textsuperscript{111}至于波兰印度，乃华土同病之邦矣，波兰虽素不相往来，然其民族多情愫，爱自畛，凡人之有情愫宝自畛者，胥爱其国为事征象，盖人不乐为鬼隶，则孰能不眷慕而生之。

\textsuperscript{112}印度则交通自古，施我大祥，思想信仰道德艺文，无不蒙概。虽兄弟眷属，何以加之。今浏览二者之抑甲，二国而曰，吾当为之号呼，无祸则上祷于天，俾与吾华同其无极。今志士奈何独不念之，谓自取其祸而加之祸，岂其履强之民，久而伏于强暴者之足下，则旧性失，同情漓，灵台之中，满以势利，因逐逐亡识而为此与！故故总日今往之敌之士，自居于强暴久，因渐成奴子之性，忘本来而崇侵略者最下；人云云云，不持自见者上也。间亦有不隶之类，而偶反其未为人类之性者，吾尝一二见于诗歌，其大旨在授德皇威廉二世黄祸之说……(118-119)
conduct at all.

In distinguishing animalistic jingoism from the secondary animalistic jingoism, Lu Xun declared his complex attitudes towards nationalism. He would first reject the secondary animal patriotism, which is worshiping the powerful nations and insulting the “men of aspiration” in the lesser nations. He would also criticize the animal jingoists, but meanwhile, he did approve of their self-assertion and self-esteem—not in a way to reiterate the animal jingoists’ logic, but to treat it as a turning point in finding a way to the ideal that each one possesses individual identity.

13. Conclusion

“Toward a Refutation of the Voices of Evil” is self-subversive in both its form and content. Formally speaking, it is a nationalist text, even though it is based upon criticism against the nationalist ideology. The text’s self-subversion is not purely a negation, in that Lu Xun’s criticism against nationalism and cosmopolitanism is not simply negation. Rather, he expressed self-awareness through this negation. Therefore, a unique tension exists between the text’s form and its content. The essay breaks the dichotomy of nationalism and globalization, while practicing self-criticism through looking for another tradition. Lu Xun is an emblematic figure in Chinese contemporary thoughts. He is an enlightener who opposes Enlightenment, an internationalist who opposes Cosmopolitanism, a protector of national culture while opposing nationalism, and a modernist figure opposing modernism. These dilemmas are not attention-seeking rhetoric, but a manifestation of Lu Xun’s fundamental ideology: freedom, equality, curbing the violent, supporting the weak, and a long tradition are the foundation and prerequisite of humanity. In order to preserve the humanity’s value, these values should not be included into the diagram of modern power relations. Lu Xun’s “a country of people” (from “Concerning the Imbalance of Culture”) is not a universal society without any tradition, as advocated by the anarchists, nor is it a nation established upon the overlapping national differentiation and territorial sovereignty, as envisaged by the nationalists. “Nation of people” is a status and product of “restoring the past while addressing the present to establish a new religion.”

For over a hundred years, China had been populated by a lot of hypocrite gentry and permeated by chaotic noise. When “silence reigns and all channels are blocked,” it is a desolate world. When he was only 27 or 28 years old, Lu Xun held establishing a China with a voice—the birth of a country of people—as his standpoint. His interpretation of the Chinese revolution, of literature, and of humanity should all be understood from this very standpoint. “When silence reigns, all channels are blocked!” Without the true feelings, the world could not exist. In this regard, this is an inquiry of Enlightenment posed by a Chinese soul.

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113 “乌乎，吾华土亦一受侵略之国也，而不自省也乎。”
114 取今复古，别立新宗
115 寂漠为政，天地闭也