Revolution Plus Love

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Literary History, Women's Bodies, and Thematic Repetition in Twentieth-Century Chinese Fiction

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To my dear father,
Liu Zaifu

Contents

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Revolution Plus Love

Introduction

"Revolution plus love" (*geming jia lian'ai*) as a theme or formula was first popularized in the late 1920s. It was a specifically literary response to political events: the collaboration and breakup (1923–1927) of the Nationalist Party (Guomindang [GMD]) and the Chinese Communist party (CCP) and the subsequent urban and rural insurrections, as well as the Soviet revolution's international influence, which played a crucial role in the emergence of this literary practice. Broadly speaking, this theme referred to a special set of issues related to the rising expectations of "revolution" in the cultural aftermath of the May Fourth movement (1919), such as the position of the self within a society in turmoil, the increasing clashes between bourgeoisie and proletariat, and the conjunction of political and sexual identities. This extremely popular but understudied theme, which not only was favored by leftist writers during the early period of revolutionary literature but also continued to influence mainstream literature up to the 1970s, has been used to convey diverse meanings that allow us to reexamine the contingency and contestedness of modern Chinese literary history. Although this theme was overwhelmingly framed by political consciousness, the interactions between revolution and love in the works it produced remain highly disputed. There are still many neglected and disconcerting questions. What has it meant, for example, to be an individual and express that politically, to associate sexual drive with politics, in the turbulent history of twentieth-century China? Does the connection between revolution and love echo only the official version of modern Chinese history, or is it an essential component of all narratives of this history? What is the role of gender in the expression and representation of politics, with which it has been intimately intertwined? How do we look at eroticized representations of bodies, which have a multitude of political and cultural meanings? The polemical relationships between literature and politics, gender and power, modernity and tradition are revealed in a

network of changing and often conflicting representations of revolution and love. The complex interaction and mutual influence between these elements in different historical moments not only reveal the contradictions and paradoxes surrounding the Chinese project of modernity but also provide some insight into the history of modern Chinese literature, beyond linear and evolutionary historicity and established genres.

In recent years, literary studies have examined revolution and love as discrete and autonomous constructions; few have paid critical attention to the relationship between them. Among these, critics such as Meng Yue argue that revolutionary discourse delimited and repressed the private realm of desire, love, sexuality, self, and all emotions during the Mao years.[1] Declaring that such an understanding imposes a strict dichotomy between political repression and bodily energy, Wang Ban emphasizes sexually charged Communist culture, in which love and pleasure have gone beyond the heterosexual relationship: "private desire can take public, political, and apparently nonsexual guises."[2] For the most part, however, neither of these interpretations—that the politics of revolution typically overwhelms and represses love, woman, and sexuality; that libidinal energy is the deep psychic root for both—takes into account that no single model can adequately explain the often overlapping and contradictory historical expressions of the relationship between revolution and love. The revolutionary discourse during the Mao years certainly influenced and shaped the construction of gender norms and sexual identity, but these codes of bodily and sexual behavior could, in turn, transform the sublime form of revolution.

In fact, as we have stepped into a new millennium and look back to examine the interactions between revolution and love in the twentieth century, we must be aware that the changes in their relationships and meanings refer to a performative and dynamic concept of literary history. Realizing that both revolution and love are culturally variable rather than fixed and timeless entities, I see the interplay between the two as a complex and constantly changing literary practice that is socially and historically constituted. In this book, I seek to confound prevailing academic paradigms that treat the interplay of revolution and love in only one model. Regarding this relationship as a volatile site for representing and displacing political and sexual identities, I examine the formulary writing of "revolution plus love" from the 1930s to the contemporary period as a case study of literary politics that structures the possibilities available to agents and their relationship to the literary field. By drawing a historical picture of the articulation and rearticulation of this theme, I note how the change of revolutionary discourse forces unpredictable representations of gender rules and power relations and how women's bodies register multiple

and incommensurable differences haunting the hegemonic narratives in modern Chinese literature.

Modernity and Revolution

Revolution and love are two of the most powerful discourses shaping Chinese modern identity. Love contains irreducible components of the individual's sexual identity and bodily experiences, relationships between man and woman, and a sense of self-fulfillment; revolution is related to the trajectory of progress, freedom, equality, and emancipation. Since these two categories constitute, clash with, or otherwise influence each other in the mainstream narrative of modern Chinese literature, recent scholarship has usually considered them as the two major tropes of modernity. As Tang Xiaobing aptly puts it, "Both terms of the antinomy—'revolution' as experience of collective power, and 'love' as successful socialization through personal freedom—are central ideological constructs in the legitimizing discourse of modernity."[3] Such metaphoric treatment assumes, however, that both terms are transhistorical or immutable, thereby wiping out their separate historical identities as well as the intellectual genealogy of their marriage. Moreover, it sets up the term "modernity" as a panacea, making it an empty term, one that has lost contact with the dynamic and contradictory historical realities that revolution and love struggle to define.

Much of the recent study of modern Chinese literature in the United States can be seen as an effort to question the association of modernity with the ideas of progress, newness, revolution, enlightenment, and national salvation. Its significance lies in its interrogation of the literary canon set originally by the May Fourth writers and their works. However, as Alexander Des Forges claims, the scholarship on modernity in modern Chinese literature already has an "essentially fetishistic character" that too often presumes a monolithic Chinese tradition in opposition to modern literature and ignores Chinese texts by valorizing European theoretical constructions.[4] Those inquiries into the definition of "modernity" usually rely on adding a word or two in front of this key word, such as "belated," "semicolonial," "translated," "repressed," "alternative," and "Chinese." Although he sees those approaches as productive, Des Forges has raised the following questions: "[The fetish of modernity] leads one to wonder: is this scholarly emphasis on a modernity that is subjective, spectral, limited, failed, problematic, or once removed—a modernity that can't show itself without a prefix—appropriate only in the study of Chinese literature? Or is it possible that literary modernity as such is fundamentally contradictory and problematic?"[5]

It is true that heavy reliance on Western theories of modernity may obscure the complexity and paradoxes of Chinese history, within which the heterogeneity of texts has diffused and problematized the master narrative of Chinese modernity. Furthermore, those inquiries on modernity have ignored that they are inventions and interventions by scholars who tried to find certain ways to interpret Chinese modern reality.[6] Des Forges' rethinking of this fetishization is significant because although modernity and its associated theories have brought to light some "repressed" modernities,[7] they also may have buried complex social conditions that they cannot fully explain. For instance, the modernities much in fashion are largely incompatible with revolution (represented by leftist literature around the 1930s), for they are in tune with capitalist modernity, which leftist literature rejects. As consumerism has overwhelmed socialism in contemporary mainland China, it is easy to forget that Chinese leftists originally tried to challenge the myth of capitalist modernity—"the belief that the industrial reshaping of the world is capable of bringing about the good society by providing material happiness for the masses."[8] Indeed, the catastrophe of the Cultural Revolution has had the deleterious effect of stopping many of us from remembering that revolution arose as a pursuit of a better future. But during the specific historical time when Chinese intellectuals embraced revolution (an embrace that was often expressed in a passionate and violent form), it was because revolution gave them hope, transferring their anxiety about national salvation and modern crisis into the utopian vision of a perfect future. Carrying the legitimate human desire for both personal and collective happiness, revolution has much to do with concepts of the classes and motifs that constitute modern society; revolution does not abandon technology, science, and modernization but criticizes the social conditions of capitalist production. What the fetish of modernity ignores is precisely such a utopian vision of a modern society as well as Chinese intellectuals' aspirations, anxieties, and despair involved in it.

The trauma of the Cultural Revolution engendered widespread disenchantment with revolutionary ideology, the Communist Party, and the grand narrative of history. As a discursive term, "modernity" started to be drawn into literary criticism in mainland China along with "cultural heat" in the 1980s; however, a critical call for resistance to modernity (Western modernization) was not heard until 1988.[9] There is no doubt that the discourses of modernity and antimodernity have successfully "defamiliarized" the literary critical field, occupied as it is with terms such as "class struggle." By bringing in many Western theories of modernism, postmodernism, and postcolonialism, the fetish of modernity has largely dominated academic interest in the field of modern Chinese literature both in the United States and in mainland China. Some literary

critics celebrated modernity's current discursive hegemony without any reflections on or critiques of the internal contradictions of Western modernization;[10] others welcomed the use of this term but with great concern, and wondered if Chinese modernization is entirely a reprint or a copy of Western modernization.[11] Indeed, the global economy has fostered the spread of modernity as a hegemonic discourse, under the new name of globalization. As a result, what is at stake here is not whether to stop questioning modernity, but how to find more specific tools of literary analysis with which to criticize it and how to be more self-reflexive in dealing with the Chinese version.

While criticizing Marshall Berman's persuasive theory that conjoins the notions of revolution and modernity, Perry Anderson gives us a clear definition of "revolution":

> "Revolution" is a term with a precise meaning: the political overthrow from below of one state order and its replacement by another. Nothing is to be gained by diluting it across time or extending it over every department of social space. . . . It is necessary to insist that revolution is a *punctual* and not a permanent process; that is, revolution is an episode of convulsive political transformation, compressed in time and concentrated in target, with a determinate beginning—when the old state apparatus is still intact—and a finite end—when that apparatus is decisively broken and a new one erected in its stead.[12]

In contrast to this specific definition, "modernism" for Perry Anderson is "the emptiest of all cultural categories," because its only referent is "the blank passage of time itself."[13] According to him, modernism should also be treated in a way that takes into account more differential concepts of historical time, geography, and the force field that defines the range of aesthetic practices. He disagrees with Berman, who puts both revolution and modernity under "the fundamentally planar development—a continuous-flow process in which there is no real differentiation of one conjuncture of epoch from another, save in terms of the mere chronological succession of old and new, earlier and later."[14]

Anderson's argument seems a little out of fashion, representing as it does a classical version of Marxism. However, his criticism of the "fundamentally planar development" that links the notions of revolution and modernity can also be applied to the recent field of modern Chinese literature, which is in danger of extending the notion of modernity to every corner, even if sometimes such extension has efficiently challenged conventions. It is impossible to sever revolution from the context of modernity, but we must be aware that the way revolution was introduced into China and then became deeply rooted in Chinese daily life as well as social projects has its own history. Under what

circumstance Chinese intellectuals accepted revolution, how they adopted it in a way that fit the Chinese context, why they were so fascinated with it, how Chinese history was written by their revolutionary desire and then rewritten by their disillusionment—all of these should be viewed as historical phases rather than within the metaphoric framework of modernity.

During the "cultural heat" of the 1980s, a time of reflection on the Cultural Revolution and welcoming of Western enlightenment thought, the philosopher Li Zehou first used the terms "enlightenment" (*qimeng*) and "national salvation" (*jiuwang*) to describe modern Chinese history. As he points out, the whole tradition of enlightenment, which includes modern freedom, independence, human rights, and democracy imported from Western capitalist industrialization, was not being sufficiently researched and developed after the May Fourth movement; instead, it was negated as capitalist trash in the wave of national salvation—revolution. As a consequence of a revolutionary war mainly led by peasants, Chinese intellectuals did not absorb concepts such as enlightenment and democracy but rather peasants' consciousness, traditional cultural structure, and some Marxist thought.[15] Li Zehou's theory remained popular during the 1980s and was not challenged until the emergence of the discourse of modernity and antimodernity in the 1990s. In his article "Ding Ling Is Not Simple," Li Tuo criticizes Li Zehou's dichotomy of "enlightenment/national salvation" by deciphering "enlightenment" as a pursuit of modernity and "national salvation" as a refusal of modernity in a metaphoric way. According to Li Tuo, this dichotomy neglects another line of Western tradition (including the arguments of Max Weber, Martin Heidegger, the Frankfurt school, feminism, and postcolonialism) that has insistently criticized Western modernization. This negligence shows that Chinese intellectuals have not developed the ability to criticize the "craze" of modernization, which inevitably involves complicated power struggles between the West and the East, the first world and the third world, modernity and antimodernity.[16]

Although Li Zehou has pointed out the deficiency of the Chinese revolution, which lost its early aspiration toward human rights and personal freedom after 1949, his reflection on the May Fourth discourse of enlightenment is not enough. His dichotomy of enlightenment versus national salvation essentializes both terms without recognizing that they intimately permeate and are deeply rooted in each other, especially against the background of national crisis and anti-imperialism. Intended as a critique of modernity, Li Tuo's argument has certainly brought the revolutionary discourse (in his terms, the Maoist discourse) into a more complicated historical context in which Chinese intellectuals' longing to surpass the world's most advanced level of science and technology and their doubt about the cultural value of capitalism or imperial-

ism conjoin and argue with each other. However, his criticism, which attempts to put both "enlightenment" and "national salvation" in the discourse of modernity, has generalized the process of Chinese modernization influenced by the imperialist hegemonic power. More significantly, his emphasis on the relationship between Maoist discourse and the discourse of Chinese modernity has uncritically interpreted the former as an omnipotent paradigm whose historical transformation is of less concern.

Compared to other scholars who uncritically pursue modernity, Li Tuo is much more keenly aware of the pitfall of "modernity" itself. In his article "Resistance to Modernity," he addresses the difficulty of drawing "modernity" into literary criticism:

> "Modernity" is a term that encompasses almost everything that has developed and accumulated with the process of modernization in the West over the past two or three hundred years. Although many commentators follow Max Weber's formulation, identifying the emergence and spread of modernity with the process of social rationalization, analyses and descriptions of this process are quite complicated. As for what modernity is, commentators all have their own versions based on their own positions and linguistic environments; a unified definition would be impossible. Under these circumstances, how Chinese critics deal with this great discourse and what position they adopt in relation to it become matters of considerable difficulty. Moreover, when Chinese critics consider how to handle their relationship with the Western discourse of modernity, they must face the question of modernity in their own country.[17]

Nevertheless, the difficulty of applying modernity to Chinese texts can still be seen in Li Tuo's interpretation of Maoist discourse. Even if he explains Maoist discourse as China's own discourse of modernity, he refuses to see that the cultural destruction brought by revolution is not based on "social rationalization" but on libido-charged revolutionary passion. In addition, he does not take into account how revolution in the early stage, which expresses legitimate human desires and aspirations (love, romanticism, intimacy, fulfillment, the common good), became an unfinished project interrupted by the Maoist discourse. For instance, Chinese intellectuals in the late 1920s and early 1930s did not lack an urgent sense of the profound crisis brought by Western modernization as they tried to enlighten the masses; but meanwhile, their revolutionary consciousness was derived from and driven by concepts of democracy and enlightenment. All of these factors require more detailed historical investigation in conjunction with cultural and literary analysis.

Thus the study of revolution ought to include more than metaphoric reading

in the framework of modernity; its scope must be broadened to include other narratives. For instance, following Lydia H. Liu's theory of translingual practice, Chen Jianhua demonstrates how late-Qing intellectuals came to an understanding of the concept of revolution that differed from its European connotation through the process of translation, introduction, domestication, and proliferation, and how the shift from one culture to the other generated a multilayered historical understanding of this concept.[18] Chen's meticulous study of Liang Qichao's (1871–1929) and Sun Yat-sen's (1866–1925) different adoptions of revolution tells us how Chinese intellectuals imagined revolution in contradictory fashion.[19] Arif Dirlik argues that although Marxism presupposed global and universal liberation and was Eurocentric in origin, Chinese Marxism invented a localized version, making Marxism Chinese.[20] These studies remind us that the concept of revolution is socially conditioned by its production, circulation, and consumption.

Therefore, as we discuss the relationship between revolution and love represented in modern Chinese literary history, we must realize that neither category is transhistorical, transnational, and stable. If the connotations of each term vary in any given historical moment, then their interaction should be far more complicated in objective historical accounts and social relations. It is not exaggerating to say that the marriage of revolution and love is similar to "dancing with wolves"; it is constantly defined and shaped by differences. We cannot understand revolution only as the homogenizing power that corresponds to a perpetual development such as modernization, nor can we understand gender relations as timeless and immutable, able to stably carry political messages or be easily channeled into sublime form.

The Genealogy of Revolution and Love

The Chinese term "*geming*," whose indigenous root can be traced to the Confucian classical text *The Book of Changes* (*Yijing*), refers to the dethronements of kings Xia and Shang by kings Tang and Wu as "the will of heaven," "the wishes of men," and "the motion of the seasons."[21] According to Chen Jianhua's study, the Tang Wu *geming,* which later on generally means a change of a dynasty by violent means, was incorporated into a diverse syntax of modern revolution. For instance, influenced by the Japanese *kanji* translation of the European concept "revolution" as well as the Darwinian notion of evolution, the prominent Chinese intellectual Liang Qichao accepted the theory of revolution as changes in all societal affairs rather than a radical political solution; Sun Yat-sen's republican ideas, on the other hand, coalesced around the Tang

Wu *geming,* taking on the meaning of violent overthrow.[22] In other words, Liang's revolution is more inclined to what he defined as "a broad sense of *geming,*" which refers to every kind of change in society; Sun's concept of revolution is exactly what Liang called "a narrow sense of *geming*"—overthrowing the central government through military actions.[23]

It is important to note that the meaning of *geming* had been heterogeneous in the early stage of translation; however, those diverse meanings—whether Sun Yat-sen's call for a violent overthrow of the Qing government or Liang Qichao's proposal for moderate social reform—should be understood in the context of the nation building in the late Qing. According to Prasenjit Duara, social Darwinism provided the rationale for the spread (and defense) of imperialism and nationalism in the late nineteenth century. "When this global discourse of the nation-state system took root in China at the turn of the century, it became the most important constitutive discourse of Chinese intellectuals for the next twenty years or so, after which the rhetoric and ethics of anti-imperialism displaced its status of preeminence." Social Darwinism, as Duara says, made both revolution and reform urgent for national or racial, instead of individual or family, survival.[24]

By linking the notion of revolution to social Darwinism and modern historical consciousness, Liang Qichao promoted a "revolution in fiction" as a prerequisite for building a new nation and its new citizens. "To rejuvenate a nation's citizens, a nation's fiction must be first rejuvenated."[25] The notion of revolution, or *geming,* thus played a crucial role in mythicizing fiction's social function, as if fiction could maneuver China's fate. Fiction was lifted from personal expression to the higher, ideological level of nation building. For late-Qing scholars Yan Fu and Xia Zengyou, fiction was worthy of promotion because of its "public nature" (*gong xingqing*), namely valor (*yingxiong*) and romantic love (*ernü*). In their words, "Without the nature of a hero, one cannot fight for survival; without the nature of a lover, one cannot reproduce."[26] Beneath the surface of heroism and romantic love lies the core spirit of social Darwinism, the utopian idea of transforming China into a civilized society. What was being celebrated was not the personal feeling between men and women—the private nature of romance—but its public function that helps build national identity and propels the evolution of humanity.

Therefore, revolution meeting up with love in the genre of "new fiction" or the political novel signified that the politics of nationalism at this stage had subsumed other and different politics, such as "the woman question," free marriage, and personal fulfillment. Romance was not a central theme in the political novel; if it existed, it was employed analogically in political theory to support the "imagined community" of nationalism. Many scholars have

traced the historical root of the revolutionary heroism integral to romance back to *xia* and *qing,* or *yingxiong* and *ernü,* as demonstrated in Wen Kang's *Tale of Heroes and Lovers* (*Ernü yingxiong zhuan*).[27] The unification of *yingxiong* (heroics) and *ernü* (love), *xia* (knight-errancy) and *qing* (emotion), which was the basic narrative format in classical Chinese chivalric novels, experienced modern transmission in late-Qing new fiction. Reformists and revolutionaries who fought for a national cause became modern valorous knights, heroic, altruistic, and willing to sacrifice themselves for justice. The female knights-errant, *nüxia,* underwent role changes and became female reformists, revolutionaries, and assassins, sharing the same courage and pursuits as male heroes. Those modern *nüxia* were usually depicted as independent, Western-trained, and patriotic, stepping out of the chamber and taking on the public role related to national issues; at the same time, their conventional femininity was well preserved. That is to say, the image of female revolutionaries was cast as a combination of modern mind and traditional body: they accepted various kinds of revolutionary ideologies but remained virtuous in the traditional moral sense. Love was either endowed with traditionally virtuous attributes that excluded sexual characteristics, or constrained to take on a nationalist expression, merely as a decoration for heroic deeds.

The theme of revolution and love can be found in the novel *Heroines of Eastern Europe* (*Dong'ou nühaojie*), written by Lingnan yuyi nüshi (pseudonym of Luo Pu) in 1902. It was the late-Qing imagination of anarchist Sophia Perovskaya, notorious for her assassination of Tsar Alexander II. As one of the most prominent imported cultural icons, the image of Sophia enlightened numerous Chinese female revolutionaries, including the famous revolutionary martyr Qiu Jin. There was a popular saying among late Qing revolutionaries: "To marry, one should marry someone like Sophia."[28] An unfinished project, the novel covers only part of Sophia's revolutionary story, in which she participates in nihilist activities, working for her Land and Liberty Party, planning a strike at a factory, being arrested and put in jail. The love story opens in the middle of the narrative when her former schoolmate and fellow Party member Andrei Zhelyabov (Yu Baoquan) comes to rescue her. David Der-wei Wang provides an interesting analysis of their love relationship:

> Luo Pu assures us over and over again that their love relationship is platonic, as would befit the stereotype of an unmarried romantic couple in the tradition of a scholar-beauty novel—despite the fact that the historical Zhelyabov was married when he met Sophia and that they flagrantly lived together out of wedlock. More important, in a way reminiscent of the thesis of *A Tale of Heroes and Lovers,* Sophia and Andrei are treated both as great lovers, because they can tran-

> scend personal passion to attain humanist compassion, and as great heroes, because they can transform individual valor into altruistic strength. Although Luo Pu was writing about a group of radicals whose ultimate goal was to smash all human institutions, his Sophia and Andrei are more like paragons of Confucian virtues radically refashioned in the late Qing style.[29]

Although she represents women's role in public, Sophia's private life is still confined by a moral code, or more precisely, is sinicized and placed in a familiar system of sex roles. Discussing how the foreign figure of Sophia was transformed into the Chinese Su Feiya, Hu Ying points out, "Through this process of transformation, Sophia emerges as a figure constructed from a delicate balance between the authentically foreign and the familiarly domestic: she is often emphatically Sinicized as a cultural icon, both in her name and in her moral attributes."[30] Indeed, Sophia's nihilist activities are authentically foreign, but her sexuality is still controlled by Chinese traditional virtues. The control of female sexuality under the name of "tradition" might make the figure of Sophia more legitimate in the Chinese context, but it also reveals that the associations between revolution and love, nationalism and the woman question had been problematic in the genre of new fiction. The whole host of related notions of individualism, romanticism, and libidinal drive was absent in such sinicized depictions of love between men and women.

With the name of "the mother of the nation" or "female citizens," Chinese women, who had always been in the abject position in traditional society, gained a supreme power and a responsibility for the nation-state. The late-Qing scholar Jin Tianhe wrote, "Woman is the mother of the nation. If we want to rejuvenate China, we need to first rejuvenate women; if we want to fortify China, we need to first fortify women; if we want to civilize China, we need to first civilize women; if we want to save China, we need to first save women."[31]

The myth of woman as the mother of the nation no doubt reflects many late-Qing reformists' and revolutionaries' nationalist and racial thoughts: the mother has an ability to engender new citizens who can build a new China. Such promotion of women encouraged some of them to step out of the feudal family space and join the public space of an imagined national community. This was the first time in Chinese history that the woman question was carried over to the metanarrative ground, where only some big men's issues, such as liberation, democracy, revolution, and nation-state, were articulated. However, those mothers of the nation were to be reproductive machines only; their autonomy—regarding private lives, emotions, subjectivity, and sexuality—was seriously neglected. As the politics of nationalism overwhelmed the politics of the woman question, women's emotions and sexuality were oversimplified.

For instance, in *The Stone of Goddess Nüwa* (*Nüwashi,* 1904), female revolutionaries are requested to abstain from romantic entanglements with men because, as the female leader Madame Qin Ainong says, "Human genitals are a sticky place where feelings emerge and easily trap the patriotic body inside them, cooling down the idea of saving the country."[32] Even if equipped with modern power—advanced technologies and progressive ideas—these women revolutionaries forfeit their sexual identity in exchange for nationalist discourse, turning into pure political and scientific instruments.

There was a certain lack of subjective sentiment in the manner in which personal love had to be sublimated into love for country. Even if free marriage was pursued, it was for the sake of the whole nation, as represented in novels such as *Free Marriage* (*Ziyou jiehun,* 1903) and *Women's Rights* (*Nüzi quan,* 1907). However, the narrative of revolution and love had variations in the genre of the courtesan novel. Based on the legend of Sai Jinhua, whose liaison with Count Waldersee during the Boxer Rebellion allegedly saved China, Zeng Pu's *Flower in the Sea of Sins* (*Niehai hua,* 1905) portrayed Fu Caiyun as both a promiscuous femme fatale and a national heroine. During Fu Caiyun's trip to Europe, she encounters the Russian anarchist Sarah Aizenson, who tells her the story of the notorious woman martyr Sophia Perovskaya. Yet Fu never becomes a revolutionary, even if she resolves a country's crisis in a "promiscuous" way. Different from the female revolutionaries in the genre of new fiction, who merely convey metanarrative voices of revolution, progress, and nationalism, she maintains her keen personality and voice through the whole novel, remaining loyal to her own sexual instinct rather than to the old moral canon or the new "revolutionary" one. The image of Fu Caiyun shows the slippage of the national construction of the "new woman." Even if her seductive power has mystified the male writer's imagination, her complexity, shown in both her "depraved" and "patriotic" actions, breaks the totality of nationalist discourse and opens a door for female subjectivity. Thus, the myriad and contradictory narratives of revolution and love in late-Qing novels indicate that nationalism could be a contradictory discourse. Its historical agency could be sometimes progressive though often traditional, sometimes holding indigenous morality though often longing for Western civilization.

It is impossible to delineate a coherent history of revolution and love. As a matter of fact, the literary representation of this theme was interrupted by the flourishing of Butterfly fiction in the early-Republic period. National concerns such as reform and revolution were elided or removed from Butterfly fiction's exquisite, sentimental world of desires in which physical passion was withheld but scholarly sentiments reached an exciting point. As Rey Chow notes, "Butterfly stories' frank operation as mere play, entertainment, weekend pastime,

and distraction from 'proper' national concerns, meant that they had to be exorcised not because of their subject matter (which is much more homespun than most May Fourth literature) but because of their deliberately fictional stance, their absolute incompatibility with the modern Chinese demands for 'reality,' personal and social."[33] Indeed, taking the form of literature for the masses, whose entertaining and commercial elements replaced the tradition of *wen yi zai dao* (literature as the embodiment of moral principle), Butterfly fiction neither carried the nationalist and revolutionary purpose of late-Qing "new fiction" nor embodied May Fourth literature's new *dao,* such as language reform, individualism, sexual emancipation, and so forth.[34] Its "reality" of amusement remained very much alive throughout the modern period, even if the tradition was condemned by May Fourth literature. At the end of Xu Zhenya's (1889–1937) best-selling novel *Jade-Pear Spirit* (*Yulihun*), first published in 1912, the protagonist Mengxia chooses to die as a patriotic martyr in the Wuchang revolution of October 10, 1911, after his unfortunate sentimental adventure with Liniang. The patriotic sacrifice, or the love for country, becomes the shining tail at the end of the love story, an ornament to decorate the extreme sentiment between lovers. It is clear that the protagonist dies for the sake of love itself rather than for the noble national cause. In the sentimental world of Butterfly fiction, national identity was no longer deemed an important issue.

Although women remained "chaste" in Butterfly fiction, they changed drastically in the May Fourth period. The emancipation of women's bodies associated with the rise of women's subjectivity became one of the most important signs of literary modernity at this historical moment. In the female writer Ding Ling's (1904–1986) *The Diary of Miss Sophie* (*Shafei nüshi riji,* 1928), the narrator Sophie, like other "self-liberated" modern Chinese women, confronts the conventional configuration of women. As Jaroslav Průšek characterizes it, the distinctive features of May Fourth literature are subjectivism and individualism.[35] Yet this emphasis on individual emancipation is questioned by Lydia H. Liu, who argues that the discourse of individualism of May Fourth literature was never valorized at the expense of nationalism and social collectivism. "On the contrary, collectivism now inhabited the same homogeneous space of modernity as individualism."[36] Using Hu Shi's (1891–1962) subordination of *xiaowo* (the individual "I") to *dawo* (greater self, or society) as an example, Liu wants to show that "individualism did not always constitute itself as the counter-discourse of nationalism nor did the enlightenment see itself as the other of national salvation."[37] Liu's convincing argument allows us to see that the reform of *xiaowo* or the individual is unnecessarily opposed to the nation-state; instead, they are intimately intertwined. Nevertheless, Liu's concept of nation-state,

which does not seek to problematize May Fourth intellectuals' understanding of nation, needs to be questioned. As in other historical periods, the meanings of the nation-state at this specific moment should be viewed as plural, capable of generating identities that are changeable and sometimes conflicting. Prasenjit Duara points out that the May Fourth activists actually problematized the concept of nation. For instance, Chen Duxiu (1880–1942) "pursues to its extreme the logic of the break with both history and nation that is implied by total commitment to the doctrine of self-consciousness." In contrast, Li Dazhao (1889–1927) "refused to separate patriotism from self-consciousness: he took self-consciousness to refer to a process in which purposeful people sought to change the world and thus could bring forth a new China."[38] Duara's study is especially thought provoking because for him, the relationships between *xiaowo* and *dawo,* between individualism and nation-state, during the May Fourth period were much more performative than what Liu has implied.

It should come as no surprise that the theme of revolution and love was changed into representations of sexual revolution, women's revolution, and individual emancipation, which were indicative of important societal and cultural changes during the New Cultural movement. Among those "minor" revolutions, the narrative of love, with its focus on personal events, personal experiences, and subjective sentiments, transgresses the traditional dichotomy of *qing* (feeling) and *yu* (desire) and comes to stand as a distinct symbol of Chinese modernity. For example, the Creation Society (Chuangzao she) during its early period was fully occupied with representations of the human libido, sex drive, repression, and the unconscious in the forms of romanticism, expressionism, and even symbolism. The increasing emphasis on reform of self and reform of gender and sex roles seem to displace Liang Qichao's reform of *xinmin* (new citizen), but the problem of the individual and his or her relationship to modern society and the nation-state looms large in the background. To be sure, unlike late-Qing political novels' central model of narration, the subordination of self to nation, what occupies the predominant position within the range of May Fourth narrative possibilities is clashes between self and nation (or society), the acknowledgment of the question "Who am I?" in the modern sense. Yu Dafu's (1896–1944) famous novel *Sinking* (*Chenlun*), written in 1921, which owed a great debt to the Japanese "I-novel" (*shi-shosetsu*), combines the crisis of selfhood with the crisis of nationhood, sexuality (or masculinity) with patriotism. The protagonist's sexual impotence can be easily read as a metaphor for China's weakness, yet his self-consciousness, self-doubt, and self-abuse make the connection between sexuality and nationalism difficult.[39] This no doubt means that the discourse of individualism has never been totally severed from nation building, but it also attests to the fact that the self is no longer the trans-

parent and easy vehicle of nationalist discourse. Resembling the Russian "superfluous man," the protagonist upon his final "patriotic" death sounds more like a self-parody, pointing poignantly to the dilemma of the modern and nationalist self.

The representations of love and the revolution of love (which includes sexual revolution, family revolution, marriage revolution, women's revolution, and individual emancipation) during the May Fourth period were influenced by the Japanese literary critic Kuriyagawa Hakuson's book *Symbols of Mental Anguish* (*Kumon no shocho*), translated by Lu Xun in the early 1920s. Leo Ou-fan Lee notes that Kuriyagawa's work "combines Freud's thesis of the repressed *id* with Henri Bergson's famous concept of the *élan vital* to form a synthetic theory of artistic creation." "According to Kuriyagawa, art and literature are created as a result of the conflict of two archetypal forces: a primordial life force of freedom versus the force of civilized convention in an increasingly institutionalized society."[40] Kuriyagawa's notion of "the life force" is obviously the embodiment of Freudian notions of instincts (the pleasure principle, Eros, libido, and so forth). Focusing on the connection between sexual passion and civilized work, Freud wrote, "Our civilization is, generally speaking, founded on the suppression of instincts."[41] Because the instinctual syndrome of "unhappiness" recurs throughout Freud's theory of repression, Herbert Marcuse comments, "Freud questions culture not from a romanticist or utopian point of view, but on the ground of the suffering and misery which its implementation involves."[42] Echoing Freud's connection between civilization and instinct, progress and suffering, freedom and unhappiness—a connection that is ultimately between Eros and Thanatos—Kuriyagawa emphasizes the life force under the constraint of civilized convention. The anguish of love, one of the most important symbols of mental anguish that stem from the clashes between self and society, thus became the predominant mode of expression in May Fourth literature.

May Fourth writers' adoption of Kuriyagawa's theory and Freudian psychoanalysis explains why the mainstream narrative of this period celebrated "unhappy love," frustration, loneliness, the destructive force of sex, passive sentiments, and decadence—all of which constitute the repressed impulse to overthrow dominant social conventions. The all-encompassing appeal of Goethe's *Sorrows of Young Werther* to modern Chinese writers and readers was also due to its pessimistic, passive expression of sentiments. However, we should regard the pervasive representation of the repressed individual, sexual repression, and the autonomous transformation of a repressive society as historical phenomena rather than omnipresent facts of existence, invoked by Freudian psychoanalytical theory. After the transformation from literary revolution to

revolutionary literature, sexual relations became much more closely assimilated with social relations than during the previous historical periods. Expressions of love and sex also became more violent, passionate, and masculine.

Continuity and Discontinuity

The more dominant, and in the long run more political, trend after 1927 was the cooperation of Marxism with the literary field. The suppression of the Communists by Jiang Jieshi in 1927 intensified intellectual interest in revolutionary literature, an interest that was manifested in the emergence of numerous leftist publications at this time. If the literary journal *New Youth* (*Xin qingnian*) represents a cultural space in which the May Fourth movement was produced, then the leftist journal *Cultural Criticism* (*Wenhua pipan*), launched in 1928 by Japanese-educated progressive youths such as Feng Naichao (1901–1983), Zhu Jingwo (1901–1941), Peng Kang (1901–1968), and Li Chuli (1900–1994), facilitated the assimilation of Marxism into Chinese literary writing. In the late-Qing and early-Republic periods, efforts had been made to introduce theory, but Marxism did not have an immediate influence on literary practice before 1928. According to the leftist critic Cheng Fangwu (1897–1984), *Cultural Criticism* was designed to criticize capitalist society and replace May Fourth literary hegemony. It is noteworthy that the relationship between the May Fourth movement and leftist literature suggests the intriguing relationship between revolution and modernity: revolutionary literature focuses on capitalist modernity by reducing May Fourth literature to bourgeois values, but at the same time relies on modernity's idea of newness and progress for legitimacy. Therefore, "revolutionary literature" is both the negation and the continuation of May Fourth literature.

The emergence of the class concept did not mean that the myth of the nation-state was replaced by transnational aspirations for the emancipation of the oppressed. Instead, as a result of national crisis, Chinese intellectuals used class as a means of resistance to the imperialist capitalists. Against the conventional view that class and nation are competing and conflicting identities, Duara sees "class as a trope that constructs a particular and powerful representation of the nation."[43] Indeed, by putting the "universal" Marxist theory in a Chinese context, Chinese leftists accepted class struggle while retaining a strong sense of national identity. The conflict between the petit bourgeoisie and the collective proletariat that captured the attention of Chinese leftists shows not only their criticism of the capitalist mode of production—the imperialists' transnational exploitation of the oppressed—but also their reconsider-

ation of the position of self in the context of nationalism. Love in revolutionary literature is not only a sign of modernity, as in the May Fourth narrative, but also a sign of utopian desire for both the self and the nation.

Feng Naichao's short story "Puppet Beauty" (Kuilei meiren), published in *Creation Monthly* (*Chuangzao yuekan*) in 1928, signifies the penetration of the class concept into gender representation. Based on the genre of story retold, Feng Naichao redesigned the traditional image of the famous femme fatale Baosi, whose astonishing beauty, according to the historian Sima Qian, brought the whole country of Zhou to ruin. In contrast to the conventional view, which views the femme fatale as "disaster water" (*huoshui*), Feng Naichao takes Baosi, who is doubly deprived by her home country and the enemy country, as a symbol of the oppressed, stressing the importance of class consciousness. Gender relations and the woman question thus became hallmarks of class relations in revolutionary literature.

Nevertheless, the representation of revolution's affiliations with love, sex, and gender, though undeniably a component of class ideology, still remained open and dynamic at this stage. The image of a seductive revolutionary woman, whose promiscuous body accompanies a revolutionary mind, became one of the most popular embodiments of leftist ideology. Sexual liberation, which in one way or another symbolizes revolution itself, is not in conflict with collective revolutionary passion. For example, after his girlfriend agrees to have sex with him, the young revolutionary Huo Zhiyuan in leftist writer Hong Lingfei's (1901–1933) novel *Front Line* (*Qianxian,* 1930) expresses his excitement:

> From now on we don't have to worry about anything, or suspect anything. All we need to do is to exert ourselves to run forward! Fight! Fight! We shall encourage each other to fight against the old power! Our association is completely established on the idea of revolution! Yes, just like what we have written on our photo: To love for the sake of revolution! Don't sacrifice revolution because of love![44]

The above expresses the harmonious relationship between revolution and love, one of the best-known themes in the early period of revolutionary literature around 1930. This theme explores the wondering self, especially the urban intellectual self, in search of his or her position in the turbulent society after the 1927 Nationalist Party liquidation (or the failure of the 1927 Communist revolution, in the mainland version). For leftists such as Hong Lingfei, revolution—the utopian goal of the collective—is personal, because only through the collective fight can individual happiness be secured. Although other leftist writers such as Jiang Guangci (1901–1931) preferred to focus on the clashes

between the petit bourgeois sentiment and the collective revolutionary movement, they still regarded the two factors as reciprocal, springing from the same libidinal source. In Jiang's own famous words, "Romantic? I myself am romantic. All revolutionaries are romantic. Without being romantic, who would come to start a revolution? . . . Idealism, passion, discontent with the status quo and a desire to create something better—here you have the spirit of romanticism. A romantic is one possessed of such a spirit."[45] Despite this formula's political focus, Leo Ou-fan Lee considers Jiang Guangci and his followers part of the "romantic generation," which carries the May Fourth legacy of subjectivism.[46] In contrast to the Mao years, in which personal love as well as subjectivity were repressed or channeled into the sublimated collective energy, Jiang Guangci's period exalted both personal freedom and revolutionary passion. In Yu Dafu's language, "The emergence of a revolutionary career is possible only for that little passion, the cultivation of which is inseparable from the tender and pure love of a woman. That passion, if extended, is ardent enough to burn down the palaces of a despot and powerful enough to destroy the Bastille."[47] What Yu Dafu pinpoints as "that little passion" reminds us of Herbert Marcuse's vision of nonrepressive conditions, under which "sexuality tends to 'grow into' Eros—that is to say, toward self-sublimation in lasting and expanding relations (including work relations) which serve to intensify and enlarge instinctual gratification."[48] This so-called little passion, which successfully connects love and revolution, sexuality and eros (the enlargement of sexuality itself), can well explain why the Creation Society dramatically switched from the representation of individual sentiments to the representation of collective revolutionary passion, an abrupt transformation that is incomprehensible to many scholars.

However, beneath the harmonious relationship between personal love and revolutionary passion in the late 1920s and the early 1930s lies a split personality, or more specifically, a split modern consciousness characteristic of the writers who frantically pursued this fashion. Driven by the utopian dream of a strong China, those leftist writers came to embrace revolution and love enthusiastically both in fiction and in real life but found themselves confronted with dilemmas between the ideal and reality, self and nation, progress and tradition, revolutionary masculinity and sentimental femininity. In other words, they were fascinated with this formulaic writing because it provided a perfect site to linger on the dilemmas and contradictions that epitomized their tormented experience. Although they appear romantic and passionate, they are also schizophrenic—an archetypal modern mental state resulting from their bitter struggle for personal happiness and national idealism.

In his insightful study of the leftist literary movement, T. A. Hsia reveals

that Lu Xun (1881–1936) was not the only writer who experienced "the paradox of his personal life and modern Chinese life, the conflict between hope and despair," "the dilemma of the shadow whose existence is threatened by both the light and the darkness";[49] other leftist writers such as Qu Qiubai (1899–1935) and Jiang Guangci also possessed "dual personalities" as sentimentalists and Communists. The revolution plus love formula, as this book demonstrates, is a specific genre that critically underscores that dual personality, which challenges the conventional view of modern consciousness as a symbolic unity. Although those leftists unmistakably longed for progress, freedom, and the utopian society, they at the same time endured a schizophrenic syndrome in which their sensitivity as individuals was troubled by the difference between utopia and reality. Through the production and proliferation of this formula, the individual's unsettling experience, his or her bitter struggle and tormented anxiety, were repeated again and again.

Looking closely at Mao Dun's (1896–1981), Jiang Guangci's, and Bai Wei's (1894–1987) lived historical experience, David Der-wei Wang illustrates a polemical picture in which "these writers did not merely write down but personally acted out modern Chinese *fictional realism*."[50] Indeed, the formula of revolution plus love was by no means a literary construction that existed only in textual reality; it was closely associated with the brutal reality in which progressive youths such as Ding Ling's first husband, Hu Yepin (1903–1931), were murdered for their ideals. Whether life imitates art or vice versa, love and happiness do not simply serve as a symbol for revolution; they are the purpose of revolution. In other words, writers during the early period of revolutionary literature usually personalized revolution or revolutionalized their romantic and sexual adventures, for both are based on utopian desire. This is what enabled them to accept hardship as well as revolutionary frenzy; it is also what aroused their anxiety as the harmonious relationship between revolution and love was hampered by reality.

The leftists' personal experiences are particularly revealing. For instance, Qu Qiubai, the early leader of the Communist Party who was also actively involved in the leftist literary movement in the 1930s, fell in love with Ding Ling's best girlfriend, Wang Jianhong, but finally left her for the sake of revolution. As he confessed to Ding Ling, Qu was later tortured by Wang's death from tuberculosis caught from him, for he had been forced by his political beliefs to betray his real heart.[51] In *Superfluous Words,* he repeatedly emphasized that his devotion to political work was a "historical misunderstanding" that even his Communist friends couldn't understand.[52] The two irreconcilable sides of Qu's character were vividly captured by Ding Ling's novel *Weihu* (1930), a typical example of the revolution plus love formula.

Another famous leftist writer, Mao Dun (1896–1981), who joined with Qu Qiubai to poignantly criticize this formulaic writing but whose novels were conspicuously tinged with revolution and romance, after a period of bitter struggle finally chose the marriage arranged by his family over his lover Qin Dejun, a new woman whose dazzling sexual adventures and political awareness inspired him to write *Rainbow* (*Hong,* 1930).[53] Mao Dun's vacillation between conventional marriage and sexual liberation as well as his uncertainty at the peculiar moment of 1927 expose a modern man's split mental state, which lurks behind his controversial novels related to this theme.

Jiang Guangci, the initiator of this formula, also heroically sacrificed himself both for revolution and for love. Alhough he played an important role in propagating proletarian literature and revolution, he was nevertheless dismissed by the Communist Party because of his petit bourgeois lifestyle. Despite his lover Song Ruoyu's tuberculosis, he married her; thus his romantic passion led to his own death from tuberculosis, contracted from her.[54] His failed love affair with the Communist Party parodies the romantic spirit of his protagonists and himself. As the heroine Wang Manying in his novel *The Moon Forces Its Way through the Clouds* (*Chongchu yunwei de yueliang,* 1930) romantically uses her own body, infected with a sexually transmitted disease, as a weapon to fight the bourgeois class, Jiang Guangci himself was trapped in a reality that seriously fettered his romantic spirit.

Female leftist writers' personal experiences of revolution and love intriguingly forged a dialogue with those of male writers. Shi Pingmei (1902–1928), the progressive woman writer famous for her romance with one of the early Communist leaders, Gao Junyu, refused to accept his love but fully committed herself to him after he died for both revolution and love. Her love affair with death may seem bewildering, a bizarre romance that conflicts with revolutionary literature's propaganda purpose. In Lu Yin's (1898–1934) *Ivory Rings* (*Xiangya jiezhi,* 1934), Shi's obsession with sentimentalism and death, her elevation of the utopian woman-to-woman relationship, which is also expressed in Shi's own writing, strike an incongruous note in the male-constituted world of revolution and love.

After her first husband, Hu Yepin, was executed by the GMD in 1930, Ding Ling completed her transformation from a feminist writer who specialized in representing modern girls' subjectivity and sexuality to a female leftist identifying with Marxist ideology. As Ding Ling tried to carry on and spread that ideology under difficult circumstances, she was kidnapped and imprisoned by GMD agents from 1933 to 1936. During this period of detention, even though she knew that her second husband, Feng Da, who was also a Communist, had betrayed his political beliefs, she compromised, living with him and

bearing his child. She explained, "I was a Communist, but I was after all a human being, who still naturally maintained a person's little desire of survival. . . . I could only blame myself for not being strong enough—that I even could tolerate my former husband's hand reaching to me, the hand belonging to someone that I should hate."[55] No doubt, Ding Ling was experiencing the most awkward dilemma between romance and revolution. Her ambiguous attitude toward the traitor husband was later criticized by her comrades in Yan'an and during the Cultural Revolution. The two sides of her character—a woman with a human nature and a devoted Communist—were delivered in her essays "Thoughts on March 8" (Sanbajie you gan, 1942) and "When I Was in Xia Village" (Wozai xiacun de shihou, 1941), which showed great concern about women's fate in Yan'an.

Another female leftist writer, Bai Wei, whose works *Fight out of the Ghost Tower* (*Dachu youlingta,* 1928) and *A Bomb and an Expeditionary Bird* (*Zhadan yu zhengniao,* 1929) keenly accentuate women's problems in the revolutionary movement, had a failed affair with her lover Yang Sao. Their painful romance brought Bai Wei a sexually transmitted disease, gonorrhea, which prevented her from engaging in revolution. In her autobiographical novel *Tragic Life* (*Beiju shengya,* 1936), Bai Wei meticulously recorded how she was incarcerated by her diseased body, the result of the romantic pursuit of personal happiness, and how much she despaired because she was disqualified from both love and revolution.[56] She was hysterical and often wrote in a hysterical mode: she was irritated by the contrast between the progressing historical tide and her own decaying body. Living with disease, she poignantly expressed her suspicious attitude toward the utopian desire that triggers the formula of revolution and love.

Taking a brief look at the romantic lives of these leftists allows us to learn more about their inner world, full of contradictions. As agents working for progress and revolution, who personally act out their idealism, they themselves are reluctant to privilege the collective at the expense of the individual. As a result, their literary practices of revolution plus love were crammed with paradoxes: they violently attacked the passive sentimentality and individualism that prevailed in the May Fourth literature, but their writing could not escape the petit bourgeois mentality; they seriously criticized capitalist materialism, but the sale of their work was largely based on a consumer culture; their bold description of sex connected sexual emancipation with revolutionary and antifeudal acts but at the same time contained the elements of bourgeois decadence. Those paradoxes show that the "mutual enrichment"[57] or the reciprocal relationship between love and revolution has never been easy; the uneasiness not only engendered the split personality of these writers but

also suggested the multiple and contested nature of historical identities in the revolutionary literature around 1930. Thus, the ceaseless reiterations of those paradoxes are potentially resistant to totalizing revolutionary ideology.

If in the period of the Creation Society, the Sun Society (Tai yang she), and the Chinese League of Leftist Writers (Zuolian) leftist writers illustrated private feeling, sex, and love from various angles, they and other writers from the new generation developed an ambivalent attitude during the Yan'an period and the first seventeen years of the People's Republic of China. That is to say, the intensive relationship between revolution and love had begun: writers had to carefully control the representation of this theme under the pressure of Mao's famous Yan'an talk. As a matter of fact, Mao encouraged revolutionary romanticism, a positive romantic spirit that is able to mobilize and sublimate individual sexuality into the higher goal of political culture. Yet Mao gave individualism and subjectivity negative connotations because the individual's private feeling and space may pose a threat to the stable and pure form of revolutionary ideology. Therefore, the antagonistic embrace of sex and politics—personal feeling, gender, and sexuality being suppressed by the Party discourse of class, nation, and state or, alternatively, politics being sexually charged and driven—represents two major narratives of revolution plus love during this historical period. Meng Yue's reading of *The White-Haired Girl* (*Baimao nü,* 1942) and *Song of Youth* (*Qingchun zhige,* 1958) observes that as the myth of class victory and the myth of women's liberation joined together, the narratives of private sexual issues, women's individuality, and femininity were repressed and eliminated by the state's political discourse.[58] On the other hand, Wang Ban's reading of the film *Song of Youth,* based on Yang Mo's (1914–1995) novel, borrows Herbert Marcuse's notion of nonrepressive sublimation to explain why the sexually charged revolutionary discourse had a great emotional effect on a mass audience.[59] Apart from these two opposing interpretations of sex and politics, a third option is to acknowledge the temporary convergence of individual sexuality and the broader sexual implications of politics, from which writers' ambivalent treatment of private feelings resulted in an "ambiguous pluralization."[60] This position again shows the split personality of Chinese intellectuals who painfully swing back and forth between the hope for self-fulfillment and the hope for a certain supportive communal environment. Seen from this angle, not all the private passions or petit bourgeois sentiments could be repressed by or uplifted to political enthusiasm and collective libidinal satisfaction; many Chinese writers were still struggling between individual love and national revolution during the Yan'an period and the first seventeen years. In other words, the split modern consciousness was never fully erased by the totality of Maoist discourse; instead, it tenaciously existed in the repetition of this

literary formula. For instance, Xiao Yemu (1918–1970), Lu Ling (1923–1994), Wang Meng (1934–), Ouyang Shan (1908–2001), Zong Pu (1928–), and many other writers all created a complex private space in their novels through which to temporally negotiate with the totality of political power.

During the period of the Cultural Revolution, private feelings, sex, and personal love, which were regarded by the Communist Party as harmful and destructive elements, were expelled from literary production. In Yang Mo's *Song of Youth,* the author describes the sexual relationship, however ambiguous, between the heroine Lin Daojing and her comrade Jiang Hua in the guise of "comradeship." This kind of subtle description of sex and personal love was eliminated in Hao Ran's (1932–) *Golden Road* (*Jinguang dadao,* 1972) and notorious eight revolutionary model plays (*yangban xi*). In the plays, the image of wife (or husband), who symbolizes the private space, ordinary daily life, and emotional and sexual relationships, is removed from the stage as in *The Story of Red Light* (*Hongdengji*). As a signifier of the repressed, women's bodies were required to be pure, without any reference to sex, as the raped body of Xi'er in the revolutionary model ballet *The White-Haired Girl* is purged and erased.[61] Even the comradely love between Wu Qinghua and the Party representative, which is vague but still visible in the film of *The Red Detachment of Women* (*Hongse niangzi jun*), was omitted in its ballet version, supervised by Mao's wife, Jiang Qing. Heterosexual love became unspeakable, unhealthy, and inappropriate. Accordingly, the thematic repetition of collective revolution and personal love was disrupted in this period, for "individual identity was no longer something unique but was extensively socialized and standardized, the local mark of a homogeneous communal identity."[62] Instead, love, sexuality, and life instinct were channeled into a high degree of libidinal satisfaction. In Herbert Marcuse's words, "The biological drive becomes a cultural drive."[63] That is to say, "the cultural-building power of Eros is non-repressive sublimation: sexuality is neither deflected from nor blocked in its objective; rather, in attaining its objective, it transcends it to others, searching for fuller gratification."[64] The cult of Mao, the exaggeration of revolutionary heroes, and the frenzy of the Cultural Revolution resulted from such an aggrandizement of sexual instinct and sensuousness, which in return was catastrophic for personal identity. The Communist revolution promised individual self-fulfillment and self-development, but in the process it seemed to have lost its original purpose. The repression of personal feeling and sexuality corresponds to the myth of Mao's nation building, with the goal "to purge or disenfranchise undesirable classes in the nation and strive to shape the nation in the image of the idealized proletariat."[65] The urgent feeling of anti-imperialism that is continually carried by Maoist discourse and its

myth of the nation does not leave any space for Chinese intellectuals to linger on their split modern consciousness.

Since the early 1980s, personal love has been rediscovered and has become one of the most popular themes in novels, poetry, plays, and films. Loaded with the social duty to reflect what was destroyed by the Cultural Revolution, "scar literature" embraced love as a key to solving social problems. Even a quick glance at scar literature titles, such as Liu Xinwu's "Place of Love" (Aiqing de weizhi), Zhang Jie's "Love Cannot Be Neglected" (Aishi buneng wangji de), Zhang Kangkang's "Right to Love" (Aide quanli), and Zhang Xian's "Corner Forgotten by Love" (Bei aiqing yiwang de jiaoluo), reveals writers' obsession with this taboo subject. Containing the political unconscious, love for those writers represents the banner of humanism, a way to save society, and a tentative vision of the lost "self." However, though they use love to criticize Maoist politics and to condemn the Cultural Revolution wholesale, those writers are not necessarily disillusioned with revolution or Marxism. Rather, they strive to humanize the revolutionary discourse by focusing on the individual's love life. Among novelists who use the formula—"a literary creation is equal to X [which refers to any topic] + wound + love"[66]—Zhang Jie (1937–) makes the problem of the female subject in the socialist context a challenge to the received idea of women's emancipation.[67] Showing significant concern with questions of gender relations, her female subjective voice explores women's bitter experiences in love relationships, which are not easily explained by existing Marxist thought.

Although scar literature was burdened with social responsibility and its description of love carefully surrounded by the question of morality, extravagant descriptions of sex, erotica, and physical experience soon took over the literary scene following Zhang Xianliang's *Half of Man Is Woman* (*Nanren de yiban shi nüren*). The Chinese reader, accustomed to traditional as well as revolutionary morality in judging sex, was stunned by this new literature flooded with men's and women's sexy bodies, primitive sensations, libidinal energy, and erotic desire. This phenomenon provoked great controversy because critics could no longer categorize it with their familiar Marxist approaches.[68] Crossing and recrossing the boundary of revolutionary morality, sex and erotica soon appeared as the most forceful instrument for Chinese writers to rediscover their own roots, personal languages, and subjectivity marginalized by Maoist discourse. For example, avant-garde writers such as Mo Yan, Li Rui, Liu Heng, Su Tong, and Ge Fei employ sex as a narrative strategy to deconstruct the metanarrative of national myth, revolutionary history, and critical realism. Unlike the previous generation, who still believed in socialism, these avant-garde writers were disenchanted with revolutionary ideology. They de-

pict sex at its most primitive, physical, celebrated, and carnivalistic in order to rebel against the sublime version imposed by the official discourse. But even if they transcend politics and pay more attention to formalities such as language, narratology, and structure, which are influenced by Western modernism, the symbolic meaning of sex in their writings is still very political: it is a subversion of political allegory. However, this way of depicting sex eventually disappeared among the much younger generation's literary practices in the context of globalization. The so-called new human beings (*xinxin renlei*), represented by Wei Hui and her generation's "women's bodily writing," neither identify with the heavily loaded sense of nationalism nor care to pursue the autonomy of literature. In her representation of sex, Wei Hui ambiguously mixes the consumer culture's manipulation of women's bodies with a postmodern sense of female sexuality. The old paradigm of revolution plus love, which attracted the modern Chinese literary imagination for almost a century, eventually lost its seductive power over the postsocialist generation.

A Performative Act

So far, I have briefly delineated the interactions of revolution and love in different historical periods. Although I have tried very hard to characterize the "spirit" and "face" of each historical period, I find that what needs to be questioned is not only sociological mechanistic determinism but also the false unity of revolution and love in linear history. How true is a historical description based primarily on a single, seamless account of the spirit of a period? What has been concealed or marginalized in it? How dynamic were the interactions of revolution and love in different historical periods? What should we do with interactions that were inconsistent but overlapped and coexisted in time? If the zeitgeist cannot represent the original and authentic history, then how can history be represented, how "thickly" can it be described?[69]

Bearing these theoretical questions in mind, my project of historicizing the interplay of revolution and love focuses on "a plurality of histories" to determine what relationship is described by the discontinuity and continuity of that interplay. By examining different historical periods, I challenge the "total history" that "seeks to reconstitute the overall form of a civilization, the principle—material or spiritual—of a society, the significance common to all the phenomena of a period, the law that accounts for their cohesion—what is called metaphorically the 'face' of a period."[70] However, I am also aware that whether diversity should be valued over unity is not a theoretical question, but a question that hinges on a certain historical moment. The relationships

between difference and unity, particulars and the universal, the individual and society, gender difference and gender abstraction do not automatically contain any moral judgment, but rather are themselves objects of critique depending on circumstances.

Few novels have been more thoroughly written according to a formula than Chinese novels about revolution plus love of the late 1920s and 1930s. The popular theme attracted avowed revolutionary writers and their followers. The wide application of this formula in fiction writing unavoidably elevated and belittled it. Unlike other narrative modes that belong to mainstream literature, such as critical realism or revolutionary realism, the formula of revolution plus love presents a dilemma in orthodox literary history. Most critics are incapable of accommodating it within established categories. Simply calling it a failure because it produced only copies relegates a series of problems brought up by this type of writing comfortably to oblivion. What has been seriously ignored is the complicated reality that the formula of revolution plus love tried painstakingly to define. Although this formula was to represent "newness" and modernity's progress, it aims to criticize capitalist modernity, freeing the Chinese people, the national proletariat, from the oppression of Western capitalism. Although it targets capitalist materialism, its proliferation and commercial triumph sustained and erased that idea at the same time. Therefore, to see the formula as a simple reflection of standardized Marxist thought would reduce this intricate literary practice to a fixed form with a universal or authoritative voice. In my discussion of this formula writing, I try to avoid being limited by the literal definitions of "revolution" or "love." The varied representations of their complicated relationship tell us we cannot perceive the connotations of these terms as fixed in a social vacuum, nor can we reduce them to the very thing against which they are constructed by simply interpreting literary representations within the dominant political field. Instead, I view the thematic repetition of revolution plus love as a performative act mobilizing the relationship between revolution and love within different cultural and historical contexts, thus causing their definitions to vary in the struggle for dominant symbolic power.

The word "performative" may be reminiscent of J. L. Austin's speech act theory and Derrida's further deconstructive reading of it.[71] My usage is certainly derived from such a genealogy that focuses on iterability, possible imitation, and repetition in various serious and nonserious contexts, but I point to concrete historical conditions that make such reiterations possible. My definition of "performative" is more than a linguistic formulation and reformulation and is inseparable from broader concerns about power relations in the literary field. Lying behind the endless, enthusiastic thematic repetition of revolution plus love are the utopian desire and the revolutionary ideal, which

generate pleasure and pain, laughter and tears, love and hate, ecstasies and disappointments. The utopian desire best explains why numerous writers came to embrace, imitate, and repeat the theme of revolution plus love and why their imitation and repetition put their political and sexual identities in question. In other words, revolution's dealings with reality, which include passion and despair, sacrifice and blood, are more than performative theory can grasp and comprehend. Writers driven by utopian desire, who have real interests in the different possibilities in the literary field, repeat, reiterate, and contest the meanings of revolution and love in different ways that show the stable modern consciousness to be only and always an illusory construction.

My focus in the first chapter is on the *wentan* (literary scene) during the period of revolutionary literature. Questioning the coherent identity and form of so-called revolutionary literature, I describe different groups of writers, who sometimes also acted as editors and critics, expressing their interaction with revolutionary beliefs. By focusing on the popular revolution plus love fiction from 1926 to 1935, chapters 2, 3, and 4 not only question the coherence of the modern Chinese literary canon itself but also explore some noncanonical writings that have been ignored by official history. Copies and repetitions of the revolution plus love formula are deceptively simple. Every imitation creates unpredictable modifications of and differences from the original (if there is an original). This fact should have been clear to the utopian critics who saw the theory of revolutionary literature and its literary practice as a romantic harmony, and who saw duplications of the form as identical. The historical participants using this all-embracing formula, such as left-wing writers, female writers, and the early New Sensibility writers, all contributed different interpretations from their own perspectives, thus expanding and diffusing each carefully formulated practice. It is important to note that agents' different responses to cultural norms, with concealed modes of imitation, have both undermined and affirmed the existing systems of power.

The correspondence between revolution and love appears tangled in different historical periods. Therefore in chapters 5 and 6 I examine women's bodies as a site of intense interactions structured by the power controlling reality. Regarding women's sexually specific bodies as socially and politically constructed entities reveals the complexity of the connection between erotic imagination and symbolic power. My study shows that women's bodies are subject to endless rewriting and reinscription that establish various sign systems in social space. By analyzing women's bodies and their relationship to politics in the first seventeen years of the PRC and the twentieth-century fin-de-siècle period, I aim to draw a more comprehensive picture of the dynamics between revolution and love.

Tracing how women's sexual bodies are produced by culture and society, I refuse to accept them as ahistorical, precultural, or natural in any simple way. The feminist critic Judith Butler rejects gender's ontological status by putting it back within a discursive framework.[72] I agree that gender is the site of a historically specific organization of power relations, but I also do not want to disregard the biological aspect of women's bodies, which seeps beyond the power structure and social space that attempt to contain it.[73] In contrast to solid men's bodies, the female body symbolizes various forms of uncontrollable flow; this naturalness and fluidity may be a threat to men's purported rationality and transcendence.[74] Accordingly, by taking both the containability and uncontainability of women's bodies into account, I freely cross and recross the boundaries of outside and inside, public and private, knowledge and desire. I ask, for example, When we scrutinize how women's bodies are distributed, censored, and put to political use, aren't we only emphasizing their fundamental passivity and transparency? What about the inarticulate part of the body that might act to produce fragmentations, fractures, dislocations in different historical and social spaces? How can we historicize the relationship between revolution and love in terms of both the containability and the uncontainability of women's bodies? My frequent use of feminist theory throughout this book is not simply an antifoundational gesture but a means to observe the ceaseless struggles between politics and gender.

Over the past two decades or so, there has been much sophisticated discussion of revolutionary discourse and romantic imagination, but no systematic analysis of the dynamic interplay between these two elements in modern Chinese literary history. Admittedly, much more is involved here than popular conceptions of body politics or the political meanings of eros. How can we rewrite a modern Chinese literary history that has been constrained by established modes of thinking? For example, canonization often subordinates discussions of marginalized writers to footnotes in the evolution of mainstream literature. Is digging out some marginal writings enough to challenge the critical system? This question becomes more urgent when we consider that the interplay of revolution and love is related to the ongoing enactment of Chinese modernity. The transmission of power from a canon to a countercanon represents a critical moment in the reciprocal relation between the history of literature and social patrimony. Therefore, although my study explores different modes of marginal writing that have not garnered the scholarly and critical attention they merit, I do not mean to merely use them as replacements for canonical works. Rather, I wish to draw attention to how the canon and countercanon have been established as a way of relating literary texts to their historical context within the matrix of power relations. Examining the discursive

construction of the canon and the countercanon enables us to question the apparently unified concept of newness, progress, and revolution, stratifying it into different layers according to its constant repetitions in the formulary writing of revolution and love.

A Self-Recycling Discourse of Revolution

At the end of the twentieth century, Li Zehou and Liu Zaifu published their coauthored book *Farewell Revolution* (*Gaobie geming*), which criticizes the revolutionary mode of thinking that had manipulated not only the intellectual life but also the daily life of the Chinese people. In his article "No Revolution to Literature" (Wenxue buke geming), Liu Zaifu especially questions the necessity of "revolution" in literature and the arts, which originated with Liang Qichao's "revolution in poetry" and "revolution in fiction," then was carried on by the "literary revolution" of the May Fourth movement and leftists' much more radical advocacy of "revolutionary literature."[75] Under the pressure of nationalist urgency, those revolutions have repeatedly subordinated literature to social concerns, nation building, and political ideologies; as a result, writers' individuality and subjectivity have been gradually eliminated, and the traditional Chinese literary legacy has been less cherished. Liu's criticism of literary revolution and revolutionary literature epitomizes his generation's disillusionment with the utopian dream after the trauma of the Cultural Revolution. His targeting literature's social and political function is more or less congruent with Lu Xun's prediction of literature's association with revolution: "Revolution, anti-revolution, revolution of revolution, revolution of anti-revolution, anti-anti-revolution of revolution . . ."[76] In Lu Xun's words, "[Some people] often like to address the close relationship between literature and revolution in order to propagate, advertise, stir up, propel, and complete revolution. However, I think this kind of article is powerless, for a good artistic work should not obey others' orders, should not concern gains and losses, but is something naturally coming from one's heart."[77] Unfortunately, only at the end of the twentieth century did Chinese intellectuals have the luxury to reflect on a "self-recycling"[78] revolutionary discourse, which believes in the myth of progress but in fact merely revolves around literature's submission to politics.

Borrowing Matei Calinescu's definition of modernity, which contains two bitterly conflicting sides—the cult of progress and an aesthetics[79]—Leo Ou-fan Lee discusses Chinese intellectuals' search for modernity in Chinese social and historical conditions. He argues that in China, the second modernity of culture and aesthetics never launched serious criticism of the first modernity

of time and human progress, as happened in the West. "The crucial point of difference, however, is that these Chinese writers did not choose (nor did they feel the necessity) to separate the two dominants of historical and aesthetic modernity in their pursuit of a modern mode of consciousness and modern form of literature."[80] Instead, the cultural or aesthetic modernity "was not coequal with but ultimately subordinate to the new historical consciousness."[81] Chinese intellectuals were so deeply involved in the processes and pressures of mundane modernization that they lost the capacity to repudiate or question this subordination. All their efforts were required to adapt to the fluctuating and immediate demands of the social order. This attitude affected all the arts. The personal, subjective, and private had to yield to the ideology of the new, of progress conceived as a positive, continual movement forward through the destruction of old forms and the invention of new ones adequate to the expression of imperative reality. The form that could best express the new historical consciousness was the realistic narrative. Other narrative modes, such as romanticism or neoromanticism, were definitely inferior, although they "were also made within the conscious framework of the modern 'tides' of history."[82]

Leo Ou-fan Lee provides a panorama of Chinese literary history, based on an analysis of Western modernity's transformation in China, in which art serves as an instrument for political and social purposes. This argument captures the broad tendency and tide of literary history; however, it does not mean that resistance to the inevitable flow of modernization or ambiguity toward the new historical consciousness has never existed. We can find private doubts and waverings about the ideology of progress in Lu Xun's paradoxical writings and the experimental modernism of the new sensibility school, in Shen Congwen's detachment from modernization and Zhang Ailing's aesthetic concept of desolation. Even if literary form itself rests on the idea of revolution, the process of representation will generate degrees of obscurity and heterogeneity within it. As Franco Moretti has said, "Literature is perhaps the most omnivorous of social institutions, the most ductile in satisfying disparate social demands, the most ambitious in not recognizing limits to its own sphere of representation. One cannot ask that heterogeneity to disappear, but only (and it is no small request) to reflect faithfully the real diversity, in terms of their destination and function, of the texts under examination."[83] It was precisely the fundamental distinction between representation and the represented, between the sign and the signified that refined and extended the territory of the realist mode, which aptly expressed Chinese intellectuals' pursuit of modernity as progress. For example, the work of leftist writer Lu Ling represents the complexity of Chinese cultural modernity, as Kirk A. Denton describes it, "characterized by two discourses—romantic individualism and revolutionary collectivism."[84] Because

the author is caught by the contradictions between these two discourses, his work is filled with tensions stronger than the revolutionary authoritarian voices carried by the form of realism. Therefore, although the representation of historical modernity has largely dominated that of aesthetic modernity in the history of modern Chinese literature, we still need to dig out the "repressed modernities" (David Der-wei Wang's term) that have been denied or suppressed in mainstream literature.

Despite Liu Zaifu's and Leo Ou-fan Lee's different critical angles—one reflecting revolution, the other modernity—both point out the lack of individualism and subjectivism in modern Chinese narrative. The trend of experimental fiction in the 1990s, which extolled the autonomy of literature and the arts, to some extent filled such gaps, which always existed in modern Chinese literature. However, in the newly emerged context of globalization, the debates between the new leftist school and the neoliberal school have shown Chinese intellectuals' doubts about capitalist modernity, which organized the world through the continual expansion of economically powerful nation-states. If Liu and Lee criticized the "phantasmagorias" production of revolution and modernity as progress, then the new leftist school made its target global capitalism in the new historical situation. As Walter Benjamin wrote, "Capitalism was a natural phenomenon with which a new dream sleep fell over Europe, and with it a reactivation of mythic powers."[85] This capitalist "phantasmagorias" has successfully turned into a global dream. Critics of the new leftist school have written that the dream world built on the economic market is all illusion, belying the success of the new order of globalization. They have criticized the continuity of experimental literature or the autonomy of literature, which seems to have lost its critical power over the postsocialist and postmodernist reality. Thus literature is reassociated with social concerns as new leftists cautiously reveal the West's political and economic motivation behind its promotion of global consumerist dreams. It is in this new context that some critics, such as Kuang Xinnian, urge a reexamination of the leftist literature of the 1930s, the manifestation of the intriguing relationships between socialism and capitalism, between Chinese intellectuals' pursuit of modernity and their reflection of and resistance to it. According to Kuang, both modernism and leftist literature respond to modernity in relation to capitalist development. However, the former never transgresses capitalism even if it constantly produces newness; the latter, on the contrary, intends to thoroughly destroy the structure of capitalism.[86] Apparently, Kuang's reaffirmation of the leftist literature of the 1930s can shed some light on new leftists' concern about what kind of role literature should play in the increasingly global situation.

From Liu and Lee's denouncement of literature's association with social

and national affairs to Kuang's recall of that association, we find that the self-recycling discourse of revolution has once again made history turn backward upon itself. This phenomenon reminds us of Herbert Marcuse's discussion of revolution:

> Each revolution has been the conscious effort to replace one ruling group by another; but each revolution has also released forces that have "overshot the goal," that have striven for the abolition of domination and exploitation. The ease with which they have been defeated demands explanations. Neither the prevailing constellation of power, nor immaturity of the productive forces, nor absence of class consciousness provides an adequate answer. In every revolution, there seems to have been a historical moment when the struggle against domination might have been victorious—but the moment passed. An element of self-defeat seems to be involved in this dynamic (regardless of the validity of such reasons as the prematurity and inequality of forces). In this sense, every revolution has also been a betrayed revolution.[87]

Marcuse's definition of revolution is in tune with Liu Zaifu's argument: each revolution in literature embodies an element of self-defeat and unnecessarily brings literature to a more progressive stage. Yet in light of Marcuse's theory, we can also say that a farewell to revolution and a reconsideration of revolutionary literature are both historically constructed criticisms of revolution. The former rebels against the domination of the official political language; the latter struggles with the control of global capitalism. But their moments of militating against domination (either Communist or capitalist) will eventually pass as we face another new historical situation. By then, how will we be reinterpreting the "revolutionary literature" of the twentieth century? Will Chinese intellectuals' search for modernity do justice to revolutionary passion and spirit? Will revolution's self-defeat illuminate the rethinking of discourses of modernity and antimodernity? What is the role of literature in association with social change? Although the following chapters cannot offer sufficient answers to those questions, they at least reconsider a more dialectical relationship between revolution and modernity.

1 The Unusual Literary Scene

Following the May Fourth movement the literary field experienced a turbulent time of searching for a new subjectivity, not only in active literary creation but also in writers' interaction with their professional environment as well as the broader social environment. Here we must pay attention to the political situation that triggered the new category of "revolutionary literature." The GMD and CCP joined forces in 1923. Two years later British police killed thirteen Shanghai demonstrators (the May Thirtieth massacre) and French marines killed fifty-two demonstrators at Canton on June 23. Then came the Northern Expedition in 1926–1927 and Jiang Jieshi's 1927 liquidation of the CCP members. All these political events are connected to the rising public expectation of revolution. Chinese writers either witnessed or experienced the great excitement, turmoil, passion, destruction, and despair brought by revolution. After these events many Chinese writers walked out the ivory tower of literature and vigorously plunged into real revolutionary struggle. In 1926, Guo Moruo (1892–1978), Cheng Fangwu, and Yu Dafu of the Creation Society, as well as Mao Dun and Wang Renshu (1901–1972) of the Literary Research Society, all appeared on the streets of Guangzhou, which was regarded as ground zero of revolution at the time. Even Lu Xun took a roundabout way from Xiamen to the same place in 1927. A wave of anti-imperialist and nationalist fervor engulfed the Chinese public as well as the Chinese literary field. Then, after Jiang Jieshi's sudden break with the Communists on April 12, 1927—an event that was to be of enormous significance for the emergence of revolutionary literature—the literati engaged in a series of frantic debates over what revolution meant for literature. Dramatic changes in the literary field resulted not only from the logic and idea of newness, which impelled modern Chinese writers to commit to whatever new identities could differentiate them from the May Fourth generation, but also from their eagerness to respond to the political and social situations.

Class Nationalism

According to John King Fairbank, the Soviet Union had actively helped the Chinese revolution. Although the Soviets made an alliance with the GMD instead of the CCP from 1923 to 1926, "they left no stone unturned to accelerate China's revolutionary avalanche."[1] As early as 1898, Liang Qichao had introduced socialist ideas to Chinese readers, but he didn't think that a socialist revolution should be carried out in China.[2] In 1920, Li Dazhao began to characterize China as a "proletarian nation" in his introduction to and practice of Marxist theory. As Maurice Meisner points out, there was a strong nationalist implication in Li Dazhao's international position. "If the entire Chinese nation was 'proletarian,' then national struggle and class struggle were synonymous, and nationalistic interests and motivations were sanctioned as legitimate forms of China's contribution to the world revolution."[3] Following Li Dazhao's lead, leftists also identified class struggle with national and racial conflict in the late 1920s. During this historical period, numerous Marxist theories of art and literature were introduced and translated into China from the Soviet Union or from Japan. It is noteworthy that those translated Marxist art theories were not directly from Marx or Lenin, but from Trotsky, Plekhanov, Lunacharsky, Kurahara Korehito, Vladimir M. Friche, Sinclair, and so forth. The different agendas of those translated theories no doubt had caused the diffusion of Chinese writers' acceptances of "revolution" and "revolutionary literature." Despite the various sources of imported Marxist theories, numerous Chinese intellectuals were swept up by Marxism, for they believed it would provide a way to salvage the Chinese nation from the exploitation of Western capitalism.

Of course, Chinese intellectuals' comprehension of the class concept took an international expression, as Cheng Fangwu, the leading member of the Creation Society wrote: "Capitalism has already reached its final day. There are two fortresses in the world: one side is the poisoned residue of capitalism, an isolated city of Fascism; the other side is the association of proletarians around the world."[4] In one of his important articles written in 1928, "About Revolutionary Literature" (Guanyu geming wenxue), Jiang Guangci clearly conveyed his anxiety about the backwardness of Chinese literature. According to Jiang, this backwardness was caused by May Fourth writers' imitation of European literature. Chinese literature could never excel through this kind of naive imitation. To create a place for it in the literary universe, Jiang Guangci attempted to align Chinese literature with the global genre that focused on the oppressed and the proletariat, since the language of class was not limited to the East, the West, or specific countries. Through revolution, especially class revolution, Chinese literature would ultimately reach the new and transcendental

ideal that the whole world seemed to be pursuing. As Jiang said, "The nature of Chinese revolution for the past two years is no longer a simple revolution of either nation or national rights. If somebody regards the literature of nationalism as revolutionary literature, it totally contradicts the meaning of the modern Chinese revolution."[5] However, such an urge to implement literary universals still came from the real sense of crises of the nation under Western repression, ideas of the acceleration of history and the concept of progress. As Arif Dirlik points out, Chinese nationalism played an important part in localizing Marxism.[6] Therefore it is still nationalism that lurks at the very heart of Jiang Guangci's understanding of the class concept. As with Li Dazhao, even if Jiang's expression encompassed international aspirations of the emancipation of the oppressed and crossed national boundaries, he presumed the Chinese nation to be a nation of the oppressed and the proletariat. Thus the overriding sentiment of nationalism was still the vital factor for Chinese intellectuals in accepting Marxism. Abdullah Laroui's definition of "class nationalism" has well explained why the class concept can always be extended to nation in third-world countries.[7] Seeing class as a trope to construct nationalism is important,[8] because in this way, we can understand leftists' intentions to criticize capitalist modernity not only from a Marxist point of view, but also from a position of the semicolonial country. The Chinese national self—the idealized proletariat—is defined in relation to the Other, the Western bourgeoisie. That is why leftists wanted so much to negate the May Fourth discourse of enlightenment, to purge the petit bourgeois and bourgeois classes, and to terminate an inclination toward a Westernized culture.

A set of issues related to the revolutionary frenzy and despair was brought up by the emergence of revolutionary literature: How should literature be redefined? What is the relationship between revolution and literature? What is literature's social function? Does literature automatically contain the class element? What is an intellectual's role in promoting proletarian literature? Who is eligible to write revolutionary literature? How should intellectuals adjust their positions against the large background of revolution? In the famous leftist journal *Cultural Criticism,* Cheng Fangwu foresaw the historical tasks of the movement of revolutionary literature, which were "to criticize the legitimacy of capitalist society, to delineate how imperialists indulge in promiscuity and pleasure, to answer the question of 'what we should do,' and to point out our direction."[9] Through redefining literature and its relationship to revolution, this young leftist generation launched a severe attack on the May Fourth writers, who in their eyes were the agents of the bourgeois class and the "spokespersons" of Western imperialism and capitalist modernity.[10] Yet, influenced by Marxist historical consciousness, they shared with the May Fourth writers the

same idea of time, of linear and teleological history.[11] In the end, these leftists vehemently resisted and criticized modernity, especially the expansion of Western capitalist culture into semicolonial China on the one hand, but accepted modernity as progress on the other. This paradox—both resistance to and acceptance of modernity—constituted the principal motif of revolutionary literature.

Talking about cultural practice and cultural production, Pierre Bourdieu develops the concepts of agents and field. The concept of "agents" not only takes account of the social relations that shape the individual but also recognizes the individual experience that represents the social reality. The literary field, for him, is "a field of forces, but it is also a field of struggles tending to transform or conserve this field of forces." Agents who occupy the diverse available positions therein compete for authority, to "defend or improve their positions (i.e. their position-takings) through their strategies and trajectories."[12] Bourdieu's theory provides an interesting dimension through which to consider the emergence of revolutionary literature, involving an analysis of the historical development of the available possibilities in literature within the broader field of power on the one hand and an account of the individual and class habitus that engenders strategies of competition on the other. However, Bourdieu's Francocentric observation of the literary field that is based on cultural capital or symbolic capital cannot fully explain the utopian desire, the nationalist implication, the semicolonial sentiment, or an individual's sensuous and bodily experience that are implicated in the movement of "revolutionary literature." Besides leftists' competition for the hegemonic discourse of revolution in the literary field, they were also practically involved in the libidinally charged revolutionary waves. Their corporeal interpretation of revolution that is best manifested in their literary practice of revolution plus love constantly challenges their own presumptions and understandings of leftist ideology.

Here, my specific focus will be on the relationships among writers and in literary groups, their redefinition of literature in association with political concerns, and the circulation of literary fashion. I will not assume a coherent identity of revolution and its literary practice, but rather try to understand the transformation of the *wentan* as an ongoing historical project that involved the agency of different groups of writers and critics. By looking at literary debates, representation, and journals, I try to historicize the transitional period of revolutionary literature, which appears full of gaps and overlaps, layers and interplays of difference and distance, and cannot be seen as a simple, familiar, and clear ideological legacy. This reexamination is not a campaign to find a new definition for Chinese modernity, to deny leftists' pursuit of revolution. Rather, it is an effort to see "revolution" as a contested concept that involves the discursive practices of Chinese intellectuals.

Literary Debates

The transitional period from literary revolution to revolutionary literature marked leftists' debut in the literary field. In most textbooks published in mainland China, this period is regarded as successful and significant. Even Mao Zedong highly praised leftists' triumph on the literary scene during this period.[13] Most critics believe that the CCP initiated the controversial debates among the leftists in the late 1920s. Yet if we look closely at the historical situation, we can see that all the debates actually started from those writers' confusing definitions of "revolution" and "revolutionary literature." This confusion precluded an ultimate order, which the new revolutionary literature needed. The emergence of an entirely different, problematic understanding of revolution dismantled the established power of the literary field. Therefore, any universalist claims for revolutionary literature were impossible.

From 1923 to 1928, many new terminologies related to Marxist theory and proletarian literature—such as "capitalism," "proletarian," "ideology," and "class"—were introduced into China. The new structure of knowledge replaced, reorganized, and conquered the old structure of knowledge that was popular during the May Fourth movement. Translating, introducing, and adapting Marxist theory from the Soviet Union or Japan became an interesting site for the newcomers to achieve recognition and the ones who occupied the existing positions to defend for their positions. In August 1924, Jiang Guangci, one of the first students sent by the CCP to the Soviet Union, wrote an article titled "Proletarian Revolution and Culture" (Wuchan jieji geming yu wenhua), in which he affirms the legitimacy of proletarian culture. Proletarians should have their own culture, he stressed, "because the current culture that is under the capitalist system either does harm to proletarians or has no relationship to proletarians."[14] In "Modern Chinese Society and Revolutionary Literature" (Xiandai Zhongguo shehui yu geming wenxue), published in January 1925, Jiang radically criticized some May Fourth writers such as Ye Shaojun (1894–1988), Yu Dafu, and Bingxin (1900–1999) and called for the emergence of revolutionary literature, which for him can agitate revolutionary mood and arouse violent resistance.[15] Similar to the On Guardists and the Proletkult groups in the Soviet literary field, Jiang espoused a materialist view of the relationship between literature and class and attempted to establish the exclusive domination of proletarian culture by eliminating not only bourgeois culture but also "the fellow travelers."[16]

Mao Dun, on the other hand, pointed out the deficiency of proletarian culture that misunderstood art as the vehicle of political propaganda in his article "Talking about Proletarian Art" (Lun wuchan jieji yishu) in May 1925. Like

Alexander Voronsky, who wanted to include the works of fellow travelers in his debate with the young proletarian writers of the On Guardists and the Octoberist group, Mao Dun emphasized the importance of inheriting the May Fourth literary legacy.[17] Among the May Fourth writers, Lu Xun was the one who consciously updated his knowledge of Marxist theory. His enthusiastic but polemic stance of accepting Marxist aesthetics and Soviet literature has been carefully studied by Leo Ou-fan Lee. As Lee notes, much of Lu Xun's knowledge of Soviet literature before 1928 was derived from the works of Leon Trotsky, who had supported Voronsky and the fellow travelers. In his preface to the Chinese translation of *Literary Debates in Soviet Russia* (*Su'er wenyi lunzhan*) edited by Ren Guozhen in 1925, Lu Xun "restated in particular Trotsky's opinion that no revolutionary art had yet appeared in revolutionary Russia but that there were, more importantly, 'revolutionary men.'"[18] By relying on Trotsky's theory that sees proletarian literature only in the future Communist society, Lu Xun interrogated the legitimacy of revolutionary art in the present.

A group of young members of the Creation Society, including Li Chuli, Feng Naichao, Peng Kang, Zhu Jingwo, and others, returned to China after a period of study in Japan. Influenced by Fukumotoism, which advocates "splittism" instead of a "united line" with those apparently less committed to Marxism, a kind of strategy that is more radical than that of the Soviet On Guardists, this group of young leftists brought an earthquake to the literary field by completely negating the May Fourth writers and the enlightenment discourse they established. In 1927, Cheng Fangwu's article "From Literary Revolution to Revolutionary Literature" (Cong wenxue geming dao geming wenxue) argued that literary revolution during the May Fourth period belonged to the bourgeois movement. This movement, by a class that ignored the massive proletariat and indulged only in leisure and personal interests, was in his mind far detached from social reality. Not only did he advocate the negation of the May Fourth pioneers, whom he called bourgeois intellectuals; he also asked that these "revolutionary intelligentsia" negate themselves. It seemed that for him, Chinese society could catch up to the progress of history only through Marxist dialectics, which he comprehended as the negation of everything, even himself.[19] This article drew a clear line between the May Fourth tradition and the emergent revolutionary literature, using the concept of class. Li Chuli, in his article "How to Establish Revolutionary Literature" (Zenyangde jianshe geming wenxue), published in 1928, classified the May Fourth literary revolution as the stage of conflict between feudalism and capitalism. After the bourgeoisie lost its revolutionary function, the proletariat would replace it. Redefining literature as a class weapon, Li Chuli asserted

that the essence of literature was tantamount to what Upton Sinclair called it in *Mammon Art:* "All art is propaganda. It is universally and inescapably propaganda; sometimes unconsciously, but often deliberately propaganda."[20] Mixing both pragmatism and Marxist determinism, Li showed a radical impatience with the goal of perfection or utopia. Compelled by national crisis and idealism, Li and his friends seemed to easily subordinate literature to political purposes. Ironically, although those young leftists criticized capitalist modernity and Western culture, they not only were committed to modernity as progress, but also relied heavily on Western Marxist theories (especially Japanese Marxist theories) in striving for the legitimacy of proletarian culture and literature.

As Pierre Bourdieu notes, "One of the central stakes in literary (etc.) rivalries is the monopoly of literary legitimacy, that is, among other things, the monopoly of the power to say with authority who is authorized to call himself writer (etc.) or even to say who is a writer and who has the authority to say who is a writer; or, if you prefer, the monopoly of *the power of consecration* of producers and products."[21] In the case of the debates over revolutionary literature, the most important issue became who had the authority to define proletarian literature and its writers. Indeed, the struggles between Lu Xun and radical leftists for control of the legitimacy of revolutionary literature involved prestige, consecration, and recognition. The newcomers, such as Li Chuli, Peng Kang, Feng Naichao, Zhu Jingwo, Cheng Fangwu, and others from the Creation Society and Jiang Guangci and Qian Xingcun from the Sun Society, had to assert their difference from the existing celebrities, such as Lu Xun, in order to get themselves recognized.

Despite the achievements of such May Fourth writers as Hu Shi (1891–1962), Yu Dafu, and Guo Moruo, Lu Xun was the towering literary figure of the generation. Many young writers who were lucky enough to receive his patronage became overnight sensations. Those who got his recognition, such as Rou Shi (1902–1931), Xiao Hong (1911–1942), and Xiao Jun (1907–1988), emerged in the literary field much more smoothly than those who did not, such as Duanmu Hongliang (1912–1996).[22] Yet Lu Xun's patronage position was challenged by some young writers, such as Cheng Fangwu, Li Chuli, and Feng Naichao, who received extreme leftist theory from the international Communist movement, especially from the Japanese leftists. At the beginning, some members of the Creation Society and the Sun Society were still willing to seek Lu Xun's help. For instance, Jiang Guangci and Zheng Boqi went to see Lu Xun in January 1928, proposing to build an alliance of all the progressive writers to fight against the GMD. With Lu Xun's agreement, they published a united announcement in the newspaper.[23] This announcement,

however, was rejected by radical writers such as Cheng Fangwu, whose strategy pitted the revolutionary avant-garde against the old May Fourth generation, represented by Lu Xun. Therefore, without giving Lu Xun any notice, members of the Creation Society suddenly declared in their new magazine *Cultural Criticism* that the epoch of Ah Q was over and that Lu Xun, strangely labeled as a writer of "bourgeois literature" or "petit bourgeois literature," must be abandoned by the new historical development, which was heading toward "proletarian literature."

The struggle for power in *wentan* was best demonstrated in a series of debates, rife with militant imagery, between Lu Xun and radical young leftists. In fact, any attempt to categorize Lu Xun's various experimental modern writings into the extremes of avant-garde or regressive would be too simplistic and fail to explore the complex relationship between the narrative forms and the historical subtext underlying Lu Xun's works. Undoubtedly, members of the Creation Society and the Sun Society did not take literary values into consideration; instead, it was the so-called zeitgeist (*shidai jingshen*) that drove them to repudiate Lu Xun and his generation. In "Arts and Social Life" (Yishu he shehui shenghuo), Feng Naichao criticized Lu Xun as a laggard who looked at life from a dark tavern with drunken eyes and leisurely discussed some beautiful issues of humanity with his brother. According to Feng's criticism, Ye Shaojun, Yu Dafu, and Zhang Ziping (1893–1963) were all "typical pessimists," degenerating into the reactionary camp.[24] This piece bore a striking resemblance to Cheng Fangwu's article "Finishing Our Literary Revolution" (Wancheng women de wenxue geming), written in 1927, in which he also denounced several famous writers, including Lu Xun, Zhou Zuoren (1885–1967), Xu Zhimo (1897–1931), and Liu Bannong (1891–1934), for their taste for leisure and their bourgeois individuality.[25] Such severe criticisms, which revolved around the simple distinction between revolution and antirevolution, undoubtedly startled the May Fourth generation. However, only by negating the established May Fourth writers could the radical leftists take over the literary territory. Although the Sun Society and the Creation Society were also quarreling over the leadership of revolutionary literature, as well as the importance of literary theory and practice, they basically followed the same belief, that the old generation must be replaced by the new. As one of the founders of the Sun Society, Jiang Guangci showed his dissatisfaction with older writers, who appeared to have too much connection with the old world and could not offer any new strength to revolutionary literature.[26] The other founder of the Sun Society, Qian Xingcun (1900–1977), railed against Lu Xun, as we have seen, by claiming that the epoch of Ah Q was over. The heart of his article was his consciousness of Lu Xun's darkness, opposed to the

brightness of revolution in which Qian believed.[27] Indeed, the shadows of death and darkness creep over Lu Xun's works in various shapes, ranging from cannibalism in "Diary of a Madman" to the abundant imagery of ghosts, cemeteries, and corpses in *Wild Grass* (*Yecao*). As the critic T. A. Hsia points out, Lu Xun's "beliefs in enlightenment did not really dispel the darkness; but they served as a shield from the dangerous attraction that darkness exercised."[28] But Qian Xingcun did not give any serious thought to the conflicts and paradoxes in Lu Xun, whose vacillation between hope and despair made his art unique. What bothered Qian Xingcun was Lu Xun's obsession with darkness, which for him "could only lead the young to the path of death and could only dig numerous graves for his followers."[29] Similarly, Li Chuli gave Lu Xun a nickname—"a Chinese Don Quixote"—to describe a vision of their current society that was blind, outdated, and preposterous.[30]

As the shock of being attacked subsided, Lu Xun fought back. It was hard for him to believe that the Creation Society, which espoused the slogan "art for art's sake," would turn so suddenly into the agent of revolutionary literature. He poignantly mocked those members of the Creation Society who abandoned the ivory tower of the arts and lifted the flag of revolutionary literature, wanting to secure the final triumph of revolutionary writers.[31] Apparently, Lu Xun was not convinced that those radical leftists were true revolutionaries; therefore, he focused his argument on who should be the real agent of revolutionary literature. As he expresses in "Literature of the Revolutionary Age," proletarian literature should be written by the proletariat itself, and only after the masses are really awakened:

> Some people use common people—workers' and peasants' materials—to write novels and poetry; we call it common people's literature. Actually it is not real common people's literature, because common people haven't opened their mouths yet. . . . The literati are all intellectuals, so if workers and peasants are not liberated, the so-called workers' and peasants' thoughts are still intellectuals' thoughts. Only after workers and peasants gain their real emancipation can we have real common people's literature.[32]

Lu Xun's strategy was to shift the debate from the definition of revolutionary literature to its spokesmen and agents and their legitimacy. To question his rivals' right to be the real agents of revolutionary literature was to defend the established power. Echoing Trotsky's view that "proletarian literature cannot exist in the present but was a thing for the future Communist society,"[33] Lu Xun described three stages of the relationship between revolution and literature. The first stage refers to the time before a great revolution when

"nearly all literature expresses dissatisfaction and distress over social conditions"; the second stage is the time during a great revolution when "literature disappears and there is silence for, swept up in the tide of revolution, all turn from shouting to action and are so busy making revolution that there is no time to talk of literature"; the third stage occurs when the revolution has triumphed and only two types of literature exist: "one extols the revolution and sings its praise," and the other laments the decay of the old.[34] By pointing out that neither he nor those radical leftists could create real proletarian literature in the current revolutionary stage, he subverted the new hierarchies proclaimed by the newcomers who imposed their definition of revolutionary literature on the literary scene.

The question Lu Xun raised was essential to those young leftists; therefore, they had to defend their rights to write proletarian literature. As Guo Moruo quickly jumped to the conclusion that Lu Xun's argument was antirevolutionary propaganda,[35] Li Chuli argued that writers of proletarian literature were not necessarily rooted in the proletariat and that people who were born into the proletariat would not necessarily produce proletarian literature. According to him, as long as the petit bourgeois writers had right motive and class consciousness, their class origin should not influence their status as proletarian writers.[36] Li Chuli's argument was derived from that of Fukumoto Kazuo, who endorsed the avant-gardist role of intellectuals who had proletarian consciousness. Endowing the revolutionary intellectuals with the historical duty to enlighten the working class, Fukumoto Kazuo attracted many young leftists to his theory. However, Li still couldn't provide sufficient answers to who had the right to judge whether or not a writer belonged to the revolutionary intellectual class. In response, Lu Xun caricatured members of the Creation Society: "It is natural that people transfer from one class to the other. . . . [But] they shouldn't deliberately cover the old residue in their mind, pointing theatrically to their own noses and saying that only I am the proletariat."[37]

Lu Xun was not the only one who singled out the arbitrary standards of the Creation Society for attack. Mao Dun also chastised the society's excessively narrow scope, intended to exclude writers who did not belong to their group.[38] Even Qian Xingcun from the Sun Society complained that the Creation Society had gone to the extreme in seeking command of the literary scene.[39] Similar complaints and protests were echoed by many other writers. If one of the major considerations of revolutionary literature was the debate over who was the real agent, then the Creation Society's parochialism was bound to cause problems. Debates raging at this time referred not only to the political conflict between different classes but, more important, to the struggle for control of *wentan* among different literary groups. Parochialism should therefore

be seen as the predominant, if not the only, paradigm under which the Creation Society operated.

It has often been said that what transpired between Lu Xun and the radical leftists was manipulated by the CCP.[40] But it has been less frequently noticed that most of their debates came from their different ways of adapting and appropriating Western Marxist theories. Their disagreements were more a competition for the discursive hegemony of proletarian literature than an argument over the truth of these various claims for revolution. To build up the legitimacy of the new discourse of anticapitalism, the radical leftists inevitably made Lu Xun and his generation the target despite their pioneering role as rebels against feudalism. But the leftists were not united on all matters. The Creation Society, most of whose adherents were not CCP members, was involved in some arguments about revolutionary literature with the Sun Society, which consisted primarily of CCP members. If, as some critics have argued, the debates were actually controlled by the CCP,[41] then these two societies would not have come into conflict with each other. In March 1928, Qian Xingcun, who represented the Sun Society, wrote an article titled "Jiang Guangci and Revolutionary Literature" (Jiang Guangci yu geming wenxue), fighting over the leadership of revolutionary literature with the Creation Society.[42] It is unlikely that the CCP organized both societies' attacks on Lu Xun. On the contrary, the CCP ordered both societies to ally with Lu Xun and form the Chinese League of Leftist Writers in 1930. It is important to specify here that to say that the CCP did not manipulate the whole debate behind the scenes is not to defend the CCP but rather to recognize the need for further exploration of early revolutionary literature. As the struggles over the authority to define proletarian literature continued, the differences between groups and agents became increasingly clear. Generally speaking, the divergence lies in the definition of "literature."

Lu Xun disagreed with the radical leftists' opinion that literature could serve as a means to change society.[43] In general, members of the Creation Society and the Sun Society regarded writing as a propaganda tool, aligning literature and art with political struggle. Quoting Upton Sinclair's statement that all art is propaganda, they criticized the individuality and the petit bourgeois consciousness of the May Fourth generation. In this opinion, literature became the pure instrument of class struggle, totally losing its artistic value. Opposing this argument, Lu Xun emphasized the powerlessness of literature to influence revolution. Unlike those radicals who romantically eulogized the marriage of literature and politics, Lu Xun revealed the dark side of this union—that politicians usually repress artistic expression: "arts are unsettled in the current situation, but politicians do not like other people to object to

their ideas, and therefore they believe the literati to be the ones who incite social disturbance."[44] Although reality and history later proved Lu Xun to be correct, people at that time could not appreciate his rational analysis. When the radical leftists tried to turn Lu Xun's own weapons, such as the darkness and individuality in his novels, against him, they betrayed the fact that, at the risk of denying themselves as intellectuals and literati, they had to recognize the value of intellectuals and literati as they combated secular values. Thus, at the cost of absolute submission to politics in the literary field—that is to say, by denying their own interest in literature—those radical leftists put their own interests at stake. While defending the paradox of darkness and brightness, despair and hope represented in his novels, Lu Xun ridiculed his rivals' fear of that dark reality. It was indeed this divergence on literature that began the whole debate on revolutionary literature. Afterward, the literary field was no longer the same: the submission of most literati to politics had opened the gate to real political struggle, which became the central theme of mainstream modern Chinese literature until the 1980s.

The Jiang Guangci Phenomenon

Even though young radical leftists from the Creation Society flaunted their "proletarian consciousness" and used it to oppose the "bourgeois" old May Fourth writers, they had contributed less convincing proletarian literary practice than that of Jiang Guangci. As one of the most influential and prolific proletarian writers during the period of revolutionary literature, Jiang Guangci created a so-called Guangchi phenomenon (Guangchi was one of his pen names), which attracted many patriotic young writers to follow his style of writing. The most conspicuous characteristic of Jiang Guangci's writing was that he combined revolution with love, bombarding negative sentimentalism with simple, violent, Byronic, and masculine expression. In fact, before Jiang Guangci published his first novel, *The Youthful Tramp* (*Shaonian piaopo zhe,* 1926), one of the early Communist leaders, Zhang Wentian (1900–1976), also dealt with the theme of revolution and love in his novel *Journey* (*Lütu,* 1925). Although Zhang conveys revolutionary passion and ideas in this novel, he dwells upon the sentimentally melodramatic story of a Chinese revolutionary who falls in love with one Chinese girl and two American girls. Lacking Jiang Guangci's Byronic stance and close touch with the turmoil of the time, Zhang's novel was less influential than Jiang's.

What distinguishes Jiang from the May Fourth writers is his violent (*cubao*) and passionate language. In the preface to *The Youthful Tramp,* Jiang wrote, "In the recent literary world in which aestheticism is in fashion, I know

this book of mine cannot win applause from people. While people are still intoxicated by things such as flowers, moon, good brother and sweet sister within the softly fragrant nest, I suddenly jump out and shout in a rude manner. It looks like I am ignorant of their interests."[45] Indeed, his bold writing and his combination of violence with love appeared out of place in the context of aestheticism, represented by the early Creation Society. However, this discordant note prefigured a synthesis and revision of writing about love that occurred in the May Fourth period. When Jiang Guangci consciously sought an essential congruity between revolution and love, he proved that the language of love was applicable to the rhetoric of revolution. As T. A. Hsia noted, "What helped the sale of his books (or theirs) was not revolutionary zeal, however violently portrayed, but the presentation of revolution as something bittersweet, and deliciously seasoned with love."[46] In love with revolution himself, he passionately recorded the blood, flesh, and tears of many major historical revolutionary events that happened between 1923 and 1928, such as the May Thirtieth massacre, the Shanghai workers' uprising before 1927, the Northern Expedition, and Jiang Jieshi's 1927 liquidation of the CCP members. He desired, in the first place, to describe those exciting revolutionary events, to put on record his and other revolutionaries' experiences, emotions, and impressions gathered during those tumultuous years. His interest is in the romantic aspects of revolution. He describes revolution as erotic, interchangeable with romance between men and women. Literature for him is no longer confined to a passive role—to mirror society and history faithfully and dispassionately; instead it purposely interprets and organizes reality. He denounces "pure art" and "art for art's sake" and becomes a spokesman for literature for the people, demanding that literature have a worthy educational and social significance. By romantically associating revolution with love, he gives young readers revolutionary "emotional education."

His first novel, *The Youthful Tramp* (1926), as C. T. Hsia comments, "deserves attention not only because it was the first example of proletarian fiction of that length (125 pages) but because it managed to embody most of the themes that later became standard in Communist fiction."[47] Written in the form of a confessional letter, the hero—who has been a beggar, a grocer's apprentice, and a worker in a cotton mill and who later on joins the railroad workers' strike—represents the lower class of people. The tragic love story of the hero and the grocer's daughter, who died because of a lack of will to live and whose death reflects the darkness of society, not only contains the May Fourth concepts of free marriage and antifeudalism, but also provokes class consciousness in men and women's love relationship. Yearning for both revolution and love, the hero, after the heroine's death, joins the 1923 railroad workers' strike,

witnesses the Communist leader Lin Xiangqian's heroic death, then attends the Huangpu Military School, and finally sacrifices himself in the fight during the Northern Expedition. When this novel was published, readers responded with great enthusiasm.[48] Even Hu Yaobang, who was the general secretary of the Communist Party in the 1980s, recalled that Jiang Guangci's *Youthful Tramp* inspired him to join the revolution at a young age. Other famous revolutionary writers such as Tao Zhu, Tian Tao, and Chen Huangmei also wrote in their memoirs that this novel led them into revolution.[49] The popularity of the novel was stunning; it was reprinted more than fifteen times during the years 1926–1933.[50] What appealed to readers was the juxtaposition of personal sexual drive and violent revolution, an exciting combination that had never been tried by the May Fourth generation.

Jiang's short story "On the Yalu" (Yalujiang shang, 1927) tells of a love affair between a respectable Korean revolutionary and his girlfriend, who was arrested by the Japanese and then died in prison. Full of romantic emotionalism, the tragic love story expresses a strong sense of nationalism and symbolizes the alliance among international proletarians who are oppressed by Western and Japanese capitalists. In his other short story, "The Broken Heart" (Suile de xin, 1926), the revolutionary hero, who is killed in a political demonstration against Japanese imperialists, has converted his lover—a kind nurse—from a faithful Christian to a revolutionary believer who finally commits suicide for the sake of love. From bodily attraction to the final convergence of their minds, this couple has proved the melodious relationship between revolution and love. In utilizing an anti-imperialist strain in his presentation of the proletariat, Jiang was intent upon showing both his nationalistic and his revolutionary anxieties.

Unlike the recent scholarship that pays more attention to power relations and discursive struggle than to the judgment of literary value, T. A. Hsia views Jiang's work as "bad writing,"[51] with an "abundance of stylistic errors."[52] For Hsia, Jiang is a "hack who had yet to prove that he could write a simple good sentence but put on airs as if he were a great 'romantic' writer whose genius should compel admiration and exonerate his atrocious manners!"[53] Hsia's anti-Communist position in the cold-war period keeps him from understanding that the "failure" of Jiang's artistic value is derived directly from his definition of literature, which displays a concern for the *immediate effect* of revolutionary literature upon social life. Jiang's "failed" literary practice is the manifestation of his idea that literature should serve as propaganda for revolution and instantly affect readers' conduct and morale. Literature's political function rather than its artistic value is Jiang's central concern. In introducing *On the Yalu,* a collection of Jiang's short stories, the critic Qian Xingcun pointed out

that Jiang Guangci's literary attitude resembled that of the left front of literature (LEF) of the Soviet Union:

> Before I introduce this book, I want to use the LEF group of the Soviet Union to illustrate [Jiang's] writing attitude. Of course, I cannot say that Guangchi is influenced by this school, but I think his writing attitude is exactly like this: 'art is not a cognition of life but a building of life. The [LEF] does not admit realism and objectivity. It objects to realism but advocates propaganda, negating objective experience but affirming -ism and will. It replaces content with ideas, formality with purpose. It disputes dead and inert facts but emphasizes the future of human beings. Its purpose is to create proletarian arts and wage war on non-working-class literature.' Therefore Guangchi stands on the same battle line as that of the LEF.[54]

Indeed, Jiang shares the LEF's ideas of underlining the revolutionary nature of futurism, using art as a weapon of revolutionary agitation and propaganda, proclaiming art that "makes" life instead of merely reflecting it. Distant from realism, Jiang's writing was irrevocably moving toward what the LEF championed—"utilitarian, 'purposeful' art, art conceived as 'building of life' and 'production of things.'"[55] Even his dilemma—being attacked from both the right and the left—was similar to that of the LEF, which was opposed to "Voronsky's idea of art as cognition of life as well as to the On Guardists' stress on ideology."[56] In advocating proletarian literature, Jiang disagreed with Mao Dun's conception of naturalism and realism that objectively reflect reality, especially the despair after the failure of revolution. Yet unlike Li Chuli, who focused on ideological and theoretical struggle derived from Japanese Fukumotoism, Jiang was a romantic singer and poet who used literature to agitate revolutionary emotion and passion. As a result, he was criticized first by Li Chuli,[57] who was more radical than he was, and then by Mao Dun, who denounced his hypertrophy of slogans and concepts.[58]

Jiang Guangci's long article "The October Revolution and Russian Literature" (Shiyue geming yu Eluosi wenxue), which was subsequently serialized in *Creation Monthly* from 1926 to 1927, was later collected in his edited book *Russian Literature* (*Eluosi wenxue*) in 1927. In this long article, Jiang Guangci discovered the perfect link between revolution and romanticism through the poet Alexander Blok, who saw revolution as "a beneficial spiritual storm"[59] and whose poem *The Twelve* was also applauded by Lu Xun. "Revolution is art; a true poet cannot but feel what he shares in common with the revolution. A poet—a romantic poet—has an even keener feeling toward the revolution than other poets."[60] In Jiang Guangci's eyes, Blok is a genuine

romantic who can "capture the soul of revolution, solicit beautiful poetry from revolution, and foresee the hopeful future from revolution."[61] Jiang's exaltation of Blok was certainly a "self-justification" of his own position as a revolutionary and romantic poet and writer,[62] but it also sought erotic impulses in poeticized and aestheticized revolution. The sexually charged revolution gave sensuousness to art, and hence Jiang Guangci's favorite theme, revolution and love, was able to thrive.

While introducing other Soviet writers, Jiang paid special attention to Ilya Ehrenburg's two novels *The Life and Undoing of Nikolay Kurbov* (1923) and *The Love of Jeanne Ney* (1923), both related to the theme of revolution and love. In *The Life and Undoing of Nikolay Kurbov,*[63] the hero, Kurbov, a member of the Bolshevik's secret police, falls in love with the reactionary heroine and "succumbs in a clash with the irrepressible 'biological' forces of life." What strikes Jiang is Ehrenburg's description of Kurbov's complicated inner conflicts. A devoted Bolshevik, Kurbov has not yet succeeded in discarding personal existence. This conflict between collective revolutionary duty and individual feeling is one of the psychological pivots of the novel. Jiang turned it into the central theme of his own novels and life. Apart from the conflict between revolution and love, Jiang was also touched by the harmonious relationship between the two that was exemplified by Ehrenburg's melodramatic story of a love affair between Jeanne Ney, a respectable French girl from a bourgeois family, and a Russian Communist.[64] Although affirming Ehrenburg as a romantic who sympathized with the October Revolution and condemned bourgeois civilization, Jiang also criticized him for his attitude as an intellectual:

> If Ehrenburg has sympathy with the October Revolution, it is because revolution is destructive, containing great negating power. But later on, Ehrenburg should be able to see the October Revolution not only can destroy the old, it can also build up the new glorious future. . . . If Ehrenburg cannot solve the relationship between individual and collective, he later on will gradually understand there is no conflict between the two. The real glorious individual not only sacrifices himself to the collective, but also improves himself inside the collective.[65]

Jiang's ideas were evidently centered on the futuristic and romantic aspects of revolution at this stage. However, one can see Ehrenburg's influence on his more controversial novels written in his later years, such as *The Last Smile* (*Zuihou de weixiao,* 1928), *The Sorrows of Lisa* (*Lisa de aiyuan,* 1929), and *The Moon Forces Its Way through the Clouds*. Although *The Last Smile* was attacked by some orthodox Marxists for its anarchist fever and gloomy psyche,

Qian Xingcun defended it: "Chinese critics seldom read Dostoyevsky's and Ehrenburg's big novels that focus on psychological description; therefore, Guangci's *The Criminal* [the other title of *The Last Smile*] cannot avoid being despised by nearsighted critics and writers."[66] Thus, somewhat paradoxically, Blok, who stood in the transitional period of the revolution, and fellow travelers such as Ehrenburg became some of the most powerful and vital factors influencing Jiang's proletarian writing.

Yury Liebedinsky, another Soviet writer who belonged to the Octoberist group and was famous for his defense of ideologically pure proletarian literature, also had great impact on Jiang's writing. In *Des Sans-culotters* (*Duanku dang,* 1927), Jiang Guangci tried to write a monumental proletarian novel of the Shanghai workers' struggle in aid of the 1927 Northern Expedition. This novel, laden with political doctrine and expressed naively and roughly, is strikingly similar to Liebedinsky's *A Week* (1922), which was regarded by some Soviet critics as "the first of the 'proletarian' novels" and "an important event in Soviet literary history."[67] As Liebendinsky did in *A Week,* Jiang Guangci illustrated the inner workings of the Communist Party, providing a gallery of vivid portraits of Communists based on some real figures such as Qu Qiubai and his wife, Yang Zhihua. As a translator of *A Week* himself, Jiang followed Liebedinsky's manner closely, attempting to give a picture of a microcosm of the Communist Party and the high-strung atmosphere of revolution, but most of his characters lack the distinct individuality of Liebedinsky's. As soon as he needs to deal with the subject matter of the Communists, Jiang automatically comes back to the theme of revolution plus love from which to show his characters as human beings facing personal problems. Despite its coarse description, *Des Sans-culotters* contains scenes of Party meetings, of political lectures, and of true Communist figures that have a considerable historical documentary value; and in Jiang's own words, it is "evidence of Chinese revolutionary history."[68]

Although Jiang showed a particular predilection for favoring the theme of revolution and love in the novels we have discussed, this theme did not become a formula for others to follow and imitate until the publication of his novel *A Sacrifice in the Wild* (*Yeji*), in 1927. As Qian Xingcun wrote, "Everyone wants to write novels about revolution and love now. But before *Yeji,* it seems we have not seen this kind of phenomenon."[69] Written right after Jiang Jieshi's crackdown on the Communists, *A Sacrifice in the Wild* is a novel about a revolutionary writer, Chen Jixia, who tries to adjust himself to the turbulent revolutionary era through personal love experiences. Jixia's love adventures give us a glimpse of how the revolution can act upon individuals' lives. At first, Jixia chooses the pretty petit bourgeois girl Zheng Yuxian, who keeps her distance from revolution, over the plain-looking girl Zhang Shujun, who turns into a real revolutionary after

she is enlightened by his progressive writing. Once Jixia realizes he has made the wrong choice it is already too late: Yuxian deserts him in fear of the danger of revolution, but the heroic Shujun sacrifices herself to the revolution, becoming a revolutionary martyr in Jiang Jieshi's liquidation of the Communists. The role of revolution in this novel is exactly as David Der-wei Wang analyzes: "Among the three lovers, revolution serves as both the pretext and conclusion for their romantic resolution." In addition, "revolution is described as a test of these young characters' moral capacities. It functions as the *absent cause* through whose displacement, romance, the young characters negotiate their own libidinous yearning."[70]

However, what is more important about this novel is its reflection of the position of a revolutionary writer in the revolution. Caught in the whirlpool of the revolution, Jixia tries to fix a place in it for himself. Although his popular revolutionary novels have enlightened Shujun—from which we can sense the power of Jiang Guangci's fiction among his readers—Jixia has done nothing but become entangled in love relations. As Shujun busily engages in various revolutionary activities, Jixia shows petit bourgeois weakness by hiding in the love nest. Only after the death of Shujun, "the angel-like woman warrior," does he vow to be a real revolutionary, carrying on her mission. Jixia's ambivalent attitude toward the revolution before his awakening reminds us of Jiang Guangci's own life experience. Refusing to participate in the mass movements ordered by the Party, Jiang decided to resign his membership in 1930. The Party denounced him as a "traitor," a "degenerate petit bourgeois," and a coward who "is supported by the rich monthly income from the sales of his books and leads an entirely bourgeois life," and expelled him from the Party.[71] As a revolutionary propagandist, he, like his protagonist Jixia, appears weak and powerless in front of the bloody revolutionary movement.

In his novel *Jufen* (1928), Jiang again touches upon what a revolutionary writer should do in the violent revolutionary era. The protagonist Jiang Xia is a well-known revolutionary writer whose works have inspired numerous youth to devote themselves to revolution. He falls in love with an innocent, beautiful young girl, Jufen, an admirer of his novels and a female revolutionary who escapes from Jiang Jieshi's liquidation of the Communists in Chongqing. Regarding Jufen as his goddess, Jiang Xia questions her: should he continue to write revolutionary literature or should he pick up a gun and join the army? He also questions himself: "Am I a revolutionary writer? In this era that needs guns, what's the use of me? Can I really contribute to the revolution?"[72] The failure of the Communist revolution in 1927 clearly serves as a backdrop to the story, but in the center of it stands the conflicting interiority of a revolutionary writer such as Jiang Guangci himself. Illustrated as a trope of

revolution, Jufen affirms that literature can serve as revolutionary propaganda, and her answer echoes Jiang's own voice propounding an agenda of revolutionary literature in this dark period. But at the end of the story, the revolutionary writer's position seems again in question: after Jufen dies in attempting to assassinate a GMD governor, Jiang Xia, the one who enlightened her to the revolution, feels ashamed of himself for his cowardice and admires her courageous sacrifice.

According to a memoir written by his second wife, Wu Sihong, Jiang Guangci once complained about the real revolutionary activities that the Party assigned to him: "They [his comrades in the Party and the League—Wu's note] think that revolution means to go with them to smash glass windows and to stage riots. But I am a writer! I can only struggle with literary means—literature is my revolutionary tool."[73]

Like his protagonists, Jiang Guangci was caught between being a true revolutionary and a revolutionary writer, a dilemma that Lu Xun had foreseen. Ironically, in the Party's eyes, Jiang had "never engaged himself in any hard task, nor made any attempt to approach the masses. He maintains a comfortable and luxurious way of life, supposedly proper to his position as a writer."[74] Like his protagonists, Jixia and Jiang Xia, who are more occupied by love affairs with pretty girls than by revolutionary careers, Jiang was also busily involved in his bittersweet love and marriage with Wu Sihong and refused the Party's order to attend to actual revolutionary works.[75] Leo Ou-fan Lee in particular recognizes Jiang's self-contradictory character: "Behind the façade of revolution in his fiction there lurks a sort of dual anxiety; he was, in truth, unwilling to do the type of political work assigned to him, and yet he wanted to prove his worth as a revolutionary; he yearned for love, human warmth, and a decent home, but was ashamed of their petite-bourgeois connotation."[76] Both in his real life and in his fiction, he was unwilling to subordinate the individual's existence into the mass movement, and such unwillingness contradicts his intention to promote mass movement. His formulaic writing of revolution and love, as T. A. Hsia suggests, "reflects things that mattered to him as an individual: he didn't invent it according to ideology."[77] By being obsessed with the conflict between revolution and love, between the collective and the individual, Jiang forever postponed the individual's eventual transformation into the mass as he had done in reality.

Intriguingly, the more influential Jiang Guangci's writings were among young readers in 1929–1930—for instance, his novel *The Moon Forces Its Way through the Clouds* "ran into seven editions in the first year of its publication"[78]—the more problematic his literary practice became in terms of the Party's doctrines. Circulation of his novel *The Sorrows of Lisa,* written in

1929 and based on the formula of counterrevolution plus love, was ordered stopped by the Party, but Jiang Guangci ignored the order, and "even then the Party had had the intention to expel him."[79] This novel tells the story of the tragic life of an aristocratic Russian woman, Lisa, who degenerates into a prostitute in Shanghai after the White Russian army where her husband serves is defeated by the Bolsheviks. Although this novel was meant to be a parody of the White Russian, Jiang Guangci's psychological description of Lisa as an individual runs counter to his political intention; as a result, the novel aroused bitter controversy among leftist critics. As Hua Han points out, "Subjectively, Jiang Guangci really wants to represent the inexorable decline of aristocratic Russia . . . [but] objectively, does this product of Guangci fit his subjective plan? It is true that aristocratic Russia decays, yet through Guangci's emotional organization, the representation of the decay of aristocratic Russia is so sympathetic and so touching."[80] This novel expresses Jiang's personal observation and reflections on existence as an individual, which conflict with and confuse his other, more important concerns of country, class, revolution, and counterrevolution. In his best-selling novel *The Moon Forces Its Way through the Clouds,* there are many allusions to Mao Dun's *Eclipse* (*Shi*), a novel that depicts the abyss of nihilism and despair that revolutionary youths had experienced after Jiang Jieshi's liquidation of the Communist Party. Jiang was much more optimistic than Mao Dun: his protagonist, Wang Manying, still finds a way to struggle against the bourgeois class even after she becomes a streetwalker in the failure of the revolution; and eventually, through the help of her lover who is the Communist leader of workers, she is able to rediscover the promising future of revolution by transforming herself into a proletarian. However, this novel was regarded as no better than Mao Dun's because it contains too much petit bourgeois sentiment. Jiang's description of the wandering individual such as Wang Manying after the failed revolution is replete with elements of anarchism and nihilism. In Wang Manying's words, "Instead of changing this world, we'd better destroy it; instead of reviving human beings, we'd better extinguish them."[81] At this moment, Jiang probably forgot his own criticism of Ehrenburg.

Jiang's final novel, *The Roaring Earth* (*Paoxiaole de tudi*), written in 1930, seems to draw a conclusion to his favorite theme, revolution plus love. Unfortunately, Jiang didn't live to see the publication of this novel because it was banned by the GMD when it was advertised. After Jiang's death, Qian Xingcun changed its title to *Wind from Land* (*Tianye de feng*) and had it published in 1932. In *The Roaring Earth,* Jiang tells a story of a landlord's son, Li Jie, who turns into a real revolutionary and organizes a peasants' guerrilla force after the 1927 failed Communist revolution. It is for the sake of love that Li Jie

becomes a revolutionary rebel. After his lover, Langu, a peasant girl, commits suicide because his family rejects their marriage, Li Jie joins the revolutionary army and comes back to his hometown to stir up land reform. While undertaking his revolutionary work in his home village, he is loved by two girls, Maogu, the sister of his former lover, and He Yuesu, another landlord's niece, who has sympathy with revolution. In this novel, however, Jiang focuses on revolutionary activities in the countryside rather than on the love stories. Despite Jiang's efforts to purge the petit bourgeois sentiments and speak for the class of peasants, to prove that he was in conformity with revolutionary standard, this novel did not receive high recognition until 1949, after which his name was gradually reestablished. Nevertheless, no matter how critics look at Jiang Guangci's writing, the name of Jiang Guangci has represented revolution and love in the history of modern Chinese literature.

The Simulacrum of Revolution plus Love

How did the theme of revolution plus love turn into a formula during 1928–1932 for writers to follow and imitate? The notion of "formula" no doubt has a negative connotation in terms of aesthetic standards. According to T. A. Hsia, revolution plus love became a formula because "both subjects and their 'conflict' usually underwent a rough treatment, so clearly marked by a uniformity of purpose that it looked as if there were a 'formula' for fiction-writing."[82] In his essay "On the Formula of Revolution and Love" (Geming yu lian'ai de gongshi, 1935), Mao Dun used "formula" to clearly exemplify the extent to which Jiang Guangci and his followers neglected art. The wave of revolution plus love literature, summarized by Mao Dun, was based on three kinds of formulas:

> When writers first took up the formula, they often focused on the *conflict* between the revolutionary cause and the romantic drive, and they concluded their work with a call to relinquish love for the sake of revolution. Next to this "conflict" formula was the *reciprocation* formula. That is, instead of being an impediment, revolution served as an incentive bringing forth true romantic feelings between the revolutionaries. Finally, this "reciprocation" formula progressed to the *nurturing* formula, one that saw love emanating from the comradeship and compassion of revolutionaries. In other words, revolution was no longer the antagonistic factor in one's pursuit of love; revolution was love.[83]

It is inarguable that the practitioners of revolution plus love seriously disregarded artistic value and couched simple and coarse writing in appalling slogans and Marxist jargons. However, the aesthetic standard cannot sufficiently

clarify why this formula was highly demanded by readers and writers at that historical time. Even Mao Dun's own writing, such as *Eclipse* and *Rainbow,* similarly dealt with the relationship between revolution and love. It is this theme's influence that leads one to wonder whether the formula points to a kind of pursuit of fashion or to a prevailing cultural, political, and literary performance that connects to public desire, literary representation, and circuits of production and consumption.

Regardless of the dangers of imitation and repetition, many left-wing writers were attracted to this formulaic writing. The fever of pursuing revolution plus love first started with members of the Sun Society and the Creation Society. For instance, Hong Lingfei's *Exile* (*Liuwang,* 1928), *Front Line,* and *Transformation* (*Zhuanbian,* 1928); Hua Han's (1902–1993) *Two Women* (*Liangge nüxing,* 1930) and trilogy *Subterranean Spring* (*Diquan,* 1930); Dai Pingwan's (1903–1945) *Eve* (*Qianye,* 1929); and Meng Chao's (1902–1976) *Reflection of Love* (*Aide yingzhao,* 1930) helped form the prevalent literary practice of revolution plus love. Other leftists who were on the margin of these two societies also explored the same theme, such as Hu Yepin in *Go to Moscow* (*Dao Mosike qu,* 1930) and *The Brightness Is in Front of Us* (*Guangming zai women de mianqian,* 1930), Ding Ling in *Weihu* (*Weihu,* 1930) and *Shanghai Spring, 1930* (*1930 nianchun Shanghai*), and Bai Wei in *A Bomb and an Expeditionary Bird.* Even if some authors did not follow this formula directly, its influence is evident everywhere in their texts, such as in Mao Dun's *Eclipse* and *Rainbow,* Ye Shaojun's *Ni Huanzhi* (*Ni Huanzhi,* 1930), Ye Yongzhen's (1908–1976) *Little Ten Years* (*Xiaoxiao shinian,* 1929), and Ba Jin's (1904–) *Trilogy of Love* (*Aiqing sanbu qu,* 1936). The fashion of revolution plus love was so irresistible that even Shanghai modernist writers such as Liu Na'ou (1900–1939), Mu Shiying (1912–1940), Shi Zhecun (1905–), Teng Gu (1901–1941), Zhang Ziping (1893–1963), and Ye Lingfeng (1904–1975) participated in pursuing its prominent sentiment. In 1928 the famous leftist Feng Xuefeng (1903–1976) categorized three kinds of intellectuals relating to revolution: "The first kind of intellectual renounces individualism and elitism completely and becomes a socialist; the second kind desires revolution but is hesitant and unwilling to renounce his privileges, which makes him feel guilty; the third kind is an opportunistic intellectual who shifts according to the direction of the wind."[84] Apparently, these three kinds of intellectuals were unanimously involved in the circulation and reproduction of this formula from different agendas. As a result, the revolution plus love formula powerfully and successfully molded popular thinking and expression during this historical period. It did not simply convey the Marxist enlightenment of the people; it also produced social and cultural identity, thereby inventing and

establishing a new cultural practice, which in turn shaped the original intention of the Marxist enlightenment.[85]

Walter Benjamin's concept of "the loss of aura" in the age of mechanical reproduction is helpful for us to understand that the circulation and reproduction of revolution plus love inevitably lost the aura of the original concept of revolution.[86] If this formula's original intention was to challenge capitalist modernity and the culture of consumerism, then such original aura has been transgressed, questioned, and even destroyed in the process of imitation, wholesale reproduction, and consumption. Baudrillard's postmodern notion of "simulacrum"—the "empty signifier" that has no direct reference to the signified except its own reality—can also be applied to the circulation of revolution plus love to a certain extent. Copies and imitations that resemble the original meaning of revolution have generated a world of simulations, which have lost the original goal and failed to provide rationalist critique of capitalist culture. In Jiang Guangci's diary, he documented an event that irritated him. According to his friends Feng Xianzhang and Ren Jun, a Chinese writer (his name was unmentioned) wrote to his friend in Japan as follows: "If you want to get famous, you should write something about love seasoned with revolution. In this way sales will be extremely good, and you can become famous." This writer also wrote, "You'd better use more pen names, deliberately arrange the enigma and let readers suspect one of your products is made by someone famous."[87] Jiang was furious about such opportunistic behavior, but in fact, his name was so profitable at the time that numerous publishers illegally used his name in many pirated books. For instance, a collection titled *A Female and Suicide* (*Yige nüxing yu zisha*) was published by Aili bookstore in 1930 under Jiang Guangci's name, but five short stories collected in the book—"A Female" (Yige nüxing), "Suicide" (Zisha), "Creation" (Chuangzao), "Tan" (Tan), and "Poetry and Prose" (Shi yu sanwen)—were actually written by Mao Dun.[88] In a study of pirated books published under Jiang Guangci's name, Tang Tao discovered that it was almost impossible for readers in the 1930s to discern the fake from the genuine, for the publishers usually inserted parts of Jiang Guangci's real writing into those pirated editions, which were in truth written by other less-known writers.[89] The marketing success of Jiang Guangci's books had inevitably transferred the theme of revolution plus love into a commodity fetish that was inexhaustible in inciting public desire. Jiang's own "luxury bourgeois" living also became dependent upon the expansion of consumption, leading the Party to question the "authenticity" of his position as a revolutionary writer.

However, Baudrillard's postmodernist theory that attempts to unveil the structure of social existence in the era of high-tech capitalism has certain limits

if we try to use it to explicate the specific social reality in which the simulacrum of revolution plus love was produced. The contagious revolutionary sentiment was the major factor accelerating the propagation of this formula. More than a fashionable commodity, revolution, which connects to the utopian dream of a new China that can surpass Western capitalist countries, cannot be imagined without faith and cannot avoid shedding blood in reality. In *Festivals and the French Revolution,* Mona Ozouf understands the revolutionary culture through its symbolic forms and recognizes how festivals can serve an educational function to stir the public's revolutionary fervor. As Ozouf notes, the people's appearance in revolution is equivalent to the first image of festival, in which every individual is mesmerized by its magic atmosphere as well as its magic language. That is to say, the people's appearance in revolution is "the language of magic"—an indispensible ingredient of the festival: "it lies outside all art and all systems. Nobody can propose it, nobody knows how it is carried out; it is the gratuitous triumph of an ephemeral rationality, a miracle."[90] In light of her study of revolution and festivals, we can see that the people's enthusiasm in accepting and performing revolution and love was also "the language of magic" at this point. In other words, the circulation of revolution and love among writers and readers was the simulacrum of festivals, and such a circulation was linked to the combustible mode of expression of the revolutionary masses, masses who found this formula a perfect space to release their anxiety. The revolutionary gatherings, demonstrations, and public lectures, which had been largely described in those novels following revolution plus love, also reflected the festival-like circumstances during the revolutionary era that did not seem to be in any way independent of the realm of sensation. Therefore, the successful sale of Jiang Guangci's and others' books was not merely dominated by commodity culture in which the circulation of the formula has become a commodity object or "simulacrum," as Baudrillard contends, that has "no referent or ground in any 'reality' except their own."[91] It is true that in a commodity culture the relation between sign and referent is broken and reconstructed, but those signs, words, meanings, and referents are still grounded in the big context of revolution. The desire to purchase, consume, and reproduce is penetrated and invigorated by the contagious revolutionary sentiment and is embedded in a festival atmosphere, and such penetration creates the effect of revolutionary education and propaganda.

Never freed from sensation, the formula of revolution plus love as a response to the big revolutionary background as well as to the commodity culture seized many writers' literary imagination. The various acts of imitation and repetition of the formula are equivalent to a performative act that compels reconsideration of the stability of the original notion. According to Jonathan

Culler, "The possibility of grafting an utterance upon a new context, of repeating a formula in different circumstance, does not discredit the principle that illocutionary force is determined by context rather than by intention. On the contrary, it confirms this principle: in citation, iteration, or framing it is new contextual features that alter illocutionary force."[92] In the case of the formula of revolution plus love, imitations and repetitions transposed the concept of revolution into various new contexts in which a stable identity was impossible. "Meaning is context-bound, but context is boundless."[93] Therefore, the concept of revolution became exceedingly diverse in various formulations and reformulations. For instance, a member of the Sun Society, Dai Pingwan, in his novella *Eve* describes the protagonist Zhao Nan as floundering about, unable to decide between two young girls. Torn between Li Ruoyan, a lovely and beautiful bourgeois girl whose innocent mind is centered on pleasure and a life of luxury, and the poor and depressed Dong Suyin, who has no money to cure her tuberculosis, Zhao Nan starts to have a vague idea of class. After Dong dies of tuberculosis and Li leaves him, he thinks that in siding with revolution he can attain full freedom. However, his search for a place in revolution is psychologically not very convincing; his transformation into a real revolutionary is overly dramatic. In spite of the likeness to Jiang Guangci's formula, Dai Pingwan's writing is inclined more to melancholy and pessimism; and as a result, there hangs about the whole novel that atmosphere of gloom that is so characteristic of a majority of youths' visions of old society. At the end of the novel, the author proclaims that "the era of love is over, and individualism goes bankrupt now"[94] and indicates revolution as a way out for his protagonist and readers. Lacking Jiang Guangci's violent, crude, and masculine style of writing, Dai Pingwan's romantic yearning for revolution is completely overwhelmed by the Wertherian type of passive sentimentality[95] that was dominant in the early period of the Creation Society. The novel is concerned more with the protagonist's grappling with his individual problems than with his involvement in the large revolutionary movement. The vague class concept imbedded in the triangular love relation has been submerged in petit bourgeois sentiments. Dai's problem is typical among other leftist writers such as Hong Lingfei, Meng Chao, and Hua Han: while writing the individual's transformation from a petit bourgeois to a revolutionary, they were unconsciously influenced by Yu Dafu's decadent and sentimental style rather than by Jiang Guangci's Byronic stance. Revolution for them becomes a continuity of subjective sentiment derived from the craze of love and sex in the May Fourth period.

Ye Yongzhen's *Little Ten Years,* a novel with a preface and introduction by Lu Xun, is written in a form of realism and based on the author's genuine experience. In the novel, the narrator/protagonist "I" tells his personal story

during the ten years when revolution gradually became the dominating factor changing society. The story starts with the protagonist's loss of his father at a young age and a marriage arranged by his family, then proceeds to his enrollment in the Huangpu Military School in Guangzhou and his participation in the Northern Expedition. Disillusioned with the revolution after Jiang Jieshi's liquidation of the Communists, he continues his romantic journey with his middle-school lover, Yinyin, and both struggle with their family-arranged feudalistic marriages. After their struggles fail and he loses Yinyin, he finally returns to the revolution. In his preface to *Little Ten Years,* Lu Xun expresses admiration for Ye Yongzhen's realistic mode of writing, which distinguishes itself from Jiang Guangci's and others' hyperbolic narration. Lu Xun especially appreciated the part in which Ye faithfully documented his own revolutionary experience in the Northern Expedition, an experience that mirrors the "uselessness" of a writer in the big wave of the revolution. However, for Lu Xun this novel was still a sentimental book of an individual, for the bridge between the individual's personal love and the great project of social reform was not substantially built.[96] Without such a bridge, it is doubtful that revolution can really provide a way out for an individual. One can clearly see Lu Xun's agenda behind his promotion of Ye's book. First, based on his intrinsic judgment of artistic value, Lu Xun favored Ye's realist mode of writing, which regarded art as a reflection of life, to Jiang Guangci's employment of art as political propaganda. Although his own writing was condemned by radical leftists as bourgeois realism that was fundamentally pessimistic and often implied an unhealthy, morbid attitude toward society, Lu Xun was never convinced by the optimistic future of revolution pointed out by Jiang and others. Second, because of his suspicious attitude toward the relationship between revolution and literature, Lu Xun deliberately exhorted "revolutionary men" rather than "revolutionary literature."[97] In Lu Xun's own words, "I think the fundamental problem lies in whether the writer is a 'revolutionary man.' If he is, no matter what he writes about and what material he uses, it is still 'revolutionary literature.' That which springs from the fountain is all water; that which flows from the veins is all blood."[98] Since *Little Ten Years* was written by a real revolutionary man with genuine revolutionary experience, it provided evidence to support Lu Xun's definition of revolutionary literature in his debates with radical leftists. However, it is ironic that in this novel the revolutionary man who has heroically participated in a bloody revolutionary war is unable to solve his own personal problems. The final paradox is thus revealed: not only is literature powerless to effect revolution, revolution is also powerless in fulfilling the individual's happiness.

Although Mao Dun consistently criticized the formula of revolution plus love, his early novels such as *Eclipse* and *Rainbow* were closely related to this

theme. His trilogy *Eclipse,* which includes a series of three novellas, *Disillusionment* (*Huanmei,* 1927), *Vacillation* (*Dongyao,* 1927), and *Pursuit* (*Zhuiqiu,* 1928), focuses on young revolutionaries' exuberance, despair, and wandering in the ups and downs of revolution during the years 1923–1927. After the GMD split with the CCP inside the Wuhan government in the summer of 1927, Mao Dun was listed as wanted by the GMD. He first took shelter in Lushan, eventually landing in Shanghai after he used the CCP's official money to bribe the GMD investigators. Since he had lost contact with the CCP, he decided to support his family through his writing.[99] Compelled by both political and economic reasons, Mao Dun started his career as a novelist whose treatment of revolution and love was overshadowed by pessimism, nihilism, and decadence. His reproduction of the theme of revolution and love was both a reflection of his own disillusion and vacillation after the failed revolution and his reliance on the consumer culture. He wrote of revolution and love partly for the sake of earning money; such an intention can shed some light on the possibility that consumption had become the chief basis for the production and reproduction of this theme.

In *Disillusionment,* the petit bourgeois girl Jing tries very hard to seek a new life in the torrent of revolution by working in the new revolutionary government established in Wuhan, attending women's movement gatherings, and working for the Workers' Association, but she is disappointed with the hypocrisy of many so-called revolutionaries. Transferring to a hospital, she falls in love with the wounded Lieutenant Qiang, but soon she becomes disillusioned with love also. Jing's skepticism and disillusionment with both revolution and love reflect Mao Dun's difference from Jiang Guangci and other fellow leftists who prefer to regard revolution as a way out for the individual. Mao Dun's *Vacillation* depicts the wavering of a revolutionary, Fang Luolan, in the power struggle between the leftists and the rightists and his vacillation between his wife and the revolutionary and decadent heroine, Sun Wuyang. The atmosphere of confusion and bewilderment is conveyed by Mao Dun's objective realism, which reveals the paradox hidden inside revolution that generates the individual's vacillation. In *Pursuit,* Mao Dun intended to write of a group of petit bourgeois intellectuals who are unwilling to accept the desolation and despair after the failed revolution and try to continue to pursue the ideal in vain. The gloom and despair, coupled with the hysterical and decadent behavior of this group of youths, have uncannily equaled revolution with decadence. In his study of Mao Dun's defeated hero and decadent heroine, Mau-sang Ng points out that those images are strikingly similar to the images of the nihilistic heroes of Andreyev and Artzybashev created during the "age of decadence" in Russian literary history. "The typology of his [Mao Dun's]

early defeated hero is thus a combination of the indigenous elements—the nihilistic and defeatist outlook on life of many Chinese intellectuals, together with the author's own natural pessimism and the borrowing from the Russian forerunners who were depicting a parallel situation some twenty or more years before."[100] Although objectively reflecting the psychology of the sensitive intellectuals during the turbulent years of the revolution, Mao Dun's *Eclipse* aroused severe criticism from radical leftists of the Creation Society and the Sun Society because it failed to point the way toward a better future.[101]

In response to those criticisms, Mao Dun in his famous article "From Guling to Tokyo (1928)" pointed out that Jiang Guangci and his followers' formulaic writing of revolution plus love was full of excessive pamphleteering and slogans.[102] Although the radical leftists immediately fought back by claiming that Mao Dun was speaking from the position of a petit bourgeois, they also admitted that the practical problems he brought up needed solving.[103] Lurking behind Mao Dun's argument may very well have been the mode of thinking influenced by Zola's scientific naturalism and Tolstoy's historical vision.[104] In contrast, Jiang Guangci and other radical leftists were inclined to the romantic aspect of revolution that drew on libidinal energy for strong aesthetic and political appeal. Qian Xingcun, criticizing Mao Dun's "Pursuit," is very dissatisfied with Mao Dun's objective way of writing: "Sickliness is depicted everywhere in the whole book; sickly characters, sickly thoughts, sickly actions, everything is sickly, everything is unhealthy. Objectively the ideas expressed by the author do not go beyond despair and vacillation. So the standpoint of this novel is wrong."[105]

Equipped with the Japanese Marxist Kurahara Korehito's literary theory, Qian Xingcun advocated "new realism" (*xin xieshi zhuyi*), which is founded on a positive attitude toward building the new realities of the proletariat.[106] But for Mao Dun, it is the historical vision that needs to be most emphatically expressed. Shuttling between Zola's mechanical determinism and Tolstoy's religious fanaticism, Mao Dun comes to his own version of realism in the light of Marxism and Communism.[107] Although able to envision a bourgeois society doomed to collapse under the forthcoming proletarian revolution, Mao Dun believes a naturalist writer's duty is to document precisely what has happened. So he does not avoid exposing with objective accuracy the sickliness, decay, and stagnation after the failure of the revolution. In his appraisal of Ye Shaojun's long novel *Ni Huanzhi,* Mao Dun argues as follows:

> Considering the matter calmly, we will have to admit that even a work which portrays only the "backward" petit bourgeois class can also have its positive value as a negative example. As a potential influence and guide, such a depic-

> tion of darkness probably has a more profound effect than those unrealistically optimistic pictures that are so out of touch with reality! In contemporary China, where the reader's power of judgment is generally rather weak, depicting darkness may have a harmful side effect because the irony is often misunderstood. But the duty of the critic is precisely to point out the underlying meaning of those pictures of darkness, not to blindly condemn them as "backward," much less to arrogantly revile a work before even reading it closely.[108]

As a witness to the big revolution, Mao Dun disagrees with the revolution plus love formula represented by Jiang Guangci because it is "so out of touch with reality." Insisting on the scientific observation and objective description of history, he strongly opposes the viewpoint of the Creation Society and the Sun Society, that literature is purely a megaphone or a propaganda instrument to stir the masses' enthusiasm for revolution. Because of Mao Dun's understanding of the relationship between literature and politics his novels enhance rather than settle the tension between decadence and revolution. His ideological discourse is buried deeply in his narrative, and his objective account of depressed and sick reality suspends any value judgment, leaving uncertainty, gaps, and inconsistencies.

Mao Dun's appraisal of *Ni Huanzhi* derives from his sympathy with the May Fourth literary legacy that the radical leftists declared invalid. In *Ni Huanzhi,* Ye Shaojun, a May Fourth writer who was labeled by radical leftists as "backward," tells a story of a young educator, Ni Huanzhi, who first firmly believes "all hope hinges on education,"[109] then feels disillusioned in his career as an educator and in his ideal of a new marriage with a new woman. After the May Thirtieth massacre, he gives up teaching to participate in a political movement; but the abortive 1927 revolution finally drives him to disillusion and death. Even if the historical epoch or revolutionary wheel pushes Ni Huanzhi to run forward, his understanding of revolution is still marked by the May Fourth discourse of enlightenment. The novel intriguingly discusses the relationship between education and revolution: "if an educator does not know revolution, then all his efforts will end in vain; but if revolutionaries do not pay attention to education, then they have nothing to rely on."[110] In the great tidal wave of revolution, the only meaningful revolutionary deed that Ni Huanzhi does is to draft the plan for countryside education, a plan that is neglected by the revolutionary collective. As Marston Anderson points out, "In each case Ye Shaojun was apparently unable to fully overcome the characteristic limitation of May Fourth fiction: specifically, Ye shows a failure of historical imagination by confining himself to the subjective concerns of the troubled bourgeois youth he takes as his protagonist and intellectual laziness in allowing

his fiction to become a medium for the expression of personal whims and frustration."[111] Although taking up the theme of revolution and love, this novel still lingers on the May Fourth framework of enlightenment; in the tide of revolution, however, an educator's position becomes completely useless. Regardless of Ye Shaojun's May Fourth identity, Mao Dun used *Ni Huanzhi* to bolster his own argument that proletarian literature should not exclude the petite bourgeoisie, who for him are the majority of readers of revolutionary literature.[112] In defense of the petite bourgeoisie, Mao Dun wrote, "Although the main character Ni Huanzhi is 'useless,' for just that reason he represents faithfully the 'form of consciousness' of the revolutionary intellectuals in the transitional period."[113] It is clear that Mao Dun comes to grips with the problem of intellectuals' position in revolution and of the relation between art and ideology. He avoids the extreme view held by members of the Creation Society and the Sun Society that revolutionary writers are obliged to become conscious spokespeople for the interests of the proletariat.

If members of the Creation Society and the Sun Society saw revolution as a way out for an individual, Mao Dun viewed revolution as full of pessimism and decadence; Ye Shaojun, an educator's dream and disillusionment; Ba Jin, anarchism. As an important anarchist in the 1920s, Ba Jin adopts revolution plus love as the main theme in his novels *Destruction* (*Huimie,* 1929), *New Life* (*Xinsheng,* 1933), and *Trilogy of Love,* which includes *Fog* (*Wu,* 1931), *Rain* (*Yu,* 1932), and *Lightning* (*Dian,* 1932). In prose remarkably similar to Jiang Guangci's violent and Byronic stance, Ba Jin represents revolution as a destructive force, a "whip," "which can strike and pulverize the darkness of society."[114] Lacking Jiang Guangci's optimistic view of revolution that can build a new life, Ba Jin's destructive force gives birth to anarchism and nihilism.[115] Critics branded Du Daxin, the hero in *Destruction,* "'an anarchist,' 'an individual nihilist,' and 'a personification of Kropotkin's anarchism, Tolstoy's humanitarianism, and Artzybashev's nihilism.'"[116] One of his protagonists, Wu Renmin in *Rain,* an idealist revolutionary who "falls into the love net" instead of joining the social movement, feels desolate and shouts as much: "Move! Move! As long as I can obtain a radical move even just for one minute, it is worth destroying my whole life. Erupt, erupt like a volcano. Destroy the world, destroy myself, destroy this contradictory life."[117] While Ba Jin's heroes and heroines busily engage in both revolution and love in *Lightning,* they express anarchism through nihilist political practice, preferring individual political action, such as assassination, to collective movement. Although anarchism is one of the most important sources of early Chinese Marxist thought, orthodox Marxist critics usually fear the anarchist elements such as mindless individualism and disorder.[118] However, the striking similarities between Ba Jin's and

Jiang Guangci's writings prove that the definition of revolution in the late 1920s and the early 1930s has a close connection to anarchism.

For these reasons, the concept of revolution appears random and sometimes even "politically incorrect" in the formulations and reformulations of revolution and love. It is probably for this reason that the Party officially ordered the termination of this literary practice. In 1931, the Chinese League of Leftist Writers raised rigorous criticism of the writing of revolution plus love in its resolution "The New Task of Chinese Proletarian Revolutionary Literature" (Zhongguo wuchan jieji geming wenxue de jin renwu).[119] In this resolution, written by Feng Xuefeng, the "new task" was to promote and facilitate the popularization of literature and to eliminate the influences of the petite bourgeoisie. The way to do this was to "abandon some stereotyped concepts and some hypocritical content which belong to the pattern of petit bourgeois intellectuals, such as 'trivial contingent affairs,' 'the excitement and the disillusionment of revolution,' and 'the conflict between revolution and love.'"[120] In terms of methodology, the article emphasized negating mechanism, subjectivism, romanticism, false objectivism, and sloganism. Ironically, the failure of revolution plus love ended with its being given the same label—"petit bourgeois"—that radical leftists once used to denounce the May Fourth generation.

The Circulation of Literary Fashion

Although fashion does not always violate existing social conventions, it sometimes flirts with transgression. To a certain extent, it is as if twin and complementary entities were born at once from the same source: one existing entirely to produce new knowledge, the other to restrict it; one existing solely to stimulate the audience's eyes, the other to reshape them; one breaking the rules, the other setting the limits. In actuality, they constantly intertwine, forming part of power relations, bearing traces of the constant struggle between domination and subordination, between power and various forms of resistance to or evasions of it.

Around the 1930s, revolutionary literature was in fashion and became the major target for censorship. Despite tremendous pressure from the Nationalist censors, many publishers and booksellers were still eager to sell books related to revolution. One of the main reasons was the chance for great commercial gain. As Lu Xun put it, "They know pretty well that if they removed all of the left-wing books from the shelves, the bookstore would go bankrupt. So they decide to continue the business for profit while looking out for ways to alleviate the sting of those works."[121] According to Qian Xingcun, most bookstore owners would suggest that novelists write something about

women and love against a revolutionary background because the best-sellers around 1930 all dealt with the theme of revolution plus love.[122] Not only were the publishers and booksellers aware of the big market for revolutionary literature, but some government officials also left loopholes for their own benefit because some of them were board members of the bookstores. Thus, the Nationalist censorship "was not simply a repressive governmental measure, but rather the result of negotiations and interactions," as Michel Hockx argues in his discussion of the censor in Shanghai.[123]

The 1930 publishing law, which governed the production of literary works, did not stipulate prepublication inspection of content.[124] Postpublication censorship made the proliferation of revolutionary literature possible. Only after 1934 did the Central Books and Journals Censorship Committee require all works meant for publication to be sent in for inspection.[125] In fact, there was strong evidence that censorship was relatively loose before the 1930 publishing law: many progressive magazines focused on proletarian literature emerged and became popular. Although they were eventually banned by the GMD between 1929 and 1931, magazines such as *Creation Monthly* (*Chuangzao yuekan*), *Sun Monthly* (*Taiyang yuekan*), *Embryo Monthly* (*Mengya yuekan*), *Explorer* (*Tuohuangzhe*), and *Trackless Train* (*Wugui lieche*)[126] had already cast a new light on a large readership. In addition, even if those progressive journals were forbidden and shut down by the Nationalist censors, the editors would immediately choose a new name and start another journal with the same content. For example, after Nationalist censorship shut down *Sun Monthly* in October 1928, Jiang Guangci and his comrades instantly launched another journal, titled *Time Arts* (*Shidai wenyi*). It produced only one issue; then they changed it into *New Tide Monthly* (*Xinliu yuebao*) in March 1929 for another four issues before it became *Explorer* in January 1930, the central journal of the Chinese League of Leftist Writers.

As Michel Hockx points out, seeing the Nationalist censorship only as a repressive regime would limit our vision to the flourishing of revolutionary literature around 1930.[127] However, this perspective can allow us to reexamine the definition of revolutionary literature that traveled between the repressor and the repressed. Banned by the GMD for allegedly propagating proletarian literature in 1928, *Creation Monthly, Sun Monthly,* and *Trackless Train* represented very different ways of pursuing the fashion of revolution. What did the fashion mean to the editors of the three journals, which respectively represented three different literary groups—the Creation Society, the Sun Society, and some urban modernist writers who later on were labeled the School of New Sensibility? How did they perceive the so-called proletarian literature and communism? Why did some literary historians try so hard to consign

Trackless Train to oblivion, even though it helped proliferate revolutionary literature? Although the suppression by Nationalist censorship made no difference to these three journals' direction, this does not mean the repressed were united. Rather, inasmuch as fashion is always a contested territory, we must rethink Chinese intellectuals' consciousness of modernity and ask how the fashion was circulated among different literary groups.

The three journals were involved, as we have noted, in attempts to propagate Marxist ideology and proletarian literature, and therefore all of them were banned by the Nationalist authorities. The essential difference among them lies in their relationship to what is called the true content of political ideology, their claims to possess some truth or epistemological value. *Creation Monthly* refocused from the diversity of Western fashion to the one and only newness—proletarian literature—imported from Japan; similar to the late period of *Creation Monthly, Sun Monthly* regarded fashion as its shelter in order to achieve its political purpose; *Trackless Train* wore the mask of proletarian literature for the purpose of pursuing the novelty and variety of modern fashion. Apparently, the former two journals drew their resonance from a conviction that by following fashion, revolutionary literature would be accepted by the larger audience. The latter, however, resolutely wove the revolutionary literature into a glorious brocade with no true content, only sheer superficiality. This accounts for the reflexivity of the historical context, in which Chinese intellectuals' experience with fashion was not of a single historical movement, but of pluralistic identities of modernity.

Creation Monthly is an example of a cultural product of the revolutionary experience and in particular of the disparities in that experience. One of the earliest magazines advocating revolutionary literature, *Creation Monthly* attempted to represent a radical transformation of the Creation Society. This magazine started to introduce new Russian literature from its second volume. However, except for some essays, such as those of Guo Moruo, Jiang Guangci, and Cheng Fangwu, that brandished new revolutionary terms and theory, the magazine still juxtaposed various styles of writing, including impressionist, sentimentalist, and modernist poetry and fiction. Ye Lingfeng's painting in the magazine showed his interest in the supreme decadent artist Aubrey Beardsley, who designed the cover of the sentimental magazine *The Yellow Book* at the end of the nineteenth century. In the second volume of *Creation Monthly,* Ye Lingfeng's painting *Wine and Woman* symbolized the dangerously deceptive character of romantic and decadent art, its power to seduce through its exoticism. The woman in the painting was surrounded by bottles of wine and wore a foreign dress decorated with a peacock design. Her hair, like other women's hair in Ye's paintings, created a sense of mystery and hallucination characteristic of

decadent expression. Although from the third volume of *Creation Monthly,* Guo Moruo, Cheng Fangwu, and Jiang Guangci began to publish their revolutionary statements, they did not create much in the way of literary practices to follow. What the magazine had were pieces such as Zhang Ziping's popular triangular love story, Tao Jingsun's experimental decadent style, and Wang Duqing's (1898–1940), Mu Mutian's (1900–1971), and Feng Naichao's poetry inclined to impressionism.

Only beginning with volume 9 of *Creation Monthly* (December 1927) were the diverse contents of the magazine replaced by revolutionary statements and the emerging revolution plus love novels. Yet this volume contained not only Cheng Fangwu's "From Literary Revolution to Revolutionary Literature" and Jiang Guangci's novel *Jufen,* but also Mu Mutian's introduction of the French poet Alfred de Vigny, who was obsessed with death, decay, and demonic women. It is worth noting that some illustrations preceding articles were replaced with paintings of naked women. To a large extent, women's naked bodies flouted all conventional notions of morality and confirmed the inspiration of revolution. Following this volume, although there are hardly any poetic, fictional, or theoretical introductions of modernism in the magazine, the disparities among revolutionary identities are evident in different styles of proletarian novels, which fail to constitute a uniform genre. The paintings of naked women were used repeatedly in the following volumes of *Creation Monthly* until the GMD banned the magazine for political reasons. Most revolutionary novels in the following volumes also used women's bodies to represent power relations. For example, in volume 12, Hua Han's "Female Prisoner" (Nüqiu) connected women's bodies with violence and power, portraying the sadistic and ferocious character of the GMD by depicting women raped and ravished by the enemies of the Communists. The ideological concept was thus subsumed into the author's massive, dark fantasies of sexual violence. Most other proletarian novels in this magazine imitated the revolution plus love formula, yet the "romantic" in their novels not only conveyed positive meanings but also dwelled upon excessive sentiments, such as tears, drinks, and feminine details. The case of *Creation Monthly* reveals the problem of basing literary analysis on social origins and outcomes, for the interplay of transmissions, ruptures, disappearances, and repetitions in revolution plus love writing may have extended the literature's influence well beyond its original readership.

Founded by Jiang Guangci, Qian Xingcun, Meng Chao, and Yang Cunren, who were members of the Communist Party, *Sun Monthly* was nourished in the very heart of the passionate microcosm; it was the chief venue of political propaganda and bursting desire. Among all the literary groups of that period,

the Sun Society had the closest relationship with the Communist Party. For instance, Qu Qiubai, the general secretary of the CCP, directly instructed the activity of the Sun Society, which belonged to the third branch of the Shanghai Zhabei's Party organization. Jiang Guangci and his comrades announced their enthusiastic embrace of revolution in a frank and romantic way. In their manifesto poem of the first issue, Jiang Guangci wrote:

> Were we brave enough,
> we should be like the sun,
> illuminating the whole universe with our brightness.
> Sun is our hope, our symbol—
> Let's open our voice of triumph
> under the illumination of Sun:
> We will defeat everything,
> We will conquer everything,
> We will explore over new homeland,
> We will plant new flowers and trees.

The problem of totalization is surely crucial in a world in which the unity of capitalism or the GMD government was symbolized by darkness, in contrast to the bright sun, representing the strong desire to create a new land. With this hyperbolic tone and heroic vision, Jiang Guangci and the other members of the Sun Society were determined to create revolutionary literature in the most fashionable way. Desire and violence—these are the themes of the monotonous and repetitive proletarian novels in *Sun Monthly,* and the way the authors tried to set themselves apart from the May Fourth generation; they are also an overweening celebration of the authors' identity, the proletarian revolution. Jiang and his friends made the journal fashionable in the most efficient way, by rendering revolutionary literature with a sexual charge. They paraded revolutionary propaganda with ecstatic intensity and passionate desire. Many writings dealt with the conflict between heterosexual love and revolution, which became the most famous theme of the time; the rest were also full of broadly sexual implications or libidinal intensity.

It is no accident, therefore, that besides the formulaic writing of revolution plus love, the other stereotype that appeared in most of the proletarian novels in *Sun Monthly* is that of the oppressed and the oppressor overcome by violent sexual desire. This motif played a large role in shaping the political ideology into fashion charged with great emotion and libidinal intensity. The violent sexual desire is not limited to heterosexual love but includes the broad meaning of bursting desire and energy, converted and channeled into revolutionary passion. Like *Creation Monthly* later, *Sun Monthly* used women's bodies to represent power relationships in which the faceless individual was

engulfed by violent libidinal energy. For example, Yang Cunren's (1901–1955) short story "Female Prisoner" (Nü fulu) published in *Sun Monthly* (January 1928) portrays how the GMD officials sexually abused female Communists in jail and how the prisoners vehemently resisted. More significant than the sex and the rape was the power struggle encompassed by the compelling desire of revolution; such intense political sexuality swallowed up women's suffering bodies and feelings. It is interesting that Hua Han's "Female Prisoner," published in *Creation Monthly* (August 1928), strongly resembles this earlier text. In other proletarian novels of *Sun Monthly,* the scenario of female Communists or female workers being raped by the sadistic oppressors appeared again and again. Dramatizing the dichotomy of suppression and resistance in this way converted desire and violence into revolutionary drives; this was the new fashion the members of the Sun Society were selling to their readership.

The understanding of revolutionary literature at that time was not as uniform as might be imagined. Even among leftist writers, controversies about Marxist theory and proletarian literature were frequent. The alliance between Lu Xun's generation and the new radical members of the Creation Society and the Sun Society easily crumbled. Both *Creation Monthly* and *Sun Monthly* printed a large number of articles contributing to the debates on revolutionary literature. But the radical revolutionary writers also faced a dilemma, illustrated by T. A. Hsia's example of how the Communist Party criticized Jiang Guangci's petit bourgeois style and his obsession with romanticism.[128] In fact, before Jiang Guangci died of pneumonia in 1931, he was in a political and economic predicament: he quit the Communist Party and was later expelled formally because "the romantic, luxurious life he was accustomed to rendered him unfit for the iron discipline of the Party";[129] on the other hand, since all of his books were banned by the GMD, he lost the economic means to survive.[130] His case demonstrates that even the leftists and the Communist Party did not uniformly support the romantically decorated fashion of revolutionary literature.

Other writers who did not firmly commit themselves to the revolutionary cause, such as Liu Na'ou, Shi Zhecun, Mu Shiying, Zhang Ziping, and Ye Lingfeng, regarded revolution as one of the products of modernism. For example, Liu Na'ou's definition of the so-called avant-garde literature mixed proletarian literature from the Soviet Union, Japanese literature of the new sensibility school, and Freudian psychoanalysis.[131] Adding revolution to the pastiche of imported modernism, Liu Na'ou's and Shi Zhecun's bookstores, First Line (Diyixian) and Froth (Shuimo), as well as their magazines, *Trackless Train* and *La nouvelle littérature* (*Xin wenyi*), represented a curious mixture of proletarian and modernist experimental writings. They covered the

heteroglossia of newness, from Mu Shiying's imitation of proletarian novels to Dai Wangshu's poetry, from a series of books that focused on translations of Marxist arts theory to numerous introductions of French impressionism and Japanese New Sensibility.

With the stress on the literary concept of the trackless train, Liu Na'ou and his friends surged ahead into newness. The design of the journal cover is a man riding on a huge ball, aiming nowhere. Since the whole image is upside down, the ride looks as wild and astonishing as can be. This design symbolizes the speed of modernity, the amorphous shape of fashion, the shocking effect, and the free spirit. The image is loaded with proletarians' idea of revolution, but the trackless ball alleviates the rationality of an ideological goal, suggesting the diversity of modernity. The actual content of the journal, which focuses not only on introducing Russian proletarian literature but also on developing modernist literature, forges an interesting dialogue with this visual image.

Trackless Train is an example of how Chinese intellectuals appropriated Western modernity and inserted it into a modern Chinese context. Besides bringing in some proletarian novels and writers, such as Soviet Russia's writer Gorky, Liu Na'ou paid special attention to introducing French modernist writer and poet Paul Morand, whose works explored the fragmentation and decadence of modern metropolitan life. Liu Na'ou was so fond of Paul Morand that he devoted the fourth issue of *Trackless Train* to him, not only translating Benjamin Cremieux's literary criticism but also including two other translations, of Morand's novel and essay. What attracted him most was Morand's writing of unconsciousness, exotic flavor, and promiscuous sexual life of the city, amid the ecstatic intensity of modern speed, color, and light. Thus, *Trackless Train* bridged the idea of progress, represented by proletarian literature, and the air of decadence in modernist writings. It became the very ground for different powers' struggle over newness, which cannot be reduced to an essentialist understanding of modernity. Shih Shumei has pointed out "the ambiguous stance of the journal: simultaneously fascinated by a leftist critique of capitalist decadence and fetishizing that decadence itself."[132] Based on Feng Xuefeng's categorization of three kind of intellectuals connecting to revolution, Shih wrote:

> *Trackless Train* thereby typified the second kind of subjectivity defined by Feng Xuefeng, ambiguously situated vis-à-vis socialism (sympathetic but not willing to be dogmatic) and capitalism (critical but not willing to reject its urban lures.) Translated into literary terms, this subjectivity has leftist leanings but is attracted to pure aesthetic formulism and refuses strict leftist prescriptions; it is critical of capitalism, but delights in its pleasure.[133]

Indeed, if Jiang Guangci and other radical leftists aimed to criticize capitalist modernity and speak for the proletariat, Liu Na'ou and his friends never intended to overthrow the capitalist culture and abandon the urban pleasure. By freely swinging back and forth between revolution and decadence, they found themselves an ambivalent position where they responded to but kept a certain distance from revolution at the same time.

What *Trackless Train* shows is that those modernists generated a secondary representation of revolution plus love by absorbing psychoanalytic writing and impressionism into their way of writing proletarian literature. For instance, Shi Zhecun's "Pursuit" (Zhui) and Liu Na'ou's "Flow" (Liu) are masterpieces of titillating the political ideology by writing about it in terms of sexuality and exoticism. In addition to offering these imitations of proletarian literature, which differed significantly from the leftists' writing, *Trackless Train* focused on urban sensations. Instead of using women's bodies to express political power, their writers produced a series of playful femmes fatales, an image that was often seen as the epitome of Chinese decadence. Though this image reflected male writers' fantasy of the modern New Women, it opened a forbidden area in which sensual exploitation of sex was boldly developed. The sensuality and even the horror in the extreme emotions of the femmes fatales distract our attention from *Trackless Train*'s introduction of proletarian literature to the sense of decadence. By strangely combining the fashion of revolution with the fashion of eroticism, Liu Na'ou and his friends confronted a set of questions surrounding modernity in the Chinese context. Their definition of modernity as scientific and technological progress, as revolution, was juxtaposed with modernity as an aesthetic concept. They circulated the fashion of revolution as an aesthetic style, not the real and violent revolution that the Sun Society and the Creation Society had represented.

In addition, the GMD's censorship of *Trackless Train, La nouvelle littérature,* the First Line bookstore, and the Froth bookstore demonstrated the confusion caused by different understandings of revolution. The censorship regulations defined so-called proletarian magazines as a cunning way of fighting against the current social system, capitalism. These magazines supposedly hid their proletarian propaganda in veiled expression.[134] Not surprisingly, given that Liu Na'ou and his friends equated erotic literature and new sensibility writings with proletarian literature, the GMD banned their bookstores and magazines. From their point of view, these different literary schools had something in common: they all exposed the darkness and decay of capitalist society and indicated the arrival of a bright future.[135] Although Liu Na'ou's effort to attach erotic literature to social criticism may seem ineffectual, it shows the diversified cultural background against which revolutionary theory

and literature were produced. The emergence and proliferation of the revolution plus love formula writings proved that there was no one formula and no absolutely certain way of using it. On the contrary, the cultural phenomenon of revolution plus love was heterogeneous, inexplicable by the logic of cause and effect.

2 In the Eyes of the Leftists

According to some orthodox literary histories, such as Tang Tao's *Brief Edited History of Modern Chinese Literature* (*Zhongguo xiandai wenxueshi jianbian*), the emergence of revolution plus love writing merely served as a connection between political causes and effects; political preoccupations had replaced the cultural context within which the revolution plus love writings emerged and proliferated.[1] This assumption is based on the theory of reflection, which regards literature as a simple reflection of social causes and effects but ignores the fact that literature may have the potential to construct diverse meanings that transgress social determinism. As a historical fact, the literary practice of revolution plus love could not fully conform to the Marxist theories of proletarian literature that radical leftists advocated; the disjunctions between them were ceaselessly reiterated through gender constructs and repetition of the formula. In contrast to the theory of reflection, critics such as T. A. Hsia and Leo Ou-fan Lee reveal the contradictions within this literary practice by pointing out the close connection between the May Fourth generation and the leftist generation in the late 1920s and the early 1930s.[2] Stitching together a continuous history of these two generations requires counterpoising a radical discontinuity between literary revolution and the revolutionary literature posited by Marxist literary historians, who believe that social and political bases determine superstructure.

Here I propose to see the emergence of revolution plus love as showing both continuity and discontinuity with the May Fourth enlightenment. In terms of resisting capitalist modernity, this formula writing is implemented with class ideology, salvaging national and classical identities from the May Fourth Westernized culture. At the same time it follows the May Fourth romantic tradition, not only conceptualizing modernity as progress, but also continuing to use subjectivism to show its modern quality. The bourgeoisie and the proletariat, the individual and the collective, the old and the new that are

manifested in the formula of revolution plus love inevitably forge interesting dialogues in the tangled relationship between revolution and modernity. As a product of a transitional historical period, this formula juxtaposed the vestiges of the eros-and-love craze inherited from the May Fourth generation and the new revolutionary zeal, which was still fuzzy in the minds of enlightened youth. This combination of the new and the old satisfied the popular mentality, through which political propaganda was functioning. The spreading of revolution through literature therefore catered to individual interests and social interests at the same time.

Indulging in revolutionary romance and romantic revolution, leftist writers attempted to transform love among the petite bourgeoisie into proletarian heroism. However, the transformation was complete only in terms of political slogans and concepts; it failed in the narration of eros and love. The concept of love, after all, still belongs to the petite bourgeoisie even if it allegedly carries anticapitalist ideology. The leftist critic Qian Xingcun vividly summarized the problem:

> [Meng Chao]'s novel *The Reflection of Love* is the mirror of this problem. While riots rage outside, our protagonist still holds and kisses his sweetheart warmheartedly. The revolutionary youths play with prostitutes on the one hand and keep cursing capitalist society and requesting revolution on the other. As for those writers depicting youths who plunge into revolution because of failed love affairs, they usually spend three-fourths of a novel specifically narrating love, and in the final one-fourth arbitrarily insert revolution; it is just like the early period of sound film—the beginning eighty percent has no sound, the twenty percent toward the end has sound.[3]

This mechanical combination of love and revolutionary slogans finally ended in a failure that was both social and literary. But it is striking that Chinese intellectuals' enthusiastic repetition of revolution plus love reflects their anxiety in facing their transformation from the petite bourgeoisie to the proletarian mass. Using the critic Wang Yichuan's term, it is a kind of "anxiety of a rebirth."[4] A series of contradictions—between personal and collective, romance and discipline, traditional residues and revolutionary future—that are embedded in this formulaic writing, which allows Chinese intellectuals to ceaselessly and repetitively indulge in bitterly struggling images of themselves, suggests they must have as much connection to the past as to their utopian future. We might, therefore, infer that it is precisely the split personality, the inner conflict of those writers that forestall the perfect transformation. The incongruity between personal sentiments and empty revolutionary concepts, an aesthetic failure that was later criticized by other leftists such as Qu Qiubai and

Mao Dun, signifies that those writers have a hard time finding a new position in the torrent of revolution. It is also a sign that the modern (*xiandai*) represented in the repetition of revolution and love is fundamentally contradictory and problematic. Even after some literary authorities rejected this formulaic writing as of little aesthetic value, its thematic repetition was continuous in literary representation during the anti-Japanese period, the Yan'an period, and the first seventeen years of the PRC. This repetition reveals the continuity of the tremendous anxiety derived from the split modern personality, torn by both personal interest and national demand, nostalgia for the past and dreams of the future, revolutionary ideals and cruel reality. The ceaseless repetition and the anxiety it causes indicate such a split in numerous Chinese intellectuals, who are reluctant to give up the self, the individual, and subjectivity for the revolution, the sublime, and utopian China.

The images of new women and the problematic youth created by leftist writers in their production of revolution and love are closely linked to the anxiety of the rebirth. Sexuality and politics accompany each other in various situations invoking or expressing such an anxiety. In one way or another, the formula of revolution plus love conflates political power and sexual power. Starting from Jiang Guanci, revolution has been imagined by many leftist writers as masculine and violent; such an imagination has turned masculinity into a trope symbolizing power of domination, the mass, the collective, the iron discipline, and the irresistible revolutionary movement. However, while Mao Dun and Jiang Guangci employ the image of the new woman to express revolutionary ideology, women's sexual bodies consistently go beyond the control of masculinity. The open and depraved sexual behavior of new women, which exemplifies both modern desire and revolutionary destructive power, contradicts the purity of revolutionary ideology and comes to question the subjective position of male leftist writers. If the ideal revolutionary man is positive, strong, masculine, powerful, disciplinary, and iron-willed, then Hong Lingfei's weeping hero, decadent hero, and wandering hero fail to meet such masculine ideals. The ambivalent male subjectivity of those problematic youths—weak, feminine, depraved, vacillating but longing for the masculine ideal—is symptomatic of male gender anxiety during the period of transformation. The disease of time (*shidaibing*) that Hua Han tries to capture is homologous to the realm of sexuality, in which both men and women are anxious to search for a new gendered subjectivity. As we consider some representative works of early proletarian literature that are concerned with both politics and sexuality, we see that those leftists never managed to completely break with the petit bourgeois identity that makes the completion of their transformation into the revolutionary mass impossible.

Jiang Guangci and Mao Dun: New Women's Sexual Bodies and Politics

Jiang Guangci, regarded as the initiator of the revolution plus love formula, ended his career as a revolutionary and a writer tragically. Although he had won accolades for his introduction and promulgation of Marxist theory and proletarian literature and was considered a classic writer for his writing of revolution plus love, he was expelled from the Communist Party in 1930, and his literary practice was criticized as oversimplified by Mao Dun and Qu Qiubai.[5] Even though he was the most prolific professional Communist writer at the time, who founded the *Sun Monthly,* the *New Tide Monthly,* and the *Explorer* and acted as an important revolutionary propagandist, he was dismissed by the CCP; at the same time, his books were the first to be banned by the GMD. Despite successful sales of his books in the late 1920s, he was unable to gain any income from his writing under the strict GMD censorship in 1931 and died of tuberculosis with only a few friends around.

According to Xia Yan (1900–1995), the critic, writer, and Party cultural official, there are two reasons that Jiang Guangci was given a disciplinary warning by the CCP in 1929: his novel *The Sorrows of Lisa* and his inability to obey the iron discipline of the Party.[6] That Jiang Guangci's fiction was itself a form of ambivalence, caught between revolution and counterrevolution, led to a reductive account of his relation to the CCP. The announcement "Jiang Guangci Expelled from the CCP" published in *Red Flag Daily News* (*Hongqi ribao*) in 1930 specifically pointed out the bad influence of *The Sorrows of Lisa* within the Party.[7] As the repeated criticisms of Jiang's novels indicate, the connections between politics and gender proved more complicated and threatening than Communist critics expected. Even if Jiang's representation of women's bodies is more vitally involved with political propaganda than that of Mao Dun, it still renders diverse meanings.

That is to say, the correspondence between erotic bodies and the political ideas they represent can be uneasy, indirect, and fluctuating. What seems to be stated by the formula revolution plus love has the possibility of being subverted by layers of signifiers, which resist any straightforward reading. In Chinese history, women's bodies were usually confined by the morality of Confucianism. They were thought to be dangerous if they trespassed in men's domain. After the emergence of the concept of the modern, women's bodies became more and more important in terms of their representative power. They could stand for progress or corruption, for the production of a new order or the decay of an old one. In Jiang Guangci's *The Moon Forces Its Way through the Clouds* and *The Sorrows of Lisa,* women's bodies play different roles in the

transmission of power, one for revolution and the other for counterrevolution. However, this use of women's bodies inevitably positions Jiang's masculine or violent way of writing on the forever contested ground where the fluid, the female, can reshape the masculine logical system.[8]

In *The Moon Forces Its Way through the Clouds*, a new woman, Wang Manying, falls in love simultaneously with a man named Liu Yuqiu and the ideal of revolution. With great enthusiasm, she joins the revolutionary army, fighting as a female soldier and experiencing the real crudities of war, similar to what is portrayed in Xie Bingying's *Diary of a Female Soldier* (*Nübing riji,* 1936). But after the fiasco of the first Chinese Communist revolution in 1927, Wang Manying goes through a stage of dejection and leaves the army, then starts a new life in Shanghai. In order to survive, she sleeps with various men who belong to the bourgeoisie. Although her behavior is like that of an ordinary prostitute, she never feels ashamed of herself because she regards her own prostitution as a continuous way of revolting, of struggling against the old society and the bourgeoisie. Only when she adopts a sister and encounters one of her old admirers, Li Shangzhi, who keeps his revolutionary beliefs and works for the Communist Party, does she realize she has trapped herself in a solitary and wandering life. At the happy ending of the novel, Wang Manying not only gains her real lover but also returns to the right road of revolution.

The novel is remarkable in that the body of the female revolutionary contains a unified, active, and destructive female sexuality, which is described as parallel to the power of revolution. Sex, gender, class, and revolutionary identities conjoin rather than clash, resulting in the bizarre harmony in which the myth of revolution goes astray. The irony in Wang Manying's pursuit of revolution in the city is that she invests meaning in prostitution, which raises poignant questions about what it means to be a modern, decadent, revolutionary woman and how the erotic female body conveys and distorts revolutionary discourse.

Marxist critics have a hard time with Wang Manying's bewildered reaction to the old, dark society. Qian Xingcun points out the flaws of Jiang Guangci's depiction of this new woman: "first, as to Wang Manying's romantic activity after the change, Jiang does not provide enough criticism; second, Manying's knowledge of revolution goes through a transformation from the individualism of heroism to collectivism, but Jiang has not fully elucidated her consciousness of collectivity."[9] Critics have often wondered why Jiang Guangci's proletarian literature is filled with details of Wang Manying's sexual affairs but devoid of narration of collectivity. Yu Dafu thinks that "Jiang Guangci's product is not real proletarian literature. His depiction of the proletarian in the manner of illusion cannot satisfy most new literary readers who

want realism."[10] It is interesting that Wang Manying's romantic way of revolution resembles Jiang Guangci's nature as a petit bourgeois, described in his own words: "The more intense the revolution appears, the more immense the romantic heart becomes."[11] The characterization of Wang Manying as a new woman is based on this spirit of romance, which in Jiang Guangci's mind is interchangeable with other generalized terms, such as "progress," "revolution," and "masses." The conjugation of the spirit of romance and the spirit of revolution reveals a cultural and political ambivalence in this early stage of proletarian literature. The apparently "happy" ending of the novel romantically celebrates the author's own interpretation of this historical stage.

By setting the narrative in Shanghai, one of the most appropriate symbols of modernity, a place full of desire, money, and women, the author gives Wang Manying a double personality: she is a modern and seductive woman with a firm belief in revolution, in the sublime. Lingering on the street like other prostitutes, Wang Manying appears to represent a destructive female sexuality unleashed upon men. However, instead of being a sex object, Wang Manying controls the phallic power and turns it violently against men. As a femme fatale, she entices, mocks, and plays with men as her sexual instruments. The narrator emphasizes the subversive power of Wang Manying's body by the fact that she "rapes" men rather than being handled and insulted. Her gaze upon men's bodies demonstrates her subjective position in the sexual game:

> Manying closes the door, pulls him to her bosom, sits down and carefully looks him up and down. His shy look and his tenderness as a virgin intoxicate her. Manying is burning with desire, wildly kissing his blood-red lips, white face, and beautiful eyes. . . . She holds him tightly, heartily enjoying his virginal flesh. . . . She takes off his clothes for him, makes him completely naked.[12]

Through the detailed narration, we are confronted with an eroticized and fetishized image of a male's body, described in voyeuristic terms usually applied to women's bodies. Wang Manying plays the dominant role with masculine power. Thus metonymically, her physical dangerousness becomes an effective and powerful means of fighting against the patriarchal system. The narrative is suffused with a desire to emancipate the "oppressed," represented by women. As Herbert Marcuse states, "Marxian theory considers sexual exploitation as the primary, original exploitation, and the Women's Liberation Movement fights the degradation of the woman to a 'sexual object.'"[13] By transforming Wang Manying from "female receptivity" to "male aggressiveness,"[14] the author creates a new image, a female counterforce and a liberated woman, whose battlefield shifts from the real war to the bed and whose weapon

is her own seductive body instead of the gun she held before. It is interesting that while Jiang keeps Wang Manying's physical tenderness, receptivity, and sensuousness, signs of her repressed humanity, he also has her use her dangerous body to scramble for the aggressive and male-dominated position. Yet this usurpation of male power is still determined by the same hierarchical sexual system; the ideology of revolution has merely replaced that of patriarchy. The reversal of male and female positions is only a new form of female acceptance of a male principle, a female conveyance of male imagination and interpretation of revolution.

By seducing the men who belong to the bourgeoisie or who reject the ideas of revolution, Wang Manying distinguishes herself from ordinary prostitutes. She attempts to judge her own behavior in a paragraph describing her psychology:

> But is Manying a prostitute? The most degraded woman? Manying asks her own consciousness, and she totally rejects it. Not only does she reject it, but she also believes herself to be the noblest and the purest person in the current society. It is true that she is selling her own body. But this is because she wants revenge, she wants to use it to air her indignation. When she finds out that other revolutionary means have already lost hope of changing society, she then utilizes her own female body to make mischief in society.[15]

This interior monologue indicates a conflict within her character. She vacillates between "the most degraded woman" and "the noblest and purest person": her body is dirty because of her trade, and she is in danger of contracting syphilis; but her mind is healthy, noble, and pure, the means by which sex and the female body experience a process of sublimation. After she encounters her old lover, Liu Yuqiu, who has betrayed his early revolutionary beliefs and become a rich official, she despises and blames him: "I am selling my body, but it is much better than selling the soul. . . . You are a person who sells your own soul; you are worse than me."[16] However, this hierarchical subordination of body to mind systematically degrades the body. When it rebels or becomes depraved, the mind, the soul, or the will is necessarily culpable. According to the author's value system, Wang Manying's body may be sinful, anarchic, and decadent, but it is under the control of a proper mind. But what kind of proper mind is this? Can Wang Manying's erotic body really be purified?

According to the novel, the female body does not remain passive and silent with regard to the sublime revolution and mind. Instead, it disintegrates and confuses the masculinist containment of ideas, souls, and minds in an erotic frenzy. Originally, the subordination of body to mind, of female discourse to spiritual masculinity in the narrative mode, had been presumed to direct and

sublimate the female body to the transcendental level. However, the rebellious quality of that female body as deformed, decadent, promiscuous, and monstrous conspires against revolutionary ideals. Instead of being channeled into sublimity, the erotic body of Wang Manying ultimately changes the meanings of revolution to self-destruction and nihilism. In the novel, when Wang Manying suspects that she has syphilis, she is in despair at first, then decides to use her illness as a weapon against society: "If Manying used her own body only to insult men before, then right now she can use her sickness to attack society. Let all men be infected by her. She won't be done until she destroys this world. . . . She hopes all mankind is destroyed by syphilis."[17] Here a contagious sexual disease has important implications for understanding revolution in a nihilistic way. The use of syphilis becomes a means of revolting, but it twists the transcendental unity of the revolutionary discourse: revolution is now equivalent to women's physically destructive power over society, the world, and the universe. The tendency to destroy is characteristic of the modern age, of revolution; moreover, syphilis symbolizes modern disease and the starting point of all decadence. In this way, the "lower," material, and sensual existence and the danger of the female body run counter to the ideal of progress and revolution, directing it to putrescence, decadence, and death.

What puzzles Marxist critics most is exactly this tendency toward decadence, nihilism, and disillusionment. The uneasiness caused by the exotic female body constantly haunts revolutionary utopia and collective discipline. Even if Jiang Guangci arranges a happy ending in which Wang Manying changes from a prostitute to a worker, a nihilist to a proletarian revolutionary, purifying not only her body but also her mind and soul, it seems that her motivation is love, passion, and romance rather than the ideology of revolution. Wang Manying says: "Dear, not only will I wash my body clean to see you, but also I will subvert and change my inner world thoroughly, from every corner, then I can come to see you. Therefore I went to the factory. . . . What you said is correct. The life of the mass's struggle has completely molded my body and my heart. Brother, now I can love you."[18]

Leftist critics such as Hua Han complained about Jiang Guangci's insufficient interpretation of Wang Manying's romantic and nihilistic activities as well as her transformation from a progressive prostitute into a Communist,[19] because the narrative of her promiscuous sexual life conspicuously overwhelms the narrative of revolution. Such an unbalanced depiction can lead readers to believe that libertinism, a quest for pleasure, corresponds to the pursuit of revolution. The narrative does not condemn Wang Manying's lascivious life but offers plenty of explanations to legitimatize her sexual activities. No doubt this reflects the author's commitment to both the fulfillment of sexual

pleasure and the ideal of communism. As T. A. Hsia says, "It is obvious to his reader that he [Jiang] had two commodities to sell: communism and sentimentalism."[20] Jiang Guangci's indulgence in sentimental romance and his illusion of revolution are closely interconnected. He uses romance to stimulate the passion for revolution and employs the fervor of revolution to ignite love. The harmony of the two conveys revolutionary discourse in a twisted way, through which we can perceive the chaotic reality and the author's questionable solution to the conflict between individual romance and collective discipline.

Another important leftist writer, Mao Dun, consistently criticizes the formula of revolution plus love yet also portrays a series of images of decadent yet revolutionary new women, defining revolution through femininity. Comparing Mao Dun's and Jiang Guangci's writings can shed some light on the complexity of the relationship between gender and revolution in the context of so-called revolutionary literature. It can also challenge the existing scholarship on gender studies, which relies heavily on criticism of male writers' masculinist representation of women and thus erases the differences among those male agents. A feminist reader may easily conclude that both Mao Dun and Jiang Guangci employ women's bodies to express masculinist ideology. However, what is missing from this judgment is the representative zone that gender can unsettle. Thus, I aim to question the intangible status of gender as it is represented in Mao Dun's and Jiang Guangci's different modes of writing. The opposition between the surveillant gaze of male writers and the disruptive voice of gender representation structures their ambivalent texts. My purpose is not to search for a world beyond masculinist language, but rather to reveal the way a specific historical and cultural context fashioned the interplay between gender and politics.

Mao Dun published his first essay on the emancipation of women in 1919 and continued to pursue women's studies in the 1920s; he made his debut in fiction also about women, or new women. In the early 1920s, Mao Dun actively advocated the women's movement by introducing into China many Western feminists' theories, such as those of Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Mary Wollstonecraft, and Ellen Key. To him the emancipation of women exemplified an ideal of social reform; it was not a replacement of men's power. Although he firmly endorsed the women's movement, he also showed some concerns about the radical effect it might have on the male-dominated society: "women should not waste their energy in competing with men," and "their movement should not transgress the boundaries permitted by the society."[21] From his contradictory ideas, we can see he still carefully constructed his feminist point of view in masculinist terms.

The intermingling of public, political life with the private, romantic, or,

more accurately, erotic life of the new woman is a common strategy in Mao Dun's early fiction. This device allowed him to vent his own frustration at the turmoil of China's political reality. The range of new women presented in *Eclipse, Wild Roses* (*Ye Qiangwei,* 1929), and *Rainbow* is considerably wider and more positive than in the work of earlier writers, where women were concerned almost exclusively with love. The prominent images of Ms. Jing, Ms. Hui, Sun Wuyang, Zhang Qiuliu, and Ms. Mei are the beginning of a positive representation of revolution's significance to the new woman. Compared to women in May Fourth literature, who were portrayed as either victims of the old society or completely severed from it, like the wandering Nora after leaving her family, these new women had already achieved a certain power and autonomy in the male-centered society. Despite the deep-seated ambivalence of his male feminist discourse, Mao Dun's exhibition of a large group of new women rendered a vivid picture of the burgeoning women's movement. It was the first time that Chinese women celebrated their sexuality in a positive way in Chinese fiction. Their sexy bodies, especially their breasts, were a new figure at the time, symbolizing progressive and revolutionary power in contrast to the traditional female figure, tightly wrapped by the patriarchal system. The most paradigmatic figures, those of Sun Wuyang in "Vacillation," Zhang Qiuliu in "Pursuit," and Ms. Mei in *Rainbow,* all possess an irresistible, seductive female body, with round, high breasts, undauntedly and proudly challenging the public eye.

Nevertheless, though they are apparently linked with Mao Dun's objective narrative of revolution, these new women's sexy bodies are simultaneously fixed by the male's obsessive gaze. One may wonder why these progressive women's bodies must be so seductive. Does their sexuality hinge on their political identity? Don't these attractive bodies shaped by the male's gaze indicate another shoal of feminism? Aren't both their bodies and their political allegiance only the reflection of Mao Dun's anxiety during the ups and downs of the revolution? In her analysis of Mao Dun's obsession with women's breasts, Rey Chow argues that there is "a gap between 'women' as reflexive 'mind' and 'women' as sexual 'body'":[22]

> In the midst of the most radical change in Chinese literary language—an analytic openness in fictional writing—we are confronted with the return of woman as the traditional, visually fetishized object, which, in spite of women's new "cerebral" developments, still fascinates in a way that is beyond the intellect, beyond analysis! One cannot conceptualize the breasts without "seeing" or "feeling" them in one's mind; the "intellectual" grip on reality is then loosened, sensuously.[23]

Indeed, these new women's sexual bodies once again become the fetishized object, separate from the real female mind and subjectivity. When Mao Dun depicted the decadent, high-spirited, and flamboyant Sun Wuyang and Zhang Qiuliu, he had a hard time penetrating into these two women's minds. He was enchanted by these new women's openness about sexuality, but he did not know how to demarcate a sphere within which their sexuality could be legitimized. Both fascinated and terrified by the audacious women he himself created, he seems to have lacked the enthusiasm or the courage to fully understand them.

In "Vacillation," Mao Dun's ambivalent attitude toward the decadent and emancipated woman Sun Wuyang is expressed in the male protagonist Fang Luolan's vacillating manner, which refuses to adhere to either good or bad values, conservative or progressive action. Though Fang Luolan hears some rumors about Sun Wuyang's promiscuity and even sees contraceptives in her room, he avoids these facts, instead imagining Sun as someone who has a "pristine and noble soul."[24] Using the male fantasy of new women, he attempts to cover the truth, that he cannot resist the temptation of Sun's attractive body: her slender waist, full and round breasts, and sweet smell. In other words, it is her seductive body that attracts him rather than her unconventional mind. After Sun Wuyang confesses to him her philosophy, that she only plays with men without ever loving them,[25] he is intimidated by this beautiful woman's "mind." Mao Dun writes, "[Fang] is extremely disturbed—one minute, he wants to turn around and escape; another minute, he wants to embrace this lovely and dreadful lady."[26] This quotation clearly echoes many of Mao Dun's writings that imply his contradictory attitude toward new women. The fetishized female breasts, waist, arms, and legs—quite a few bodily elements go into the making of the deeply fascinating and terrifying feminine Other, "Other" to both the patriarchal tradition and the progressive male writer. The terror is how to define this new femininity. Fang Luolan is impotent in the face of Sun Wuyang's destructive energy, so he chooses to find paradoxical stability in a forever vacillating position.

Another image of a new woman, Zhang Qiuliu in "Pursuit," also embodies Mao Dun's fantasy about and fear of women's desire for liberation and transgression in the male-centered world. Among her comrades, who suffer from depression as a result of the failure of revolution, Zhang Qiuliu stands out as a brave fighter; her sexual energy overturns the traditional feminine passivity. However, in the eyes of her former lover, Manqing, she is nothing but a "strange woman," who is not only constantly hysterical but also hedonistic and solipsistic.[27] He eventually chooses a mediocre woman as a wife instead. Implicit in Manqing's choice is Mao Dun's fear of the sexually independent

woman, who has a strong will to transgress traditional boundaries. In real life, Mao Dun chose his conventional wife, Kong Dezhi, over his mistress, Qing Dejun, a typical decadent and revolutionary new woman who had love affairs with many men before she accompanied him to Japan for more than a year.[28]

However, unlike Jiang Guangci, Mao Dun in "Pursuit" makes an effort to explore the dilemmas of new women. Trying to delve into women's minds—even if in a very limited way—he raises some serious questions concerning the definition of their sexuality: Where is the demarcation between revolution and decadence when new women prostitute their bodies for a good cause? What does new women's destructive sexual power mean to the masculine society? In "Pursuit," three female characters—Zhang Qiuliu, Wang Shitao, and Zhao Chizhu—embrace a life of decadence while at the same time longing for a bright future. After suffering the disappointment of the failure of revolution, both Wang Shitao and Zhao Chizhu degenerate into prostitution for practical reasons: Wang needs to raise her baby left by her martyr husband, and Zhao has to support herself and her husband. Particularly intriguing is the dialogue between Zhang Qiuliu and Wang Shitao, in which they disagree about how to search for a new Chinese feminist consciousness. Zhang Qiuliu believes new women's prostitution can reverse the tradition of men playing with women. Confident in her own body, she thinks that through prostitution women can have their revenge; they do not need to feel ashamed of prostitution if it is for the right cause. Wang Shitao, lacking Zhang's romantic and revolutionary attitude, sees more of the pain that women have to face: pregnancy, raising children, and selling their bodies to men in order to survive. Wang eventually turns to prostitution only because she needs money to raise her child. Through the debate between Zhang and Wang, Mao Dun consciously tries to reveal the complexity of new women's sexuality: even in the same revolutionary camp, female sexual identities differ. The conclusion of the novel shows that Mao Dun is aware of the difficult life that new women have to face: their sexual bodies are not pure revolutionary instruments without any pain; the women have to endure the consequences of how they use their bodies. At the end of the novel, Zhang Qiuliu has to suffer from syphilis after she fails to save her self-destructive friend Shi Xun by means of her body.

Unlike Mao Dun, who examines women's perplexed psychology while tackling this issue, Jiang Guangci simply indulges himself in romantic imaginings of using women's sexual bodies as revolutionary weapons. Instead of questioning the psychic and sexual life of his protagonist, Jiang Guangci is apparently more concerned with Wang Manying's class consciousness. Although there is a suspect "bourgeois" ideology embedded in Wang Manying's individual struggle, contrary to the radical leftists' definition of proletarian literature, Jiang Guangci carefully arranges for her to sleep with men from the

enemy class to achieve her revolutionary goal. In addition, as the story progresses, he puts Wang Manying through a dramatic transition from an individual to the collective identity of a proletarian. Through her new lover, Li Shangzhi, one of the Communist leaders of the workers' movement, Wang Manying's sexual body is successfully directed toward a higher purpose—that of proletarian revolution. Her body, suspected of having contracted syphilis from men, is also suddenly purified. Therefore, in Jiang Guangci's novel, female sexuality and desire are hijacked by the revolutionary discourse: the new woman's sexuality hinges on political purpose, which leaves no space for her to think and feel like a normal woman.

Although Jiang Guangci never completely sacrifices individual sexuality or heterosexual relations to the collective goal of revolution, he does intend to sublimate Westernized femininity into proletarianism. However, in Mao Dun's novels, the feminine identity of these new women is much more complex, not readily conceivable within the boundaries of class consciousness. Rather than concealing feminine sexuality under the cloak of class awareness, Mao Dun's novels exude an air of decadent sexual desire, related to new women's progressive consciousness and redefinition of femininity. Lacking a direct channel for sublimating the disruptive force of femininity, Mao Dun's heroines seem to drift ceaselessly in a sea of unspeakable desire, wallowing in fragmented and diffused sensuality, ornament, and affection. For example, Sun Wuyang refuses to settle down with any man, and her lascivious sexual conduct far exceeds her role as a female revolutionary; Zhang Qiuliu never undergoes a psychic purification and rededication to rational politics but rather is trapped in the turbulence of desire as well as the shame of a sexually transmitted disease. Even in Mao Dun's long novel *Rainbow,* where Ms. Mei eventually finds her political identity—Communist revolutionary—through a pilgrimage toward ideological enlightenment, her yearning for spiritual transcendence conflicts with her desire for physical pleasure. Therefore, in Mao Dun's representation of new women's gender awareness there is no closure, no ultimate sublimation: the emotional bonding of comradeship and brotherhood cannot easily replace the newly emerged femininity.

The reason Mao Dun does not simply convert new women's sexuality into lofty revolutionary passion is not that he identifies with the petit bourgeois ideology, as the Creation Society and the Sun Society charged, or that his male feminist idea has gone beyond the power of masculinist language to express. What makes him indulge in the disclosure of new women's sexual identity is his realistic style, which conflicts with Jiang Guangci's hyperbolic imagination. Of course, Mao Dun's political point of view allows him to admit that his novel *Eclipse* only portrays "a negative example" of petit bour-

geois intellectuals who are not ready for the forthcoming proletarian revolution.[29] Yet his objective account of the failure of revolution provides a space for gender to argue with politics. In his dialectic, there is a split between new women's desire for sexual pleasure and their longing for the revolutionary ideology. This split exposes the inconsistency in Mao Dun's portrayal of social and political issues by means of new women's psychological and ideological growth. Though he posits a causal relationship between sexual and political revolution, the female in his novels is not merely a mediator but is in intense conflict with his political thoughts. Maybe it is right for him to fear new women's emancipated desire, which has dragged his narrative into pitfalls tinged with decadence and darkness. Therefore, as we look back at how politics became intertwined with sexuality and gender at that specific historical moment, we should bear in mind that their relationship could be volatile. The examples of Mao Dun and Jiang Guangci have verified that the representations of gender paralleled to political revolution may differ.

Generally, new women's bodies in the revolution plus love formula play a particularly significant role as a sign of Westernization and a product of revolution. Female bodies mark the widely diffused textuality of modern representation, which is based on Western humanism; representations of them make sex the core of individual identity. Leftists' representation of the image of the new woman focuses a good deal on the production of modernist referentiality and subjectivities. As a product of revolutionary practice, new women's bodies are designed to switch from the subjective position to tropes of revolutionary collectivity in the larger, masculinist discourse. However, the juxtaposition of signs of Westernization and revolutionary practice in female bodies shows the vacillation of representation between private and public spaces, individual and collective identities. The power of passion embraces both modern subjectivity and revolutionary zeal; the conflicts between love and revolution are never truly resolved. Therefore, while leftist writers connect female bodies with politics, the ambiguity of women's sexual bodies fails to direct this literature toward one single and omnipotent "truth." Although new women's bodies are meant to convey political meanings, they are entangled with the qualities of virility, unity, and transcendence that reign supreme and finally transgress the boundaries they are designed to guard.

Hong Lingfei: The Weeping, Decadent, and Wandering Youth

As we have seen, love and sex, the tradition of subjectivity and individualism in fiction, underwent a broad process of historical transformation during the 1930s. In discussing the Western impact on romanticism in China, Leo Ou-

fan Lee marks two dispositions: Wertherian (passive-sentimental) and Promethean (dynamic-heroic). As for the spirit of particular generations captured by each, the former could represent the early stage of the Creation Society, whose prototype was "often passive and submissive, with a singularly feminine nature";[30] the latter could stand for the transitional period of the Creation Society in revolutionary literature and of course the Sun Society, whose ideal hero's ultimate desire was "to impose his personality on the world, to shape the world—even to create it."[31] One may wonder how the passive style of writing of the early Creation Society could change so drastically into the violent and ardent expression of both revolution and love. What was the inner bond between passive sentiments and positive heroism?

On the surface, revolution plus love writing was inclined to the Promethean type represented in a more masculine aesthetic mode. Yet this did not mean the Wertherian type of writing had completely disappeared. In fact, the Wertherian and Promethean types were conjoined in this formula, supplementing and defining each other. Historically grounded, the interplay of these two dispositions in the revolution plus love formula can be taken as more than a rhetorical exercise aimed at aesthetic transcendence. The striking fact is that the negative and positive passions appear indeed to be intimately linked, and this linkage represents a significant stage in literary development. Most discussions of left-wing literature have valorized revolution at the expense of passive sentiments. If these enter in at all, they are usually only negative, the sinister background against which the ideology of progress can shine. Finding some of the possible reasons for the depreciation of passive sentiments would help us understand why certain issues have been invisible or rarely pursued. Since passive sentiments cannot stimulate the enthusiasm of the mass, Marxists usually regarded it as unhealthy, to be subordinated or given up for the revolutionary cause. Yet surprisingly, there are still a lot of passive sentiments in leftist writing of action or violence.

Some leftist writings of the revolution plus love formula contain numerous transformations from negative to positive emotions, exemplified by the image of youths. According to Franco Moretti, "Youth is 'chosen' as the new epoch's 'specific material sign,' and it is chosen over the multitude of other possible signs, because of its ability to accentuate modernity's dynamism and stability. Youth is, so to speak, modernity's 'essence,' the sign of a world that seeks its meaning in the future rather than in the past."[32] In the literary revolution of the May Fourth era, the representation of youth focused on human consciousness as individual, in contrast to feudalism, which suppressed and oppressed personal existence. But Chinese intellectuals' translation and importation of Western humanism and individualism were always done against the larger na-

tional and social background of modern China. The existence of "self" as the opposite of tradition embraced negativity at the same time.[33] The affirmation of individualism was closely associated with the suspect position of the self. The passive sentiments represented by Yu Dafu's *Sinking* (*Chenlun,* 1921) as well as some other fiction of the earlier Creation Society could reflect the mindset of a wandering youth who struggled in despair over an incomplete self and an impotent nation. After leftist writers turned to Marxism, they tried to transform themselves from marginal or wandering individuals to the proletarian mass. A desire to search for a stronger male identity thus inevitably emerged in the formulary writing of revolution and love. In other words, revolution came to define masculine ideals: the images of strong, masculine, and powerful men in the torrent of revolution constructed the ideal of male subjectivity in the proletarian literature. However, it was at that point of transformation that the image of the weeping, feminized, decadent, and wandering youth who indulged themselves in such formless activities as tears, drinking, and desire returned to haunt and co-opt the masculine and revolutionary language within which passive sentiments were degraded and excluded. Within that process of transformation, as the problematic and revolutionary youth painfully and repetitively negotiate between self and nation, love and revolution, ideal and reality, male anxiety about masculine sexuality finds no respite.

Hong Lingfei's early novels *Front Line, Transformation,* and *Exile* all have young, dynamic, ambitious, and ambiguous male protagonists. The striking similarity of these three novels is in the narrator's placing the contradictory interiority of the young heroes against a modern and revolutionary backdrop. As Moretti says about the nineteenth-century European bildungsroman, "[The hero's] restless ambiguity makes him the natural representative of an age in which existence truly becomes what the *Theory of the Novel* calls 'problematic.' Here, interests conflict with ideals, desire for freedom with aspirations for happiness, love (as Lukacs wrote in his studies on Faust) with 'career' in the highest sense of the word. Everything divides in two, each value is opposed by one of equal importance."[34] Despite their assertion of political meanings, Hong Lingfei's heroes are all ambiguous characters whose immaturity causes their problems. Instead of clinging to the representation of the "great world," Hong Lingfei focuses more on the absurdity of his subject matter, through which a series of contradictions and dilemmas are accentuated rather than resolved. As critics unanimously agree, Hong's style is akin to the peculiarities of Yu Dafu's, full of depiction of sexual instinct, male subjectivity, self-consciousness, and psychic mechanisms. Although recognized and introduced into the literary field by Yu Dafu, Hong Lingfei managed to revolutionize Yu's sentimental style of writing, diverting male libidinal energies into revolution.[35]

Having joined the Communist Party in 1924, Hong Lingfei went into exile in Hong Kong and Singapore to avoid imprisonment by the GMD after the 1927 liquidation of the Communists. When he came back to Shanghai in 1928, he organized Our Society (Women she) and created the journal *Our Monthly* (*Women yuekan*) with his leftist friends Lin Boxiu and Dai Pingwan. Actively participating in the Chinese League of Leftist Writers in 1930, he served as one of the seven long-term committee members. Hong Lingfei was a true Communist, murdered by the GMD in 1933; his work is representative of early proletarian literary practice, bearing the distinctive mark of the revolution plus love formula. However, compared to Jiang Guangci's work, which aims to distinguish itself from the May Fourth generation, Hong Lingfei's writing is more indebted to the May Fourth literary legacy and pays more attention to the interiority of his heroes.

Basically, youth in Hong Lingfei's *Transformation* is placed in conflict with parental authority, a popular theme of literary revolution in the 1920s. The story revolves around the problems of the hero, Li Chuyan, who falls in love with his sister-in-law, Qin Xueying, first and then another female student, Zhang Liyun, but is forced by his father to marry a stranger. At the end of the novel, Li Chuyan finally extricates himself from the pessimistic abyss and joins the revolutionary movement. Apart from the fresh and bright ending of revolution, the theme of Hong Lingfei's *Transformation* bears an unmistakable resemblance to the well-established subject matter of May Fourth literature. The persecuted young victim in conflict with the evil patriarchal system and the opposition of traditional marriage and modern love symbolize the historical development and fluctuation of individualism. But it is important to note that during the father-son conflict, the protagonist, Li Chuyan, who signifies the "new, young, romantic, renegade, and destructive" generation, is designated as an emotional, effeminate, and weeping hero. The narrator describes him as a weak or feminized man:

> Li Chuyan doesn't know when he turned into an emotional and easily saddened child. He is often cursed by his father, and he dares not say anything in front of him. But he always weeps behind his back. Whenever he weeps, he can go on and on for several hours, or sometimes shed tears inside his sleeping bag throughout the night. Hence, in front of his father he is usually scared as an idiot, being totally controlled by his father.
>
> His tears soak the pillow, but he dares not make any sound. He puts his hand tightly on his chest. He feels his nose sometimes sour sometimes pungent. . . . It is already the deep night, people in the village all sleep. The more he cries, the sadder he feels. Finally, he escapes to the outskirts of the village

> alone. Out there, trees in the forest are melancholy, a ghostly fire is glittering, the desolate cemetery lies in wait. He cries loudly with abandon, and feels that he is the most lonely and unfortunate person in the world.
>
> Since their wedding, they have been together about three months. During these three months, she notices not a day passes without his crying. She is a daughter of peasants. Every man she has seen belongs to some robust and rash peasant lineage, who never shed tears during their whole lives. Men like him who are so fond of crying really scare her. Usually, she wants to persuade him to stop, so she tells him of some old opera she saw in the countryside, or tells him some stories she heard from a neighbor's singing. When he hears those stupid, superstitious, and unbearably vulgar old operas and stories, he on the contrary begins to cry more loudly. Later, she finds herself lacking words; she then uses simple sentences to say, "Don't cry! Don't cry! Ah! Why are you crying? Why are you crying? . . . Ah! Ah! Don't cry! Don't cry! . . ." Sometimes she talks to him in a half-angry, half-smiling way: "Well! You are more fond of crying than our women!"[36]

It is an amazing revolutionary hero who can weep so excessively and emotionally like a woman. The image of the weeping hero comes directly from Qing fiction, such as Wei Zi'an's (1819–1874) *Traces of the Flower and the Moon* (*Huayue hen,* 1872) and novels of mandarin ducks and butterflies such as Xu Zhenya's *Jade-Pear Spirit,* the sentimental tradition that favors excessive tears and sorrow. These elements are echoed in other fiction, such as the melancholy storyteller Lao Can (1858–1909) in *The Travels of Lao Can* (*Lao Can youji,* 1907) and the sentimental writer Wu Jianren (1866–1910) in *Wu Jianren Weeps* (*Wu Jianren ku,* 1902).[37] Influenced by Western novels such as Goethe's *Sorrows of Young Werther,* the Creation Society was well known for its obsession with sentimentalism and emotion. With a writing style strikingly similar to that of Yu Dafu—the representative figure of sentimentalism and subjective romanticism—Hong Lingfei also inherited a Wertherian exaggerated self-pity. Interestingly, the image of the weeping hero was also favored by many other leftist writers, such as Dai Pingwan, Meng Chao, and Ye Yongzhen. In the political context of the time, such heroes, who cry more frequently and emotionally than women, strike a discordant note in the rational and ideological struggle; the feminine gesture of weeping and the indulgence of self-torture does not suit the violent revolutionary movement.

Without the capacity to resolve the contradictions between emotion and rationality, Hong Lingfei's weeping hero is stymied. During the conflict between father and son, between old marriage and new romance, between tradition and progress, Li Chuyan does not muster the strength and courage to

fight his father and the patriarchal system he represents; Li can only cry, sob, shed tears, and vacillate between the old and the new. He never totally breaks with his family, since tradition has deeply penetrated his body and blood. Ironically, the image of the weeping hero reflects the close link between Chinese tradition and Hong Lingfei's generation, which claimed to have broken all ties with the past and regarded itself as more progressive and revolutionary than the May Fourth generation. Caught in conflict between being a filial son to his father and being a revolutionary, Li Chuyan is relentlessly lacerated by the ideal and the reality, and turns schizophrenic in a metaphorical sense. He indulges in the decadent life rather than fighting back violently; he is inclined toward death rather than the pursuit of happiness:

> From that time, he shows symptoms of neurasthenia. He cries willfully and unremittingly almost every day. He feels that if his family treats him in such a harsh way, society will treat him even worse. Therefore, he suspects "life" fundamentally. He feels that it is meaningless to be a human being. Sometimes he also wants to bestir himself, fighting with the evil old society and old system. But his inclination to destruction is too strong. He admires death, but the death he admires is a kind of easy death, not a violent death. So he decides to commit slow suicide.
>
> Whenever he thinks about her, he feels more sorrowful, and he degenerates more. In the face of fate he only trembles, incapable of changing it. Because he loves her, he cannot embrace her and behave demonically. But he is not a puritan either, just forgetting her. Therefore it is difficult for him to advance or to retreat, and he is driven to the wall. In this impasse, he wants to find a way out, to indulge in wine and embrace death.[38]

The image of the decadent youth against the revolutionary background appears in many novels from the May Fourth era to the 1930s. This archetypal youth is not found only in novels of literary revolution, such as Yu Dafu's *Sinking;* it is also surprisingly prominent in works of revolution plus love, such as Hong Lingfei's other novels, *Front Line* and *Exile;* Dai Pingwan's *Eve;* Ye Yongzhen's *Little Ten Years;* and Hua Han's *Subterranean Spring*. The most common setting for the decadent yet progressive youth is a bar or brothel, where excessive emotion can be expressed and sex is explicitly portrayed. In its very extremity, this image is closely associated with tears, alcohol, and bodily sensation. Most critics attribute this contagious, decadent mist and passive feelings in revolutionary literature to the failure of the 1927 Chinese Communist revolution. But beneath the political cause lie profound questions about the nature of being and the quest for individual existence. To ferret out these

questions, one has to relate this archetype of youth to modernity and modern consciousness. Decadence as a modern disease is wholly independent of all contingencies that are usually—and irrelevantly—used to explain the image of decay. The weeping, dejected, and effeminate hero cannot be easily channeled into revolutionary politics; instead, he represents a personal and self-involved interiority and a deep and authentic awareness of modern crisis and the hidden forces precipitating utopia in decline. Even though some authors try to impose political ideals such as nationalism or revolution on the behavior of such characters, their erotic and decadent rapture directly collides with their political intentions.

The primary goal of most leftist writers is to belittle the decadent experiences of the bourgeois individual and to emphasize the happy ending of the revolution led by the proletarian collective. When the narrator depicts the hero as an individual, the novel is constructed as a bildungsroman. According to Lukacs, this is a biography of the "problematic individual,"[39] who is "problematic because the world where the individual's action takes place has becomes contingent, deprived of transcendental meanings."[40] But after the hero awakens to the "positive" and changes from passivity to revolutionary action, the revolution plus love formula is transfigured into the *roman à thèse,* which simplifies and deproblematizes individuality. The modern, degraded, irremediably problematic character suddenly and drastically disappears; the individual exists only as part of the collective, serving the demonstrative and didactic political purpose. Most leftist writings of revolution plus love follow the same pattern—linking the bildungsroman with the *roman à thèse*—in order to function as propaganda. But although the combination of these two novel forms seems deceptively simple, as Moretti says, "when we remember that the *Bildungsroman*—the symbolic form that more than any other has portrayed and promoted modern socialization—is also the most contradictory of modern symbolic forms, we realize that in our world socialization itself consists first of all in the interiorization of contradiction."[41] Not surprisingly, the contradictory, hybrid, and compromising nature of the bildungsroman has made the writings of revolution plus love similarly uneasy, and made the *roman à thèse* an impure and paradoxical genre.

Hong Lingfei's *Front Line* is also written in the hybrid form of bildungsroman and *roman à thèse* in a strong romantic fashion. The ambivalence and problematization of this fiction become inevitable because the author portrays revolution as inseparable from decadence. At the beginning of the novel, we are told that the hero, Huo Zhiyuan, has just joined the revolution. "Originally he is very romantic, decadent, extremely admiring of death," just like most progressive youths at that time. But "recently he also engages in revolution, and

his understanding of revolution is very special: he wants to use revolution to eliminate his sorrow, just as he uses wine, women, and art to eliminate his sorrow."[42] Seeing revolution as equal to such pleasures as wine, women, and art makes the hero's sublime goal questionable. This utilitarian attitude accepts the reality principle as truly and wholly based on the pleasure principle: trying to assure and safeguard individual comfort and happiness.

According to Freud, the reality principle "does not abandon the intention of ultimately obtaining pleasure, but it nevertheless demands and carries into effect the postponement of satisfaction, the abandonment of a number of possibilities of gaining satisfaction and the temporary toleration of displeasure as a step on the long indirect road to pleasure."[43] In *Front Line,* the revolutionary enterprise that Huo Zhiyuan joins plays a role as a reality principle designed not as eternally antagonistic to the pleasure principle, but rather as its extension. In Hong Lingfei's representation of revolution plus love, triumph is never complete and secure; the pleasure principle is used "as a method of working employed by sexual instincts, which are so hard to 'educate,'" to succeed in "overcoming the reality principle."[44] The hero does not really learn to give up uncertain and destructive pleasure for the delayed, restrained, or assured pleasure of the Communist utopia. By staying committed to the pleasure principle, he is caught in the aimlessness resulting from the combination of idealization and erotic passion.

The story conflates sexuality and revolutionary ideals through the negotiation of pleasure and discipline, confirmation and disavowal, identification and anxiety. The decadent hero Huo Zhiyuan dramatically turns into a revolutionary hero after he moves in with his lover, Lin Miaochan. On the back of the photo that commemorates their love, they write, "To love for the sake of revolution, not to sacrifice revolution because of love! The significance of revolution lies in striving for the liberation of the human being, the significance of love lies in pursuing the harmony of two sexes; both have the same true value!"[45] In the harmony of love and revolution, discipline is thrown into airy passion. Yet the hero is soon criticized by the Communist leader for his relationship with Lin, who has not committed herself politically. After feeling the pain of revolutionary discipline, Huo eventually finds a solution by persuading Lin to identify with his political beliefs for the sake of love. Meanwhile, he is also attracted by several charming female revolutionaries and involved in a labyrinth of love entanglements. At the end of the novel, this dazzling revolution plus love game ends with Jiang Jieshi's massacre of the Communists. The mixture of the escalating anxiety of sexual pleasure and revolutionary zeal through the whole novel can be confusing; it requires the juxtaposition of passive sentiments and positive passion. Indeed, such a confusion reflects the decade during which the

author wrote, irresistibly fascinated with illusion and disillusionment, and defines the author's irrational comprehending of revolution.

Although Hou Zhiyuan regards the relationship between revolution and love as harmonious, his Communist comrades relentlessly show him that love has become an obstacle to revolution in his case. Therefore, he undergoes an inner struggle in which his subjectivity splits. The discipline and reason of revolution might be put off, but they cannot disappear; instead, they persist in dominating or interfering with love and sex. To keep his commitments to both utopian ideals and consummate sexuality, Huo Zhiyuan hastily alternates between revolutionary works and romantic love. The narrative unfolds first by revealing gradually the cruel discrepancy between the big "I" (*dawo*) who must be dedicated to the collective and the small "I" (*xiaowo*) who is free to wallow in eroticism. This discrepancy is chiefly the result of the conflict between public and private space. Huo Zhiyuan is persuaded by his comrades not to entangle himself with Lin Miaochan, whose identification with revolution remains vague. However, the narrative often contradicts itself: there is always an alternative to this discipline, underlined by the language of sexuality. Hence, Huo Zhiyuan's interiority is congested with contradictions among antagonistic elements on a common ground where the public space interferes with the private space, where revolution incessantly wraps up eroticism in an erratic formula.

Later on, the protagonist is portrayed as a dandy who not only succeeds in keeping Lin Miaochan's love, but also attracts many sexy female revolutionaries. In the name of revolutionary work, Huo Zhiyuan lives a dissipated life, with many erotic women. The narrator keeps reminding the reader that Huo Zhiyuan has devoted himself to revolution, but the narrative is full of sexual fantasies. This excessive description inevitably leads the sublime revolution into the trap of the lower, material, and sensual existence. For example, when Huo Zhiyuan is talking with one of his revolutionary colleagues, Ms. Chu, the narrative reveals his sexual fantasy: "Ah! How comfortable it would be if I could lie down inside her bosom! Then my head would lean against her heart, my forehead and my whole face would be hidden under her full and round breast. My hand would surround her waist, my body would hang on her thigh. Oh, if I could lie down for a while just like that . . ."[46]

David Der-wei Wang notes that dandyism in leftist writings deserves special attention, since it "is an art of betrayal and self-betrayal." Like a disease prevailing over the narrative, dandyism will easily "confuse a character's ideological and psychological orientations, obscuring the line between flirtation with a cause and commitment to it, between fashion and obligation."[47] Even Huo Zhiyuan's lover Lin Miaochan is bewildered and cannot help but criticize: "Revolution! What is revolution! You only hang out revolutionary

shingles and meddle with romance! . . . Revolution, it is really fashionable. I also follow you to engage in this revolutionary deal."[48] The narrative's constant focus on the hero's subjectivity and inner psychology has subverted the revolution into a personal romantic matter, permeated with private sexual illusion and disillusionment, basic instincts and distracting thoughts. The lofty and transcendental revolution is performed by this imaginative dandy as a farce, mixed with the game of love and his unsuccessful absorption of Marxism. Indeed, his behavior blurs the boundaries between revolution and decadence by its textual significance. But it also goes beyond the text, referring to the sociopolitical context within which leftist intellectuals were deeply trapped in the dilemma between the modern self and revolutionary ideals. In these writers' eyes, the fullest possible realization of the self was the attainment of the maximum revolutionary and romantic passion, which splits and sutures the interior self at the same time.

The protagonist Shen Zhifei in Hong Lingfei's *Exile* is portrayed as a wandering Communist after the defeat of the first Chinese Communist revolution in 1927. If Li Chuyan in *Transformation* represents progressive, effeminate youth before the revolution and Huo Zhiyuan in *Front Line* is rational, irrational youth during revolution, then Shen Zhifei, searching for the meanings of the self and revolution during his exile, completes the experience of youth throughout the process of revolution, in terms of external reality as well as individual interiority. Shen Zhifei's exile gives form to the reflection of reality and ideals within the narrator himself. Like Yu Dafu, Hong Lingfei focuses closely on the individual, although the narrator speaks in the third person. This form reinforces the links between the narrator and the protagonist, man and nature, man and himself; it is distinguished sharply from other revolutionary novels with authoritarian voices in that the hero keeps the interior narrative entirely to himself. This private form places the hero in a state of resigned loneliness that signifies a recognition of the discrepancy between revolutionary and romantic ideals and bloody reality.

Although Shen Zhifei is exiled for political reasons, his journey also contains elements of self-exile. As in the Western romantic tradition, the author deliberately isolates the hero from society in order to give scope to his individual vision. Exiled from his home and his country, the hero becomes a rootless man without an asylum of romantic pleasure, a superfluous man who lives in his ideals but wanders in reality. He no longer is an integral part of anything, and he has no spiritual home in his native land, society, or anywhere in the modern world. The theme of exile thus transfers the narrative from the mass movement to the individual mind, from collective heroism to individual loneliness, from political enlightenment to personal enlightenment. Sometimes the pro-

tagonist moves stealthily back to his home or country, but the old contradictions between his family feelings and the orthodox family system, between social reality and his utopian ideals repress his subjectivity. As his lover, Huang Manman, who has been following him in exile, writes in her letters, "What do I have in my family? What do I have in my country? What do I have in society? The only thing I love is revolution and my brother!"[49] Shen Zhifei cannot find his self in home, country, or society, but can only observe it in the endless, arduous, and tortuous journey of exile; he can only temporarily find a "home" in romantic love. He stands halfway between real exile and a romanticized reality in which love and revolution constitute a harmonious existence. This ideal, which animates his personality and motivates his hard struggles and dangerous adventures, responds to the innermost demands of self; it transfers the meaning of revolution into personal sentiments. In fact, the literature of exile itself is built on a floating discourse, through which the exile can keep a certain distance from the solid political or geographic center.[50] Hong Lingfei's narrative constantly fluctuates between the self and the nation, and this permanent wandering opens a possibility of questioning the discipline and rationality of revolution.

The narrative rhetoric Hong Lingfei conceives in these three novels of revolution plus love is bound to an unfathomable world of interiority with everlasting uncertainty. The harmony of revolution plus love offers him a contested ground where the masculinist language of revolution is recurrently threatened and confused by male weakness, amorphous sensual existence, and excessive tears and drinking. As a result, his writing style is distant from the collective and impersonal descriptions of the revolutionary movement in later proletarian novels. The way this kind of narrative slows down to transfer from interiority to exteriority creates a space where revolution and love, big "I" and small "I" intertwine in an ever greater and tighter interdependence. The problematic and uncertain youth who devotes himself to the future conveys a complex modern consciousness. Because of his contradictory and restless nature, he vacillates between love, enclosed by the small private world, and revolution, which expands to the big public world. The reconciliation of the two represents the sociopolitical context within which modernity as personal time and modernity as historical progress are capable of flexibility and compromise.

The central ambivalence of Hong Lingfei's proletarian writing is overtly represented by those images of the feminized man or the weeping hero, the decadent hero, and the wandering hero in relation to the power structure of revolution in which the ideal masculinity—a strong man, a positive hero, or the proletarian mass—is held up as a trope of power. The male anxiety that is shown through the weeping, degenerating, vacillating, and wandering indicates contradictions and conflicts during Chinese intellectuals' transformation

from the petit bourgeois self to a member of the proletarian mass. The problematic youth, in the form of both a person and a generation, can be a means of understanding the paradoxical modern consciousness in the revolutionary literature period. If the authoritarian voice of revolution dominates leftist writings, as in typical proletarian novels, the youth definitely gains maturity, coming to identify with the ideal masculinity. He no longer wanders, vacillates, and hesitates, but loses his mobility and restlessness; he will disappear in the proletarian mass. After the 1930s, the problematic youth as a symbol of modernity was gradually replaced by the mass in revolutionary novels.

Hua Han: The Disease of Time or the Sexually Charged Revolutionary Reality

Hua Han's trilogy *Subterranean Spring* (1930) also followed the revolution plus love formula, but it attempted to focus more on the proletarian movement instead of bourgeois individualism. When this trilogy was republished in 1932, Hua Han added prefaces by Qu Qiubai, Zheng Boqi, Mao Dun, Qian Xingcun, and himself. In Qu Qiubai's view, progressive proletarian artists should not "take the route of romanticism," not "mystify the reality, not fabricate some heroism to be a megaphone of the spirit of the era." Neither should they "take the route of vulgarized realism," which contained only superficial descriptions. Unfortunately, Qu Qiubai pointed out, *Subterranean Spring* went astray of revolutionary romanticism, not even reaching the requirements of vulgarized realism. Although the novel held the ideal of changing the world, its superficial and floating descriptions could not elucidate, much less transform, it.[51] According to Marston Anderson, "Qu's views on realism must be understood in the context of his critique of the European influence that had dominated Chinese culture in the 1920s." Unlike Mao Dun in the early 1920s, Qu believed that "realism and romanticism both had dubious aspects as they were practiced in the West"; he wanted to "extract the positive qualities from them in order to delineate a new literary mode more appropriate to China's needs."[52] Given the utilitarian requirement of revolutionary ideology, romanticism was an impediment that made transparency between subject and revolution impossible, whereas realism was not interesting enough to stimulate the reader because of its loyalty to objective reality. Hence, the conjugation of realism and romanticism gradually became a pretext for commentary on Communists' critical methods, especially after Zhou Yang's (1908–1989) assertion of this ideological and methodological combination. Qu Qiubai not only sought a way to draw modern Chinese literature out of Western literary practice, but also adopted Marxism in a Chinese way

based on both realism and romanticism. His theoretical goal of representing the objective and "true" reality and progressive forces was often expressed in the demand that literature conform to the ideology of the Communist Party. It is interesting to see how Hua Han responded to Qu's comments:

> Yijia [Qu Qiubai] says: "*Subterranean Spring* takes the route of revolutionary romanticism. If we don't clean this up, our new literature cannot go on the right road." This sentence is very correct. I can say Yijia is a person who sees the failure of *Subterranean Spring* in the clearest and most incisive way. But I still feel that Yijia didn't ask further in his criticism: why at that time did all of us take the route of romanticism, instead of taking the way of the materialist dialectics of realism? Therefore, he didn't tell us more profoundly how we can get to the road of the materialist dialectics of realism.[53]

Even as Hua Han saw the need to adopt the materialist dialectics of realism in the revolutionary novel, he conceded a certain degree of confusion about this mode of writing. His political affiliation was the source of his interests and goals in representing revolution and love, but the result was a misrepresentation. The relationship between politics and representation was always unstable: representation served as a way to extend the visibility of politics; but the normative function of language could both reveal and distort what was assumed to be true. In terms of class ideology, Hua Han and his comrades all believed that the revolution plus love formula failed because it was based in European romanticism, which corresponded to the petite bourgeoisie. But what bothered him was the tendency of a generation of writers to retain the same mode of writing during the early stage of revolutionary literature. As he wrote:

> As for *Rejuvenation,* if we want to recall its historical background, it is exactly the summer of 1930 in Shanghai that Ms. Ding Ling has described. During that period of rejuvenation, many people were carried away—bragging and exaggerating became a contagious disease of time. Since I was in Shanghai at that moment, I probably was infected with this disease. . . . Had I not been infected with that kind of frantic sensation, I wouldn't have overcome the surroundings of hot summer, mosquitoes, and fatigue and completed this coarse thing.[54]

Although most leftist writers transformed their subject matter from an inner or spiritual individual world to a mass movement or an outer state, they were still trapped in a snare of romanticism, or more precisely, a time of disease—a festival-like phenomenon. This time of disease referred to a kind of sexually charged revolutionary reality in which writers were captivated by and

intoxicated with the romantic and erotic aspect of revolution. It is a kind of frantic reality that is distant from what the realistic mode of writing can grasp and comprehend. Therefore, when Hua Han and other leftist writers' work of romantic representation went beyond the form of realism, it was because they were completely true to their sociohistorical position, true to themselves. Their quest for love and revolution was an enthusiastic pursuit of truth. Although their narrative style was at odds with the objective realistic mode, it came from faith, belief, and trust. Since "truth" lay in the passion they felt for both revolution and love, romanticism could, in Hua Han's mind, best reflect the "authentic" reality at that specific historical moment.

Marxist critics, however, all attribute the failure of revolution plus love to the inclusion of romanticism, which they see as dangerous even though the novels relating to this theme focus on the transformation from the petite bourgeoisie to the proletariat.[55] Because of Hua Han's hyperbolic romantic style, his writing of revolution and love lacks a solid basis for the transcendental and political truth that the genre of realism is supposed to capture. His romantic and exaggerated expression is ceaselessly sustained in a process of constant shifts and negotiations between different levels of power and desire, between sublime and unconscious drives.

Compared to Hong Lingfei's "inward turn of narration," which is indebted to the May Fourth writers' characteristic individualism, Hua Han offers an "outward turn of narration" that represents the stereotype of proletarian literature.[56] *Subterranean Spring* unfolds in two different settings: suburban, in which the author provides a vivid picture of mass movement in the first part, *Penetration* (*Shenru*); and urban, where intellectual individuals face crucial personal and political choices in the second part, *Change* (*Zhuanhuan*). These two parts parallel each other; then finally the two different settings, the subjective narrative and the mass narrative, fact and fiction mix in the third part of the trilogy, *Rejuvenation* (*Fuxing*). In Hua Han's own words, his calculated creation of this structure was based on the history he witnessed and participated in during 1928, 1929, and 1930. In contrast with Hong Lingfei's inclination toward autobiography and subjectivism, Hua Han attempted to apply historiography in his fiction to record what had just happened, to document the truth or the zeitgeist of the epoch (*shidaixing*), as Mao Dun resolutely advocated and practiced. Hua Han is clearly obsessed with "reality," seen simultaneously as modernity, revolution, and nation. However, he fails to "objectively" record historical events by subordinating romantic sentiments to the realistic mode, trapping himself in the dilemmas inherent in the disease of time. This so-called disease of time infected Hua Han with the libidinal cathexis of ego (his own body) and the libidinal cathexis of objective world that in turn subverted the truth of reality with which he was infatuated.

The first part of *Subterranean Spring* takes as its subject not a single individual but a whole class of the repressed, suggesting the basic structure of the proletarian novel, which bases its revolution on the class ideology. This part of the novel, *Penetration,* has nothing to do with the leitmotif of revolution plus love, but focuses on "realistic reflection" of the peasant revolution in the countryside. The second part, *Change,* has the typical pattern of a hero who becomes extremely decadent after Jiang Jieshi's liquidation of the Communists and then dramatically changes into a revolutionary hero without sufficient reasons. *Change* starts with the hero's disillusionment and vacillation, the popular theme in leftist writings such as Hong Lingfei's *Transformation* and *Front Line,* Dai Pingwan's *Eve,* and Mao Dun's *Eclipse.* The characters usually respond to the disordered and chaotic external world with a modern sense of alienation, anxiety, and crisis. The narrative inevitably indulges in sentimentalism, linked with decadent atmosphere; thus the fiction bears the seeds of its own destruction. The aesthetic representation of modern alienation is directly or indirectly connected with an anarchistic or a decadent style originating in romanticism. This kind of representation is highly individualistic and usually implies the dialectical complexity of the relationship between progress and decadence. Although the author's depiction of decadence is based on his presupposition of the ethical axis of good and evil, the regeneration of the revolutionary hero through decay and putrescence inevitably argues with the iron discipline of revolution. The line between good and evil, idealism and disillusionment, progress and decadence is thus blurred by the author's equivocal attitude toward love and sex.

Taking Hua Han's fiction as a model, Qian Xingcun in his preface to *Subterranean Spring* generalizes four tendencies in the writings of revolution plus love: individual heroism, mystifying reality, scholar/beauty or hero/heroine romance, and disillusionment or vacillation.[57] Indeed, these four tendencies in Hua Han's trilogy constitute the reality of revolutionized romance. In *Rejuvenation,* the narrative strategy finishes its outward turn by switching from negative sentiments to positive hyperbolic drama, intending to provide a solution to the conflict between revolution and love. But this solution is the role of love in the subject's effort to harmonize fantasy and reality within the sphere of intimate experience. It is precisely as the narrative turns that the representation of the reality established on Marxist theory becomes uncertain.

No doubt, both passive sentiments and positive hyperbole make revolution's interaction with love conceivable. Despite the difference in these elements' political meaning, the languages in which they are expressed possess an overwhelming libidinal power. But we cannot ignore that the transformation from a narrative of passive sentiments to one of positive hyperbole is historically

and socially constructed. The adoption of the latter serves the increasing depiction of mass movements made up of lower-class revolutionaries. Expressed by hyperbolic language, the libidinal charged mass, which is similar to the provocative sexual instinct, violently affects and stimulates petit bourgeois intellectuals. As Marston Anderson argues, "Such authorially endorsed revolutionary crowds as appear in 1920s fiction are viewed entirely from the perspective of the disaffected intellectual, who may be temporarily stimulated by the noise and bustle of the crowd but ends feeling profoundly alienated."[58] Compared to 1920s fiction, "the true drama of 1930s fiction lies precisely here, in the adventure of May Fourth intellectuals willfully shaking themselves free of their disaffections and venturing out to meet—and to create—this new entity, the masses."[59] While meeting the mass, the intellectual as an individual is inundated by the crowds in the emerging proletarian novels, such as Ding Ling's *Water* (*Shui*). However, since *Rejuvenation* comes to terms with the formula of revolution plus love, it generates a form of individual heroism instead of a form of collective heroism. Such a form of individual heroism is closely related to the disease of time, through which limits can be transgressed and the truth can be naturally romanticized and exaggerated. Although Hua Han attempts to convey reason, discipline, and ideology, his narrative language consists of a hyperbolic expression overwhelmed by wordless gestures, ecstasy, unspeakable passion, violent moods, and repetitious words. This kind of irrational, passionate, and redundant language, mingled with personal desire, infinitely delays the control of passion. Furthermore, the individual heroism rises to a self-referential indulgence in search of a heroic and romantic self in the act of defying the collective and the Party order. For instance, although the love between the hero, Huaiqiu, and the heroine, Mengyun, is ostensibly politically shaped, it has not gone beyond the realm of individualism that is tinged with heroic color. When Huaiqiu degenerates into a decadent hero, he cannot obtain Mengyun's love because he stands on the side of political regressiveness. But after he regenerates into a revolutionary official, Mengyun not only loves him but also admires him. In this kind of story, love is no longer driven by spontaneous instinct but is determined and measured by political identities. Yet the sense of individual heroism that ignites the hero and the heroine's love still derives from petit bourgeois sentiment, which is in permanent collision with the collective.

Whereas Hong Lingfei keeps love independent, not judged by revolutionary identities—for instance, the female protagonists are not designated as absolutely revolutionary but as women who first must have sexy and attractive bodies before pursuing progressive ideas for the sake of love—Hua Han subordinates love to politics. The female protagonist in his *Rejuvenation,* for example, experiences a process of desexualization. Before Mengyun joins the

proletarian movement, she dresses fashionably, with modish accessories. But after she merges with the group of workers, she dresses just like all the others and completely loses her sexy and seductive quality. The language of fashion has been eliminated in the proletarian movement. However, though he desexualizes her in such descriptions, the narrator ingeniously gives Mengyun two different appearances, one of a love scene in the park and one in a mass movement on the street. When Mengyun prepares for her date with the regenerated hero Huaiqiu in the park, she dresses as follows:

> This morning she makes herself up in a different way: the short white shirt and green pants disappear; she changes into a thin pink gauze cheongsam with red flowers; the cloth shoes and cotton socks she wore before are changed into yellowish pink silk socks and half-high-heeled shoes; even her hair changes, from the loose combed-back style to the smooth half-moon style. Yesterday she was a worker; today she returns to her original image—a beautiful female student.[60]

Before Mengyun participates in the proletarian movement on the street, she switches back to a worker's dress, and Huaiqiu almost cannot recognize her. Through Huaiqiu's gaze, we encounter Mengyun's other image: "He laughs boorishly. How can he keep from laughing? Not long ago in the park, Mengyun was so delicate and tender, so vigorous and pretty. Today, she wears a white short shirt with stains on it and oily, blackish-green pants. How inelegant and how vulgar she is!"[61]

The dual images of Mengyun reveal the deepening and unbridgeable gap between the representations of revolution and love. However, a certain lingering discourse of love prevents this novel from being a one-dimensional discourse of proletarian literature. The representation of gender seems incompatible with the revolutionary remarks. Mengyun's femininity is confusing: it becomes a contested space of female sexuality, which is defined by the combination of the sexual body of a petit bourgeois and the desexualized body of a proletarian. She searches for a new sexual identity that belongs to a female proletarian, but at the same time she is still obsessed with the feminine nature of new women. Swaying back and forth between the dual images and their implied meanings, the monolithic production of ideological "truth" is on shaky ground where the narrative is mixed with ambivalence and contradictions. Such dual images also reflect Hua Han's inner conflict as a proletarian writer who strenuously struggles to keep a certain private space for the petit bourgeois intellectuals among the masses.

The unified consciousness of revolution is also disrupted by the uncertain, floundering, and unconscious personal dreams that belong to the discourse of love and desire. Huaiqiu's successful and dramatic transformation into a hero

makes this a narrative of emptiness (*xu*) and falsehood, rather than the historiography with which the author identifies. Mengyun's dream about Huaiqiu as a conspicuous and influential hero among the masses represents the resurgence of genuine subjectivity, inner world, and the pleasure principle. The aura of emptiness and artificiality that surrounds the romance between Huaiqiu and Mengyun marks the author's effort to harmonize the conflict between imagination and reality. However, this effort betrays the genre of realism, which aims to objectively represent the truth of revolution.

The temporary harmony between imagination and reality through love will end as soon as revolutionary reality stubbornly comes back. Huaiqiu and Mengyun finally fall in love with each other after they agree on the same political goal, but the fantasy of love is immediately interrupted by revolutionary exigency:

> He feels wild with boundless joy, but also feels unspeakably repressed. He, Huaiqiu, is right now a youth who possesses tremendous vigor and vitality. The fire of youth is burning in his blood. He needs female comfort, and has an urgent need for a female to enrich his life. The girl he earnestly pursued before is so vigorous and graceful, standing in front of him now. He was rejected and abandoned before; now she turns to love and admire him. He is confident. He finally has the qualities to gain her favor and love. It shouldn't be a big problem for her to become his lover. But circumstances do not allow him; he himself still has a great mission. In ten days, he will go back to the journey, go back to the troops. How can he be so lucky as to enjoy this hopeful but also impossible sweet love while he lives in a bloody war, a storm of shots and shells? Isn't that the sweet dream of the petite bourgeoisie? Huaiqiu bites his lip in agony; he looks strained and pale. Now if somebody sees the grass that he has walked upon, he can notice that the grass has turned into sloppy mud. Without knowing why, Mengyun, lost in thought, also feels short of breath, as if there is some unspeakable distress in her heart.[62]

When Huaiqiu and Mengyun face the conflict between sweet fantasy and reality, between subjectivity and collective mission, they both feel profoundly repressed. Such a feeling implies the author's reluctance to subordinate love to revolution, self to collective. Obviously, the tension between the romantic individualism inherited from the May Fourth generation and the emergent authoritarian voice of the collective or the masses is not easily resolved. A certain feeling of uneasiness prevails through the whole narrative, indicating Chinese intellectuals' dubious attitude toward the transformation from the petit bourgeois individual to the proletarian collective. In fact, numerous reproductions

of the formula of revolution plus love not only clearly echo the anxiety of Chinese intellectuals before they were forced under political and ideological pressure to identify with the mass but also points to those intellectuals' embarrassed position as spokesmen for the proletariat.

Hua Han's romantic narrative direction ultimately determined the fate of *Subterranean Spring* as so-called vulgarized realism. This criticism of his novel also symbolized the decline of the golden age of the revolution plus love formula. Left-wing writers whose works had contracted the disease of time did not have a prescription to cure the disease. Although Hua Han was in solicitous attendance at the birth of proletarian realism, his defense of the disease of time incorporated much of Qian Xingcun's and Jiang Guangci's new realism. Confirming literature's active role, which imparted revolutionary knowledge to readers, rather than literature's passive role, which objectively reflected reality, Hua Han could not fail to be passionate and committed about the world he lived in and experienced. As a writer, his lively personal engagement with revolutionary experience—his romantic, subjective view of revolution—was a matter of sensation and nerves that gave meaning to the reality. In depicting the individual's final transformation into a member of the mass, it was the heroic individual's subjective experience that mattered to him rather than the proletarian mass. Truthfulness for him lay in such a subjectivity, even if it was inscribed with the disease of time. His espousal of such subjectivity raised questions regarding his role as one of revolution's conscious agents, who was supposed to speak for the masses. Since the contradictory tendency in the representation of revolution and love remained to plague him and other followers, the Party did not encourage the continuation of this formula.

3 Feminizing Politics

The emergence of the image of the new woman shows the intimate relationship between politics and gender in Chinese society around 1930. The way male writers such as Jiang Guangci deal with sex roles depends on how they articulate the field of power. In order to present a uniformity, albeit false, to serve the utopian aim of revolution, they link gender identification to class identification. Thus, the subordinate position of women in the binary sex/gender system is reconsolidated through a preestablished position or a uniform entity on the political landscape. Indeed, this false uniformity requires that women have politically coherent identities based on alliance with other subordinated groups, romantically subsuming all differences. However, can the signifier "woman" ever reach final, full unity if the notion itself symbolizes castration or lack and loss and bears illusive investments and promises? Can this identity be stabilized and coherent if the subject position of women never existed in the symbolic order of sexual difference?

Some images of new women produced by leftist male writers, such as Wang Manying in Jiang Guangci's *The Moon Forces Its Way through the Cloud*s and Sun Wuyang and Zhang Qiuliu in Mao Dun's *Eclipse,* incarnate the combination of seductive femininity and revolutionary ideas. By using new women's sexual bodies as instruments to convey revolutionary ideology, these male writers try to fight against the dominant and repressive patriarchal system. The seductive bodies, defined by nature, are referred to as prior to their gender, the cultural and social construction of sex roles. The cultural association of mind with masculinity and body with femininity actually reinforces the hierarchical system; these women's bodies are subordinated to their revolutionary minds, complying with a masculinist and phallogocentric language. While these new women confidently control their sexual bodies to achieve romantic revolutionary purposes, their sex constitutes what Luce

Irigaray calls the unrepresentable.[1] In other words, within a language of univocal masculine signification, the female cannot speak; she is linguistically absent. Therefore women, as empty signs in male leftists' treatments of revolution plus love, can only express masculine illusions and operate within heterosexual and phallic cultural conventions. But can male writers engender women without succumbing to phallocentric politics? If we assume that male writers sever female bodies from their inherent meaning, how do female writers deal with gender and power? Can they speak for the female sex in a more authentic way? Is there a more authentic way to talk about gender?

Among the writers of revolution plus love, some women, such as Bai Wei, Lu Yin, and Ding Ling, contribute their interpretations of gender within the matrix of power. Full of anxiety, Bai Wei in *A Bomb and an Expeditionary Bird* presents her perplexed attitude toward the complicated relationship between female bodies and politics. In Lu Yin's biographical narrative *Ivory Rings,* the famous love story of Shi Pingmei and Gao Junyu, the rhetoric of sentimentalism shapes and limits the ideology of revolution. Describing the conflict between urban liberal women and the masses, Ding Ling's *Weihu* and *Shanghai, Spring 1930 I* and *II* explore new women's dilemma and sensibility in revolutionary discourse, which uses and constitutes gender identity. Although these female writers inevitably repeat the revolution plus love formula, their works force us to rethink the relationship between gender and power and to consider the differences and similarities between their and male writers' treatment of the same topic. However, we might trap ourselves within the framework of male/female sexual difference if we believe that female writers construct gender more authentically or more originally than do male writers. Is it possible for these female writers to redefine their sexuality if, according to Irigaray, the feminine can never be understood as a "subject" or "other" since it is already excluded by the conventional language of the masculine mainstream?[2] Obviously, this is difficult to answer, since we have to first question who bestowed upon Irigaray the privilege of seeing through gender politics. So the puzzle remains: Does Bai Wei's melancholy claim that "there is no truth for the feminine" mean that there is an original truth, but she just cannot find it within the masculine dominant language? Or is there simply no truth at all for the feminine, in female or male writings?

My reading of women writers' use of the revolution and love theme scrutinizes how the figures of new women are produced and destabilized through performative acts against the complex cultural background of the emerging leftist ideology. I do not regard the subject position of women as preexisting, a coherent feminist resistance, but rather as part of a discursive construction that is perpetually renegotiated and rearticulated.[3] Borrowing Judith Butler's

gender theory,[4] my study discusses how the prohibitions of patriarchal systems and leftist ideology impel and sustain the gender performativity in these female writers' fiction; how the boundaries of female bodies and identifications of women's gender are destabilized through performative acts; and how these writers' imitations and displacements of the New Woman, fabricated by the regulatory masculine gender, have opened a space of resignification and recontextualization.

Naming and Renaming

The category of woman, *nüxing,* was produced as a discursive sign and an antitraditional subject position within the context of modernist revolution beginning in 1917. As Tani Barlow puts it, "Nüxing was one half of the Western, exclusionary, essentialized, male/female binary" and "was never a disfigured or unsuccessful replication of Victorian woman; she was always a recording to modernist discourse on the sexual construction of gender, situated in a semicolonial context."[5] Built on the ground of European humanism, *nüxing* played a particularly significant role in the masculinist framework of anti-Confucian discourse. According to Barlow,

> When Chinese translators invoked the sex binary of a Charles Darwin they valorized notions of female passivity, biological inferiority, intellectual inability, organic sexuality, and social absence through reference to the location of these "truths" in European social scientism and social theory. Thus Chinese women became nüxing only when they became the other of man in the Victorian binary. Nüxing was foundational when woman became nanxing's (man's) other.[6]

Therefore, although *nüxing* appeared to celebrate the new expression of women, in contrast to their fixed abject role in Chinese tradition, it required a universalized identification with the social norm of sex, which was accomplished through repeating the regulatory framework of the feminine/masculine binary. After the term "*nüxing*" entered cultural circulation, it eventually became a contextual background against which people could talk about feminism or femininity in that historical period. In other words, it became a way of naming that could be understood as a special form of power generated by the hierarchical system of sexual differences.

However, the year 1917 was nothing more than a mythical moment that engendered the naming of *nüxing.* The emergence of feminist discourse actually can be easily traced to the late Qing period. Accompanying the rise of na-

tional discourse, the woman question became the central issue in the most controversial debates over social reform in the late nineteenth century. Some distinguished male intellectuals, such as Tan Sitong and Liang Qichao, radically advocated feminist agendas as they engaged in nation building.[7] Liang's promotion of new fiction also produced surprisingly diverse versions of feminist discourse that were adequate to a range of political positions. Yet feminist discourse in the late Qing period focused more on the narration of nation than on the theme of individuality and subjectivity that was a significant part of the naming of *nüxing* during the May Fourth movement.

After the May Fourth movement, especially after Lu Xun's *Regret for the Past* (*Shangshi,* 1926) offered a tragic picture of emancipated women in a dark society, the question of *nüxing* was raised. People wondered what the liberated woman could do after escaping from a family, as in the case of Ibsen's Nora in *A Doll's House* (1879).[8] Although Lu's heroine, Zijun, is well educated and liberal, she still cannot survive within the unyielding patriarchal system. This new *nüxing,* who differentiates herself from traditional women by knowledge based on Western humanism, ends up in the oppressed situation she originally fought against. But while Lu Xun conveys sympathy for their suffering, his emphasis on victimized, exploited, and oppressed women inadvertently fixes *nüxing* in the passive position.[9]

During the transitional period from literary revolution to revolutionary literature, the most notorious images of new women were those who no longer fettered themselves within romance, marriage, and family but walked out to stand on the front line of revolution. The opposite of the passive and powerless traditional image, new women at this stage were imbued with strong wills and power, manipulating their own seductive feminine bodies to achieve the utopian goal of revolution. "*Nüxing*" stood for standards and norms overridden by imaginary identification and stabilized by a symbolic function; the new women were designated through the forced reiteration of norms. In other words, the naming of *nüxing* mobilized the speculative production of the New Woman, which could not be seen as simply a passive replication of women as a universalized, oppressed group. Instead of being inert reiterations of *nüxing,* such as Zijun, new women began to transgress the limits of that category.

The new woman's most interesting transgression is of the boundary of the female body. Most famous fictional new women, such as Wang Manying, Sun Wuyang, and Zhang Qiuliu, possess carnal desire, alluring breasts, and beautiful figures and wear fashionable modern clothes. They present new ideas, urbanization and Westernization, and they reflect revolutionary ideology. In this sense, the powerful and sexual bodies of these femmes fatales do not carry a perverse meaning but positive and progressive connotations. They also convey

male anxiety during the transitional period from the May Fourth movement to revolutionary literature.[10] That is to say, these new women's bodies cannot be uninvolved in a power dynamic but are closely associated with male writers' various responses to and representations of social and political change, even if sometimes these appear conflicting and confusing.[11] The narrative language used by male writers to describe these women's bodies combines the manner of voyeurism and the atmosphere of celebration. The celebration of the emancipation of women's bodies is not unrestrained but occurs through the gaze of leftist writers, through revolutionary discourse's negotiation with Chinese patriarchy, and through the displacement and reproduction of the visually fetishized object.

The fluctuating status of new women results in the relentless separation of sexual body and progressive mind, which deprives women's bodies of feeling and vision. It is precisely the discursive practice of this particular historical context that ensures the body/mind distinction. Besides the clash between the traditional and the new, this distinction is generated by contradiction within the new, between the residue of Western individualism inherited from the May Fourth movement and the "newer" Marxist ideology and collective consciousness. As a consequence, these sexual, fetishized bodies molded by Western material culture come to haunt, embarrass, and even subvert the revolutionary discourse.[12] Therefore, women's bodies are not simple or unchanging objects. Their instabilities open up a critical space for us to reexamine feminism and women's relationship to revolutionary discourse.

Although the contours and the movement of new women's bodies are produced by the power relationships and the reiteration of norms, the hegemonic force of law is not solid and permanent; and passive surfaces of women's bodies are not limited by gender and power. Revolutionary norms can never fully fix and define the boundaries of bodies, since their reiterations are only temporary political promises. Between them are gaps and fissures through which women's bodies can escape or exceed those norms. In my reading of some female writers' representations of gender and power in the theme of revolution plus love, I will discuss how revolutionary discourse mobilizes the formation of the subject, the narrator, and the identification of women, and how female writers, rearticulating that normative category, redefine so-called new women within the gaps and fissures of that discourse.

I do not presume a coherent identity among these female writers. Instead, I understand the narrator and the subject to emerge only in the matrix of gender and power relations. Like Judith Butler, I understand gender performativity "not as the act by which a subject brings into being what she/he names, but, rather, as that reiterative power of discourse to produce the phenomena

that it regulates and constrains."[13] Female writers cannot determine the original truth for the feminine; instead, the so-called truth only belongs to the complicated process of gender performativity, which involves a series of power struggles. I consider these women's writings a critical resource in the struggle to reiterate and replace the very term "symbolic order." The way these writers deploy gender to represent and interpret revolutionary discourse opens to question the myth of the third-world woman with a stable and coherent identity. Such an inquiry sees revolutionary discourse and the feminist point of view as conditions of articulation for each other. Thus we can create a dynamic map of how power both forms and erases women's identities, in which revolutionary discourse is also limited by feminist expressions of love.

Bai Wei: The Hysterical Mode of Writing

Neither Chinese nor Western scholars have paid much attention to Bai Wei, even though her plays and fiction are closely connected to her time's belief in progress and revolution.[14] A female leftist who joined the Wuhan revolutionary regime in 1927 and the Chinese League of Leftist Writers in 1930, she was not recognized by the literary field until Lu Xun published her play *Fight Out of the Ghost Tower* (*Dachu youling ta*) in *Torrent* (*Benliu*) in 1928.[15] The sharp female voice is the primary characteristic of Bai Wei's writing, which never yields women's concerns to social critiques. Unlike female revolutionaries depicted by Mao Dun and Jiang Guangci, who are merely tropes of Chinese modernity, allegories of revolution, Bai Wei is a typical agent of womanhood in the revolutionary context. What is intriguing is that her role as a real agent of female revolutionaries was perpetually disrupted and disqualified by her own body, infected as it was with venereal disease.

Bai Wei's personal romance and disillusionment with both revolution and love were documented in her confessional autobiographical novel, *Tragic Life* (*Beiju shengya*, 1936), which, for Amy Dooling, "can be read as a conscious reclamation of the private as a simultaneously social and political subject."[16] In this nine-hundred-page novel, Bai Wei told the complete story of her ten-year romance with the poet Yang Sao: their first encounter, her contraction of gonorrhea from him, their quarrels and separation, her painful battle with venereal disease as well as poverty, and her hesitation to have her ovaries removed at the end. As Dooling points out, this female leftist chose to "privilege the intimate details of a failed romance over her public career as an advocate of political and social reform" for two reasons: first, because Bai Wei needed a large amount of money for medical treatment for gonorrhea; second, because she was "formulating her physical (as well as emotional and psychological) experience not as

the private history of a unique individual but as the product of an endemic patriarchy plaguing modern Chinese society as a whole."[17] Indeed, although practical economic conditions forced Bai Wei to sell her own secret to the public, the poignant exposé of the "true" life of a new woman who longed for modern romance and revolution but was unqualified for both greatly challenged the social order that had constructed her as such. If for Dooling, *Tragic Life* shows Bai Wei's attempt to demystify the May Fourth romantic ideology in terms of the problematic female identity, then for David Der-wei Wang, it "serves as Bai Wei's testimony to her betrayed revolution as romance and vice versa, and how, through such a 'discourse of despair,' it revealed the schizophrenic nature of woman relating reality."[18] However, what impresses me most about this novel is not only Bai Wei's failed affair with both revolution and love but also the striking contrast between speeding modernity and a woman's diseased and decayed body, which suffers the consequences of the whole package of revolutionary romance, including freedom of love and sex.

Tragic Life could be titled "Diary of a Madwoman." Unlike Lu Xun's "Diary of a Madman," which depicts a paranoiac who insists that everyone around him is a cannibal and who is suffocated by the repressive reality of traditional China, in *Tragic Life* the female protagonist is incarcerated by her diseased body as well as the patriarchal social system. From the beginning of the novel, she is addressed by her friends as "strange stuff" (*guaiwu*); after she experiences her lover's betrayal, the ordeal of venereal disease, and poverty, she can do nothing but madly laugh at reality. "Every day, she has to search for something to eat regardless of her disease; every day, she is tortured by the illness and the sick life. . . . She is laughing all the time and everywhere. Laugh! Laugh! She cannot keep from laughing. Laugh! Laugh!"[19] Bitter, mad, sad, violent, cold, silent—all kinds of laughter stringing the series of events together in the final section of *Tragic Life* constitute Bai Wei's special language, based on the hysterical mode of writing. Only one specific program of sexualization directed toward women—"the hystericization of women's bodies"—is pointed out by Foucault in *The History of Sexuality*. However, as the feminist critic Elizabeth Grosz argues, "In treating hysteria as an effect of power's saturation of women's body, he ignores the possibility of women's strategic occupation of hysteria as a form of resistance to the demands and requirements of heterosexual monogamy and the social and sexual role culturally assigned to women."[20] Bai Wei takes hysteria, a specially feminine neurosis, as a discursive strategy to displace and erase the social inscription on her body. In rebelling against conventional femininity, she hystericizes; in lamenting her decayed body, which is engendered and rejected by the progressive modernity, she hystericizes.

Her hysteria over her diseased body is a form of nostalgia, a monument to her revolutionary past and a sign of despair for the future. "The wheel of time was rolling as quick as flying, but in Wei's memory the shadow of the wheel rolled even faster. She was as mad as the protagonist in the end of a tragedy, walking unsteadily and finally lying on the bed like a corpse."[21] Like her male contemporaries, Wei aspires to Western modernity and revolution, but she has been betrayed by her decayed body, which she cannot and will not abandon. Despite her longing for revolution, she realizes that "no matter how much she feels happy or sad for the revolutionary group, the progressing revolutionary group won't care about the patient who is lying near death. The revolutionary group is like a flock of swallows flying far away, abandoning the diseased woman behind, not caring if she falls on the sand or in the marshy swamp."[22] Being abandoned by both her lover and the revolutionaries, she keenly feels the pain of her body; and only through the truth of her body, through hysteria, can she gain back her subjectivity, her self-defined status as a new woman. Other fictional new women, such as Zhang Qiuliu in Mao Dun's *Pursuit* and Wang Manying in Jiang Guangci's *The Moon Forces Its Way through the Clouds,* also suffer from venereal disease, but their bodies are allegorized by those male writers' ideology. Repeatedly recording her physical pain, repeatedly mourning the difficult living conditions she has to suffer, Bai Wei never hides her paranoiac criticism of her lover, the revolutionary group, and everything the patriarchal society attempts to inscribe on her. Rather than seeing her disease "as a physical reminder of her failure as a woman and a revolutionary,"[23] I see it as a challenge to revolution and modern love and sex, which her contemporaries largely romanticized. It poses serious questions to the speeding modernity: What becomes of a woman who is rejected by the rolling wheel of time? What do revolution and romance mean to a woman who is disqualified for both because of her "true" body? At the end of the novel, Wei hystericizes again, because she sees how her handicapped body has been relentlessly cast out by the racing current of time as well as the proletarian masses.

Bai Wei's suspicious attitude toward both revolution and love can be traced back to her early long novel *A Bomb and an Expeditionary Bird*, published in Lu Xun's journal *Torrent* in 1928. The second part of the novel was lost because of government censorship of the journal. Although it is not autobiographical like *Tragic Life,* this story still contains many of Bai Wei's personal experiences. *A Bomb and an Expeditionary Bird* is about two sisters, Yu Yue and Yu Bin, whose father is a revolutionary but who follows feudal morality in defining women. Yue, the elder sister, enters into a terrible marriage arranged by her father and then dramatically escapes from this living hell; the events resemble Bai Wei's painful experience of her first marriage. Bin, the

luckier one, goes to Wuhan and becomes a social butterfly, playing sex games with one man after another. Yue, after she escapes from the marriage and joins the Wuhan government, chooses a love affair with revolution rather than with men, and as a result is trapped in a serious political struggle between the CCP and the GMD. Bai Wei's own experience—joining the Wuhan regime in March 1927 and working as a Japanese translator—enables her to depict the 1927 revolution from a woman writer's viewpoint. Instead of directly narrating the GMD's massacre of CCP members, Bai Wei makes Yue's body symbolic of both parties, neither of which provides an answer to the woman question. My reading explores the interaction among linguistic, ideological, and psychological dimensions in the novel's relation to society and history. This does not, of course, exhaust the interpretation of the work, but it does allow the investigation of a number of issues relevant to the problem of politics and gender. I focus on the interplay among these dimensions to show how Bai Wei brings out both the possibilities and the limits of the feminist novel, particularly when it is set in the revolutionary era.

Influenced by the May Fourth tradition, Bai Wei's *A Bomb and an Expeditionary Bird* seeks to discover what women can do after they leave patriarchal families and what revolution can provide to resolve women's problems. The two sisters symbolize two different situations of new women after they walk out of the big family. Although both desire freedom and revolution, the younger sister, Bin, gradually degenerates to an attractive and dangerous woman who enjoys playing with men and depending on them at the same time. Bin indulges in desire, passion, leisure, fantasy, and frivolity, and her body is closely tied up with power and money, sensuality, bourgeois ideology, and the colonized mentality, and also the eroticized metropolis of Hankou. Bin has already gained freedom in her sexual life; but even though she has freed herself from the patriarchy, her new sexuality is stipulated by bourgeois ideology. In contrast, the elder sister, Yue, who finally escapes the miserable marriage arranged by her feudal family after surmounting numerous difficulties, chooses to devote herself to revolution but ends up disillusioned. In Bai Wei's writing of the revolution plus love formula, it is significant that her protagonist Yue prefers revolution to love. The subject position of women had been stabilized within the discourse of love at that time; only through revolution did they have opportunities to find a new space.[24] Yue's choice is a conscious rebellion against the role preassigned her by the male-centered society.

Compared to Bin, the "feminine" and negative side presupposed by bourgeois ideology, Yue presents the more "masculine" and positive side, which means suffering, self-awareness, rationality, patriotism, and revolutionary purpose. On the ideological level of *A Bomb and an Expeditionary*

Bird, these two major and seemingly opposed protagonists stand for binaries that permeate the novel: the decadent, colonized, sensual bourgeois ideology and the progressive, patriotic, asexual revolutionary ideology (which is not exactly Marxist, though the author portrays the Communist Party sympathetically). On the surface of the text, Bai Wei affirms the latter ideology but repudiates the former. However, in fact she deeply suspects that women can find "the truth of the feminine" within both. At the end of the novel, Bin and Yue both collapse in despair; one is exhausted by the decadent and empty life, and the other is deeply harmed by political conflicts between the GMD and the CCP. Unlike Mao Dun's and Jiang Guangci's new women, who can calmly utilize their bodies for revolutionary aims without feeling pain,[25] Yue feels uncertain and confused about politics' materialization of women's bodies, whereas Bin lacks sincere belief in revolution or men.

The novel implies that blind affirmation and repudiation allow the psychological and ideological dimensions of revolution plus love to work together to both reveal the psychologies of individuals, especially women such as Yue and Bin, and give a general perspective on gender and politics. It even implies the interweaving of revolutionary ideology and feminist consciousness and the gap between Yue's and Bin's socially formulated identities and their inconsistent identification with those identities. Before Bin turns into a dangerous woman who indulges in love games and a lascivious lifestyle, she, like many other progressive youths, wants to participate in revolution. But she soon finds out she can only be a decoration. Her suspicious inner voice reveals the problem of the relationship between revolution and women:

> Bin is very upset, she feels her little light of intelligence will be extinguished by the storm in the gloomy dark night. Surprised, she begins to suspect, she wonders if revolution is as regressive as she thinks. Is the field of women's work in revolution as narrow and inferior as it seems? Is women's social position in revolution as unfree as it appears, only a puppet of men? Hum! Revolution! . . . Revolution! . . . That which tramples the rights of women under horses' hooves! . . . Are women's rights so humble? Am I, Bin, so humble? Oh! I see! I, Bin, am simply an extremely humble animal! The stupid worm who wants to take big strides but can only wriggle. . . . Bin becomes more upset, she leans on the balustrade and twists the remains of the propaganda sheet into a roll and imagines the way she will mingle with men during the parade tomorrow. The more she thinks the more she sighs: Ah! This kind of revolution! This kind of revolution! Using my struggle to make men look good and sacrificing myself in the middle of the street! In this way, my strength and heart, which are like bombs, will be extinguished![26]

Although she is a vain girl, Bin's suspicion derives in part from her feminist consciousness. It is from the inferior social position of women, from their pure decorative function designed by revolution, that Bin starts to realize the huge gap between feminism and revolution, between self and ideology. To keep her "little light of intelligence, strength, and heart" from being extinguished, repressed by men's rationality and identity, she chooses to indulge in a sensual and emotional life that can preserve and allow expression of her ego. In the formula of revolution plus love, Bin inevitably flirts with both discourses; not earnestly identifying with either, she continues the superficial and sensual performance by which she can illusively and temporarily hold power and will.

Although frantically in love with revolution, Yue consciously questions its meaning and its effect on women and herself. Yue feels perplexed about the cruel discrepancy between the crusade she desires and imagines and the real revolution, full of absurdity. Observing the protest parade, she finds out the troop includes a lot of children, stupid women, and rascals, and she cannot help wondering:

> "Is this the spirit of the masses? Are these the so-called activities of revolution? . . . See the way they walk, without any strength in their feet, and the way they pant and lower their heads and dumb eyelids. . . . How can they possess the heat and strength of revolution? How do they understand the meaning of revolution? Revolution, revolution, is it merely the word shouted by a motley crowd?" After seeing this she feels very sad and disgusted. But she does not know the principles of revolutionary ideology, nor does she know how to build revolution. . . . "Revolution . . . what is China's national revolution? I don't know!"[27]

Modern girl Yue's notion differs from leftist class awareness and collective strength, and distances her from the people. Unlike Bin, who abandons her original goal easily, Yue insists on pursuing her own identity within revolutionary discourse. Even if she feels disappointed by reality, in which the GMD women's movement only chimes in with bureaucratic politics and in an unchangingly closed, confined, and limited voice, she never gives up pursuit of her ideal of revolution. Unfortunately, involving herself in the conflict between the GMD and the CCP, she agrees to use her own body as an instrument for political purposes. When her Communist friend Ma Teng persuades her to seduce Minister G from the GMD in order to steal some information, she is willing. At this moment, Yue's superego, with an ideal revolutionary aim, is prohibitive, regulating sexuality in the service of politics; her body is severed from her intellect, mind, and psyche. However, Bai Wei's representation of

new women here varies conspicuously from Mao Dun's and Jiang Guangci's: Yue thinks and feels when her body is suffering from violent sex and bloody political struggle.[28] Instead of actively seducing the minister, Yue ends up being raped by him on a dark, rainy night; after this she refuses to commit herself to this "revolutionary" task. Here what concerns Bai Wei is the female revolutionary's suffering body, not political ideology. Plunging into men's political struggle, Yue is doomed to failure: she loses not just her body, self, and love but everything for the revolution. At the end of the novel, jailed in a dark and damp prison, Yue seems abandoned and forgotten by both political sides. Her sincere pursuit and her failure raise questions about the significance of revolution to modern and progressive women. Since Yue's subject position has always been presupposed and predesignated by the masculinist framework of national and revolutionary discourse, she can never find the place she really wants within it.

Bai Wei's reiteration of the term "new woman" is nothing but a displacement and an appropriation. On the linguistic level, since her narrative consists of hysterical expression that corresponds with women's neurotic symptoms, it takes on an uncanny and unfamiliar sense, in contrast to the portrayal of women by male writers or male writers speaking in the female voice. For instance, Bai Wei's narrative language is extremely emotional, lacking basic logic and reasonable connections between events, freely jumping from one protagonist to the other, from interior monologues to exterior reality, from the heights of excitement to the depths of depression. A reader may have a difficult time keeping up. Bai Wei's style shows that the libido and the unconscious on one side and the ego, consciousness, and reality on the other are closely linked. This connection and confusion lead to something alien, the neurotic characters of both Bin and Yue. Echoing the madwomen's laugh and cry from Western gothic novels, these two protagonists' outrageous and lunatic actions express their despair about men and revolution in a unique female voice that threatens the normality of male-centered society. Bai Wei's narrative language may seem coarse and immature, but such classification ignores the fact that her language results from her consciously feminist purpose. Claiming that the feminine is precisely what is excluded by sexual binary oppositions, Irigaray argues that it appears only in catachresis. Bai Wei's usurpation of the proper name of "new woman" can return to haunt the male ideological level of language, from which feminine sexuality is excluded. Through the hysteria of mimesis, the playfulness of repetition, and the uncanniness of catachresis, national and revolutionary discourse becomes dubious and problematic, and feminist writing finds new operating possibilities.

In the text of *A Bomb and an Expeditionary Bird,* the author brandishes some significant terms, such as "the movement of peasants and workers,"

"proletarian liberation," "women's movement," "nationalism," and "revolution," but she usually underscores their distance from the protagonists. Moreover, sometimes these words, used in the characters' hysterical expressions, do not make philosophical and linguistic sense; the general problems of using these "original" masculine ideological terms thus produced—linguistic, conceptual, and formal difficulties; the new adoption of the sign; and the destruction of the older "restricted codes"—offer promising space in which to rethink revolution and women's problem. The hysterical expression seems to create contradictions and dilemmas, most notably within the precarious matrix of gender.

However, Bai Wei's narrative language is not "authentic" or "natural." Simply connecting female hysterical expression with the "authentic" female sex and female writings leads back to the essentialism and ontology in which naturally constructed women are regarded as inferior to culturally constructed men. Instead of relating hysterical expression to "natural" feminine writing, we should consider it as part of cultural production generated by miming and repetition of the norm of sexual difference. Only through miming can the feminine language operate at all; it is deeply implicated in phallogocentrism and can be exposed by mimetically reproducing that discourse. In addition, as Judith Butler notes, the miming can be "a reverse mime," which does not necessarily resemble and privilege the masculine as its origin or stabilize the significance of the terms "masculine" and "feminine."[29] Therefore, Bai Wei's reiteration of "new woman" can be taken as a co-opting and displacement of phallogocentrism by means of gender parody.[30] Her hysterical displacement creates "a fluidity of identities" in which the naturalized and essentialized gender matrix must be recontexualized and reconfigured.

Bai Wei's hysterical mode of writing displaces Mao Dun's and Jiang Guangci's naming of new women and also discloses the phantasmic promise of their "originality." As a consequence, women cannot find their own truth in male writers' depictions of new women as tropes or allegories of revolution; nor can Bai Wei's hysterical writing discover the "authenticity" of the female. If feminist writing is possible, it is only in the recontextualization of the gender matrix, of power relations, through parody. Indeed, the significance of Bai Wei's writing lies in her rejection of woman as a universal signified of revolutionary discourse and in her subversion of male writers' essential designation of new women. The protagonists Yue and Bin never readily identify with the universal concept of repressed third-world women or any official women's association. Their bodies refuse to carry the rationality of revolution.

Male leftists' writings of the revolution plus love formula either capture the language of love and revolutionary discourse as conditions of articulation

for each other or subjugate the more feminine signification of love or eros to the more masculine revolutionary discourse. Although Bai Wei's rewriting shows a frantic interest in imitating the same fashion, her attitude of doubt interrogates the whole mutual identification of love and revolutionary discourse. By questioning both love's and revolution's power over women, she challenges the formula itself, reducing it to an empty alternation of performances. Since Yue's and Bin's feminine identities are different from the regulated, universal one, their problematic female bodies can destabilize the marriage between revolution and love and even recontextualize the formula itself. On the surface, Bai Wei clearly affirms the Communist ideology; however, her feminist writing consciously and unconsciously blurs affirmation and negation, leading the formula astray. As a result, via the hysterical mode, Bai Wei avoids reemphasizing the oppressed, instead questioning their liberation and emancipation and thus making the subversion of the ideology possible.

Lu Yin: Transcendent Female Love and the Passion for Death

A celebrated female writer of the May Fourth generation, Lu Yin also came to terms with the topic of revolution plus love. In "Manli" (1928), Lu Yin's new woman protagonist devotes herself to revolution with great enthusiasm but ends up in the hospital with a wounded heart and body. In the form of a confessional letter, Manli confides to her female friend Sha that she feels disappointed and frustrated about the absurdity of revolution and its disposition of women's bodies and gender identities. Like Bai Wei's observation of women's role in revolution, Lu Yin's "Manli" expresses the tension between revolution's designation of the new women and their reconsideration of that assigned position. At the end of the story, as the protagonist indicates, her disease is a mental one, neurasthenia, rather than a physical one. Lu Yin's emphasis on the mental disease that is the symptom of social injury is politically necessary to claim the terms "woman" and "womanhood." In Lu Yin's fictional world, the interiority or the mental state of new women is complicated and sensitive, far beyond male writers' description; moreover, the pure, sincere, and transcendent love of her redefined womanhood suggests a contested territory in national and political struggles. Lu Yin lays claim to women's private lives in order to refute the revolution's modernity, and the nation's deployments of women in public life. Her formulation of womanhood mobilizes ideal identity and platonic female love against the heterosexual framework upon which the masculine interpretation of woman is established.

Lu Yin's *Ivory Rings* was based on the true story of famous revolutionary lovers Gao Junyu and Shi Pingmei, whose short and glittering lives exemplified

revolution plus love. According to official history, Gao Junyu was an early Communist founder who died in 1925 at a very young age; his lover, Shi Pingmei, was a well-known female writer who died in 1928, having devoted her life to progressive literature. They were buried together in Taoranting Park in Beijing, where their tombstones became a special and popular symbol of romance. In 1956, their mausoleums were taken over by the government because Zhou Enlai regarded them as a means of education and propaganda for the youth of new China and pointed out that their story signified the harmonious relationship between revolution and love. Apparently, veiled by a glorious story of revolution plus love, the truth of the tragic and sentimental romance between Gao Junyu and Shi Pingmei has been smoothly erased by official history.

Shi Pingmei's own literary production and her close friend Lu Yin's *Ivory Rings* offer quite different versions of her romance with Gao Junyu. Among the literary works Shi Pingmei left behind is one short story, "A Horse Neighing in the Wind" (Pima sifeng lu), that deals with the popular topic of revolution plus love. The heroine, He Xueqiao, and the hero, Wu Yunsheng, have to separate because of their revolutionary jobs. Mixing letters and lyric storytelling, the narrative mixes heroism and sentimentalism. At first, when He Xueqiao bids farewell to her lover, she looks less sentimental than Wu Yunsheng; after all, she is determined to subordinate her personal feelings to the higher purpose, revolution. After she knows that Yunsheng has been killed by enemies, however, she allows her emotion to temporarily overwhelm her rationality. At the end of the novel, her revolutionary aim shifts to personal revenge for Yunsheng's death. Wu Yunsheng, in contrast, divides his emotions equally between romantic love and revolutionary fervor. In a letter to He Xueqiao, he claims, "There are two worlds in my life: one world belongs to you, I would like to put my soul under your control as an everlasting prisoner; in another world, I don't belong to either you or myself, for I am only a pawn in a historical mission."[31] Wu Yunsheng sees clearly his subjective position in the revolution; therefore he values love and allows himself to indulge in sentimental feelings. Interestingly, although Shi Pingmei was far more sensitive and emotional than is the character He Xueqiao, the maudlin fictional image of the hero Wu Yunsheng bears a close resemblance to the Gao Junyu that Shi Pingmei had described in her diary, letters to friends, and prose. Even Wu Yunsheng's description of two worlds, one belonging to the lover and the other devoted to the revolutionary mission, had appeared as Gao Junyu's original sentences in a letter to Shi Pingmei.[32] What has been omitted is Gao Junyu's uncontrollable obsession with emotion and love.

After Lu Yin's *Ivory Rings* was published, this sentimental and romantic story drew thousands of youths to mourn for Gao Junyu and Shi Pingmei in Taoranting Park. As one of Shi Pingmei's best friends, Lu Yin tried to take her

point of view. The long story includes a lot of Shi Pingmei's diary, letters to lovers and friends, and published articles. This large amount of original material blurs the distinction between fictional characters and real people. Through the narrative voices of Shi Pingmei's best friends, Lu Jingqing (whose name in the story is Suwen) and Lu Yin (whose name in the story is Lusha), as well as Shi Pingmei's own voice in her diary, letters, and private dialogue with female friends, the truth of this beautiful and melancholy romantic story is revealed. Narrative emphasis on private female voices tends to lead all the varied interpretations of this so-called revolution plus love story in the direction of feminist criticism, in which Shi Pingmei is naturally enough taken to be the most important embodiment of a redefined new woman, who effortlessly fits the fundamental paradigm of Lu Yin's utopian female world. Actually, Lu Yin's gender performativity, built on the basis of a women's utopia, creates a female identity that transcends the heterosexual framework and imposes its own discursive priority. As Lu Yin has described in *Old Friend on the Beach* (*Haibin guren,* 1925), the harmonious and intimate friendship among these female protagonists reenacts the unusually close relationship among Lu Yin, Shi Pingmei, Lu Jingqing, and other female friends. The near-synonymous female friendship and pure love among women, either fictional or real, inevitably blot out the boundary of heterosexuality. By redefining the norm of sexual difference in this way, Lu Yin's reiteration of revolution plus love severely challenges the masculine discourse of this formula.

Some critics comment that Lu Yin's *Ivory Rings* distorts the authenticity and significance of Gao Junyu and Shi Pingmei's love by dragging the original positive and healthy story into the pessimistic trap of sentimentalism.[33] However, in a letter to Lu Yin, Shi Pingmei said:

> I have read "To Sister Mei—the Tide of the Intelligent Sea" (Linghai chaoxi zhi meijie) and "To My Old Friends in the North of Yan" (Ji Yanbei zhu guren). Since I read them I feel *you are just myself*. You have expressed so much indescribable feeling for me, I have nothing to say anymore. When one feels that the other person is herself, how unusual and comforting it is. But, Lu Yin, I have already got such a feeling. If our world will always be empty and lonely, and within such cold loneliness we can see everything about ourselves through seeing each other, then although life is so cruel and ruthless, I only want to love this understanding in the deep heart of the intelligent sea and I no longer want anything more.[34]

Shi Pingmei was happy because what she thought of as unrepresentable had been perfectly expressed by her female friend. Her love for Lu Yin, who

was so close to her in mind, heart, and feeling, was in a sense unrepresentable in words. The letters that Shi Pingmei, Lu Yin, and Lu Jingqing exchanged contain expressions strikingly similar to the language of heterosexual love; in addition, their language comprised a special bond completely separate from compulsory heterosexuality. This bond, stated by "I feel you are just myself" or "I can see myself through you," is prevented by the heterosexual difference between men and women and goes beyond the norm of sisterhood between women.

Lu Yin unfolds her narrative through her and Lu Jingqing's reading of Shi Pingmei's diary. In the first half of *Ivory Rings,* Lu Yin listens to Lu Jingqing's narration of Shi Pingmei's secret romance, and in the second half they switch positions. Thus in the form of friendly gossip, the first and original source of information about Shi Pingmei's life is opened to the public. We find out that Shi Pingmei authorizes her friends to look at her private possessions, such as diaries and letters, even if she is not present. When Lu Yin and Lu Jingqing glimpse Shi Pingmei's secret life, they gain the pleasure of the aura that comes from Shi Pingmei's artistic and sentimental expression of her pain. This pleasure is mutual. The friends see themselves, their pain and inferiority, through each other. Uncontaminated by mundane regulations, the pleasure they share is derived from their transcendent feminine love, which relentlessly questions the originality and authenticity of the revolution plus love theme in Gao Junyu and Shi Pingmei's love story.

Ivory Rings is an important work because its ultimate sentimental aesthetics involve a death obsession within the language of love, and its historical context makes it a precursor to other feminist writings. Narrative figuration of feminine intimacy and feminine consciousness depends on the historical situation, so I will first explore why and how a particular social and historical juncture leads to Lu Yin's performative language of gender, which is closely related to the death drive and destructive sentimentalism.

In Lu Yin's novel, the reader only faintly knows that the Communist leader Gao Junyu works on some heroic mission. His revolutionary background fades from the scene before the sentimental romance takes place. Although he is deeply in love with Shi Pingmei, he does not gain her true love until he dies. Having been hurt by her first lover, a married man who manipulated her feelings, Shi Pingmei cannot recover from the trauma and accept Gao Junyu's genuine love. She keeps refusing him, and Gao Junyu finally dies for this unattainable love. Only then does she swear to sacrifice her youth and love to him; she visits his grave frequently for almost three years and eventually pines away too. According to Lu Yin's narrative, Gao Junyu lives and dies for love instead of his great revolutionary work. With deep remorse, Shi Ping-

mei says, "Why didn't you die and shed blood in the battlefield, instead of choosing to lie among a clump of roses? Now you are mourned not by the people of the whole country, but by a person who had different thoughts and was ungrateful for your love."[35] The formula of revolution plus love has here been shaped and deranged by the discourse of love, a sentimental tradition that was popular in the May Fourth imagination but became problematic during the period of revolutionary literature.[36]

The title *Ivory Rings* has deep significance as a symbol of the bond between Gao Junyu and Shi Pingmei; it also carries the meaning of death throughout the novel. In her own collection of prose titled *The Language of the Waves* (*Taoyu,* 1931), Shi Pingmei illustrated the history of the rings in detail in one short story, "Ivory Rings." Within it she included the letter Gao Junyu mailed to her with the rings. He wrote, "Let us use 'the white' to commemorate life as deadly quiet as emaciated bones."[37] When her friend Jingqing advised her to take off this white, cold ring, which might be an unlucky omen, Shi Pingmei firmly refused, preferring to let her "splendid and magnificent fate be lightly tied inside this sadly white and withering cold ring."[38] Even though Shi Pingmei knew that this ivory ring was full of implications of death, she bound her young and beautiful life tightly with it. When Gao Junyu was struck by Shi Pingmei's denial of his love and spat out blood, it was this ivory ring that was deeply engraved in her memory; when she saw Gao's corpse in the hospital after he died, it was also this ivory ring that first greeted her eyes. Through her deep understanding of Shi Pingmei, Lu Yin came to select this symbol as the thread on which she strung every bead of the sentiment in her novel.

The discourse of desire in *Ivory Rings* does not take a decisive political turn, as in other writings of revolution plus love in the 1930s. Lu Yin seems to harp on the same string of sentimentalism that was heavily indebted to the Chinese erotic-romantic tradition, established by works such as Cao Xueqin's *Dream of the Red Chamber* (*Hongloumeng*), Wei Zi'an's *Traces of Flower and Moon,* and Xu Zhenya's best-seller *Jade-Pear Spirit.* In real life, Shi Pingmei liked to secretly figure herself as Lin Daiyu: even her pseudonyms, Meng*dai* and *Lin* Na, were taken from *Lin Dai*yu's name; moreover, Lu Yin sometimes called her "Pin," which was the nickname Baoyu gave to Daiyu. It is interesting to note that in *Ivory Rings,* Lu Yin deliberately focuses on representing Shi Pingmei's narcissism, self-pity, and self-destructiveness, similar to Lin Daiyu's. With its abundant tears and obsession with illness and death, Lu Yin's version of Shi Pingmei and Gao Junyu's love story looks like another copy of the emotionally excessive Chinese literary tradition, which conflicts with rationality.[39] However, historical conditions shape the production of this

sentimental tradition. Influenced by the May Fourth tradition, Lu Yin also tries to recapture Western romance. The protagonist Gao Junyu quotes a famous line from Theodor Storm's *Immensea*, repeating that if he dies he can only be buried alone. This exaggerated, Wertherian sensitivity renders the protagonists more and more agonized, helpless, and morbid. Such a painful existence seems to have been so common that it made Shi Pingmei and Gao Junyu's love story extremely popular at the time.

The hybrid of Eastern and Western sentimental traditions provides Lu Yin an opportunity to remold Shi Pingmei's image as a new woman. According to the narrator, the protagonist Shi Pingmei is a well-educated modern girl, a dextrous ice skater and a marvelous dancer at parties, smoking and drinking all the time. As Lu Yin narrates through Lu Jingqing's storytelling, after Shi Pingmei is wounded by her first lover, she becomes suspicious of heterosexual romance. Although she spends time with Gao Junyu, she never loves him while he is alive. One of her excuses is that, like her first lover, he is married. Therefore, she regards the afflictions and sorrows of their relationship as fiction, and she acts only inside this sadly beautiful play. With a melodramatic attitude toward life, she cannot help but be deeply affected by her own performance. She once tells Lu Jingqing that when she is acting she is clearly aware that it is only a play, but at the same time she feels so absurd that she makes a real show of being in earnest:[40]

> I believe Cao [Gao Junyu] really loves me and pursues me. Probably it is the possessive desire of human beings. I don't believe that he can die for the sake of love, truly, I don't believe there is such a possibility. But who knows? My heart is locked inside the contradictions—sometimes I also fear, not only that he would die for me; even when I see him cry I tremble all over. A man, especially an adult, should be more rational, but when he cries his eyes are swollen and his face is pale, isn't it serious? Whenever I am in such a situation, I almost forget myself, I am softened and hypnotized. During the hypnotic state, I change into another person, I become very gentle and I cannot refuse him any request. Oh! How miserable! This mesmerism is only temporary. After I wake up again, I firmly turn him down. This brings him more embarrassment than when I didn't accept his requests in the first place. But I didn't plan to do this. How pitiful! Nobody sympathizes or comforts me and my tortuous feelings. They—those gentlemen who enjoy blaming other people—say that I am a demon woman, who flirts with men, drags them to wells but then escapes by herself. Alas! What relentless criticism. When have I been so evil? Honestly speaking, if I am dallying with them, what kind of benefit can I get?[41]

Some of her intimate confessions in the novel show her critical attitude toward men and the modern romance, engendered by the May Fourth cultural movement:

> Especially men who have wives already cannot be relied on. These men are used to riding one horse but looking for another. If they find someone who is better than the old, they begin earnest pursuit. If they cannot succeed, they have the nerve to go back to their wives. The most detestable thing is that they see women as objects. They liken women to lamps and even brazenly claim that they don't need kerosene lamps if they can have electric lights. — After all, women also should have their human rights; after all, they are not horses or lights.
>
> No, I feel that if I ruin others' marriage for my own sake, I would offend other people. Therefore, I still remain celibate as I wait for love.[42]

Since the May Fourth tradition encouraged men to decline their arranged marriages and pursue sexual and emotional liberation, many intellectuals such as Lu Xun, Yu Dafu, Guo Moruo, and Mao Dun were involved in love triangles with their former wives and new women. Perplexed by such a common situation, in which the conventional woman has no choice but to sacrifice for both the feudal morality and the modern romance, Shi Pingmei shows deep concern about women's problems. She also consciously challenges the role of new women as defined by the new patriarchal culture.

> Women like us, who would like to sacrifice everything merely because of marriage? . . . As a person, he [Gao Junyu] is not bad. Although I do not need him to be my lifelong companion, I need him to decorate my life.
>
> But when you think of other people too much you will forget yourself. Think—the reason a girl deserves people's admiration and pursuit is just because she is a girl. If she marries, she is nothing but a dying star, without light and heat; who wants to pay attention to her? Therefore I really don't want to marry.
>
> In dealing with men, when we are happy, there is no harm in smiling and playing with them; when we are unhappy, we should break up with them. Who would like to fetter oneself in the jail of love?[43]

The protagonist Shi Pingmei's secret inner thoughts disclose what is so different and disconcerting about Lu Yin's and her own reiteration of new women. Deeply suspicious of men's love and heterosexual marriage, Shi acts like a modern girl, holding power and will, flirting and playing with men. She

wants to maintain the dominant position, without sacrificing herself to men, love, marriage, or any male-centered ideologies. Bearing her own trauma, Shi Pingmei refuses to accept the assigned position of new woman offered by the heterosexual norm and decides to build all kinds of love, heterosexual marriage and utopian female relationships, on the basis of illusory like-ice-like-snow friendship (*bingxue youyi*). Her self-denial, self-destructiveness, and self-exile are perfectly suited to such friendship both aesthetically and psychologically. Regarding real life as a play or fiction and herself as the actress within it, she uses circuitous behavior and excessive sentiments in a dramatic performance through which she redefines new women according to her specific feminist point of view. Denying the very self, empty and full of pain and trauma caused by a logocentric society controlled by male discourse, she successively upsets and twists the masculinist logic of power relations. By withholding belief in sexuality, Shi Pingmei can cross the lines drawn by social relations such as marriage. Yet her definition of like-ice-like-snow friendship is not per se homosexual; it encompasses an array of meanings associated with deviation from the norm, which includes the compulsory heterosexual framework.

Readers may wonder if the real Shi Pingmei, who was known as a devoted revolutionary writer, was as sentimental and self-destructive as the heroine Lu Yin described in *Ivory Rings*. We can say that Shi Pingmei's diary, prose, and letters prove that Lu Yin truly reveals the most private part of the real person whose public image was fixed as a positive revolutionary. Although Shi Pingmei intended to demonstrate her dissociation from regulated sexuality, she had to live within the ostensible fixation of masculine discourse and the repression of women's perspectives and self-representation. Like most of her female friends, Shi Pingmei in real life lived and died because of contradictions. She vacillated between rationality and emotion, the traditional and the new, death and love, between the assigned role of women and her own imaginary surpassing of this role. Her contradictory existence allowed her a lavish obsession with death, which became a means of reforming the self in the most paradoxical way: she did not love the living Gao Junyu but fell deeply in love with the dead one. In "Heartbroken and Tears Turn into Ice" (Changduan xinsui leicheng bing), Shi Pingmei gives a chilling description of her experience when she bade farewell to Gao Junyu's dead body.

> His appearance hadn't changed a lot: it was only as sadly white as wax. His right eye was closed, but his left eye was still a little bit open and was looking at me. I was praying silently as I touched his body, begging him to close his eyes in death. I knew he did not have more requests and hopes in this world. I looked at his body carefully, seeing his sad white lips and his lifeless opened

> left eye. Finally I was staring at the ivory ring on his left forefinger; at this moment, my heart was similar to that of Salome when she got John's head. I was standing there solemnly and gravely all the time; other people were also standing behind me silently. At this moment, the universe was extremely quiet, extremely beautiful, extremely sad, and extremely gloomy![44]

In her own grotesque description, Shi Pingmei becomes a typical Westernized decadent woman addicted to the beauty of death, sickness, and corpses, who has the menacing power to seduce men to death. Consciously identifying herself with the famous Western femme fatale Salome, she commits herself to a decadent sexual identity, which distances her from revolution, progress, and nationalism and drives her toward alienation. When Gao Junyu was alive, she involved herself in the love game but declined any sexed position in it. Deep in her heart, as she confessed to her female friend in a private letter, she held the dangerous idea of toying with other people and being self-indulgent.[45] This playful attitude eventually brought on Gao Junyu's death and lured Shi Pingmei into the permanent commitment to death itself.

> My current situation of bitterly lonely sympathy is not for Tianxin [Gao Junyu], but for my own needs. . . . The reason that I continuously write *The Language of Waves* is to substantially and deeply build our grave, let people know that I am as hopeless as a walking corpse. . . . I love virgins, especially the corpses of virgins, I hope I can succeed in my love. Before, I dared not say such big words, I was afraid that I couldn't control my feelings. Ever since Tianxin died, I have known I can reach my goal.[46]

Shi Pingmei always wrote for herself, building a tomb of her intricate and bizarre love—a passion for death. Her impulsive act of showing desire for decay and death separates her from the revolutionary and decadent new women, whose seductive bodies are used to convey progressive ideology. Shi Pingmei's obsession with all symptoms of decadence and exhaustion reflects her strong belief in individuality—and also the female dilemma of wanting to reject male stipulations of female desire but finding no fully satisfying alternative within the male-dominated society. Death and decadence seem to be Shi Pingmei's only means to represent her selfhood and overcome gender discrimination. With their sentimental way of writing and existence, Shi Pingmei's and Lu Yin's subversion and substitution of male desires and identities are not limited by an unreal aesthetic mode but translated into cultural practices in which their voices are sharp and real, sad but loud, and difficult for men to accept.

Writing for themselves and each other, Lu Yin and Shi Pingmei create a specifically feminine locus of subversion of the paternal law. Through their unique feminine language and private communication, they ceaselessly argue with the real, authentic, political, and revolutionary signifier of new women. Such rewritings endeavor to understand feminine discourse on the model of a performative theory of names, providing for variation and rearticulation of the masculine definition of new women. By mistakenly conflating the symbolic with the real, which is supplied by firsthand accounts, Shi Pingmei and Gao Junyu's story reformulates revolution plus love. In a radical departure from the idea of progress, Lu Yin argues on behalf of Shi Pingmei without postulating an original sexed position; her argument is justified and consolidated through the construction of a narrative with its own language, which effectively masks its immersion in power relations.

Ding Ling: Reshaping New Women

In Ding Ling's version of revolution plus love, liberated women do not act as fatally sentimental as Shi Pingmei or as hysterical as Bai Wei and her protagonist Yue, nor do they perform like the decadent revolutionary women created by male leftists' pens, who use their seductive bodies to achieve revolutionary goals. Instead, they face a new political condition in which the emergence of the masses begins to conflict with the modern or Westernized signs these new women carry. Female writer Ding Ling is famous for her early novel *The Diary of Miss Sophia,* which speaks of desire, physicality, sexuality, and the dilemma of newly liberated women in the audacious, open, confessional voice of a first-person narrator. As Lydia Liu argues, Sophia's diary "redefines reading and writing in gendered terms by insisting on an intimate woman-to-woman talk," and "such feminine talk would render both the scholar-lover (indigenous male beauty) and the medieval European knight (imported Western ideal) superfluous to their existence."[47] Unlike Shi Pingmei and Lu Yin's intense, private conversation, Sophia's confession not only talks about feeling, thinking, everything interior, but also bravely exposes women's desire, especially physical desire. Instead of building a transcendent, artistic, and aesthetic utopia of feminine alliances, Ding Ling in *The Diary of Miss Sophia* puts the liberated woman back in the mundane world, alone and sick, letting her speak out loudly about her genuine desire and the pain of modern sex roles. It is significant that after the May Fourth movement, women became so keenly aware of their own bodies, desire, and sexuality. However, despite the great effect her exploration of female subjectivity had, Ding Ling's writing changed dramatically after her husband, Hu Yepin, became a Communist and was brutally executed by the

GMD in 1931. From then on, she closely tied her literary writings to Communist ideology. Her novels *Wei Hu* and *Shanghai, Spring 1930 I* and *II,* which were written before Hu Yepin's death, belong to the genre of revolution plus love. Although later on Ding Ling herself admitted that she had "[fallen] into the trap of the love and revolution conflict in the Guangci manner,"[48] these three novels, as Yi-Tsi Mei Feuerwerker suggests, "show Ding Ling negotiating a passage from love to revolution, from the focus on internal experience to the outer world of political reality."[49] As an avant-garde feminist who had been exploring women's roles in modern sexual relationships from a female perspective, Ding Ling had to deal with the conflict between new women and the revolutionary symbol—the masses. How do modern women affect the discourse of emancipation, revolution, and proletarian liberation? As Ding Ling gradually sacrifices modern, liberated women to revolutionary discipline, how does she relate to her own body, sexuality, and writing?

Ding Ling's *Wei Hu* is based on the real story of her close friend Wang Jianhong's romance with the eminent Communist leader Qu Qiubai, whose double-sided character, dedicated to the Communist movement yet embracing romanticism, is recognized and carefully discussed by T. A. Hsia.[50] In 1922, Ding Ling, Wang Jianhong, and other female friends shared a house in Shanghai, attending the Communist-controlled Female School for Common People together, where they learned about the idea of social revolution from teachers such as Chen Duxiu, Li Da, and Mao Dun. After Ding Ling and Wang Jianhong moved to Nanjing in 1923, they met Qu Qiubai, who had just come back from Russia and impressed them with his erudite knowledge of Russian novels rather than Marxist ideas. Encouraged by Qu, the two girls transferred to Shanghai University, where Qu Qiubai was praised by Ding Ling as "the best professor," compared to other famous professors such as Mao Dun, Tian Han (1898–1968), and Yu Pingbo (1900–1990).[51] During this time, Qu Qiubai and Wang Jianhong fell deeply in love. The couple soon moved in together, and their romantic life was closely witnessed by Ding Ling, who was sharing a house with them. According to Ding Ling, Qu was a romantic who wanted to accompany Jianhong day and night, even after school began. He wrote love poetry to her every day, carved his beloved poems on stones, and enjoyed playing flute and singing Kun opera as well as discussing literature with them.[52] Ding Ling's depiction of Qu's literary talent and romantic nature reminds us of his *Superfluous Words,* written before his sacrifice: "Owing to a 'historical misunderstanding,' I began, fifteen years ago, to engage myself, no matter how reluctantly, in political work. It is because of this reluctance that I have never succeeded in performing any task satisfactorily; when my hands were busy with one thing, my mind was occupied by something else."[53] Qu

Qiubai, characterized by T. A. Hsia as "a revolutionary hypochondriac, a socialist-minded aesthete, a sentimental hater of the old society, a practitioner of Bodhisattvahood trained in Moscow, a pilgrim in quest of the land of hunger who could not stand the black bread, or, in a word, a tenderhearted Communist,"[54] is well represented by Ding Ling's character Wei Hu, who is tortured by the conflict between his political beliefs and his bourgeois lifestyle.

What concerns Ding Ling most about her closest friend Wang Jianhong's love affair with Qu Qiubai is the new woman's position against the revolutionary background. Before Ding Ling headed to Beijing to continue her college studies, she told Jianhong that it was not her ideal that her friend "was nothing but only Qu Qiubai's lover."[55] She was bothered by Jianhong's indulgence in modern love and sex, in which the independent character of the new woman disappeared. Not long after Ding Ling's departure, Jianhong died of tuberculosis, infected by Qu Qiubai, who apparently had left her before her death for the sake of revolution. Shocked by this abrupt news, Ding Ling could not forgive Qu Qiubai, who she felt should take full responsibility for her friend's death. "I was like a wounded person, going to Beijing with Jianhong's cousins by boat," Ding Ling wrote. "I didn't write a word to Qiubai despite the fact he left an address and hoped I could write to him. I was thinking: no matter how great you are, our connection will be cut because of Jianhong's death. She died of tuberculosis, but when did she get this disease? Didn't she get it from you?"[56] Qu Qiubai wrote to Ding Ling constantly, blaming himself in every letter without providing a clear explanation of what had happened. In a poem he wrote to her, he lamented that "his heart was dead, and he was sad because he let Jianhong down, let his own heart down, let Ding Ling down."[57] From those letters, Ding Ling only vaguely learned that Qu was under criticism from the CCP, and as he sadly expressed to her, nobody except Jianhong could really understand him.[58] Although Qu Qiubai chose revolution over love, he was perpetually tortured by this decision, which was against his real heart. Experiencing the conflict between revolution and love in real life, Qu Qiubai showed himself to be much more complex and lonely than the ideal, iron-willed Communist; in fact, he "is found to be affectionate, sentimental, meditative, idealistic, capable of absorption in scenes of natural beauty, introspective to the point of self-pity, and haunted by a sense of loneliness."[59]

Later on, Ding Ling discovered that Qu Qiubai had left Jianhong because of his wife, Yang Zhihua, who was also his revolutionary comrade and a Communist Party member. This discovery irritated her: "I was very emotional, for the sake of Jianhong's love, for the sake of Jianhong's death, for the sake of my losing Jianhong, for the sake of my friendship with Jianhong; therefore, I made a lot of complaints against Qiubai."[60] Qu Qiubai didn't write to Ding

Ling again before he was executed by the GMD. At the end of *Superfluous Words,* he wrote something to his wife and asked for her forgiveness, "for not even to her had he had the courage to reveal his heart. . . . He wished that she would henceforth detest him and forget him so that his soul might rest in peace."[61] Ding Ling surely understood that Jianhong was the only one to whom Qu could reveal his heart; therefore in her novel *Wei Hu* she not only emphasized the Communist's split personality, she also explored how modern women had to suffer in love, even if that love was linked to revolution.

In her criticism of *Wei Hu,* Yi-Tsi Mei Feuerwerker aptly points out that "by weighting its descriptive interest on the side of love, *Wei Hu* is a nostalgic lingering on what has already been or will soon be lost and past, rather than a positive affirmation of the revolutionary future."[62] Indeed, reading this fiction along with accounts of the real event, we may come to suspect whether Ding Ling intends to affirm Wei Hu's final choice of revolution over love. To a certain extent, *Wei Hu* is the continuation of Ding Ling's exploration of women's predicament in the new context of revolution plus love. Through her concern with problematic female sexuality in the revolutionary context, Ding Ling again demonstrates a strong feminist consciousness and refuses to allegorize women's experience, even though her writing was going through a radical political change. Like *The Diary of Miss Sophia, Wei Hu* grapples with the problem of modern women in gendered terms, but this time in a neutral narrative voice. Unlike authors whose writings eulogize the combination of romance and revolution, Ding Ling here directly grasps the dilemma that newly liberated women confront as they choose to connect their love with revolution. In this story, although the ending valorizes the mass revolution at the price of romantic love, the confusion of new women still exists. In both her writing and her life, Ding Ling was caught in a dilemma between her original identity as a modern, urbanized, and liberated woman and her new, vague Communist identity.

This story begins with the protagonist, Wei Hu, returning from Russia to participate in the Chinese revolution and being tempted by his friend to meet some new women. At first, Wei Hu refuses this opportunity, since "his whole enthusiasm can only be devoted to his belief and goal," and he has met various kinds of women before, both traditional Chinese intelligent women and foreign exotic, brave, and romantic women. But the women he is introduced to are completely different: they are neither traditional nor as frank and confident as Russian women. Ironically, he cannot help falling in love with one of them, Lijia. Not surprisingly, Lijia and her group of female friends have some hostility toward men and enjoy playing with them or making things difficult for them. These new women are proud and admire Western knowledge, freedom, and feminism; they refuse to identify with any kind of ready-made social roles,

even if they have not entered college or gone to work. To cater to these new women's interests, Wei Hu keeps talking about topics they like, such as Western literature, women, love, and freedom, but he avoids mentioning Marxism or socialism because Lijia rejects these dry concepts from the very beginning.

Like Lu Yin in her description of a transcendent feminine alliance, Ding Ling creates a stable, reliable, and beautiful woman-to-woman relationship, meant not to affirm the primacy of sexual difference but to explore how to think of power relations—gender, sexuality, race, class. After Lijia and her group embark on their different futures, Lijia and her best friend, Shanshan, go to Shanghai together. Their relationship is unusual in that they love and quarrel just like a romantic couple. Ding Ling invested a lot of personal emotion into depicting this intimate female friendship, for she and Jianhong had spent two harmonious years together before Qu Qiubai entered their lives. In Shanghai, the two girls meet Wei Hu again; then Lijia and Wei Hu gradually fall in love and move in together. Ding Ling depicts Shanshan's love for Lijia in a very ambiguous way: Shanshan acts like a mother, a lover, and a female friend. Before Lijia moves in with Wei Hu, Shanshan refuses to talk about him: "I just don't want him, Wei Hu, to come to occupy our whole time. . . . It is not worth it."[63] In the narrative, Shanshan is "the disturbing vision" manifesting the feminist point of view to comment on Lijia's romance with Wei Hu. When Lijia confides in Shanshan about Wei Hu's former Russian lover, Shanshan is attracted immediately by this dissolute woman because she admires her independence and courage, qualities hard to find in Chinese women. Shanshan's secret love for Lijia might explain her indifferent attitude toward Wei Hu; in addition, she questions women's association with the normative sex role, even if it includes revolution, progress, and other noble ideas. Shanshan's disapproval of Lijia's romance compels the narrator to distance herself from the harmony or conflict of revolution plus love and from the degradation of the female within the heterosexual framework of society.

Even Wei Hu can tell how Shanshan feels about Lijia; he says, "How nice you have such a good friend, but I don't have one. She really loves you! She is virtually like a mother." Lijia answers, "Are you jealous of me? I believe she also loves you, because she loves me too much. In addition, she will never abandon me. But you, Wei Hu, can you also let me trust you like this?"[64] Ironically, Wei Hu eventually betrays Lijia for the sake of his revolutionary ideal, but Shanshan, as Lijia predicts, still loves and supports her as before. That Ding Ling links woman-to-woman love (not exactly homosexuality) with potential problems in heterosexual relationships seems clear: the utopian female bond is the means by which the truth of sexual repression is exploded and by which socially ideal men and women are questioned.

Symbolically, new women such as Lijia and Shanshan comprise a convergent set of historical formations of gender, race, and social relations. They are caught between the prospect of freedom through adapting Western knowledge or bourgeois ideologies of humanism and the violation of the third-world, oppressed class of Chinese women, whose sexuality is deprivatized and undermined. Wei Hu's comrades regard his association with Lijia as plunging into a "degenerated and debauched gold-decorated brothel."[65] The ideological impulses in *Wei Hu* could have been driven in a sequel toward a resolution, a rational solution of choosing revolution instead of bourgeois ideologies. However, the author obviously has a hard time dealing with the unstable concept of the new woman. Ding Ling admires the new, progress, and freedom just as Lijia and Shanshan do; therefore, her attitude toward the sexuality of new women like herself is ambivalent: she cannot condemn them, even if they epitomize Western bourgeois decadent ideas. Through Lijia's words, Ding Ling criticizes these Communist comrades:

> You misunderstood me. I certainly had some comments on a few Communists; that is because I was influenced by other thoughts. I was very naive, but some of your comrades are not tactful at all. You don't know, it seems, that because they have some new knowledge and are capable of using some different terms, they also change into these terms and become so stupidly proud of themselves.[66]

Hostility to superficial and rational Communists pervades the text that constitutes Ding Ling's reception of revolution in gendered terms. This explains a paradox in her solution for the conflict between revolution and the new women at the end of the novel, where she notes through Wei Hu's letter that the tragedy of their love happens because Lijia has an unstable feminist attitude and because "Wei Hu, after all, belongs to that group of materialists and philistines who blaspheme love."[67]

In particular, Ding Ling is concerned about new women's position in modern sexual relationships, for Lijia continues to subordinate herself to male authority by putting her fate in the hands of Wei Hu, even if he is a respectable revolutionary. Without burdening Lijia with any ready-made class characteristics, Ding Ling accentuates rather than dismisses new women's sexuality and dilemma. Contrasting Wei Hu's absence and Shanshan's loyalty at the end of the novel, she leaves sexual difference fluctuating but affirms the power and the value of feminine independence and subjectivity. By identifying herself as a new woman, Ding Ling strikes a decisive blow against revolution's condemnation of women's subjectivity. Because the opposition between masculine and

feminine is itself tainted as an ideological construct, her neutralization of sexual difference through Shanshan's genuine friendship might appear as intentionally feminist writing. The feminine has been ideologically determined to be a racial and bourgeois signification and therefore devalorized, but Ding Ling's uneasy treatment of new women makes a striking transvaluation of the feminine, and a no less significant degendering.

In *Wei Hu,* Ding Ling attempts to forge a new language to speak about the female body and sexuality within revolutionary discourse. In *Shanghai, Spring 1930 I* and *II* she shifts from speaking for the subjectivity of new women to downplaying the decadent and bourgeois signs carried by new women's sexual bodies. Sacrificing self-consciousness and her special feminist point of view, she tries to adopt the language of revolutionary rationality. This transformation was also influenced by the emergence of class and mass consciousness and the decline of intellectuals' individuality within leftist writings at the time.

Shanghai, Spring 1930 I and *II* is composed of two independent stories, each of which can be read as variations on the Nora theme. Meilin, the heroine of the first part, is an educated woman who is unsatisfied with her bourgeois home and therefore plunges herself into the mass movement at the end of the story. Mary, the bourgeois girl of the second part who refuses to catch up with the historical tide of revolution (even though she walks out of the home of her revolutionary boyfriend) represents a counterdiscourse to Meilin. However tinged with political messages, these two women's action—walking out of the homes that confine them—still contains the residue of new women's subjectivity that Ding Ling once highly valued. Comparing Ding Ling's exploration of the Nora theme with Hu Yepin's, T. A. Hsia finds that "Ding Ling was allowed by her reservations to see at least the charms, problems, and meanings of a nonrevolutionary life," but Hu Yepin's "eagerness for revolution made it impossible to dwell on such trivialities or on anything or any person that was doomed to be swept away by the surging tides of history."[68] In his meticulous study of *Shanghai, Spring 1930 I* and *II,* Tang Xiaobing notes that "this nonrevolutionary life" reflects Ding Ling's own situation, confined by her own pregnant female body in 1930 while her husband, Hu Yepin, was actively involved in numerous political activities. "By ascribing this nonrevolutionary life to a female body, Ding Ling both acknowledged the corporeality of her own gender and, more importantly, created a trope through which to imagine and prescribe her transformation." Tang continues, "For this reason, her portrayal of Mary in the story is wrought with ambiguity."[69] Yet, no matter how much Ding Ling attempts to continue her exploration of new women's dilemma and sensibility, her political beliefs require her to allegorize new women's bodies.

In *Shanghai, Spring 1930 II*, the love between Mary and her boyfriend, Wangwei, a devoted revolutionary, looks like the love story in *Wei Hu,* but this time Ding Ling identifies herself with compulsory heterosexuality, depreciating the modern urbanized girl Mary on the basis of her gender and class identities. Since the emancipation of women is equated with the liberation of the oppressed class, Mary, a liberated woman who adopts bourgeois life, is inevitably excluded by the so-called women's and proletarian movements. New women who dwell on love but are not involved in revolution can no longer be considered progressive; rather, they suddenly represent depravity, vanity, and regression.

Ding Ling portrays Mary as a modern sexy girl: she likes material goods and lacks revolutionary interests. When she moves in with her revolutionary lover, Wangwei, she brings a lot of delicate and trivial belongings. These feminine ornaments and trinkets are the unmistakable and irrefutable signs of degeneracy. As Naomi Schor points out, "The decadent style is inherently ornamental. Decadence is a pathology of detail: either metastasis or hypertropy or both."[70] This equation allows Ding Ling to discriminate between the healthy and the sick, the revolutionary and the bourgeois. As a material girl, Mary "does not love anybody but only herself." Not only is she obsessed with trivia and ornaments; she also enjoys her own seductive body: "She casts an eye at her half-naked body with love and a playful gaze, enjoying that white neck and arm for a long time, then covers herself with the cotton robe."[71] Although Lijia in *Wei Hu* lacks revolutionary consciousness, Ding Ling treats her sexy female body as an important form through which to reconsider post–May Fourth modern sex roles; but here Mary's body is transformed into a satire of bourgeois ideology.

By politicizing Mary's sexy body—even if, compared to Wangwei's disciplined body, it remains sensuous and feminine through the novel—Ding Ling tries to reduce Mary to the image of a typical material girl. However, Mary's independent personality, which represents a generation of new women who struggle for their own freedom, still obstinately and constantly jumps out from her "degenerate" sexy body. Though Mary loves Wangwei, she prefers their relationship to be that of free lovers, not of a married couple. When Wangwei attends revolutionary meetings and abandons her in the empty house, she finally acts like Nora in *A Doll's House,* escaping the loneliness her lover assigns to her. In *The Diary of Miss Sophia,* Ding Ling identifies with the similar bourgeois girl who is fully aware of her body and sexuality, but in *Shanghai, Spring 1930 II* she firmly denies that feminist position and the individuality previously pursued. Mary's repetition of Nora's action becomes a sign of resistance against the historical tide—the revolutionary ideology. Hence, in the conflict

between new women and the masses, Ding Ling eventually sides with revolutionary ideology, subordinating herself by giving up her own subjectivity.

The writing of Bai Wei, Lu Yin, and Ding Ling are engaged with a historical transformation of the relationship between gender and politics, growing out of what is implicit in revolutionary ideology itself—the imaginative force of women's gendered subjectivity. Through these women writers' use of the revolution plus love formula, we can see women writers consciously and constantly negotiating with their social position, one that is fixed and consolidated by repressive social laws in the name of progress and revolution. Their different performances show that the feminist identities emerging within the matrix of power relations are not simple replications or copies of a masculinist identity, nor uniform repetitions in alliance with other subordinated groups. Rather, feminist identities are fluid, operating as sites for invention, exposure, and displacement of male-centered sexual power relations.

4 Shanghai Variations

The series of political events during 1923–1927 gave rise to the well-known literary movement of "revolutionary literature" (*geming wenxue*), which aimed at criticizing capitalist modernity by bringing Marxism into the literary field. As one of the most important literary practices of revolutionary literature, the formulaic writing of revolution plus love expressed a sense of an urgency to redeem nationalism from the domination of Western capitalist culture, for which the May Fourth generation was regarded by radical leftists as the spokesmen. Initiated by leftist writers such as Jiang Guangci, this formulaic writing attracted numerous followers from different political and cultural backgrounds who were not necessarily loyal believers in communism. Other scholars have focused only on leftists' pursuit of this genre and ignored Shanghai writers' overlapping and contradictory historical expressions of the relationship between revolution and love. It is from this standpoint that we need to reexamine the multicultural background of Shanghai, where this formulaic writing was produced and transformed. As a modern city in a third-world country, Shanghai had to reject modes of thinking that expressed its cultural imagination in simplistic ways, such as native nationalism, colonialism, and modernity-as-revolution. The cultural ambivalence of the city made it possible for writers to treat modernity from a variety of shifting positions that had been discursively articulated in cultural practice.

Yan Jiayan's and Leo Ou-fan Lee's introduction of urban modernists such as Shi Zhecun, Liu Na'ou, Mu Shiying, Shao Xunmei, and Ye Lingfeng, whose names were often consciously erased in many studies of modern Chinese literature, has redirected a certain amount of scholarly interest in Shanghai and its cultural practice.[1] Western scholarship on urban modernism has fundamentally altered the canon set originally by leftist writers and critics who promoted revolutionary romanticism, socialist realism, and the political

function of literature. These leftist critics tended either to ignore the Shanghai modernists or castigate them as "bourgeois decadents." Research on Shanghai modernism has demonstrated how through an experimental technique urban modernists' obsession with erotic and exotic scenes of Shanghai created an interesting literary phenomenon that significantly contributes to "the development of literary modernism," which "has been rediscovered after more than half a century of scholarly oblivion."[2] However, those urban modernists' pursuit and imitation of the formulaic writing of revolution plus love—a literary practice that resulted from leftists' and Communists' advocacy of proletarian literature—has remained largely unexamined.

Although Yan Jiayan, Leo Ou-fan Lee, and Zhang Yingjin have discussed Liu Na'ou's "Flow" (Liu) and Mu Shiying's "Pierrot," two stories that clearly carry the stamp of revolution plus love, they do not read them as derivatives of this formula. Both Lee and Shih Shu-Mei have pointed out that Liu Na'ou's journal *Trackless Train* juxtaposed progressive essays and fiction translated from or inspired by the Soviet Union with the decadent sensibilities of Paul Morand and Japanese *shinkankaku ha* fiction—a strange combination, but for Liu Na'ou and his fellow modernists a harmonious one, because both of them foreground and highlight the new. What has been ignored in their discussions of *Trackless Train* is this journal's contribution to the proliferation of revolution plus love, the central event in the literary field around 1930. In my view, a consideration of those modernists' early imitation of revolution plus love in the context of revolutionary literature is meaningful because not only does it point to the complexity of the literary field around 1930, which was unnecessarily rigidly controlled by radical leftists, it also suggests the confusion of forms of newness understood by these writers, who negotiated between the binary oppositions of progress and decadence and of the serious and the nonserious. What is more important, it demonstrates that the reproduction and circulation of this formula have constituted a world of simulations in which the original leftist goal—the rational critique of capitalism—is subverted by different kinds of implications within the urban culture of Shanghai.

Literary historians such as Wang Yao and Tang Tao have assumed an existing revolutionary identity held by writers who embraced the formulaic writing of revolution plus love.[3] This identity not only includes Marxist goals and concerns, but also constitutes a progressive subject that is pursuing political representation. This assumption is created by the possibility of a "total history" (Foucault's term) or total description, which relates all events to the so-called worldview or the spirit of a generation.[4] What has been excised from establishment histories of modern Chinese literature is the satirical treatment of revolution plus love by some Shanghai urban writers, such as Shi Zhecun,

Liu Na'ou, Mu Shiying, Ye Lingfeng, and Zhang Ziping. In his study of Jiang Guangci, T. A. Hsia notes that leftists' writing of revolution plus love could be disturbing, because those leftists constantly vacillated between revolutionary ideology and the bourgeois lifestyle.[5] However, Hsia overlooks the more disturbing practice of this formula by other Shanghai writers, who were obsessed with the urban culture of Shanghai, which was then being denigrated by Marxist critics as an "immoral product of capitalist decadence." In the involvement of Liu Na'ou and his fellow modernists with proletarian literature, "the so-called 'depravity of capitalist culture,'" as Shu-mei Shih argues, "becomes the locus of allure and eroticization, thereby reducing the supposed socialist thrust to a kind of empty, perhaps fashionable gesture."[6] As a matter of fact, while pursuing the fashionable revolution plus love formula, those urban writers never hesitated to flaunt their critiques of the "decadent" bourgeoisie while at the same time deeply indulging themselves in the seductive urban milieu of Shanghai. Revolution had proven irresistible for the playful literary games of writers intent on portraying it as just as dazzling and fluctuating as sexual desire. Their fiction transformed the exciting spectacle of revolution into an emblem of the psyche's overflowing erotic fantasies. Despite their different styles of writing, they all treated revolution as an object on exhibit or an eroticized street scene, chaotic and alluring, orchestrated solely to satisfy the modern reader. In a sense, their placement of revolution plus love in the urban culture of Shanghai puts revolutionary language to different uses, establishing new imaginative boundaries by breaking through previous progressive categories.

Among those five urban writers who imitated the formulaic writing of revolution plus love, Shi Zhecun, Liu Na'ou, and Mu Shiying are usually categorized as belonging to the Japanese-inspired neosensationalist school (*xin ganjue pai*) because of their obsession with literary modernism. Zhang Ziping is often criticized for catering to popular tastes and commercialization, and Ye Lingfeng is somewhere between these two extremes. Although most of their formulaic practices were launched two years before the famous Jingpai (Beijing school) and Haipai (Shanghai school) debate in 1934, collectively these five writers can be said to form the fictional landscape of the Shanghai school. Putting them side by side not only challenges the conventional view that the Shanghai school simply refers to vulgar, consumer-based, low-quality urban literature,[7] but also goes beyond the paradigm of the neosensationalist school, which has been the central focus of Western scholarship on Shanghai literature of the 1930s. In other words, it is impossible to find a clear-cut distinction between so-called high modernism and low culture in the Shanghai school literature, such as that which perhaps characterizes the modern literary tradition of the West. In such a context, we need to raise the following questions: if the Shanghai school writers

cannot be reduced to a simple integrated group, how can we categorize the Shanghai variations on revolution and love? Was their imitation of this formula merely a counterrevolutionary strategy by which they rewrote revolutionary literature in the light of the "immoral and decadent" capitalist culture, or was it actually the embodiment of a revolutionary spirit in a more political sense? Did they attempt to promote the sale of their books through catering to popular interests, or did they want to take the elitist, avant-garde stance by adopting the experimental literary techniques? Were they able under the pressure of national crises to break away from the idea of modernity as historical progress, or were they themselves among the producers of this modernity?[8]

In this chapter, I explore these questions by examining the sources from which the Shanghai school writers derived their formula of revolution plus love. Tracing the sources of those marginalized formulaic writings reveals some literary practices that are seldom recognized by mainstream literary history. More important, such efforts make it possible to question assumptions about the period of revolutionary literature. It is these writers' different ways of creating the same images (such as nation, class, and the object of desire) that need to be underscored as we examine the erotic undercurrent of revolutionary discourse in the cultural milieu of Shanghai. Observing how these writers articulated the popular theme of revolution plus love in various new forms not only helps us understand the way they defined modernity and its relationship to politics, but also shows there is no original, single, and stable identity inherent in the mere imitation and repetition of the formula. Those urban writers' performative transplanting of the revolution plus love formula to the erotic urban context constitutes another facet of Chinese modernity and dismantles the binary opposition of progress and decadence, the opposition that is at once powerful and exhausting.

Shi Zhecun: Psychosexual Politics

Shi Zhecun was on the editorial staffs of *Trackless Train, La nouvelle littérature,* and the famous *Les Contemporaines* (*Xiandai*), the magazines that were identified most closely with Western modernist experiences ranging from new romanticism and expressionism to the use of psychoanalysis. When young members of the Creation Society and Sun Society were busily involved in debates about revolutionary literature, Shi Zhecun, Liu Na'ou, and their friends responded to this new phenomenon by introducing revolutionary novels from Soviet Russia in *Trackless Train*. For Leo Ou-fan Lee, Shi and his friends' interest in revolutionary novels derived from their inclination toward cosmopolitan and avant-garde writing:

> According to Shi, the term *qianwei* (avant-garde) was first introduced to China around 1926–1928 from Japanese sources on Soviet literature. Shi and his friends were initially attracted to this radical revolutionary metaphor because they believed that all the best Soviet writers active in the 1920s—Mayakovsky, Babel, and others—were avant-gardists, which they equated with the "modern" trend in art and literature in Europe as well. In other words, they saw themselves as both revolutionary and aesthetic rebels on an international "front line."[9]

Unlike the leftists from the Creation and Sun Societies, who emphasized the social function of literature, Shi Zhecun was attracted to Soviet literature because of its new form and technique. Among Shi's early writings, one short story, "Pursuit," which has seldom attracted critics' interest, tackled the theme of revolution plus love. Written in 1928, the year he became friends with the Communist critic Feng Xuefeng, "Pursuit" was recognized as influenced by the English version of *The Flying Osip: Stories of New Russia,* written by Shishkov, Seifulina, Kasatkin, and others.[10] As Shi Zhecun later wrote: "'Zhui' was my attempt at imitating Russian fiction, using a rough outline to write a proletarian revolutionary story. This small book of Zhui was unexpectedly noticed by the GMD's propaganda department and was included in the list of prohibited books. This prohibition really elevated my market value."[11] Although "Pursuit" is different from Shi's later and more notable fiction, such as "A General's Head" (Jiangjun de tou, 1932), "Shi Xiu," and "An Evening of Spring Rain" (Meiyu zhixi, 1933), it already shows the psychological exploration for which he is known. This story deserves attention because in it Shi invents a psychic world build on the discourse of social realism and its ideological underpinnings. Through the parallel conflicts in the story—between the poor and the rich, the sexual and the political, the personal and the collective—the author shows how revolutionary identity has been dislodged by perverted sexual desire.

Unlike Jiang Guangci and his followers' literary versions of revolution plus love, "Pursuit" is neither dominated by hyperbolic romantic passion nor overburdened by slogans or revolutionary concepts. Departing from the notion of the real defined by revolutionary literature and its ideological frame of reference, Shi chose to represent the issue of class identity in terms of the hero Xinhai's sexuality. The title obviously has a double meaning: is it a revolutionary goal that Xinhai pursues, or the sexy daughter of a capitalist? On the surface, the story seems conventional: a revolutionary proletarian worker is seduced by a bourgeois girl; because of his love for her, he allows her to escape when the workers and revolutionaries take over the city. After he realizes that the reactionary girl has betrayed him and escaped alone, Xinhai gets so furious

that he volunteers for a heroic mission—to bomb the bridge in order to protect the city. "Pursuit" may seem a standard Communist novel: it advises revolutionaries to be alert to the corruption of the bourgeois. However, the erotic fantasies of the oppressed that may be unleashed by revolution are hidden within every psyche; this generates a crisis of masculine sexuality that threatens political morality, which draws a clear demarcation between the pure and the impure.

In this story, Shi blends class consciousness, sexual repression, sexual yearning, and sexual psychology. Against the background of a city controlled by a militia of low-class workers, the narrator creates a ghostlike reality of violence, death, and terror, a strange and dark scene of continuous violent acts, combined with a revolutionary sentiment mingled with masculine fantasies and desires. In this isolated revolutionary city, only the liberated oppressed can be named as human beings; the others, male and female, are all "reactionary dogs." The original flourishing and bustling signs of the modern city, such as markets, dance halls, hotels, the bourgeoisie, the proletariat, and prostitutes, have all been replaced by merciless class struggle and revolutionary war. This scene looks more like an allegory of the terror of revolution itself than a record of reality in 1928. It allegorizes the future of revolution; interestingly, contemporary readers might even find this kind of terror and this ghostlike city in Mao's era. Inside the isolated city, the faces of revolutionaries are anonymous, but their violent impulses and vague anxiety permeate every corner.

It is here that Xinhai encounters the "female reactionary dog," the daughter of a member of the bourgeoisie, with whom he had secretly fallen in love while previously working for her father. The bourgeois daughter uses Xinhai's sexual attraction to her to gain his help. Made to serve the political purpose of representing the decadent bourgeois class, she is portrayed by Shi Zhecun as a superficial, hypocritical, and erotic femme fatale, the trope of the decadent city before it was conquered by revolutionaries and workers. As the girl makes gestures of sexual invitation, Xinhai is tempted and thrilled by the possibility of possessing her. The original master-slave relationship and class consciousness have further intensified Xinhai's carnal desire. Although the story follows the style of proletarian literature, it resembles Shi's studies of male sexuality and eroticism in his later fiction. Obviously indebted to Freud, Shi has created a psychic reality in which Xinhai indulges in a peculiar erotic fantasy. Suddenly realizing he has a chance to be this bourgeois girl's lover, he feels thankful to the revolution: "How happy I am today. You see, I have never seen such a seductive gesture from her. Without the revolution, I wouldn't have been fated to encounter this romance."[12] Xinhai's repressed sexuality takes on the class dimension; his erotic fantasy is also an act

of class revenge. Skillfully combining repressed sexuality with oppressed class status, Shi shows more interest in exploring the world of male psychology than in conveying political ideology.

Since the character of the daughter is a visible agent of the upper class, her seductiveness suggests that the power of decadence can match the power of revolution and that sex can be more potent than military force. Xinhai's masculinity and his meager knowledge of class struggle are quickly overcome by her allure and his own sexual hallucinations. Shi Zhecun juxtaposes the practical imperative to oppose the upper class and a complicated sex relation invoked to justify that opposition. The boundary between the bourgeoisie and the workers is temporarily eliminated by Xinhai's sexual fantasies; he cannot find any reason to fight against the upper class. Actually, his beloved's political status as one of the oppressors arouses and increases Xinhai's desire for her. Only at the end of the novel, after Xinhai finds out the woman has deceived him, is the psychosexual war between the bourgeoisie and the oppressed transformed into a real political war. At the moment of his humiliation, Xinhai's class identity is rekindled. In a sense, by inserting a psychosexual scene in the mapping of class struggle, Shi Zhecun represents the simultaneous breakdown of and desire for both sexuality and politics.

The confusion of the protagonist Xinhai's sexual and political desires translates into images of spatial closure and confinement in the story. The separation of the revolutionary city from the other, modern city indicates how military barriers define both inside and outside, the bourgeoisie and the workers, decadence and revolution, and also suggests the difficulty of keeping those categories clearly defined. In the author's representation of psychosexual politics, the sexual and political voices meet and mix as the two opposing agents, Xinhai and the upper-class woman, get entangled in their ridiculous love affair. Such representation, combined with an experimental narrative technique and a parodic mode of writing, has put the formula of revolution plus love in a seemingly simple but actually very complicated and awkward situation.

Liu Na'ou: Hybrid Identities

Another famous writer of the neosensationalist school, Liu Na'ou, started the literary magazine *Trackless Train* in 1928,[13] and in 1929 opened the Froth bookstore, which published a lot of progressive literary books, including *The Collection of Marxist Artistic Theories* (*Makesi zhuyi wenyi luncong*) and his own translation of the Soviet theoretician Vladimir M. Friche's book *The Sociology of Arts* (*Yishu shehui xue*). Liu and Mu Shiying, another prominent writer of the neosensationalist school, are well known "because for both the

city was the only world of their existence and the key source of their creative imagination."[14] Liu's life ended tragically: in 1939, he was assassinated while serving as an editor of a newspaper under the collaborationist regime of Wang Jingwei, possibly by the Green gang or secret agents of the GMD.[15] Mu was also assassinated in 1940 by secret agents of the GMD as he took over the editorship of a newspaper under the puppet regime.[16]

As Shi Zhecun recalls, Liu Na'ou introduced various new literary trends from Japan to China, contributing greatly to the translation and transformation of Western modernity into China from 1928 to 1931:

> Liu Na'ou introduced a lot of newly published literary books, including some products of the new trend in Japanese art circles, such as Yokomitsu Riichi, Kawabata Yasunari, and Tanizaki Jun'ichiro's fiction; as for literary history and literary theory, he included some artistic books and reports on futurism, expressionism, surrealism, and historical materialism. In Japanese art circles, it seemed that all of these multicolored new artistic trends, as long as they were antitraditional, all belonged to "new" literature. Liu Na'ou had the greatest esteem for Friche's *The Sociology of Arts,* but his favorite was the work depicting the erotic life of the metropolis. For him, there were no contradictions: in Japanese art circles, these products were all "new" and "avant-garde." Their similarity lay in the newness of the creative methods and critical standards; their difference was in the direction of thought and social significance. Those opinions of Liu Na'ou had a great impact on us; therefore, our knowledge of art became very eclectic.[17]

From Shi Zhecun's description of Liu Na'ou's translations, we can see that modernities and modernism consisted of hybrid knowledge, and as they are transmitted from one culture to the other, the conditions that produced them in the original culture do not necessarily get passed along into China. Moreover, this translated knowledge does not automatically develop a site for resistance to Eurocentrism.[18] Rather, because of their newness, these different neologisms and forms of knowledge were mixed together, forging a connection between modernity and the complex process of domination, resistance, and appropriation in the cultural context of "Shanghai cosmopolitanism."[19] Since Liu's and his fellow modernists' sense of Chinese identity "was never in question in spite of the Western colonial presence in Shanghai," as Leo Ou-fan Lee argues, they "were able to embrace Western modernity openly, without fear of colonization."[20] Using Liu Na'ou's representations of the Westernized "modern girl" as an example to discuss the semicolonial formulations of gender and race in Shanghai, Shih Shu-mei also points out that "the search for

'civilization' in the Western mode need not be hampered by the existence of Western imperialism in China."[21] In other words, Liu Na'ou's translation of mixed Western knowledge cannot be simply categorized according to Western theories of colonialism and postcolonialism. Rather, his way of sinicizing and appropriating Western knowledge reveals complicated facets of Chinese modernity, beyond the binaries of the colonizer and the colonized, nationalism and imperialism.

Moreover, far from being interested in novelty as such or in novelty in general, Liu Na'ou and writers of the neosensationalist school tried to discover or invent a new form to convey the possibilities of crisis: the cultural crisis of Chinese tradition, the crisis of the nation, the crisis of modern man, or any other created crisis. In this new form, these writers juxtaposed the apparently contradictory notions of avant-gardism and decadence, revolution and eroticism. From this point of view, Liu Na'ou's use of revolution plus love can be defined as his personal manner of translating Western modernity into China. Liu could always find a certain parallelism between urban eroticism and revolutionary desire; for instance, he translated a collection of Japanese modernist writings, *Erotic Culture* (*Seqing wenhua,* 1928), which included seven Japanese *shinkankaku ha* works and proletarian stories. He said those Japanese writers "were all depicting the unhealthy life of the corrupted period of modern Japanese bourgeois society, but they also revealed implications for tomorrow's society and the new path of the future."[22] But under this title, the meaning of revolution was shaped by its erotic sensation.

Since he was a Taiwanese who grew up in Japan, Liu Na'ou's identity as "Chinese" was more problematic than that of native Chinese; he was caught up in the bitter conflict between the foreign and the traditional, the new and the old. The "un-Chinese" quality of his writing as well as his national identity became targets for leftist critics in the 1930s, but these characteristics "had been part of the aesthetic agenda of Shanghai modernist fiction from its inception."[23] His attitude toward the national crisis, or any other cultural crisis, was one of mockery of Chinese intellectuals' obsession with China. Transgressing national and cultural boundaries, his depiction of the Chinese is rife with foreign flavor, without the agony of identity crisis but generating the fantasy of difference.

In *Landscapes of the City* (*Dushi fengjing xian,* 1930), an interesting collection of short stories, the story "Flow" shows his intention to pursue the fashion of revolution plus love. Hidden in the crowd of a modern city, the story's Chinese characters, whose revolutionary and erotic consciousness and unconsciousness mingle with each other and make a memorable appearance in an exotic land, are ambivalent about their political identities. "The experience of Shanghai modernity, as it stands at the center of Liu Na'ou and Mu Shiying's

short stories," Yomi Braester suggests, "depends upon staging 'the modern' as a spectacle in which the characters view the city and the suburb and at the same time become part of that view."[24] Regarding the theme of revolution plus love as also part of this spectacle, Liu Na'ou lavishes criticism on the depravity of capitalist culture but at the same time is unable to resist its seduction.

Liu Na'ou's narrative strategy for grasping the fluidity of light, color, and sensation merits special attention here, because it creates a dazzling background behind which the lives of modern men and women are intensified and dramatized. The narrative language in "Flow" is a hybrid that crosses linguistic boundaries between Europeans and indigenous Chinese. This narrative language perfectly expresses the exotic and erotic city scenes, which titillate readers, making them feel lost in the array of modern cars and radiant neon signs, film images, and sensual fantasies. The story begins at a cinema where foreign technologies project and produce exotic and shocking experiences and visual pleasure. When Liu Na'ou depicts the atmosphere inside the cinema, he equates its real space with the illusory fluidity of fantasies derived from the silver screen:

> Suddenly, the pink light coming from nowhere illuminates the whole scene of the cinema. Some beautifully dressed women, who are sitting on the left, quickly pull thin scarves with flowery decorations over their faces. People seem to walk in the new wedding tent, the pink feeling starts to surround them layer upon layer. After a while, as soon as the machine sounds, the scene turns dark, and the white screen on the opposite side sparkles with silver light.[25]

Switching dramatically from pink light to a pink feeling, from the gaze of real people to the gaze of the silver screen, and from the theater to the fanciful visual pleasure, Liu Na'ou smoothly leads the reader into this intoxicating world. Liu was fond of film and was something of a film critic in the 1930s. He promoted "soft film" (*ruanxing dianying*)—film for entertainment—for which he was attacked by leftist film critics.[26] In "Flow," by emphasizing film's soft material as well as its entertainment function, Liu intends to criticize the extravagant and decadent bourgeois lifestyle; at the same time, however, his story seems intoxicated by these soft and floating images. The protagonist, Jingqiu, who works for a textile factory owner and has an opportunity to become the son-in-law of his boss, goes to movies—the dream world—with his boss's son, Tangwen. Although he accepts the progressive idea of opposing the bourgeoisie, Jingqiu is immediately enchanted by the realistic yet imaginary atmosphere of the cinema, a product of bourgeois class. As Jingqiu stares at the fictional but real Western world in the film, his desires and fantasies

mingle with the artificial and exotic visual objects. Liu Na'ou describes Jingqiu's first time watching a foreign film as an almost bodily experience that overpowers his rational mind. His description of Jingqiu's experience with foreign culture as one of fascination overwhelms any potential criticism Liu raises about the corrupt bourgeois lifestyle. Thus the real and the imaginary, the foreign and the native, as well as the upper-class and the proletarian consciousness contend with one another in Jingqiu's experience.

In the middle of the film, Tangwen and Jingqiu discover that Qingyun, the third concubine of Tangwen's father, is sitting in the same theater with another man, with whom she is obviously having an affair. To cover up her illicit behavior, she recklessly comes over and seductively lures Tangwen away to a tryst. After the two of them have left Jingqiu alone on the street, he suddenly feels lonely and disillusioned, and at this moment his class consciousness is awakened:

> Jingqiu still cannot calm his stimulated nerves, thinking silently in his heart. Hum! Is this what Tangwen had called the "diner de luxe" of eyes? Spending the money workers can't get even if they sweat for half a year brings only a little more than an hour of pink excitement. No wonder the lower-class people often argue about unfairness. I also understand a little bit of the feeling of the rich, but how long can they still indulge in their comfortable life and silk culture? With today's audiences, although they are enveloped in soft wool fabric and expensive fur, who knows if inside their bodies they aren't already corrupted? Most people among them are either hysterical women or impotent old men. How much strength do they have to participate in the future society?[27]

Although bearing the imprint of class ideology, Jingqiu's critique of capitalist exploitation and corruption is ironically triggered by his own repressed sexuality. Looking at the bourgeois class as represented by either "hysterical women or impotent old men," he positions himself as a male chauvinist and social Darwinian. Stimulated by foreign bourgeois pleasures, Jingqiu reflects on society, the future, the rich, and the poor instead of looking inward at himself. His class consciousness is constructed through negotiations between pleasure and anxiety, gain and loss, identification and projection. Dovetailing leftist ideology with cultural crisis, social decay, and his own depraved and erotic fantasy life, Jingqiu attempts to maintain his class identity against destabilizing erotic desire. Yet here the class conflict is only an extension of the author's imitation of the novelty or the avant-garde aesthetic gesture of Western modernity. The crisis also looks fake, deliberately created to link all existing symptoms of decadence and exhaustion to some vague class concept.

Jingqiu's political rhetoric is a means of expressing self-consciousness, class consciousness, and racial consciousness, but it also serves to make these forms of consciousness ironic and self-destructive.

Living in his boss's home, Jingqiu is involved in a sexual game with three women: the thirteen-year-old daughter of his boss; the daughter's private tutor, Xiaoying, who is also a revolutionary; and the concubine Qingyun. Wooing Xiaoying substantiates Jingqiu's class awareness. What attracts Jingqiu is her masculinized body—with its healthy dark skin, strong and elastic arms and legs, and short hair—and her masculine revolutionary ideas. Her masculinized body differentiates her from the femininity of the two other women in the decadent bourgeois family. The class boundary between the oppressor and the oppressed, the employer and the employee has been seemingly secured, but class and sex serve only coincidentally as conduits for Jingqiu's neurotic anxiety and sexual desire. Interestingly, Xiaoying declines Jingqiu's marriage proposal; instead, she chooses to have only a sexual relationship with him. A revolutionary who enjoys reading Bukharin's *Theory of Historical Materialism,* Xiaoying is also a typical modern fox spirit, who knows how to seduce men: she waits for Jingqiu in his bedroom, taking off her clothes and slipping into bed, titillating him in her cunning way. At this point, the revolution plus love formula is overtly transformed into the erotic game between man and woman. In addition, Jinqiu's flirtation with Qingyun and liaison with his boss's daughter turn a potentially progressive theme into a scandalous sexual game and orchestrate class differences in such a way that only unbridled desire is conspicuously highlighted. At the end of the story, Jingqiu quits his job and joins the workers' strike. After seeing enough actual examples of upper-class perversity, he decides to fight the bourgeoisie instead of continuing as a middleman between the oppressor and the oppressed. But his revolutionary energy is soon redirected to flirtation: he joins the strike because Xiaoying is one of the organizers and because her flirtatiousness irritates him.

Generally speaking, Liu Na'ou's rewriting of revolution plus love can easily overwhelm the reader with sensual excess, exotic language, and dazzling imagination. The title "Flow" points to the seductive bodies of modern fox spirits, the revolutionary Xiaoying and the capitalist's concubine Qingyun. No matter which class they identify with, they both represent modern femmes fatales, whose floating and soft bodies are reminders of the softness of film, the product of the immoral bourgeoisie. Enchanted as he is by such softness, Jingqiu's class consciousness inevitably loses its solid ground.

Although Liu Na'ou claims that his intention was to expose the decay of the bourgeois class and the crisis of a corrupted society, his obsession with erotic life and exotic urban scenes reveals a concept of class that is far removed

from Marxist theory. As his inquiry into class differences broadens, so too do the initially circumscribed sexual anxiety and erotic fantasies. Paralleling revolution with eroticism, Liu Na'ou's imitation of revolution plus love places this potentially progressive theme within the exotic world of sexual intoxication, which is utterly divorced from the social reality of the proletarian masses. Compared to Jiang Guangci's and other leftists' criticism of capitalist modernity, Liu Na'ou's engagement with this theme, which is largely in tune with the sensations of urban existence, shows his ambiguous attitude toward struggling against the forces of capitalism.

Mu Shiying: The Inner World and the Criticism of Modernity

Liu Na'ou's sense of crisis seems constructed only to provide opportunity for indulgence in erotic performance and to color his pastiche of exotic urban scenes. Mu Shiying's consciousness of crisis is different: it involves a rhetoric of parody that draws a line between Western modernity and his reflections on it. In other words, Mu Shiying's writings represent a modern artist's alienation from society and are an aesthetic reflection of the modernity of his age. According to critics Su Xuelin and Zhang Jingyuan, Mu Shiying is the most successful writer of the neosensationalist school.[28]

In the early part of his writing career, Mu wrote fiction dealing with the opposition between the upper class and the oppressed from the point of view of the lumpen proletariat,[29] focusing on the profound sense of loss, alienation, and crisis of modern Chinese men and women in semicolonial Shanghai. As Shi Zhecun describes, when Mu Shiying's early fiction was published, everybody thought it was the epitome of leftist writing. But later on, people questioned whether Mu's outlook was fundamentally Marxist, since he lacked proletarian life experiences. Shi Zhecun concludes that Mu Shiying could write fiction about Shanghai workers by relying on his uncanny ability to imitate content and form.[30] Later on, he turned from proletarian realism to urban modernism, taking the splendid and decadent city life as his central theme.

Like Liu Na'ou, Mu Shiying worked for some magazines controlled by Wang Jingwei's collaborationist government during the Japanese occupation; he too was assassinated by secret agents of the GMD. Ironically, writers like these who were more interested in the new technique of representation than in political ideology all met with tragedy in the political sphere. An orthodox Marxist might easily relate these two writers' political failures to their Western style of writing and its imitation of foreign decadence. However, their downfall resulted from national and cultural circumstances; as Shi Zhecun has said, "there was no room for development in literary themes, forms, and techniques."[31] The relationship

between Mu Shiying's modernist writings, his political life, and the theme of revolution plus love evinces the entangling issues of politics and writing.

Mu Shiying's "Pierrot" presents two worlds simultaneously: exotic and colonial Shanghai, where modern capitalist civilization, like a charming woman, allures and entices a nation; and a personal, subjective, and imaginative land in which an isolated individual feels a deep sense of crisis and alienation from the first world. The protagonist, Pan Heling, a writer, experiences the mental agony of the conflict between these two worlds. Driving and binding Mu Shiying's modernist narrative is a series of interrelated sociopolitical, psychosexual, and aesthetic issues: the lifestyle and economics of the modern city; perceptions of friendship, love, and sex; the collusion of revolution and eroticism; the contrast between city and countryside; questions of narrative authority; and crises of representation. Two narrative voices, one from the objective world and the other from Pan's subjective world, interweave throughout the story, exposing the complexity of modern identity. The dialogue between the narrative voices documents the splendor and decadence of city life while rendering a sense of alienation through the writer's self-mockery. Although he shares Liu Na'ou's obsession with urban decadence, Mu adds a voice critical of modern alienation. The lonely and subjective world becomes his counteractive force against modernity and progress.

Mu Shiying uses parentheses to indicate the inner voice of the protagonist Pan Heling, so the reader visually sees the dialogue between the outer and inner worlds, sees how this man gradually plunges into the despair of modern existence. Since the themes of anxiety, dread, and modern crisis are precisely the ones Mu attempts to capture in this story, revolution plus love—the real or imagined romantic home for most leftists—is inevitably swallowed by this sense of alienation. At the beginning of the story, after introducing Pan Heling's exotic love, a Japanese girl named Liuli zi, the narrator describes a prosperous urban street scene:

> Street. There are numerous magic eyes of the city on the street: the erotic eye of a dancing ball, a greedy fly's eye on a department store, the heavenly happy drunk eye of Beer Garden, the cheating vulgar eye of a beauty parlor, the intimate lascivious eye of a brothel, the hypocritical judging eye of a church, the cunning triangular eye of a cinema, the vague sleeping eye of a hotel. . . . A pink eye, a blue eye, a green eye, in the light of all these eyes a picture of the social customs of the city is opened. . . . The travelers who enjoy and look at this secret picture of customs have a grinning cheeky smile for no reason. Smiling and grimacing, Mr. Pan Heling appears on this street. It seems he is influenced by this carefree picture of social customs. Mr. Pan Heling walks

> with vigorous strides, wearing his hat askew, smiling and grimacing for no reason, just like other travelers.[32]

Roving like a movie camera, the narrative produces a sensational visual effect. Those "numerous magic eyes" conjure up the visual image of the city, aggressively gazing at the crowd. As Pan Heling seeks refuge, he gazes back at the city and the crowd with a smile and a grimace like a typical flaneur, maintaining his personality and personal space while he walks among the people on the street. Walter Benjamin describes the flaneur as someone "who demanded elbow room and was unwilling to forgo the life of a gentleman of leisure" and who "is as much out of place in an atmosphere of complete leisure as in the feverish turmoil of the city."[33] Using Benjamin's conception, Yomi Braester has suggested that "the impersonal gaze is one of the *flâneur*'s ways to immunize himself to the shock of the crowd." With it, he "restructures the space around him," "ostensibly indulging in consumption and gambling" as an escape from "the stress caused by the modern urban redefinitions of space and time."[34] Like the flaneur's impersonal gaze, Pan Heling's smile and grimace contain a self-mocking undertone, distancing him from the crowd. When discussing his love affair with his old friend, he complains about the friend's misunderstanding and concludes that "everyone in this world lives in a lonely and boring way." Even if he is enchanted by the magic eyes of the street, he cannot escape the sense of alienation caused by this commercial and semicolonial city. He walks and lives like a flaneur, but he is nevertheless unable to rid himself of an inner sense of contradiction.

A smile and a grimace are a mask for Pan Heling's lonely heart. Disguising his sadness with a happy face, Pan Heling is more like a Pierrot—a typical image of Mu's literary imagination—than the flaneur. Emphasizing Mu Shiying's pierrot character as a reflection of the writer himself, Leo Ou-fan Lee explains the difference:

> That Mu has consciously chosen the pierrot as the central figure in his urban landscape and as the self-image of a writer, instead of the more aristocratic dandy and the more aesthetic *flâneur,* may be connected with the pierrot figure's affinity to the Picaro, a roguish figure and tramp made popular by Charlie Chaplin. Both character types are, by definition, antiheroes, and can be regarded as lower-class counterparts to the *flâneur* and the dandy.[35]

Mu first portrays Pan Heling as a flaneur, then immediately criticizes and mocks that image from the perspective of the Pierrot, who questions and criticizes the leisurely city life. Like other *hommes de lettres* who enjoy gathering

and discussing a wide range of topics, Pan Heling holds a salon at his home. Suffused with an air of exotic imaginings and sexual fantasies, Pan's salon is full of conversations about city culture that go randomly from foreign movie stars to modernism, from Freudian to Russian revolutions, from narrative technique to eroticism. Interestingly, the narrator describes such cultural activity in a tone of parody. Pan makes every topic, high or low, into an erotic joke through Freudian interpretation in order to ridicule supposedly meaningful and noble subjects such as art, literature, and culture.

Sitting in his own salon, Pan Heling discovers his complete lack of identification with this erotic cultural phenomenon, especially when his guests give inaccurate interpretations of his novel. Finding that his original meaning has been distorted, Pan Heling feels despair: if words cannot convey basic meaning, how can people understand each other? His inner voice tells us, "human beings are spiritually separated, they are living a lonely existence." Once he is aware of the inescapable distance between words and meanings, his illusions of freedom, social relationships, and every other fundamental building block of modern life vanish. At this point, Mu Shiying's modern narrative technique conveys a crisis of communication among author, reader, and critic, a crisis of words and meanings, and a crisis of arts and culture that make Pan Heling's leisurely life as an *homme de lettres* incomplete and meaningless.

As he becomes disillusioned about such things as urban life, friendship, culture, and literature, his inner voice elevates love as a pure pillar in his spiritual ruins. But after he goes to Tokyo to pursue his love and discovers Liuli zi's affair with a Filipino, Pan soon becomes disillusioned with love and romance as well. He blames Liuli zi for forfeiting her chastity to a Filipino—"a slave without a country," whom even Pan Heling, as a Chinese, despises. Originally, Pan's relationship with Liuli zi was established in conjunction with Shanghai cosmopolitanism, which cannot be simply defined by either imperialism or nationalism. In other words, the power relationship between Japanese imperialism and Chinese nationalism did not play an important role in Pan Heling's pursuit of exoticism. Now, defeat in love evokes a complex racial identity, as his racial derogation of the Filipino reminds him of his inferior position before his Japanese lover, who represents imperialism and colonialism. As a typical Shanghai occidentalist who admires foreign power, Pan Heling imagines the exotic as a perfect Other; this illusion has been shattered. As a result, a particular discursive formation emerges, blending gender with race, eroticism with international interests, and love with power. Pan Heling's disillusionment with urban exoticism and eroticism represented by Liuli zi's body can also be read as a self-mockery of the writer who is intoxicated by foreign culture in Shanghai.

After he is disillusioned with the modern city culture—the erotic female body, urban exoticism, and the bourgeois lifestyle—Pan rediscovers the dream of his mother, his old family home, and the pure countryside. He buries his exotic fantasy and returns to his hometown. The contrast between the city and the countryside has deep allegorical meanings in modern Chinese literature: the city portrayed by writers such as Shen Congwen usually signifies decay, contamination, and alienation, while the countryside symbolizes lyricism, purity, naturalness, and health. In this pastoral environment, Pan suddenly longs for revolution. The connection between the idyllic countryside and revolution seems too abrupt, but it is the result of Pan Heling's utopian thinking, springing from a radical impatience with the imperfection of the world as it is. Home, countryside, and revolution become his last spiritual resort. But Pan Heling's utopian dream is easily and quickly shattered. After discovering that his parents regard him as little more than a source of money, he feels disillusioned about nature, countryside, and family. Now the only thing that attracts him is revolution, destruction, and rebellion.

As Pan Heling actively participates in revolution, he sees the masses, his heroic acts, and rebellion as poetry. He loves the masses and wants to be loved by them. But after he comes out of jail and becomes a cripple, the organization and his comrades slander him as a traitor and the masses do not even know of his existence. At the end of the story, Pan has lost all his beliefs and can only smile like an idiot. As the narrator says, "Everything is deceit! Friendship, love, arts, civilization . . . everything, rough and exquisite, inferior and abstruse, is deceit. Everyone deceives himself and deceives others."[36] The sense of crisis that Mu Shiying describes in this story is existential, going well beyond the political crisis of leftist ideology. However, for the critic Yan Jiayan, this sense of crisis, mediated by thoughts of nihilism, exposes the dark side of Mu Shiying's psychology and reveals the negative influence of the neosensationalist school, which embraces Western modernism uncritically.[37] Yan sees the neosensationalists as passive recipients and imitators of Western modernization and capitalist culture. In contrast, Leo Ou-fan Lee affirms Mu as an agent and subject of Chinese modernity, whose relationship with the Western colonial culture in Shanghai is one of subtle complexity. The pierrot-like figures that Mu creates "appear more self-paradistic than self-pitying," and their alienation in the urban city is, therefore, "more psychological than social."[38]

Indeed, the self-mocking tone of the Pierrot character aims not only to ridicule the group of Shanghai leftists who embrace romantic revolutionary literature, but also to mock the writer's own existence as a particularly self-conscious modern man. Unlike Liu Na'ou, who portrays revolution as just another scene of urban exoticism, Mu Shiying uses it to reflect modernity and

Shanghai urban culture, with which he is enchanted. His aesthetic seems caught in a major contradiction. On the one hand, by setting out to explore modernity as a spiritual adventure, he shows a genuine fascination with it; on the other hand, through a personal, individual, and subjective voice, he deplores the encroachment of materialism and hypocrisy and expresses his deep concern as a man inevitably fragmented by modernity. His rewriting of revolution plus love belongs to his project of reflecting progressive modernity; according to him, neither revolution nor love can rescue one from modern crisis, or from an alienating society. In this way, Mu Shiying's modernist writings not only add a sense of irony to leftist prescriptions of revolution plus love, but also have the explicit dimension of self-reflexivity in representing desire and urban modernity.

Zhang Ziping: The Consumer Culture

The case of Zhang Ziping is very complicated. Written while he was a member of the Creation Society, his early novels deal with some serious social problems, such as the freedom to fall in love and marry without consulting parents and the emancipation of the individual. With his 1925 novel *The Flying Catkin* (*Feixu*), however, Zhang changed into a popular writer specializing in triangular or quadrangular love stories. From then on, he catered to mass culture by focusing on eros, the psychology of sexuality, carnal desire, and love. In 1928, when leftist writers advocated revolutionary literature, Zhang Ziping responded immediately and claimed that he was willing to change direction again.[39] Some critics find connections between Zhang's move toward revolutionary literature and his economic concerns: as the head of Entertaining the Mass (Yuequn) bookstore in Shanghai, he had to attract more readers at a time when revolution was in fashion.[40] By then, he had translated some Japanese proletarian literary theory and fiction and started to tackle the theme of revolution plus love. But his revolutionary writing lasted only a short time. At the end of 1928, he resumed his old popular style and returned to themes of love and eroticism. Lu Xun once summarized the trajectory of Zhang Ziping's fiction as a big love triangle.[41] Hostile toward Lu Xun, Mao Dun, and other leftist writers, Zhang aimed in his late fiction to denigrate both the older May Fourth generation of writers and the younger generation of revolutionary writers.

Zhang Ziping's two novels *Long Journey* (*Changtu,* 1928) and *Pomegranate Flower* (*Shiliuhua,* 1928) are the products of his pursuit of the theme of revolution plus love. With these two novels, Zhang closely associates this popular formula with commodification and urban mass culture. Unlike the writings of Shi Zhecun, Liu Na'ou, and Mu Shiying, which pursue the same

theme though with experimental literary techniques, Zhang Ziping's commitment to mass culture tied him to his previous style and precluded innovation and novelty. He always returned to familiar generic stereotypes and imitations for mass consumption.

Written in 1928, Zhang Ziping's *Long Journey* attempts to follow the pattern of proletarian novels. The first half of the novel surprisingly contains a serious critique of society. The female protagonist, Biyun, who comes from the countryside, suffers economic pressures and human indifference in a totally strange city. In the second half of the novel, Biyun finally finds a job as a secretary in the military department of the revolutionary army. She completes her transformation from a country girl into an urban erotic woman, but this painful process reveals the dark side of the revolutionary effort, where some revolutionaries degenerate into "new bureaucrats and warlords," "depositing millions of dollars into the bank of imperialism."[42] At the same time, Biyun cannot help but also degenerate in the evil city, where the economy unscrupulously manipulates her body.

Although *Long Journey* is regarded as one of Zhang Ziping's most serious novels, beneath the surface of the social and political criticism is his favorite narrative pattern—the love triangle. The female protagonist, like most heroines in Zhang's fiction, is shaped and corrupted by the consumer culture of Shanghai. After recognizing the power of money, Biyun becomes more and more avaricious and never feels ashamed of sleeping around. Being chased by two or three men at the same time, she chooses money and sexual desire over traditionally defined love:

> Only now, after two or three years' hard work, she finally realizes her blind obedience. Before, when people talked about love, she believed in a real love; when people talked about saving the country, she believed it could be saved; when people said that after the success of the revolution everyone would have food, she also had deep trust in them. Actually, where does love exist? Nothing is real but eros and money. People are compelled by these desires, exhausted from running around; how can they have a heart for society, for the masses, and for love?[43]

Of course, surviving in the city is Biyun's primary concern; everything else looks empty and deceptive. In Zhang Ziping's fiction, money usually plays an important role: he concretizes the urban existence by means of detailed records of earning and spending, opting for the direct narration of a city's material life. Even when dealing with the theme of revolution plus love, Zhang pays more attention to the economy than to leftist ideology. For him, the power of money

and desire can easily surpass that of revolution and pure love. His meticulous account of ordinary life—everyday expenses, snobbish human relationships, and the crowded living space in Shanghai—is based on the conviction that economics has largely overcome the utopian impulse of revolution. In leftist writing, both revolution and love glitter like stars, instructing normal people to transcend the ugly and dirty world. Zhang Ziping, by contrast, maintains a suspicious attitude toward the illusive radiance of both revolution and love, since he himself is deeply rooted in the world of the urban petite bourgeoisie and their ordinary, bustling reality. Because of his consumer-oriented writing, revolutionary heroic spirit is absent in *Long Journey.* By putting a price tag on Biyun's existence and her relationships with other "degenerate" revolutionary lovers, Zhang Ziping unravels the urban landscape controlled by the market economy at the cost of impoverishing leftist ideology. Therefore, although he adds an ideological ending to the story—in which the masses come to struggle against imperialists in defense of their own country—the structure of the story remains influenced by the consumer culture in which the so-called progressive youths care about nothing but money.

In the preface to his novel *Pomegranate Flower,* Zhang Ziping writes: "This draft was planned in the spring of 1927. I feel a bit ashamed of the contradiction here, since on the one hand I advocated proletarian arts, but on the other hand I was writing such boring fiction." However, the contradictions between serious proletarian arts and vulgar entertainment did not stop Zhang from combining them. This bizarre synthesis in *Pomegranate Flower* redirected the author's progressive practice back to the familiar triangular love stories and reinterpreted revolution plus love within the context of urban consumer culture.

When some leftist writers distinguished between the popularization of arts for the masses (*dazhong wenyi*) and for the general population (*tongsu wenyi*), they defined the former as proletarian literature and the latter as entertainment for the leisured middle class, which has money and time.[44] Aiming at the general urban audience, Zhang Ziping focuses more on entertainment, the production and reproduction of which are based on commercial values rather than on political ideology. In *Pomegranate Flower,* what is missing in his most persistent structure—the love triangle—is the notion of class, the most important component of proletarian arts. This novel, therefore, provides a striking illustration of displacement: class antagonisms between rich and poor have been transformed into animosity between rivals in love. In a sense, Zhang replaces the meaning of "the masses" in proletarian literature with "the masses" of commercial culture: the readers of urban popular literature with diversified class backgrounds.

The plot of *Pomegranate Flower* unfolds through a triangular love story:

following her lover to join the revolution, Tang Xueqiao at the same time becomes the mistress of Commander Gu, who is a degenerate revolutionary, new bureaucrat, and warlord; at the end of the story, Tang Xueqiao assassinates Commander Gu to save her relationship with her upright revolutionary lover. The heroine resembles the stereotype of the revolutionary and decadent woman represented by Jiang Guangci and Mao Dun, but she never identifies sincerely with revolutionary ideology as they do. She appears fake, copying the images of new women in a twisted way; with her hedonistic idea of what is modern and progressive, she is a parody of the meaning of revolution and its romantic spirit.

Zhang Ziping's relationship to mass culture was closely linked with his view of naturalism, which in his mind occupied a much higher position than realism. His fondness for naturalism earned his writing a reputation for "low taste."[45] Zhang regarded psychological and physiological descriptions as essential and determinative elements of naturalist fiction. He argued that "human beings were a kind of biological organism, so their thoughts and behavior were mostly controlled by physiology. Therefore any observation of human beings must start from the description of physiology."[46] Unlike Mao Dun's promotion of naturalism as a serious literary form of criticizing social reality, Zhang Ziping's interpretation of naturalism paves a convenient way for him to concentrate on the descriptions of wanton depravity, the commodity fetish of women's bodies, and the materialization of urban life. As a result, most of his novels are trapped in low moral and artistic standards. Zhang's naturalist descriptions of sex served to boost the sale of his books and strengthen his alliance with the prevailing leisure-class culture in which the only unchallenged standards are utilitarian and mercantile. As a result, his version of revolutionary literature not only appeals to the working class but also cuts across the entire strata of public taste, reflecting social disintegration instead of the unity of the subordinated class. As a result, the core of his revolution plus love writing is the intricate intersection between the new and the traditional, high and low tastes. His protagonists are at once modern and traditional, progressive and regressive; they reflect the mixed and complicated psychological and physiological turmoil faced by readers in an era of conflict between tradition and modernity.

Although in some leftist writings images of revolutionary and decadent women are used to convey revolutionary ideas, Zhang Ziping's portrayal of Tang Xueqiao is meant to please, to satisfy the most widespread popular aesthetic taste, which includes a vague ideal of beauty held by both the leisure and lower classes. Described as a typical femme fatale, she appears as a female revolutionary who is capable of playing the game of flirtation and deceit. At the beginning of the novel, the narrator presents some shallow discussion about women among progressive people and then places Tang Xueqiao in a triangular

relationship. As the plot advances, a married professor becomes obsessed with her and then discovers in her diary the secret of her lost virginity. Of course, women's bodies and virginity are the most vulgar commodities in the cultural marketplace, and through this popular aesthetic the signs of proletarian art are misused or counterfeited. Tang Xueqiao finally chooses to assassinate Commander Gu, a negative example of revolution. But this dramatic event fails to save the novel from the popular aesthetic taste. The hedonistic Tang Xueqiao actually enjoys the voluptuous life Commander Gu provides; even her revolutionary lover cannot prevent her from degenerating. The revolutionary motivation behind the assassination is superficial; the basis of this triangular love story is still eros and material desire. Putting revolution plus love within the capitalist culture of consumption, desire, and commodification, Zhang Ziping responds primarily to leisure-class psychological and physiological needs, and such a response ineluctably alters the meanings of revolution that adheres to Marxism in Jiang Guangci's serious political writing. In fact, Zhang's nonserious and playful repetition of this formula can appeal to both the upper and lower classes. What is difficult for Zhang Ziping to accept is the identification of the masses with the working class in proletarian literature. Writing according to the aesthetic view of biological naturalism, Zhang Ziping is so obsessed with eros that he questions the transcendental power of revolution and love in his depiction of a romantic triangle. For him, there is nothing more substantial than psychosexuality and physiology, and the power of revolution and love is not necessarily superior to that of eros. Tang Xueqiao's dramatic revolutionary action is not motivated by political ideology, but rather is arranged to entertain and divert readers with eros, sexual adventure, and other fashionable ideas.

Of course, the psychological consequences of modernity's increasing pace and the turbulent revolutionary background helped popularize revolution plus love, for its content and form all represented the new. But, as an unmistakable sign of modernization, the consumer culture also gave fuel to writers. In his writing of this formula, Zhang Ziping feels no moral obligation to educate the masses. His narrative is implicated in the commodification of literature, mirroring the details of daily life, the low taste of the urban audience, and the logic of the market. Revolution is but an empty shell, in which his heroines' desires and needs are fueled by their materialist pursuits. As a result, the myth of progress appears to have been largely exhausted by the ethics of consumerism.

Ye Lingfeng: The Political and Commercial Kitsch

Ye Lingfeng also paid special attention to consumers of mass culture. As Zhang Jingyuan observes, "Ye Lingfeng often accommodates his fiction to the

needs of common readers; that is, he often treats sexuality according to the conventions of popular literature." She quotes Ye's own words to demonstrate her observation: "I know that ordinary readers require me to produce stories like 'Yu' [Bathing] and 'Lang tao sha' [Waves wash sands], which contain strong erotic stimulation or extremely melancholy romances."[47] This, however, accounts for only part of Ye Lingfeng's ambivalent attitude, for he also shows open appreciation of some of the new literary styles invented by Western modernist writers.

Ye Lingfeng was a member of the Creation Society, and his fiction not only carried on the tradition of romanticism favored by Yu Dafu and other members of the society, but also developed it by adopting Western decadent and fin-de-siècle styles. In 1926, he founded the magazine *Illusive Land* (*Huanzhou*), trying to separate himself from the leftists of the Creation Society by focusing more on new romanticism. Some of his writings are similar to those of the neosensationalist school; Leo Ou-fan Lee discusses him along with other urban modernists such as Shi Zhecun, Liu Na'ou, and Mu Shiying in his insightful study of modern Shanghai.[48]

We may see Ye Lingfeng as a writer who straddles the fence between the elite and the popular (as we have seen, though, the boundary between the two in Shanghai urban culture was never that clear). Both Ye Lingfeng's illustrations, which imitate the style of Beardsley, and his stories aim to both promote a high literary style and cater to popular taste. To accommodate the urban audience that expects "those modern 'talent-meets-beauty' romances with 'extremely strong sexual titillation or extremely sentimental romantic plot,'"[49] he chose a mode convenient for increasing the circulation of his fiction among a broad readership. Lu Xun once mocked Ye Lingfeng as "both a gifted scholar and a hooligan," a popular disparagement that indicates Ye's bizarre position in the literary field.[50] Ye was talented in assimilating elements of exotic modernism, but he wrote mainly for the entertainment of urban readers. While Ye Lingfeng's fiction contains "newness" and experimentation, he is clearly committed to kitsch,[51] which suggests repetition, banality, triteness. Moreover, his imitation of the fashionable formula of revolution plus love belongs to both a political kitsch and a commercial kitsch, each of which has the potential to alter the original goal of this formula—propagating proletarian literature and Marxist thought. Masquerading as political propaganda, his writing is actually a part of cultural entertainment, which in turn becomes a satire of this fashionable formula that itself is also derived from a form of kitsch.

Written in 1930, "Miracle" (Shenji) represents Ye Lingfeng's fictional practice of revolutionary literature. The plot of this story is simple: a modern, revolutionary girl, Ning Na, creates a miracle for the revolution. Utilizing her

pilot cousin, who admires her, Ning spreads thousands of propaganda sheets all over the Shanghai sky from her cousin's military plane. Like other new women in left-wing writings, Ning Na simultaneously appears as a devoted revolutionary and maintains a modern Shanghai girl's seductive and attractive manner. However, what distinguishes her is her romantic heroism, which Ye presents in an exaggerated fashion. He treats Ning Na's heroic flight as a kind of performance art: Shanghai is a big theater, and Ning Na performs in front of her audience—the masses; releasing the colorful propaganda leaflet, she decorates the sky and then unfolds behind the plane a long resplendent flag, delighting the spectators below. The audience is ecstatic over her romantic and heroic performance, shouting "Long live Ning Na" and breaking into deafening cheers.

Relating a modern revolutionary girl to a powerful modern machine—an airplane—Ye Lingfeng understands revolution as in some ways strikingly similar to the shock of modernity. In that association, he not only romanticizes but also modernizes revolution; moreover, he describes Ning Na's revolutionary act as an artistic manifesto. The shocking effect Ye pursues in this story shows his interest in exploring new, previously forbidden horizons of creativity in the spirit of the avant-garde. Ye writes revolutionary literature with the Western avant-garde's aesthetic goal—to bring art back to the praxis of life.[52] Such a spirit can explain why so many Shanghai modernist writers were fascinated by revolutionary literature. However, such Western conceptions of the avant-garde fail to grasp the complexity of modernist practice in the Chinese context. Ye Lingfeng's various writings demonstrate that he does not belong to high modernism, mass culture, or the avant-garde. "Miracle" is at once avant-gardist and receptive to mass culture. Ning Na's revolutionary action is mixed with an entertaining effect, and the masses are enthralled by her performance. What appear most revolutionary in this story are the modern machine, Ning Na's seductiveness, and her theatrical performance, not the revolutionary ideology conveyed on the leaflets. What is important is not what is printed on the colorful propaganda sheets, but the way they dance and flutter in the sky.

In another novel, *Red Angel* (*Hongde tianshi,* 1930), which also deals with revolution plus love, Ye Lingfeng shows a tendency to oblige popular aesthetic tastes. Treating this formula as something new, romantic, and stimulating, he avoids setting moral standards even if he is dealing with highly political and ethical topics. A typical quadrangular love story, *Red Angel* is divided into three sections: "Love" (Lian), "Change" (Bian), and "Reunion" (He). In the first section, the protagonist, Jianhe, meets his two cousins Shuqing and Wanqing when he carries out revolutionary duties in Beijing. He soon falls in love with Shuqing and marries her after the three of them move to Shanghai. To eulogize the association of revolution and love, the narrator provides an extremely romantic scene:

> This day on the morning sea, facing the rising sun from the East, this red angel, they feel it is the symbol of their bright future and happiness. Standing under the illumination of this morning sun, they all swear silently that as long as the sun exists, they will stand together inside its brightness forever. "Long Live the red angel!" "Long live people who are happily standing under his brightness."[53]

This scene echoes Ning Na's romantic manifesto, but as the narrator moves to the second section of the novel, "Change," the rising sun inexorably slides down and loses its brightness. Because she is jealous, Wanqing schemes to foment discord in her sister's marriage. After successfully seducing her brother-in-law, she plans to trap her sister in an illicit relationship with Jianhe's friend Mr. Wei, who opposes Jianhe's revolutionary ideas. But after Jianhe is betrayed by Mr. Wei and put in jail, Wanqing realizes her mistake and suddenly commits suicide. Finally, in the last section of the story, "Reunion," Jianhe and Shuqing forgive each other and restore their marriage.

The rising sun, the so-called red angel in the novel, reminds us of the positive romantic spirit carried by revolution plus love, but Ye Lingfeng adds a twist by equating revolution with decadence. The cover that Ye himself designed for *Red Angel* best illustrates his decadent imagination of a supposedly progressive topic. In this drawing, the star and the rising sun are cut into pieces by lines and shadows, suggesting that both revolution and love are entangled with sexual titillation, adultery, and the quadrangular love relationship. Although the revolutionary hero Jianhe seems to be well equipped with class ideology, he is nothing but a typical dandy who plays a sexual game with two sisters at the same time. The younger sister, Wanqing, an admirer of Shanghai's urban culture and a loyal reader of Zhang Jingsheng's *History of Sex* (*Xingshi*), becomes a metaphor for the city. Erotic and deceiving, she has the power to lure both her sister and Jianhe into a sexual frenzy in which revolution seems fake and love turns into adultery. She is no longer the passive object of the erotic sex game, but the one who aggressively designs and controls it until Jianhe is jailed by his rival. Emphasizing those decadent sexual games, the story does not have clear ideological content or serious social criticism.

Within the novel, two uses of language can be distinguished: a political use, which imitates leftist writers' ideological language, and a seductive use, which typifies most of Ye Lingfeng's writing. As the famous critic Zheng Boqi observed, "What Ye Lingfeng emphasizes is the process of stories, which has a seductive effect through his way of narrating."[54] Although Ye Lingfeng copies revolutionary language, his seductive narrative voice always disturbs the sense of morality that this political language attempts to convey. The combination

conveys an ironic attitude toward the marriage of revolution and love. All the revolution-related language and details are just decorations for sexual flirtation.

Ye Lingfeng, in equating revolution with decadence, differs from Western artists and writers in the late nineteenth century "who considered themselves decadents, consciously and aggressively cultivated a style of their own alienation, on both moral and aesthetic grounds, against the complacent humanism and hypocritical philistinism of the bourgeois majority."[55] In this story, he does not establish an aesthetic critique of revolution in terms of literary decadence nor does he show any intention of castigating the immoral bourgeois lifestyle. The novel is prone to political or commercial kitsch, derived from his eagerness to keep up with fashion. In other words, it reads like popular fiction, a modern talent-meets-beauty romance.

There is a certain similarity between Zhang Ziping's *Pomegranate Flower* and Ye Lingfeng's *Red Angel*. Besides the convenient framework of a triangular or quadrangular love story they share, both novels lead revolution plus love into an erotic system in which power is defined in relation to sexual energy. Adultery, for example, seriously interrogates and destroys the old moral system of society. Yet adultery also casts a shadow over the brightness of the sun, which symbolizes the progressive ideology of revolution plus love. Zhang Ziping's and Ye Lingfeng's erotic universes are fantasies that respond to the requirements of popular aesthetic taste and are far removed from social reality. This quality of fantasy undermines what serious social criticism they include in their novels and alters the utopian goal that impels the writing of revolution plus love. Deprived of its political function, the formula is reconstructed and recontextualized as another product of urban popular literature.

The Shanghai school writers' variations of revolution plus love that we have examined thus suggest different strategies of representation that can alter the hegemonic ideological formula. The literary scholarship on the Shanghai school in mainland China has usually condemned its tendency toward kitsch and low taste—products of a semicolonial culture—but seldom has it emphasized that this form of literature has been a remarkable bearer of the newly emerged modernity.[56] The conventional view of the Shanghai school has been challenged since the writings of Yan Jiayan and Leo Ou-fan Lee, who helped reintroduce the avant-garde, modernist stance that typified Shi Zhecun, Liu Na'ou, and Mu Shiying. However, Yan's and Lee's promotion of the modernist neosensationalist school does not mean there was a long-standing boundary between the high modernism and popular culture represented by writers such as Zhang Ziping, who eagerly joined the turbulent tides of the consumer market. The difficulty of categorizing the Shanghai school writers in terms of the old dichotomy of high and low forces us to reconsider the historical condi-

tion within which these writers mediated between aesthetic innovation and the marketization of Shanghai culture.

As we place these five Shanghai school writers in the framework of revolution plus love, we can see these writers integrate the politically oriented form with commercial as well as aesthetic issues. By doing so, the seemingly unchanging formula begins to shatter into a complex mix of formal strategies that subvert the political ideology embodied by the formula. It is commonly known that Jiang Guangci—"a bad writer yet a somewhat effective propagandist"—was criticized for his notorious "neglect of art" by leftist critics such as Mao Dun and Qu Qiubai.[57] As an imitation of Jiang's writing of revolution plus love, the aesthetic as well as political values of those Shanghai school writers' formulaic practice were much less marked. Even Shi Zhecun himself was so ashamed of this stage in his career that once he became well known, he was never willing to mention his short story "Pursuit" again.[58] However, what is more important here is not a judgment of aesthetic values, but rather the complicated cultural politics during the period of revolutionary literature, which has been whitewashed by literary historians. As a matter of fact, those marginalized writings suggest the emergence of hybridizing experiments that embody multiple ideologies during the early stage of proletarian literature, a stage that was not exclusively defined by Marxism. The revolutionary meaning and the leftists' utopian dream of the nation are often altered by these Shanghai school writers through their combination of politics with the commercial, of avant-garde sensibilities with popular ones, through their emphasis on personal dream, illusion, and fantasy that are closely related to urban life, especially the bourgeois kind of lifestyle. Accordingly, the performative act of these writers should not be isolated from the study of revolutionary literature or excluded from the study of Shanghai culture.

5 Love Cannot Be Forgotten

The following well-known lines by the poet Wen Jie (1923–1971) represent how the relationship between revolution and love was defined during the first seventeen years of PRC history, a relatively neglected period in current studies of modern Chinese literature.

> Zao er han would like to satisfy your hope,
> Thank you for the passionate singing as hot as fire;
> But, you want me to marry you?
> You lack a medal on your shirt.[1]

A medal was symptomatic of the ubiquitous new love concept, a new definition of masculinity: young women would be attracted by revolutionary heroes' medals and their political consciousness rather than material wealth or physical attributes. One typical literary expression of this new love ideal is Liu Qing's (1916–1978) *History of the Pioneers* (*Chuangyeshi*, 1959), in which the heroine, Gaixia, falls in love with the poor peasant Liang Shengbao, whose only advantage over other, more educated or wealthy young admirers is his progressive political identity. Placing personal sexual lives at the core of new China's political activism instead of focusing on the material world, this theme appears innocent, pure, and lofty on the surface. However, women's fetish of the medal, in various guises, reveals that this idealistic view of romance is by no means innocent; its overarching orientation is toward utilitarianism.

Was there a kind of pure love that could transcend political commitment during the first seventeen years? Had Chinese intellectuals finally finished their transformation from the petite bourgeoisie to the proletarian collective? How should love be represented in relation to the new revolutionary task—building the new People's Republic of China? By raising these questions, I intend to bring to critical attention the fact that, during the 1950s and early 1960s, even

though numerous novels were published about politically predetermined love relationships, many people wondered if such love was really pure. This chapter will give some examples of novels in which the politically defined concept of love is seemingly affirmed but also challenged. By focusing on contradictions and tensions between revolution and love, I question if romantic love and related topics, such as sexuality and gender, were totally subordinated to the state's political discourse, as some critics claim.[2] Could love, sexuality, and gender, represented as being repressed by the social and political authority, still have the power to challenge the raison d'être of revolutionary discourse, which is also an ongoing process that we cannot regard as a complete and single entity?[3] In other words, can we read the representation of love, sexuality, and gender beyond the category of repression by and resistance to political ideology during this period? In the rewriting of sexual love as sublime political passion,[4] was there something nontransmittable about love, sexuality, and gender?

Some Theoretical Issues on Gender and Politics

On their wedding night, the dialogue between the bride Xiujuan and the groom Yonggui in *Flowers of Bitterness* (*Kucaihua,* 1958) represents the cliché of how people express their love in revolutionary novels produced during the first seventeen years:

> "Xiujuan, you love me so much, I really feel . . . You love me more than anyone." . . .
>
> "Why are you mentioning this, Yongquan! Ain't I taking the road of revolution because of you? This is all because of our Party."[5]

Political discourse invaded private space in revolutionary novels; love became revolutionalized and revolution became romanticized.[6] Unlike during Jiang Guangci's period, which extolled both personal happiness and collective utopia, the repetition of revolution plus love during the first seventeen years could no longer engender so many different interpretations and reworkings, since personal love was strictly measured and controlled by revolutionary discourse. However, this does not mean that love was forgotten, as it appeared to be during the Cultural Revolution; instead, personal love worked in close concert with romantic revolutionary spirit. Personal sexual love was not only channeled and sublimated into political goals, it also existed in harmony with them, demonstrating the real happiness in people's lives.

In her reading of revolutionary literature during the first seventeen years of the PRC, feminist critic Meng Yue argues that "the state's political discourse

translated itself through women into the private context of desire, love, marriage, divorce, and familiar relations, and . . . it turned woman into an agent politicizing desire, love, and family relations by delimiting and repressing sexuality, self, and all private emotions."[7] In contrast with the officially sponsored sexual equality between men and women, Meng Yue notes, women's bodies and sexual desire went through a process of desexualization, after which they, as the "daughters of the Party," were the bearers of the socialist myth of class struggle or liberation. Dwelling upon a natural and essential sexual difference, Meng Yue's opinion, which was widely shared among many Chinese feminist critics, has proved powerful in deconstructing the Party discourse of women's liberation. However, such a reading limits the relationships between women and the Party, private and public, gender and state to the dichotomy of oppression and rejection, failing to explain why the repressive Communist ideology could arouse pleasure and a sense of romance that influenced a lot of youth at the time.

Taking a different approach, Wang Ban in his book *The Sublime Figure of History: Aesthetics and Politics in Twentieth-Century China* considers politics as a productive institution that represents itself as an art, rather than as a negative entity whose function is repression. As Foucault pointed out, "What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourses."[8] Following Foucault's thought, Wang Ban pays more attention to political sexuality that goes beyond the heterosexual relationship, expanding its sexual implications and libidinal intensity to the sublime. Regarding sexuality not only in a subordinate relation to politics, Wang opens another door for us to explore how the hegemonic cultural practice can produce passion and enjoyment:

> The real question thus is not the sacrifice of sexuality, but how and how much sexuality is manifested. If we read the other way around, not in terms of politics versus sexuality, but in terms of sexuality in the guise of politics; if we pay attention not just to sexual politics but to political sexuality, we may be able to trace some deep psychic roots of Communist culture. Despite its puritanical surface, Communist culture is sexually charged in its own way. High-handed as it is, Communist culture does not—it cannot, in fact—erase sexuality out of existence. Rather, it meets sexuality halfway, caters to it, and assimilates it into its structure. Communist culture was attractive to some extent precisely because it incorporated sexuality.[9]

Indeed, Wang Ban's reading clearly explains why revolutionary romance and romantic revolution could make a strong emotional appeal to a mass audience. However, his discussion leaves unclear precisely what he means by gen-

der. He analyzes the place of the feminine in the masculine discourse of the Western sublime, relating them to the Chinese notion of yang and yin, respectively, and examines how the feminine has been channeled into the sublime in revolutionary discourse. But his definition of gendered elements is fixed by a series of dichotomies between the sublime and the feminine, between yang and yin. It ignores the complexity of gender when it carries an authoritarian voice. Can the feminine be easily or totally channeled and sublimated into broader and higher goals, such as revolution and nationalism? Is it possible to conceive of gender as ambiguous, since it cannot be limited within heterosexuality in the ideal of the revolutionary age?

Another problem with Meng Yue's reading is her ignorance of gender's ambiguity. In her analysis of Ding Ling's *The Sun Shines over the Sanggan River* (*Taiyang zhaozai sanggan heshang,* 1948), she notices that gender and sexuality are repressed by the class struggle in that Ding Ling has the landlord's niece Heini and the poor peasant Chengren forsake their love. Yet Meng Yue does not point out that because Heini symbolizes the murky area of gender, which the authoritarian voice of class struggle cannot completely control, Ding Ling had to leave her "real slave identity" unresolved. This unresolved problem can generate ambiguity that may transgress the political framework of the novel.

Meng Yue's reading shows too much of the repressive side of the dominant power, whereas Wang Ban portrays the political power's transformation of personal sexual love and libidinal implication too positively and romantically. I believe the seemingly opposite readings are two sides of the same coin, both exposing how politics produced and restrained gender and sexuality during the first seventeen years. We need to regard gender not as a fixed or essential term but rather as a tangible and amorphous bodily attribute that can also generate positive power, disturbing the harmonious bond between revolution and romance.

Echoing Wang's viewpoint, Zhong Xueping's research on youth and gender in Chinese films of the 1950s and 1960s focuses on the pleasure that didactic films can offer and examines the complex construction of gendered youth. Criticizing the assumption that women from the Mao era were rendered androgynous and lost their femininity, Zhong argues that "the standards for 'androgyny' and 'femininity' are often taken for granted or assumed, and the assumptions themselves have yet to be fully examined, especially in relation to the characterizations of women growing up in the Mao era (not to mention the possibility of considering the issue as an 'alternative femininity')."[10] Zhong seeks to elucidate the various discourses of gender of the revolutionary period by probing deeper into the definitions of "androgyny" and "femininity."

Although she has not clearly defined "alternative femininity," her comparison of the older and younger generations recognizes that gender varies as it intersects with different and changing societal stratifications and movements.

Seeing femininity as a secret agent rebelling against the Western discourse of the sublime, Naomi Schor draws our attention to its disruptive, decadent, physical, and ornamental qualities.[11] Applying Schor's discourse of the feminine to the first seventeen years, we may see that as women became more and more androgynous in the Mao era, the disruptive force of femininity was doomed to gradually lose its power. As a result, even if women seemed to have gained their emancipation, they were only instruments conveying the Party's patriarchal voice. However, this does not mean that the feminine could be easily transformed from a lower to a higher and purer state of existence; nor was its disruptive power under political pressure as forceful as Schor describes. Rather, the conflict between the feminine and the sublime at this historical moment was much more ambiguous and subtle. Therefore, we must first historicize the abstruse relationship between the feminine and the sublime, love and revolution, understanding that gender has complex implications as it entangles with politics. Only then can we discover that the process of sublimation is full of contradictions and cannot be taken for granted.

In my reading of revolutionary novels of the first seventeen years, I understand gender meanings not as passive recipients of political power, but rather as fluid constructions shifting with changing cultural formations, conditions, and alliances. Gender is a culturally defined category acting against the seemingly overwhelming authoritarian voice. Instead of emphasizing how revolution incorporated gender and gender roles into politics, I pay attention to the ways in which that appropriation is contested relentlessly through tensions and contradictions hidden under the literary representation of revolutionary novels. I deal with several controversial novels of revolution and love from that period, unraveling the complexity and ambiguity of gender and sexuality that intruded upon the revolutionary representation. Those controversial novels as well as literary debates around them suggest some awkwardness and embarrassment derived from the conflict between revolution and love.

The Subtle Relationship between Husband and Wife

The conventional wisdom is that in the first seventeen years of PRC history, the transitional period from the new democratic movement to the new socialist movement,[12] political ideology informed many novels. Little attention has been given to how those revolutionary novels were criticized during subsequent political movements. Among those highly politically oriented novels

that were accused of being antirevolutionary, novels with the popular theme of revolution and love became easy targets for criticism.

One of the major debates in the literary field after the establishment of the "new China" is centered on Xiao Yemu's (1918–1970) short story "Between Me and My Wife" (Women fufu zhijian, 1949). This story is mainly about love, conflict, and compromise between the husband, Li Ke, a revolutionary intellectual and cadre, and the wife, Comrade Zhang, born a peasant, who participates in revolution at the age of nineteen and then works in a military factory for six years. From the narrator, the husband, we learn that the couple has a harmonious love relationship until they move from the countryside to the city, Beijing. The husband fits in easily: he enjoys jazz, fashionable clothes, good manners, dance halls, going to restaurants, and shopping. In contrast, the wife adamantly refuses to be changed by the city. She uses political principles to judge her husband and other people, and her unrefined manner and country lifestyle cause serious friction with her husband. At the end of the story, they regain their harmonious life because the husband is touched by his wife's persistence in politics, which he lacks after his attraction to the city.

The tension between city and countryside, bourgeois and working class, regression and progress, defines this love relationship. On one level, through the husband-narrator's confession, Xiao Yemu seems to affirm and panegyrize the wife's political consciousness and her resistance to the city's seduction even at the expense of denigrating her husband's indulgence in it. However, a sense of irony and ambiguity inevitably emerges as the narrator points out irreconcilable differences between husband and wife through their different adaptations to city life. The love relationship between husband and wife, therefore, is both subtler and more complex than what ideological differences can inscribe.

Xiao Yemu presents a nuanced description of the couple's day-to-day life, closely narrating their arrival in Beijing, the husband's frustration with his wife's stubborn attitude and uneducated manner, the wife's doomed effort at molding the city from the proletarian point of view, her constant conflicts with her husband, her final subtle change, and the happy reunion between husband and wife at the end. Foregrounding the city as a key element of this couple's relationship, the narrator shows how differently the husband and the wife perceive the details of life there: dining out, dressing, consuming, entertaining, managing money, interfering with street affairs, and dealing with the babysitter. What makes this story different from other revolutionary novels is the author's emphasis on the trivial and tedious domestic experience of a couple in the modern city.

As the symbol of the countryside, the body of the wife in the city is intensely

disciplined by political concepts at the beginning of the story. Representative of a kind of woman from the Mao era who appears more androgynous (or masculine) than feminine, she aims to reform the city by means of the country standard, which is favored by the Communist Party. A serious battle between city and countryside can also be seen in the famous film *Soldiers under the Neon Lights* (*Nihongdeng xiade shaobing,* 1964),[13] about how dangerous the city can be as it seduces the highly trained bodies of Communist soldiers. The film attempts to convey that nothing is more dangerous than the city, which is the base for bourgeois thought, a factory producing the "sweet-cloth" bombs that can undermine what revolution has brought to the new China. Xiao Yemu's "Between Me and My Wife" touches upon the same theme; however, the narrator's political voice loses its high pitch in the middle of his meticulous description of the couple's daily life in the modern city. Even the wife's disciplined body has been reformed by the city. Originally, she abhors women who put on makeup, curl their hair, and wear high heels. Yet following the husband's observations, we find out that she has changed her attitude as well as lifestyle:

> She became neat and clean in terms of dressing, and being very polite when she met strangers. What surprised me most is that she purchased a pair of used leather shoes from the market. She would put them on whenever there were some occasions like gathering or marching down the street. As soon as she returned she quickly took them off and put them in a box under the bed. . . . I think, after all, female comrades do love beauty.[14]

Because the wife gradually adopts femininity, she is not able to totally dedicate her body to the rationality of revolutionary discipline. The couple's final happy reunion further problematizes the wife's body, because it means that the countryside standard that she firmly holds has already been conquered by the city, whose multidimensional environment allows petit bourgeois thought to exist.

Published in 1949, Xiao Yemu's "Between Me and My Wife" was well received by many youths, then elicited a sharp response from Party literary leaders such as Chen Yong,[15] Feng Xuefeng,[16] and Ding Ling in 1951. Ding Ling, who was one of the vice-chairs of the Chinese Writers' Association and in charge of many important newspapers, journals, and institutions before she became an antirevolutionary rightist in 1957, wrote an open letter to Xiao Yemu in *Arts Newspaper* (*Wenyi bao*). In the letter, titled "Looking as a Kind of Tendency," Ding Ling points out that the problem of "Between Me and My Wife" is its intention to "cater to a group of urban petit bourgeois' low taste" and "distort and ridicule the image of workers, peasants, and soldiers":[17]

> What is the low taste of urban petit bourgeois? It is that they prefer to turn every serious thing into an amusement. All kinds of problems related to serious political thoughts are canceled in their light and frivolous smiling and grimacing. They are sensitive to new stuff, but no matter what kind of new stuff, they would treat it equally without discrimination and put it in their stove of old taste.[18]

The so-called low taste of urban petit bourgeois that Ding Ling criticizes is closely related to the private space and domestic details of urban life, which eventually change the disciplined body of the wife. What Ding Ling and other Party literary bureaucrats wanted to attack was a group of writers and critics who insisted on their pursuit of a sense of humanity (*renqing wei*), which could still be discovered in many revolutionary novels in the first seventeen years. In his response to Ding Ling's letter in 1951, Xiao Yemu provides certain self-criticisms, admitting that he is "aloof from politics, obsessed with some trivial matters in the daily life, regarding those details as significant."[19] He also reveals that he revised "Between Me and My Wife" twice in 1950. For example, he deleted the description of the city scene and the fighting between the husband and the wife. However, he admitted that those revisions were not enough and that he needed to correct his fundamental mistake—the petit bourgeois taste.

This literary debate claimed to have "protect[ed] Yan'an literature," which was criticized by some writers and critics as "too dry, [having] no feeling, no taste, no artistic craftsmanship."[20] According to the critic Hong Zicheng, the debate not only reflects the conflict between Yan'an literature and city literature but also exposes the psychology of the "protectors" of Yan'an literature at the time.[21] The literati tried to promote more works to educate people about the dangers of decadent urban life in the 1950s and 1960s. For instance, the fear of the city's attraction was represented in the drama and the film of *Soldiers under the Neon Lights*, and the awareness of the importance of domestic trivia was represented in the drama *Don't Ever Forget* (*Qianwan buyao wangji,* 1963).[22]

Although this literary debate is an exemplary ideological expression indicating the limits of the self as well as the personal space Chinese writers could preserve at the time, it also shows that love and related subjects have a certain power to go beyond this political limit. The love between husband and wife creates a space where the self's sensory and bodily capacities become intricately bound up with the details of daily life, where emotional impulses are not strong enough to be sublimated into revolutionary passion. Those details have dragged down the wife's politicized body and her high revolutionary spirit, passion, and identity.

Another controversial novel, Deng Youmei's (1931–) *On the Cliff* (*Zai*

xuanya shang), written in 1956, tells of a married man's love affair, which complicates the author's revolutionary message. Published in the Hundred Flowers period, when Chinese intellectuals were encouraged by Mao Zedong to freely express their ideas (only to be persecuted during the 1957 antirightist political campaign), Deng's novel represents a group of writings that were incongruous with the mainstream political voice.[23] Like Xiao Yemu, Deng Youmei uses first-person narration, the mode inherited from the May Fourth discourse of individualism but at odds with the literary mainstream of the Mao era.[24] That both authors chose this mode may be surprising, considering the severe political pressure they were under at the time; however, they used this narrative voice more to reveal petit bourgeois individualism than to affirm it. Ironically, first-person narration usually shows too much of the individual's complex interior life, thereby confusing the simple political statement.

As an intimate account of the narrator-protagonist's love affair, *On the Cliff* allows us to see the development of an individual persona, his inner psychic struggle and sexual desire. The story opens with the romance between the narrator and his future wife, an accountant who is also the chair of the Communist Youth League in their workplace, where the narrator becomes a technician after he graduates from college. Their love relationship becomes intertwined with politics because as the leader of the youths, the accountant ushers the narrator into the progressive world, where his career and political future suddenly become promising. The smooth linking of love and revolution in this couple's marriage is shown in the wife's proper political direction of their household as well as in the husband's work and the improvement of his ideological thoughts. However, the husband soon drifts from this correct political and emotional direction after he is attracted by a beautiful young girl, Jia xi ya, a mixed-race child of a Chinese music professor and a German woman. A special relationship develops between the husband and Jia xi ya because of their common interests and taste: both have a college degree, both enjoy dancing, boating, concerts, movies, parks, beautiful dresses, and romantic life. As the husband becomes closer and closer to Jia xi ya, he starts to dislike his wife; he then wants to divorce her, even though a divorce is likely to ruin his political future. After he is turned down by Jia xi ya, who says that she regards him only as a brother, he realizes at the end of the novel that his pregnant wife is his real destiny.

The two women in the protagonist's life symbolize two different ideological worlds. Caught between these embodiments of the hierarchical values of mind versus body, spiritual versus material, moral versus amoral, proletarian versus bourgeois, and collective versus individual, the husband experiences emotional turmoil and faces a crucial ideological choice. As a member of the Communist Party, the wife has clearly undergone certain political training. At

the beginning of the story, she appears as a good-looking girl with short hair, wearing a blue well-washed shirt that has almost lost its original color. The narrator deliberately downplays the wife's physical appearance and clothing in contrast with that of Jia xi ya, because the wife represents the mind—revolutionary morality—which is superior to the body. Although the narrator gives detailed descriptions of the domestic life of the marriage, imbued with love and happiness, the wife always plays a role as a political reminder, helping her husband to improve himself through every tiny matter. Enlightened by the wife, the husband becomes more and more disciplined and begins to fit the Party's requirements better; he becomes a member of the Communist Youth League, moving toward the political ideal. This process is interrupted by the seductive body of Jia xi ya; her feminine appearance and clothing, which are in stark contrast to the wife's, conjure up associations of the typical Western lifestyle and petit bourgeois thoughts. In contrast to the wife's noble mind and politically trained body, Jia xi ya's body is always described in exquisitely decorative details connected with sensual pleasure. The wife's and Jia xi ya's different attitudes toward materiality accentuate their ideological differences. For instance, that the husband prefers Jia xi ya's decorative and special gifts—French-style woolen hat and scarf—to his wife's simple and cheap ones hints that he is on the cliff's edge: he has almost degenerated into the bourgeois material world.

Like most revolutionary novels at the time, *On the Cliff* attempts to deliver a blatant political message through the plot of a married man's love affair. However, the message loses its clarity when the author indulges in descriptions of the world of feminine pleasure and sensuousness represented by Jia xi ya's body. Although Deng Youmei portrays Jia xi ya as a femme fatale with an irresistible power to seduce men, a stereotype that usually alludes to the decadence of the bourgeoisie, his sympathy with the character is clearly greater than his condemnation of her frivolous behavior. Unlike the typical femme fatale, Jia xi ya has a complex interior that is given considerable treatment in the story. The husband is attracted not only by her beautiful body but also by her artistic taste, romantic imagination, restless rebellion, independent thinking, and outstanding talents—all qualities far beyond the dry political doctrines that the husband shares with his wife. When Jia xi ya confides her worries and frustration to the husband, he realizes she is misunderstood by the people around her. Throughout the novel, the author never makes any moral judgment of Jia xi ya; instead, he constantly explains her behavior: after all, there is nothing wrong with an attractive girl who enjoys being appreciated and loved and who chooses to stay single; besides, it is the husband who misinterprets Jia xi ya's sisterly emotion toward him.

The most astonishing part of the novel is that the power of Jia xi ya's body

is so strong that even after the Party leader has given the husband a serious political lecture, he still chooses Jia xi ya over his wife. The climax of the husband's conversation with the Party leader comes as the latter explains to the husband the revolutionary morality, the ultimate principle of ruling. Sharing his personal life, the Party leader reveals that he also almost got a divorce after he moved to the city and encountered some women more educated and beautiful than his wife. Yet with this revolutionary morality in mind, the Party leader suppressed his desire and then successfully transformed his personal feelings into the revolutionary ideal. He says, "Some think the problem of love is only a trivial thing in life. I don't think this way. I feel this problem can best test a person's class consciousness and moral quality."[25] The leader's lecture may very well reflect the author's intention to convey political meaning in terms of a love affair. However, departing from orthodox morality in evaluating the marriage, the author places equal importance upon affection, interest, taste, and language that a couple can share. He raises a controversial question through the husband's wondering about the prime requirement for a happy marriage and a happy life. Is it class consciousness? Or two people's characters and common interests?

There is an apparent inconsistency between this political education and its effect on the husband. Despite his awareness of the value of politics over materialism, he is still determined to jump into the sensual and romantic world of Jia xi ya. What critics must have found disturbing about this novel is that the sensual world of bourgeois values and aesthetics she inhabits has successfully challenged and disputed the revolutionary discourse, represented by the wife's pale face, plain lifestyle, and mechanical upholding of dry political concepts. If Jia xi ya did not decline the husband's suit, he would happily marry her regardless of the political and moral judgment he would suffer. His final awakening at the end of the novel is due not to political education but rather to the practical fact that Jia xi ya does not want to marry him and his wife is pregnant. Although the ending attempts to highlight a moral or political doctrine, equivocal notes remain. Is the couple's reunion based on love, or merely a sense of duty? Is it a happy resolution of the conflict between revolution and love or just a compromise? Does the husband's love affair suggest his political weakness or the lack of connection between the couple? Above all, what is most important in a marriage? Given that the author does not pronounce a strong moral and political judgment on the love affair, this novel at least suggests rethinking the meaning of politically predetermined love, which proves so fragile against Jia xi ya's challenge.

At stake are the concept of love and gender meanings that are shaped and controlled by the Party discourse of state and nation. Along with Deng Youmei's *On the Cliff,* a debate about real love appeared at a time when politi-

cal control was relatively relaxed, before the 1957 antirightist campaign. In January 1957, Zhang Baoxin and Zhou Peitong, in "Talk about the Love Description in Three-Mile Village" (Tan Sanliwan zhong de aiqing miaoxie), bravely attacked the prevailing love archetype built on political conditions:

> Our brothers and sisters should break down those philistine opinions of love and marriage, throwing off all kinds of shackles and principles that fetter people's beautiful hope. . . . Someone falls in love with another surely for unique reasons; however, those reasons and conditions cannot be explained by one or several universally applicable rules. A person who is deeply in love would not first consciously check those conditions and then fall in love. Because love is love, it cannot be replaced by rationality.[26]

That "love is not necessarily the reflection of a person's social and political value"[27] is an idea alien to the political culture of the first seventeen years. Yet a number of novels echoed the same idea, dissenting from the predominant concept of love. Among these, Feng Cun's (1917–1989) short story "A Case of Divorce" (Yige lihun anjian, 1957) clearly shows that a politically arranged marriage that lacks love cannot be maintained.

Both the wife and the husband in this short story are model members of the Communist Youth League. Because their political status is identical, the Party leader urges them to get married even though they are not sure about their feelings for each other. As an incarnation of the Party, this leader assumes they are compatible and arbitrarily arranges the marriage. After they are married, the couple is tortured by domestic situations in which their different characters and interests constantly conflict. Unable to suffer any longer, both are determined to get a divorce. But Party leaders attribute their problem to bourgeois thoughts and disagree with their proposal. After several court investigations, their divorce is finally approved by the middle-level court. As an investigator of the case, the first-person narrator concludes that "principle is not love, and it cannot take place of life."[28]

Bearing witness to the failure of a politically arranged marriage, "A Case of Divorce" resonates with Zhang Baoxin and Zhou Peitong's idea that love is an area in which politics cannot and should not intervene. Even though both the husband's and the wife's revolutionary ideology and behavior are impeccable, even though their Party leaders try to convince them to reunite for the political cause, they are determined to separate. Political education cannot repair their marriage, which is founded on ideological concerns rather than on love. The most remarkable part of this novel is its refusal of political control over personal life.

During the 1957 antirightist campaign, this dissenting idea, as expressed in Deng Youmei's *On the Cliff* and Feng Cun's "A Case of Divorce," was attacked as decadent and bourgeois, as were many other writings and opinions. Yao Wenyuan, a member of the Gang of Four, charged that those novels harmed revolutionary morality by elevating the subtleties of love, associated with bourgeois individualism.[29] Those details irritated the Communist ideologues because they subtly militated against revolutionary rationality, blocking the transformation of personal emotion into patriotic fervor. Although the novels were criticized during the political campaign, they nevertheless reveal an ambiguity in revolutionary literature of the first seventeen years to which literary historians have not given enough attention.

An Unresolved Embarrassment

According to Liu Zaifu and Lin Gang, one of the most prominent characteristics of revolutionary novels since the Yan'an period is that the description of love usually has a beginning but lacks an ending. "With the beginning, love can be written as the comrade-type of love fighting against class enemies, using an ideal cloak to wrap personal feeling; without the ending, the author can avoid the contradiction and conflict between the atmosphere of personal happiness and the devoted spirit of revolutionary heroes. In one sentence, class struggle has deconstructed emotion and love."[30] A typical example of such love without an ending can be found in Hao Ran's *Sunny Day* (*Yanyangtian,* 1954), in which the love relationship between the hero, Xiao Changcun, and the heroine, Jiao Shuhong, is limited within the framework of class struggle. Even with the romantic beginning, their love relationship is more like comrade bonding than a romance—no hugs, no kisses, no emotional eye contact. As the narrator describes, "They began to fall in love with each other. Their love was not a common-sense love, but the most sublime love. She [Jiao Shuhong] gained Xiao Changcun's love neither because she was a beautiful girl nor because she had a tender smile, but because she was a comrade, an assistant in revolutionary work."[31] However, as Liu and Lin have observed, even such "sublime love" is incomplete in the novel because if the couple consummate their love, their common revolutionary ideal will not be the primary source of their personal happiness.

What is striking here is not the repressive power of the revolutionary discourse that strives to suppress personal feeling, but the power of love that has elicited so much alarm from authority. It is true that love without an ending can avoid tackling contradictions and tensions between the individual and the collective, between love and revolution. However, these contradictions and

tensions do not just disappear. Rather, the prevalence of love without an ending indicates a predicament, an unresolved embarrassment that has been postponed in revolutionary novels. What does such a delay attempt to conceal? What is left out after the self is subsumed and transformed into the collective identity?

As a short story that does provide an ending to a romance between a CCP soldier and a Korean girl, Lu Ling's "Battle of the Lowlands" (Wadishang de zhanyi, 1954) was condemned as "tenderhearted individualism"[32] before the 1955 anti–Hu Feng campaign. Discussing Lu Ling's earlier novels, such as *Children of the Rich* (*Caizhu de ernümen,* 1948) and *Hungry Guo Su'e* (*Ji'er de Guo Su'e,* 1943), Kirk A. Denton points out that Lu Ling's "linguistic and narrative stylistics are inextricable from his larger intention to assert a place for the private and psychological in the literary discourse of nation, revolution, and collectivity."[33] However, although Lu Ling is known as a follower of the May Fourth discourse on personal enlightenment, his linguistic and narrative style became more conservative in the 1950s; he no longer prioritized individual struggle. Set during the Korean War, "Battle of the Lowlands" epitomizes the way personal desire has to be subordinated to revolutionary discipline. The nineteen-year-old CCP soldier, Wang Yinghong, is loved by a Korean girl but unable to respond because of the strict military discipline, and at the end of the novel he dies in battle.

The focus of the story is the conflicts and contradictions between reason and emotion, the collective and the individual, the conscious and the unconscious. Although Lu Ling has the protagonist carefully restrain his subjective feeling and submit it to revolutionary discipline, he never makes this submission easy. When the Korean girl first gives Wang Yinghong a gift as a token of love, he firmly returns it to her; but the second time, when he finds her embroidered handkerchief again, he keeps it and "suddenly experiences a kind of nervous and sweet feeling."[34] Even the squad leader Wang Shun, who reminds Wang Yinghong not to make disciplinary mistakes, has an "ambivalent and speechless feeling" about this pure love relationship. During hand-to-hand combat, it is the power of love that stimulates Wang Yinghong's fighting spirit, not cold-blooded discipline. At the most dangerous moment, when Wang Yinghong and Wang Shun are surrounded by American soldiers, what illuminates and encourages both of them is the Korean girl's pure love. When Wang Yinghong reports to Wang Shun that he has secretly kept the girl's handkerchief, Wang Shun regards it as a reasonable act that would be pardoned by their leaders. Throughout the narrative, Lu Ling's representation of the subconscious, which is marked by indeterminacy and uncertainty, constantly interferes with the revolutionary rationality that tries to restrict the human psyche.

It seems that Wang Yinghong's final heroic sacrifice has channeled this "ambivalent and speechless" love into the sublime goal of international patriotism; however, the tragic ending that traumatizes the Korean girl indicates a gloomy result of this sublimation. It is worth noticing that, throughout the narrative, the embroidered handkerchief always obscurely works against the dominant aesthetic mode, which is aligned with the sublimation.

In his analysis of Lu Ling's earlier novels, Shu Yunzhong argues that the characters usually contrive to impart the message of desublimation or antisublimation. Lu Ling, Shu states, "sees the working people as saturated with a political unconsciousness and to him the political unconsciousness is a locus of 'truth' and 'authenticity,' not a lower realm to be transcended or discarded."[35] Unlike in his earlier writing, in which he revolts against the discourse of the revolutionary sublime as Shu states, Lu Ling in "Battle of the Lowlands" searches for a way to purify and rationalize the protagonist's instinctual and libidinal energies. However, as the bloodstained embroidered handkerchief is returned to the Korean girl, the reader is more impressed by the personal tragedy caused by the sublimation than by the clear political message it embodies. This personal tragedy further reinforces rather than cancels the conflicts and contradictions between the individual and the collective.

The tragic ending of the love story has evoked criticism, though it has deeply touched numerous readers' hearts. Because Lu Ling was a member of the Hu Feng group, his writing was the object of intense criticism connected to the Three Antis and Five Antis campaigns from 1952 to 1953. Published in 1954, "Battle of the Lowlands" was attacked because the tragic ending attests to the fact that love has triumphed over discipline and tenderhearted individualism has defeated collectivism.[36] In addition, Lu Ling's representation of the unconscious, individual heroism, the subtlety of love, and personal experience disturb the purity of the so-called international patriotism. According to James Gao, the concept of internationalism, another form of Chinese nationalism during the Korean War, is embodied by the CCP soldiers' high moral standards in contrast to those of the decadent Americans, who are smeared by propaganda as rapists.[37] This concept foregrounds conflict between a sexual desire that is politically impossible and a national identity that redirects individual desire and interest to citizens' duty. Ba Jin criticizes Lu Ling for twisting the CCP soldier's pure feelings for the Korean woman, which is like the feeling between brother and sister or between son and mother, not heterosexual love.[38] By inserting individual desire and erotic love in the novel, Lu Ling contaminated the purity of Chinese nationalism. He was criticized for adding a sentimental tragic ending, which positions the narrator in sympathy with the heterosexual love and desire between Wang Yinghong and the Korean girl.

However, Lu Ling was in a predicament: even if he gave the love story a happy ending, it would violate the strict military discipline. Whatever ending he designed for the story, he could not escape the charge of distorting international patriotism.

Refusing to accept such criticism, Lu Ling fought back in 1955. As Denton has recorded

> *Wenyibao* published Lu Ling's long, defiant retort to the criticism his Korean War stories had provoked. This three-part article, "Weishenme hui you zheiyang de piping" (How can there be such criticism?), defends his stories against the accusation that they "promote individualism" and "attack the collectivism of the working class." Often vituperative in tone, this retort was then used against him as evidence of his unwillingness to repent.[39]

Lu Ling passionately countered opinions of his tragic and gloomy representation by reiterating his idea that personal life is consistent with revolutionary praxis. For him, international patriotism is not an abstract concept; instead, it is intimately related to and derived from personal sensual life.[40] Not long after his response, the anti–Hu Feng campaign began, and as one of Hu Feng's followers Lu Ling was also persecuted, being incarcerated for more than twenty years.[41]

The criticism of "Battle of the Lowlands" may help explain why most revolutionary novels written at this time postponed endings of love stories: authors wanted to avoid Lu Ling's predicament. But what is unspoken and forgotten in such postponement not only exposes the constraints that Maoist discourse imposes on sexual expression and fulfillment but also reveals that the contradiction and conflict between love and revolution have become irreconcilable. Unlike the formula writing of revolution plus love in the 1930s, which saw private desire and revolutionary passion stimulated and supplemented by each other, revolutionary novels produced during the first seventeen years were reluctant to deal with the tension between the two. Instead, they gave personal love a sublime treatment, transferring it into the collective revolution charged with libidinal energy, as Wang Ban has described. However, the postponement of endings insinuates that those "lower" elements—the instinctual, libidinal, bodily, and feminine—cannot be transformed and lifted to a "higher," sacred level. Therefore, what cannot be elevated and sublimated must be postponed or forgotten because it poses a threat to the stability of revolutionary discourse.

For political reasons, many revolutionary writers during the first seventeen years published just the first and second books of a series, such as Liang Bin's *Keep the Red Flag Flying* (*Hongqipu*), Liu Qing's *History of the Pioneers,*

Ouyang Shan's *Three-Family Lane* (*Sanjiaxiang,* 1959), Yang Mo's *Song of Youth* (*Qingchun zhige),* and Zhou Erfu's *Shanghai Morning* (*Shanghai de zaochen*). They either never had a chance to finish the series or postponed the remaining books until the end of the Cultural Revolution. As a result, endings of stories about revolution and love were temporarily or permanently delayed.

Among those revolutionary novels, Ouyang Shan's *Three-Family Lane,* which covers revolution plus love in a large-scale way, deserves special attention. For political reasons, Ouyang Shan published only *Three-Family Lane* and its sequel, *Bitter Struggle* (*Kudou,* 1962), during the first seventeen years. Not until after 1980 did he publish the rest of the series, *A Romantic Generation* (*Yidai fengliu*). With the ambition of portraying "the origin and outcome" of Chinese revolution from 1919 to 1949, Ouyang Shan centers his saga of *A Romantic Generation* on Zhou Bing's development from an aimless and restless young man into a revolutionary fighter and Party member. *Three-Family Lane* is set in Guangzhou from the May Fourth period to Jiang Jieshi's massacre of the Communist Party members in 1927 and Guangzhou's three-day uprising; *Bitter Struggle* depicts the lives of peasants and farm workers in the countryside. Despite his purpose of documenting revolutionary history, Ouyang Shan does not give prominence to important events such as the May Fourth movement, the May Thirtieth massacre, the Hong Kong strike, the Northern Expedition, and the failure of the first national revolution in 1927. Keeping those events in the background, he does not have to strain to express ideological messages but can focus on the intriguing relationship among three families—those of the capitalist Chen Wanli, the landlord-bureaucrat He Yingyuan, and the blacksmith Zhou Tie in *Three-Family Lane*. Although the families belong to different classes and respond to political events in different ways, their relationships are more complicated than class can define: they are neighbors as well as relatives, and their children are classmates, friends, couples, and lovers regardless of their different political identities. What is more interesting is that this novel echoes not only the pattern of revolution plus love from the 1930s but also of the classical tradition of *caizi jiaren* (the scholar and the beauty), which is incongruous with the paradigm of the modern revolutionary novel.

The most problematic part of *Three-Family Lane* is its similarity to *Dreams of the Red Chamber*. As Joe C. Huang points out,

> Although Ouyang Shan implicitly suggests that *Three-Family Lane* is a contemporary version of *Dream of the Red Chamber,* the novel comes nowhere near the sophistication of the classical masterpiece, with its exquisite description of landscape, penetrating characterization, and intricate plot. But the triangular love affair between the hero Chou Ping and his cousins is not unlike

> that between Chia Pao-yu and his two cousins, Black Jade and Precious Clasp.[42]

After the famous *hongxue* (the study of *Dream of the Red Chamber*) scholar Yu Pingbo was repudiated for his bourgeois method of research, *Dream of the Red Chamber* was affirmed as written against the feudal family because it centers on the love affair between hero, Jia Baoyu, and the heroine, Lin Daiyu. An imitation of this classic, *Three-Family Lane* should also be considered a work of class struggle, with the hero, Zhou Bing—the contemporary revolutionary version of Jia Baoyu—representing proletarians. Nevertheless, this novel was denounced in the 1960s for "taking the side of a capitulator to the landlord and comprador capitalist classes in the era of proletarian revolution in the twentieth century" and for spreading poisonous petit bourgeois sentiments.[43]

In *Three-Family Lane,* the notion of class struggle is interwoven with an individual bildungsroman as well as the three families' history. Although the author shows how political concerns impinge upon individual choice and how personal sexuality hinges on class consciousness, the abstract revolutionary concepts unavoidably dwindle into the domestic details of the families as well as the excessive sentiments between lovers. The linguistic and narrative styles of *Three-Family Lane,* indebted to *Dream of the Red Chamber,* demonstrate the author's obsession with the unhealthy old-style aesthetic representation. The novel comes dangerously close to a version of sentimental tradition (*yanqing chuantong*), which is in intense conflict with the dry and standardized revolutionary novel form. *Three-Family Lane*'s inheritance of sentimental romance and vernacular narrative language helps it resist the tendency toward Europeanized language in the emergent modern Chinese literature, but it fails to align fully with the discourse of modernity-as-revolution and convey the dominant ideological message.

As a contemporary, revolutionary hero, Zhou Bing, from a blacksmith's family, naturally identifies with the proletarian class and later on with the Communist Party. Like Jia Baoyu, Zhou Bing is an irresistibly good-looking young man who attracts many girls, especially two of his beautiful female cousins—Qu Tao, who resembles Black Jade and is the daughter of a shoemaker; and Chen Wenting, like Precious Clasp and the daughter of a capitalist. With the same class background, Zhou Bing and Qu Tao fall in love, but Qu Tao dies in the May Thirtieth massacre, a demonstration against imperialism. As Huang has observed, there are many details similar to *Dream of the Red Chamber,* such as Zhou Bing's sentimental mourning of Qu Tao, Wenting's attempt to console Zhou Bing, and the episode of planting a magnolia tree in memory of Qu Tao. All of these plot details are described with excessive sentimental elements:

tears, drinks, illness, death, hallucinations, lamentations, and sweet memories. It is the death of Qu Tao that turns Zhou Bing toward revolution, yet more as a means of personal revenge for the loss of his lover than a sublime cause. Not long after Wenting captures his tender heart, he becomes a wanted revolutionary on the run. His love affair with Wenting fails to withstand the trial of class struggle: born in a bourgeois family, Wenting marries a Guomindang bureaucrat, although Zhou Bing writes her several emotionally charged letters. At the end of *Three-Family Lane,* Zhou Bing converts his romantic disillusionment into revolutionary action by participating in the three-day Guangzhou uprising and then escaping to Shanghai to seek refuge at the home of one of his cousins, Chen Wenying.

Wenting's abrupt marriage seems to have put an end to the love story; yet the relationship between her and Zhou Bing remains unexplained. They still have feelings for each other while Wenting is being pressured by her father and brother to marry the bureaucrat. In his effort to dramatize class divisions, Ouyang Shan deprives Wenting and Zhou Bing from the outset of the will and power to consummate their love. A copy of Precious Clasp, Wenting is a calculating and practical girl who represents the bourgeois class and so cannot be the real companion of the revolutionary Jia Baoyu. A deep ambiguity crops up, however, when Ouyang Shan suddenly consigns this love story full of sensuous details and libidinal urges to oblivion. As the narrator explains, Wenting decides to marry someone she does not love because she feels "her ambivalent relationship with Zhou Bing is really deranged, complicated, and with unnamed horror."[44] The story clearly reveals her uncertainty about revolution, yet it cannot explain away her deep attraction to Zhou Bing's physical beauty and sentiments.

The ideological framework of Zhou Bing's love affairs with his cousins becomes pronounced as Wenting exposes her bourgeois class identity. The political agenda of the narrative denounces the selfish and dark side of this daughter of capitalism; she seems to deliberately repress or forget her affection for Zhou Bing. However, as part of its imitation of *Dream of the Red Chamber,* in which daughterly femininity (*nü'er xing*) is beautiful, as pure as water, in contrast to masculinity as dirty as mud that is contaminated by the secular world, *Three-Family Lane* also underscores the purity and fluidity of femininity. As Luce Irigaray reminds us, femininity is based on the fluid, distinguished from the solid ground in which masculine discourse is established. Unlike their father and brother, who firmly hold on to their capitalist social status, Wenting and her sisters frequently transcend class boundaries by showing their sympathy and love toward Zhou Bing and his family. The daughterly femininity they show in *Three-Family Lane* and *Bitter Struggle*

forms a transcendental women's space in the men's world that politics is unable to permeate.

For instance, Chen Wenying, the oldest daughter of the Chen family and an authentic Christian, who marries a Guomindang magistrate but warmly engages in social charity, almost falls in love with Zhou Bing while he is seeking refuge at her home. Her religious belief, her theory of philanthropy, and her love for Zhou Bing all defy class antagonism. The second daughter of the Chen family, Chen Wendi, who was briefly married to Zhou Bing's second Communist brother and was once a new woman of the May Fourth generation, tries to protect Zhou Bing from her landlord-bureaucrat husband's persecution by claiming:

> "Bullshit! I don't understand your politics, I don't want to ask about politics, and I don't want to care about your politics. Don't bring up your nonsense in front of me. I tell you honestly: if you still plan to have a peaceful life, then you'd better not lay a finger on Zhou Bing. . . .
>
> "Originally I didn't want to say it, but you force me to say it: I like him! I am very fond of him! I cherish him! I love him! That's all! If he weren't too young, we four sisters would marry him all together. What do you know?"[45]

This bold claim shows the power of feeling, which enables her to disdain men's politics; it truly belongs to the pure daughterly femininity. The third daughter of the Chen family, Chen Wenjie, the owner of the farm where Zhou Bing organizes a Red Guard unit, is a long-term supporter of her younger sister's love relationship with Zhou Bing. Even if in *Bitter Struggle* her farm is damaged by the Red Guard unit's revolution, her sympathy toward the lower class never fades. She is easily touched by a political sentimental drama that Zhou Bing stages, even though she is the target of the drama's criticism. And Chen Wenting, the youngest daughter, who dreams of Zhou Bing for years, almost breaks from her bourgeois family in order to gain his love. When Zhou Bing wants to split with her and her family because of ideological differences, she says to him emotionally: "What kind of fault do I have? I am so determined to engage in revolution with you. Whatever you want me to do, I just do it. All I want is to beg your little surplus love. I am innocent! Even if my family members are not good, what does it have to do with me? How come you cannot distinguish right from wrong?"[46]

Having only a vague idea what revolution is, Wenting regards Zhou Bing as its embodiment, to which she is more than willing to sacrifice. Her confusion of Zhou Bing with revolution is only another way to show her obsession with emotion, which for her is far more important than politics and family.

This allows her to maintain the purity of daughterly femininity, even if Ouyang Shan portrays her as a cunning and practical girl who symbolizes the deceiving nature of capitalists.

To better illustrate the serious class struggle in *Three-Family Lane,* Ouyang Shan labels as bourgeois the daughters of the Chen family, who unflinchingly adhere to decadence and materialism and eventually distance themselves from revolution. The differences between them and Zhou Bing are great. However, the author complicates the reader's opinion with his description of their daughterly femininity, which enables them to sponsor Zhou Bing for school and continually protect, love, and cherish him regardless of class differences. Ouyang Shan's ambivalent attitude toward the Chen daughters is more evident as he reveals that their unhappy marriages have changed them into sex objects for their husbands, who are either Guomindang bureaucrats or landlords. Suffering from men's oppression, their femininity becomes more precious because it constitutes a women's world against that of men, who are fettered by their ideological beliefs.

Surrounded by such feminine complexity, Zhou Bing's image as a revolutionary hero also becomes questionable. By closely following the old-style sentimental tradition, Ouyang Shan depicts Zhou Bing as a handsome sentimental hero, who simultaneously indulges in both revolution and love. This character was criticized in 1964 as a "bourgeois romantic *caizi* with the fake label of working class."[47] The complicated relationship between Zhou Bing and the daughters of the Chen family also shows, according to some critics, the author's intention to distort the situation of class struggle and to advocate the theory of bourgeois humanity and class conciliation.[48] Even Zhou Bing's handsome appearance is intolerable to Communist critics because it reflects the author's bourgeois aesthetic theory. Indeed, functioning as a symbol more of sentiment than ideology, Zhou Bing's beautiful face and body constantly float beyond class boundaries, drawing the reader's attention to the sentimental tradition. As his mind is gradually uplifted, his physical beauty lingers, attracting girls from opposite classes. Later, in *Bitter Struggle,* Ouyang Shan attempts to emphasize Zhou Bing's mind by introducing a character named Qu Xi, one of Zhou Bing's cousins who shares his handsomeness but not his intellect and later enters into an ambiguous relationship with Wenting. Wenting's preference for Zhou Bing over Qu Xi in the sequel mocks such a distinction between mind and body.

In short, Ouyang Shan's *Three-Family Lane* is a controversial work that leaves the troubled relationship between revolution and love unresolved. Its questionable elements even irritated the Gang of Four, who in 1969 ordered the so-called writing group of Shanghai revolutionary big criticism to de-

nounce the political theme of the novel and its author. *Three-Family Lane* shows that ambiguity may surface when men and women's bodies are subordinated to class within the paradigm of revolution.

The Possibility of Women's Subjectivity

Much recent criticism about the role of Chinese women during the revolutionary period is centered on the idea that women lost their subjectivity and femininity and became androgynous or desexualized by Maoist culture.[49] The implication of the father-daughter relationship represented in *The Red Detachment of Women* is that Chinese women are subordinated by a new form of patriarchy in the name of revolution. The only ideal position for women, as Meng Yue argues, is within the national collective, as illustrated in *Song of Youth*, where the heroine, Lin Daojing, "succeeds in becoming one of 'us,' a comrade, facing 'them,' the enemy, but never an 'I' or a 'self,' nor a gendered individual, nor even an intellectual."[50]

Meng Yue clearly reveals the dominant narrative of the revolutionary novel; however, her critique risks retotalizing the authoritarian voice. Her discussion overlooks the revolutionary novels' contradictory heroines, who, according to Chen Shunxin, appear androgynous in public but must show their "womanly," pure, and moral virtues in domestic life.[51] This rhetoric urges us to question whether the emancipated woman is only the reflection of the state political apparatus and if women's request for equality between men and women and rising power may conflict with the Party's authority. Was there a chance for women's subjectivity to emerge during the first seventeen years? Under the official discourse of women's emancipation, could women also be aware of their individual existence, and was such an awareness at odds with the Party's authority? Did revolutionary women have difficulty being subservient to the new patriarchy? Did any women's writings show traces of subjectivity, allowing them to maintain a self and a gendered individuality? My purpose in posing these questions is to scrutinize the gaps in the seemingly all-encompassing and seamless narrative of the first seventeen years and to confront a changing, historically specific code of the feminine.

In his novel *History of the Pioneers*, Liu Qing portrays a revolutionary woman, Gaixia, who is in love with the socialist hero Liang Shengbao, the leader of a pioneer mutual-aid team. Hailed as a landmark of socialist literature, this novel revolves around the struggle between this loyal agent of the Party's mutual-aid policy for the sake of agricultural collectivization and his opponents, crafty rich peasants and ignorant poor ones, as well as selfish and profit-oriented Party cadres. The love story between Gaixia and Liang Shengbao is

only the secondary plot to this severe struggle. A New Socialist Woman who is vibrant with the emancipation brought by revolution, Gaixia bravely refuses a marriage arranged by her mother and actively joins the land-reform movement, through which she falls in love with Liang Shengbao. Since local sexist tradition still subjects women to the male-dominated discourse, Gaixia's refusal of an arranged marriage and choice of Liang Shengbao indicate the degree to which women have benefited from the officially sponsored emancipation. Gaixia has a progressive mind connected to her beautiful face and pure, virginal body; more important, her choice of the poor and revolutionary Liang Shengbao over other, more educated and richer young men represents a new concept at the time: love is measured by politics. But her determination to arrange her own marriage also reflects women's improved social status.

The love story would not be so interesting if it simply followed the pattern that revolutionary women are only assistants to men. It turns out that Gaixia's female subjectivity is so strong that the author almost loses control of it. When Gaixia's interest vacillates between gender and politics, she eventually relegates the latter to a secondary position. On her road to emancipation, she is led by a father figure—the chairman of the village deputies, Guo Zhenshan, who encourages her to pursue free marriage and progressive activity. However, this father figure is problematic: refusing to organize the mutual-aid team, he is determined to farm privately in order to accumulate more personal property. He persuades Gaixia to apply for a position in a factory, which in the eyes of backward peasants is superior to work in the countryside. Unlike the father-daughter relationship in *The Red Detachment of Women,* in which the "daughter" is taught by the "father" to transform personal revenge into collective revolution, the father-daughter relationship in *History of the Pioneers* has a different symbolic implication: Gaixia is urged by Guo Zhenshan to pay more attention to her independence and personal desire than to political goals. Although Gaixia is disillusioned after she realizes Guo Zhenshan has shown her the wrong way of revolution, her female subjectivity is more awakened than before. The narrator reveals her inner voice: "Gaixia, who listened to Guo Zhenshan right from the beginning, should use her own brain from now on. She can no longer use other people's brains to replace hers."[52] Even if such awakening is politically correct, it nevertheless depicts female subjectivity in a process of challenging the new patriarchy of Maoist culture.

Women's liberation and sexuality are almost synonymous with class struggle in revolutionary novels, but Gaixia shows significant departures from this pattern. Her beauty is frequently noticed by a lot of men in the novel, but her sense of self is so positive that the male gaze fails to convert her into a sexual object. Despite her role as a progressive revolutionary woman, she never

hides her sexual desire: "she wants so much to miss a man and be missed by him—the glorious feeling this man gives her would let her feel warm and sweet."[53] Knowing that her female friend's fiancé, a hero of the Korean War, has an ugly face, she is disappointed and thinks, "A girl can use her actions to prove that she loves the country and asks for progress, but cannot casually give away her once-in-a-lifetime love." "In Gaixia's mind, no matter if he is a hero or a model worker, it is also important that she should like him first, and they should feel happy and satisfied when they are together."[54] She revolts at the politically arranged marriage without love. Her desire is doomed to conflict with the revolutionary masculinist discourse.

In contrast to the image of the traditional obedient woman, Gaixia never passively waits for Liang Shengbao to pursue her. In their love relationship, she is always the one who initiates intimate contact, putting her tender and soft hands in his, caressing his sleeve, and deliberately waiting for him on the road to the market. The officially sponsored discourse of women's emancipation has cultivated and secured her female subjectivity, which propels her to refuse the assigned position of mere assistant to the revolutionary hero. When she consults Liang Shengbao about her plan to apply for a position in a factory, his indifferent attitude irritates her:

> She finds that Liang Shengbao is also selfish in terms of this matter. . . . Just because she asked his opinion about the factory position, which does not make him happy, he then treated her with that embarrassing attitude. Isn't this selfish? Should this be the attitude with which a male Communist Party member treats a female Young League member? Gaixia even thinks the reason Shengbao is fond of her is because he wants her to cook for him, to sew for him, and to bear children for him, instead of creating a new life together in Frog Flat.[55]

At the end of the novel, after Liang Shengbao's disciplined body has disappointed her too many times, Gaixia decides to leave the village and go to the city to work. Before she goes to pursue a better life for herself in the city, she makes a last effort to ask Liang Shengbao's opinion on their relationship; but again, Liang Shengbao, who prioritizes his own revolutionary job, refuses to consider it until the end of fall. At that moment, Gaixia starts to wonder if Liang Shengbao is worth her love:

> Gaixia thinks: Shengbao and she both have strong characters, and both love to engage in social activities; would their marriage be a good one? . . . She thinks: Shengbao definitely belongs to the people; but what about her? She is not willing

> to be a good wife of a peasant. But after they are married, the carnival time will pass quickly and the long peasant's life will begin. The one who will cook will be her, not Shengbao; the one who will bear children will be her, not Shengbao. With her strong character, how can the two not have contradictions?[56]

As a product of women's emancipation, Gaixia conducts a legitimate and reasonable quest for equality. However, Liang Shengbao and his leaders are so surprised by her strong personality that they start wondering if Gaixia is the right companion for him. According to the Party secretary, Wang, the frivolous, romantic, and arrogant Gaixia is unfit for the dependable and down-to-earth Liang Shengbao, the loyal executor of the Party's policy. To find a woman who can be a good assistant for Liang Shengbao, the Party leaders prepare to interfere in his private life. The unsuccessful ending of the love story between Gaixia and Liang Shengbao intimates that the revolutionary discourse can engender women's subjectivity, a self, an individual who does not live only in the shadow of a father or a husband. Under the name of sexual equality, the female subjectivity that grows out of the revolutionary discourse may come back to question the Party's authority. Ignoring the conflicts between women's rising power and the state's political discourse reaffirms women's subordinate position to men and to the Party.

In discussing the female subjectivity during the first seventeen years, we must consider women's writing regarding the theme of revolution plus love. Criticism of women's writing during this period pays much attention to Yang Mo's *Song of Youth,* a novel that many critics consider a perfect example of subsuming women's individual struggle and gender role into the Party discourse.[57] It is hardly surprising that female writers at this historical moment lacked individual voices and failed to develop "the gender-specific convention"[58] promoted by the May Fourth women writers. However, my reading of Yang Mo's *Song of Youth* and Zong Pu's short story "Red Beans" (Hongdou, 1957) proposes that we should not overstress the lack of individuality among women writers at the time.

Song of Youth, which tightly binds women's desire and sexuality with politics, best illustrates the repetition of revolution plus love in this period. The symbolic meaning of heroine Lin Daojing's sexual identity is deeply rooted in her class identity: her first love, Yu Yongze, a student at Beijing University who has no sympathy with revolution, represents her past inspired by the individualism of the May Fourth generation; her second love, Lu Jiachuan, a Communist who is arrested and dies a revolutionary martyr, leads her toward the road of sublimation; her third love, Jiang Hua, a Communist leader of mass movement, brings about her maturation in becoming one of the national

collective. Of the three, Lin Daojing loves the dead Lu Jiachuan the most. Although a typical petit bourgeois, Lin Daojing has successfully transformed into a qualified Communist through one trial after another in which she witnesses and participates in many great political events. Yang Mo documents Lin's despair, mental conflicts, vacillation, excitement, and sorrow during the process of transformation, but unlike leftist writings of the 1930s that were obsessed with the split personality and the anxiety of "rebirth," she emphasizes Lin's sense of self-fulfillment toward the pinnacle of sublimation.

Since Lin's first husband, Yu Yongze, signifies a reactionary political force, it is not hard to understand Yang Mo's intention of demonizing his image. But the elevation of Lin's emotion toward the dead Lu Jiachuan is puzzling. When Wang Ban discusses this love in the film of *Song of Youth,* he writes, "The love, though for a dead person, is not neutralized and rendered bloodless by politics; it parades its ecstatic intensity and passionate flamboyance."[59] In other words, Lin's love for the martyr Lu has gone beyond the heterosexual relation: it has been expanded, intensified, and brought into a higher development, taking on the broader sexual significance of collective revolution.[60] However, unlike the film version, in the novel Yang Mo's depiction of Lin's love relationship with Jiang Hua, although carefully framed by political ideology, does not sacrifice the heterosexual relationship. It is precisely at this point that the private desire, the biological need, and sex between real man and real woman stubbornly linger on, come to argue with the sublimated form carried by Lin's love toward the dead Lu, the love that glorifies mythical and utopian happiness. The failure to see this argument blinds us from understanding the difficult position of Yang Mo, who could not completely purge herself of the residue of petit bourgeois sentiments.

When Jiang Hua, who also serves as a mentor introducing Lin to the Communist Party, asks her to have an intimate relationship with him, he expresses his long-term buried feeling: "Daojing, I didn't come to talk to you about works. I just want to ask you—do you think our relationship can go further than comradeship?"[61] Lin is shocked but feels happy; after hesitating, she tells Jiang Hua, "Yes, Lao Jiang, I like you very much." Jiang Hua's physical desire is immediately aroused, and he whispers in her ear, "Why let me go? I won't go." Yet strangely, Lin suddenly feels tormented:

> Daojing stands up and walks out of the room. After hearing Jiang Hua's request, she suddenly feels disturbed, unsettled, and even pained. . . . The little vague shadow of Lu Jiachuan has unexpectedly broken into her heart again in a strong way. She wouldn't forget him, never will! But why does his shadow only pick such a moment to disturb her? She calls his name softly, remembering

> his bright and deep eyes, the ghastly jail in which he bravely crawled here and there with his broken legs. . . . She bursts into tears. Standing in the wind and snow, she is full of complexity and contradiction.[62]

Although Lin eventually agrees to have a sexual relationship with Jiang Hua—a relationship more than comradeship—the narrator emphasizes again and again that Lin loves the dead Lu Jiachuan more. By sublimating her special love for the dead martyr, the narrator attempts to downplay physical desire, even if it is happening between two Communists. What is intriguing is that the argument between Lin's love of Jiang Hua and Lin's love of Lu Jiachuan continues through the rest of the novel, an argument that often agonizes Lin, who is about to become one of the revolutionary collective. In Yang Mo's words, Lin Daojing "is not only a strong comrade, but at the same also a woman who needs tenderness and the comfort of love."[63] Lin even feels guilty as Jiang Hua generously tolerates her passion toward the dead Lu. The inner conflict of Lin has been clearly represented by this sense of guilt derived from the clashes between the sublimated love and the human (heterosexual) love. Contrary to many critics' assertions that Yang Mo has liquidated and swallowed up female subjectivity in accordance with the Communist discourse, I see that she tries to leave room to preserve residues of sexual love, personal happiness, and the individual desire under the cloak of sublimation.

While transforming her personal memory into collective memory, Yang Mo had a hard time shaping her consciousness as a female writer to fit ideological censorship. According to her, *Song of Youth,* which echoes the bildungsroman tradition, is autobiographical. To highlight the theory of class determination, however, Yang Mo erases her own mother's class position as a landlord's wife and gives the heroine Lin Daojing's mother the oppressed class identity. In this way, Yang Mo elevates her personal experience to universal significance of the oppressed, exposing the darkness of the old society and laying a foundation for Lin's transformation from a petit bourgeois to a true Communist.[64] After *Song of Youth* was published, the Communist critic Guo Kai in 1959 accused Yang Mo for her self-expression as a petit bourgeois, one who never intended to associate with workers and peasants. In her second edition, therefore, Yang Mo revised the novel again, depriving Lin Daojing of personal feeling as a female individual after she goes through "sentimental education" in jail. Even with the revision, which sacrifices the author's female subjectivity, the novel was still under severe criticism during the Cultural Revolution. The *Song of Youth* that takes on Chinese intellectuals as its subject of representation is a reminder of Chinese writers' embarrassing position within the revolutionary discourse.

Zong Pu's short story "Red Beans," which initially received unanimous

commendation for its artistic style, was soon involved in controversy over the writer's nostalgia for the bourgeois love relationship. The daughter of an acclaimed aesthetic and philosopher, Feng Youlan, and the niece of the May Fourth female writer Feng Yuanjun, Zong Pu had an educational background and artistic taste that make her one of the distinguished female authors in modern Chinese literary history. Within the revolutionary genre, Zong Pu's focus on a woman's psychological struggle renders irrelevant the linkage between an individual narrative and a Party-directed history. On the surface, there is nothing spectacular about "Red Beans," a short story that follows the familiar plot of the conflict between revolution and love. A young progressive girl, Jiang Mei, who is deeply in love with a banker's son, Qi Hong, painfully chooses to stay in China rather than go abroad with her lover before the establishment of the new China. It seems that once again, the gendered individual is replaced by the national collective, as is Lin Daojing in *Song of Youth*. What is remarkable about this story, however, is that the female subjectivity is never lost but rather reinforced in the tension and clash of gender, class, and nationalist identity.

Jiang Mei starts out as a mature revolutionary cadre who comes back to work at her university and randomly walks into her old dormitory room, where she sees a silk ring inlaid with two red beans on the back of the cross hanging on the wall. Shocked and trembling at her discovery, Jiang Mei recalls her experience in 1948, the year of the new China. Through the two red beans, a material detail and a conventional symbol of love, the flashback narration conjoins history, memory, and love in a feminine way. The nostalgic tone reveals Jiang Mei's psychology, in part a reaction against the popular narrative forms that simply celebrate the individual's transformation into part of the revolutionary collective.

Following Jiang Mei's reminiscences, the narrator brings us back to 1948, when Jiang Mei is just an innocent young college girl who has a peaceful life with her mother. Influenced by her roommate, Xiao Su, an energetic and warmhearted girl who is involved in progressive activities, Jiang Mei gradually gets a vague idea of class and a sense of collectivism. Meanwhile, she begins a sentimental and poetic love relationship with Qi Hong, a talented, handsome, rich, and cynical young man. Unlike other revolutionary novels such as *History of the Pioneers,* which have an omnipresent narrator propagating critical, political, and moral messages, "Red Beans" is narrated in the third person but in a style qualitatively similar to the first-person form through which Jiang Mei's complex interiority is expressed.

That the conflict between revolution and love is narrated in a personal way may be surprising, considering the historical background against which Zong Pu was writing. The language of "Red Beans" is distinctively free of political

jargon such as "revolution," "people," "communism," and "nation." Jiang Mei is depicted as having a peaceful life with her mother "behind pink and sweet-scented oleander," very distant from the turbulent political world. Even after she becomes inclined to embrace progressive ideas, she personalizes big terms such as "revolution" and "collectivism" as "everyone has the same understanding, the same hope, loving and hating the same things."[65] The reasons Jiang Mei has sympathy with revolution are directly personal: she lacks money to cure her mother's disease. Xiao Su generously aids her by selling blood, but is later arrested and put in jail; then Jiang Mei learns that political circumstances also brought about her own father's death. So revolution for Jiang Mei is not faceless and autonomous but a personal matter as important as her love. Zong Pu personalizes the abstract political concepts in a way unquestionably alien to her contemporaries, who mechanically duplicated the Party's policies and slogans.

Unlike *Song of Youth,* which privileges the collective at the expense of the gendered individual (even if room for the individual still exists), "Red Beans" valorizes female subjectivity as in ideal coexistence with the harmonious collective and the nation. The contradictions and clashes between Jiang Mei and Qi Hong result not only from ideological differences but also from gender differences. Born into a rich family, Qi Hong has an indifferent attitude toward people, society, and revolution. Alone, without joining any progressive activities, he searches for a sense of self, seeing life through cynical and pessimistic eyes. Feeling fundamentally separate from the mass of humanity, he is at odds with his times. Despite Qi Hong's social status, the narrator does not simply classify him as a member of the exploitative class but emphasizes his selfish, male-chauvinist, and possessive character. Although they are keenly aware of their ideological differences, Jiang Mei and Qi Hong cannot keep from falling madly in love with each other. This budding relationship is portrayed in a romantic and sentimental way that makes Jiang Mei's choice between revolution and love painful. The psychological struggle that ravages her goes beyond the simple conclusion that the nation-state discourse has displaced the gendered individual. On the contrary, Jiang Mei's female subjectivity ineluctably emerges from this painful conflict. What triggers Jiang Mei's final decision is Qi Hong's male chauvinism, not his capitalist class status. From the beginning, Qi Hong's affection for Jiang Mei is selfish and possessive. If his claim that "you are mine" is a romantic way to express love, his constant intervention in Jiang Mei's public activities is by no means consistent with sexual equality. At the end of the novel, when Jiang Mei insists on staying in China, Qi Hong is so furious that he hopes she is only luggage, an object without independent thinking, that he can carry to America. Refusing to be a sex object, Jiang Mei chooses according to her strong feminist beliefs. This conclusion

proves that Zong Pu's writing is indebted to the May Fourth discourse of individualism and women's emancipation.

The female characters in this novel—Jiang Mei, her mother, and Xiao Su—constitute an alliance that has an ideological as well as a female bond and is in contrast to Qi Hong's sexist ideology as well as the capitalist class he represents. At the most difficult moment, Jiang Mei seeks helps from Xiao Su instead of her rich lover. Never accepting any financial support from Qi Hong, Jiang Mei shows a dazzling independence and subjectivity. Her final words to Qi Hong—"I won't regret"—inherit and broaden the legacy of individualism and female subjectivity developed by female writers such as Ding Ling, Bai Wei, Su Qing, Eileen Chang, and others. In this way, the political confrontation between reactionary and progressive, oppressor and oppressed, America and China, and individual and collective is overwhelmed and replaced by the gender confrontation between the dominant male sex and the independent woman. The painful psychological struggle that Jiang Mei experiences throughout the narrative also makes a simple dichotomy between these two sides impossible. The narrator, obsessed with the tension, contradictions, and irrationality of the protagonist's psychic conflict, goes beyond the prevailing form of subsuming the individual into the collective; as a result, Jiang Mei's female subjectivity is underscored rather than erased. Unlike Lin Daojing, who at the end of *Song of Youth* merges into the marching mass, Jiang Mei always has a feminine and private room in her heart even when she is among the people. The two red beans, which symbolize that private space, can never vanish but forever remain in her psyche. Therefore, underneath the repetition of revolution plus love, "Red Beans" provides us a special case of women's conscious writing about gender roles during the Maoist era. The official history must go through collection and selection by a woman's memory to emerge as meaningful. The clear political message expressed in this novel cannot conceal Zong Pu's persistent belief in women's sense of self as important to their emancipation.

Most of the novels discussed here have been neglected by current critics, who generally fail to see the distinct difference between the first seventeen years of the PRC and the period of the Cultural Revolution. It has become fashionable to criticize revolutionary literature from the perspective of totalization. The Maoist discourse, which not only shaped each individual's thinking and expression during the Mao's years, but also became an obstacle for contemporary critics to explore the diversity of revolutionary literature, is one example of totalization. Yet during the first seventeen years of the PRC history, Chinese writers who had not become real political revolutionaries as Mao expected still struggled to rethink both writing and politics in a revolutionary

mode. Although there was a self-conscious search for the identity of the masses, the writers had not lost their own voices entirely. The description of revolution and love is justified by the attempt to overcome bourgeois thought, yet the ambivalence derived from the private desire's intermingling with the public revolutionary sensation opens a door for disparate representations of revolutionary literature, which cannot be viewed simply as a totality.

6 Farewell or Remember Revolution?

My discussion of the historical transformation of revolution plus love from the period of revolutionary literature to the contemporary era is meant not as a comprehensive outline but as an attempt to trace the bifurcated history described by Prasenjit Duara in *Rescuing History from Nation*. As an alternative history to that linear and transparent one, a bifurcated history, for Duara, "emphasizes the dynamic, multiple, and contested nature of historical identities."[1] Therefore, my study pays more attention to unmasking "appropriations and concealments in historical transmission"[2] than to delineating a general and coherent history of the relationship between revolution and love.

At the end of the twentieth century, the rewriting of the theme of revolution and love is complicated by a globalized economy in which contemporary Chinese intellectuals face a political dilemma between Westernizing development and nationalist concerns, between the marketplace and their individual positions. In general, in the 1980s, enlightenment modernism with its emphasis on liberalism, humanism, universal rights, and democracy was passionately espoused by Chinese intellectuals in their cultural critique of the Party authority and their enthusiastic embrace of China's modernization project. After the Tiananmen Square movement, the 1990s was a decade inundated with popular culture, concomitant with the process of economic reform and marketization and extending from beat and rock music, poster art, best-selling books, literature on the World Wide Web, and TV series to film adaptations of serious fiction. Commerce has visibly and inevitably influenced the arts. The pop enthusiasm of the 1990s has broken through the autonomous space of cultural production established in the 1980s, pushing Chinese intellectuals from their elite position of enlightenment. A series of debates over "the loss of humanist spirit" has shown the anxiety of the intellectuals, who have not yet found the right position in the commercial society and whose romantic ideas of self and

society have been greatly challenged by reality.[3] China's accelerating involvement in international politics and the global economy, and paradoxically, the influence of Western postmodernist and postcolonial thinking, led Chinese intellectuals to take a more critical stance toward Western modernity in the 1990s. Some reassessed traditional Chinese culture as an alternative driving force of modernity; some even retreated to Chinese nationalism, which, with its strong sentiments, unwittingly complies with the official discourse of national self-determination against the West. Others, such as Wang Hui and the school of new leftists (*xin zuopai*), vehemently criticized global capitalism; they represented a new perspective on Western modernity as a contradictory process involving more than the binary opposition of exploitation and resistance.[4]

In the context of global capitalism, a concept that for Arif Dirlik is the actual description of contemporary reality,[5] how do Chinese writers deal with the theme of revolution plus love, which has haunted the Chinese literary scene for almost a century? Does the rewriting of this old theme signal a final farewell to revolution or a nostalgia for the lost utopian dream? Is this a time to remember or a time to forget? Is this thematic repetition functioning as another means of rewriting and reconstructing history, as in Mo Yan's and Su Tong's works, or is it just one of the themes and scenes consumed by popular culture? Does the description of sex serve as a means to decode and subvert the dominant culture of the Party-state, or is it only merchandizing, devoid of any political significance? In other words, I am curious to see, facing the turbulent tides of the consumer market and the global economy, what positions Chinese intellectuals have found for themselves through the rewriting of revolution and love, as the revolutionary discourse itself is fragmented within the dominant culture of the Party-state. In addition, I examine how Chinese intellectuals deal with the typical dilemma between universalism and nationalism, between the global and the local, between Western culture and Chinese culture.

Through my reading of Chen Zhongshi's *The Land of White Deer* (*Bailuyuan*) and Wang Xiaobo's *Golden Time* (*Huangjin shidai*), I map the deconstructive trajectories of the rewriting of revolution plus love in the 1990s and investigate a variety of routes and positions that Chinese intellectuals chose to take after the autonomy of the literary field was ended. In the 1990s version of imagining history, of reconstituting the tension between revolution and love, what new value systems have these works created, and what new cultural spaces have these writers explored in the global context? What problems are hidden behind their imaginings? Instead of simply celebrating the new opportunity provided by the rapid development of a global economy and cultural commercialization, I aim to examine the crisis that Chinese intellectuals have had to face in their cultural production. Chen Zhongshi's deconstructive

rewriting of revolution plus love bespeaks a revived interest in local tradition and Confucianism and an emphasis on its specificity as a resistance to Western cultural hegemony; Wang Xiaobo's employment of sadist-masochist discursive strategy in his parody of the Cultural Revolution can be read as one kind of occidentalism, a term described by Chen Xiaomei as a tool of domestic political struggle.[6] Together, these writings challenge the "truths" of revolution, which have dominated Chinese imagination for almost the whole twentieth century, and universal love, which ignores differences derived from historicized gender subjectivities. Although contrasting sharply with the formula of revolution plus love during the revolutionary years, these postmodern rewritings continue to represent the struggle of Chinese intellectuals who consciously resist capitalist modernity and who attempt to understand the role of literature and its relation to politics in the new historical context.

A Return to Local Identity

Rewriting the theme of revolution plus love after the Tiananmen Square movement, Chen Zhongshi in *The Land of White Deer* follows in the footsteps of some experimental writers, such as Su Tong and Mo Yan, by continually offering a reading of revolutionary history substantially different from the master narratives of official, authoritarian history. But such a rewriting can no longer be simply described as the modernism of "the age of anxiety," of negation and alienation, or of the closed and finished art of autonomy that indicate the narrative direction of experimental writings. *The Land of White Deer* is not limited to language and textuality; more important, it reflects how Chinese writers thought of modernity after the enlightenment metanarratives of the 1980s had been repudiated by the postmodernists. Preoccupied with local tradition, Chen Zhongshi's writing must also be considered in the global context, in which Chinese intellectuals are caught between Westernization and nationalist identity.

Written by Chen Zhongshi in 1993, the novel is a perfect example of the reworking of revolution plus love during the last decade of twentieth-century mainland literature. At a time when the ethos of a symbiosis between revolutionary art and revolutionary politics had certainly vanished, what made this novel so popular was its audacious exposure of sex, like that in Jia Pingwa's *Waste City* (*Feidu*). Accompanied by the phenomena of TV soap operas and sitcoms such as *Longing* (*Kewang*) and *Stories of Editors* (*Bianjibu de gushi*) on mainland China's TV network, of commercially wrapped nostalgia for the "red sun"—Mao Zedong—in the popular culture, and of Wang Suo's "literature of villains" (*pizi wenxue*), which replaced serious avant-garde experimental writing,

The Land of White Deer stimulated many intellectuals who felt lost in the consumer culture and rapid global economic development. Despite its bold portrayal of sex, which boosted sales to 21,000 and three reprintings within three months, *The Land of White Deer* was affirmed by critics as "an epic production including all the important thoughts that have appeared in the literary field since 1979."[7] The novel seizes the opportunity of commercialization but at the same time maintains its reflective mode of writing, imagining and remembering a long and turbulent century.

Benefiting from a lot of challenging works of root-seeking literature (*xungen wenxue*) and experimental novels (*shiyan xiaoshuo*), Chen Zhongshi deploys multifaceted and diverse searches for the past as a strategy to question established narrative paradigms and to criticize ideological constructs of tradition, modernity, and revolution. But unlike some elite writers, who resist the seductive lure of mass culture, Chen enjoys pleasing a larger audience.[8] In discussing the readability of novels, he urges contemporary writers to communicate with readers instead of blaming them for their low tastes:

> When we are analyzing the crisis of pure literature and attempting to solve the dilemma, I think besides the pressure brought by commercialization and popular literature we also have to face our own problems. I am afraid the reason that our products are not appreciated by readers is not only because of their low tastes but also because of our self-appreciation and self-limitation.[9]

Chen Zhongshi pays a lot of attention to public taste. In his theory of mass culture, Theodor Adorno focuses on the negative aesthetic of modernism and criticizes the culture industry's manipulation of the arts. However, Adorno ignores the fact that modernism itself "is deeply implicated in the processes and pressures of the same mundane modernization it so ostensibly repudiates."[10] Both modernism and mass culture have to face the incompleteness of modernization. Unlike experimental writers, Chen consumes and produces simultaneously. Writing for public consumption, he flaunts descriptions of sex to entertain his readers. For example, the first sentence of the novel—"What Bai Jiaxuan always feels proud of is that he has been married to seven women during his lifetime"—immediately attracts the reader's attention. Following this line, Chen meticulously describes the protagonist's sex life with each of his women by showing off Bai's mysterious phallus. However, this is not a simple effort to adapt to commercial culture; it symbolizes a local tradition through which a masculine identity repressed by Maoist culture can be restored, a value system lost during the process of globalization can be rebuilt. But what kinds of masculinity and value system has Chen restored and rebuilt? Has he solved the

dilemma of Chinese intellectuals in the period of global commercialization? One conspicuous example—the production of "depraved women"—may provide some answers.

Depraved women were fixed as amoral and antirevolutionary figures from Yan'an literature onward, in contrast to the masculinized heroines who submitted their bodies, sex, and subjectivity to Maoist discourse. Revolutionary novels in the 1950s and 1960s presented the type of woman whose sexuality showed a dangerous and destructive political power in an extremely negative way. Those depraved women not only belonged to the antirevolutionary class but also resembled the "bad" women in classical Chinese novels who violated Confucian morality. For instance, characters such as Li Cui'e in *History of the Pioneers* and Shuhua and Yuzhen in *Flowers of Bitterness,* whose sexy and erotic bodies were both politicized and moralized, represent the stereotypical bad woman, menacing the sublime Communist utopia. Although the Communist Party claimed the liberation of Chinese women after 1949, women's sexuality was once again confined by the newly defined revolutionary morality; thus sexuality, one of the major issues of the May Fourth movement, was actually suppressed after the successful revolution.

After 1979, women's bodies were rewritten within the new genre of "scar literature," in which intellectuals attempted to repudiate the Cultural Revolution by revealing the mental and physical pain and scars of those years. In Gu Hua's *The Town of Hibiscus* (*Furongzhen*), the representative novel of scar literature, women's sexual bodies reappear. Maoist discourse's paradigm of bad and good women is reversed: the sexual body of Hu Yuyin represents the good woman unfairly blamed as a reactionary during the Cultural Revolution. The opposite of this sexual and kind woman is the female cadre who lacks a sexual body and violently suppresses the innocent because of jealousy. In the revolutionary novels of the Mao era, so-called depraved women always symbolized the decadent bourgeois or landlord class. But in *The Town of Hibiscus* the good (sexy) and bad (sexless) women have different implications: the author deliberately associates the former with moral decency and the latter with promiscuity—a great change in literary representation. However, depraved women and their sexual bodies are still utilized to signify political meanings.

Around 1985, writers of root-seeking literature and experimental novels consciously distanced themselves from the political center by reviving modernist narrative skills that had been little used during the revolutionary decades. They describe women's bodies as erotic, representing either the primitive sensation suppressed by Maoist discourse for so many years or the decadent aesthetics resulting from rewriting history. Some important images of depraved women appear in Su Tong's and Ye Zhaoyan's novels as part of their narrative

strategies of rewriting history: Liu Suzi in *The Family of the Opium Poppy* (*Yingsu zhijia*), Xiao-E in *Rouge* (*Hongfen*), and Xiuyun in *The Story of the Jujube Tree* (*Zaoshu de gushi*). Discussing the image of Liu Suzi, Lu Tonglin argues that "to some extent, she becomes identical with the symbol of femininity in traditional Chinese culture, water—changeable, shapeless, unpredictable, and elusive."[11] This is true from the feminist perspective, but most important is that these male writers represent history or collective memory as much as does the femme fatale, which allegorizes their personal memories. Through these ambivalent, seductive characters, they personalize history so much that the novels' historical backgrounds appear more allegorical than real.[12]

The heroine, Tian Xiao-E, in *The Land of White Deer* bears an unmistakable resemblance to the stereotype of the depraved woman that emerged in some experimental writings and in Jia Pingwa's *Waste City*. She can be considered a type of femme fatale who is whimsical, seductive, and dangerous, and whose transgressions define her in opposition to social norms or prohibitions. The emergence of the depraved woman in contemporary literature involves an explosive interaction between intention and circumstance, between symbolism and social context. Contemporary writers' frantic obsession with this image, which clearly reflects a male fantasy of women, implies their anxiety to restore the lost sexuality (the masculine identity) of the revolutionary era.

However, what differentiates Tian Xiao-E from the femmes fatales in Su Tong's and Ye Zhaoyan's novels is her special affiliation with the land of White Deer, in which the local religious system negotiates, associates, and conflicts with the GMD and CCP powers. Magnified and proliferated, Tian Xiao-E's depraved body forms the vivid nucleus of power relations in the revolutionary history of this land, encompassing the complexity of both eroticism and politics. The author endows her with various identities and positions: she is both a seductress and the leader of the women's league organized by the Communists, both decadent and progressive. Xiao-E is so seductive and dangerous that she destroys Bai Jiaxuan's son Xiaowen, a typical son of a feudal family. Her seductive power derives from her erotic body, which is depicted as no less powerful than the revolutionary struggle. Even after she is murdered, her power haunts the whole village. However, certain features elevate her as a progressive figure: her pursuit of freedom of love, her activity in land reform, and her uncompromising resistance to feudalism.

As critics have observed, one narrative mode, that of nostalgia, pervades the contemporary rewriting of history, allowing Chen Zhongshi to affirm the local unofficial religious power, which strongly holds the land of White Deer together through political turmoil and natural catastrophe. Positing the theme of revolution and love in this mysterious land, the author tries to reinstate the

local power, which combines Confucian values, magical superstition, and the patriarchal clan system and which has been neglected and erased by the official written history. Severe political struggle seems less important than the conflict between the regional patriarchal clan power and the depraved woman Tian Xiao-E. In contrast to the auspicious symbol, the white deer, Xiao-E operates as a curse on the village; yet they are both part of the mystery, contradiction, and complexity of this land, which cannot be explained by one ideology.

Derived from the magical land, Xiao-E's destructive power represents "the uncontrollable nearness of nature,"[13] which the patriarchal clan system has struggled to fix and stabilize. Ironically, this depraved woman joins the major characters of revolution in a large metaphoric company. The pervasive plague brought by Xiao-E's death shows how helpless the traditional morality and solid patriarchal system are against her ghostly, intractable power, which resembles revolution's magical destructiveness that efficiently crushes the old values but inevitably brings disaster to the land. The paradoxical Xiao-E reveals Chen Zhongshi's restless work of discovering and creating resemblances between this image and revolutionary power in order to parody the truth and rationality of revolutionary ideology.

Since Xiao-E has been the leader of the women's league, her sexuality becomes a hazy area that purposely confounds ethnic, moral, and national boundaries set by revolutionary ideology. Judged by the patriarchal tribal system, she is a bad woman; but she is by no means a good woman by revolutionary criteria, for she lacks political commitment. Although she has achieved the revolutionary goal—freedom and emancipation—her moral ambiguity cannot be easily fixed by politics. Though the description of this character is misogynistic, the unusual association between her eroticism and the land's mystery allows the author to freely break through revolutionary ideology. Following Latin American magical realism, the narrative strategy of this novel explodes the social critical realism that prevailed in mainstream literature for so many decades. Chen Zhongshi's image of the femme fatale represents both the best fantasy and the worst nightmare of revolution, man, and nation.

Yet in the conflict between the local unofficial religious power and Xiao-E's seductive body, Chen Zhongshi indubitably valorizes the former. As the agent of local authorities, the clan elder, Bai Jiaxuan, is a textual sign of what Chinese culture and society relied on for three thousand years: the rural rituals and ethics saturated with Confucian culture. Like his ancestors, he continues the legacy of hard work, self-cultivation, and benevolence, obeying the old customs that have largely been destroyed by various political struggles. As many critics have pointed out, Bai Jiaxuan is no doubt Chen Zhongshi's ideal character, the incarnation of righteousness and positive power, the "number

one benevolent and honest person in the land of White Deer."[14] If the historical memory of twentieth-century China is fraught with images of revolution, Chen Zhongshi's elevation of his ideal Bai Jiaxuan is a criticism of the idea of progress, the concept of modernity. In comparison to other characters, who identify with either the CCP or the GMD and are consumed by political turmoil, Bai Jiaxuan always maintains his individuality and his superior status in the land of White Deer. This ideal image becomes all the more powerful in driving Chen Zhongshi's novel away from the enlightenment package advocated by the May Fourth generation. Chen Zhongshi succeeds in challenging the revolutionary tradition with which Chinese intellectuals were obsessed. In affirming the local traditional values, however, Chen moves in a way opposite to his original motivation to examine what has gone wrong in Chinese history. The ideological blind spot of his novel is its lack of criticism of the traditional culture. This is particularly disturbing when it comes to the woman question.

In "Diary of a Madman," what Lu Xun sees through the book of "Confucian virtue and morality" is two words: "eat people." Although this monolithic voice totalizes the Chinese traditional culture as a contrast to the narrative of Chinese modernity, the fact that women are the victims of Confucian culture is undeniable. What is disturbing about *The Land of White Deer* is that behind the benevolent cultural value that Bai Jiaxuan represents also lie the two words "eat people." Needless to say, Chen Zhongshi's ideological valorization of the local culture uncritically endorses misogynistic elements and reinforces women's inferior status. The depraved Tian Xiao-E is so rebellious that she becomes victimized by the patriarchal system. Portrayed as "the most promiscuous woman in the whole land of White Deer,"[15] she is not allowed to enter the sacred temple of the clan because of her pursuit of free marriage. Her seductiveness is exaggerated to an extreme as she leads the elder son of Bai Jiaxuan into prodigality. Such exaggeration repeats the traditional patriarchal saying that "woman is the disaster water." Her murder by her father-in-law, Bai Jiaxuan's loyal farm laborer, to prevent her from hurting more "decent" young men, is "a great deed applauded by everyone in the village."[16] Because her ghost haunts the village, Bai Jiaxuan and his brother-in-law Mr. Zhu, who is limned by Chen Zhongshi as a saint and the symbol of white deer—positive spirit—in the land, decide to build a tower over her ashes, repressing her evil spirit forever. This reminds us of Leifeng Tower in the vernacular story of White Snake, which symbolizes the phallic center of feudalism and means to suppress the dangerous woman, and which has been seriously criticized by Lu Xun. It is intriguing that Chen Zhongshi's nostalgia for the traditional local culture blinds him to the hypocrisy and cruelty embodied by Bai Jiaxuan and the saintly Mr. Zhu.

Echoing the cultural fever and the search for roots begun in 1985, Chen

Zhongshi's *The Land of White Deer* also attempts to rethink Chinese modernity and the cultural upheaval of the May Fourth period. The positive spirit of the land of White Deer is not the destructive power of revolution, which is no different from Xiao-E's decadent power, but the stable, profound, and benevolent traditional culture evident in Bai Jiaxuan. In rethinking the ruin of history and displacing the official ideology, Chen Zhongshi rewrites local history and constructs a new totality and a return to traditional masculinity. In failing to examine the complexity of traditional Chinese culture and valorizing the attitude of "farewell revolution," he consolidates the dichotomy between the traditional and the modern, between hierarchical sexual differences. In the new period of globalization, his revitalization and mystification of traditional culture may work out Chinese intellectuals' confusion and frustration over their lost elite position. However, his uncritical attitude toward the complex local tradition indicates that he has not yet found his right position. We surely need to search for the lost humanist spirit amid the current commercialization, but how exactly should we define that term?

While criticizing recent scholarship that aims to produce a China-centered view of history, Arif Dirlik's argument provides insight into Chen Zhongshi's return to the local tradition and Confucianism:

> The effort is well-intentioned because it seeks to rescue Chinese history from its subjection to the hegemony of EuroAmerican teleologies and concepts; but it is misguided because it is accompanied by assertions that the Chinese themselves are incapable of producing this history because they have tainted by Western concepts and, therefore, have lost touch with their own past. Such efforts, which deny the Chinese contemporaneity while giving again Euro-Americans the privilege of interpreting China's past for the Chinese, are reminiscent of nineteenth-century Europeans who, claiming historicalness for themselves while denying it to others, appropriated the meaning of history for the whole world, especially for the Third World.[17]

What Dirlik criticizes is the kind of orientalism produced by the oriental, which actually becomes a reassertion of the universalistic claims of modernity. On the surface, it seems that Chen Zhongshi's reaffirmation of the legacy of Confucianism is the site of resistance to modernity and to Western cultural hegemony; however, his idealistic attitude shows his inability to critically involve himself in the process of globalization.[18] The stable and unchanging local value system is stripped of history and incapable of explaining dynamic social change. Such essentialization of the "authentic" local culture not only ignores the fact that the local is always reestablished through the global but

also reaffirms the orientalist imagination of the local. In sum, displacing the discourse of enlightenment with tradition and the legacy of Confucianism does not mean we have rediscovered the humanist spirit or have found a perfect site for fighting the teleology of modernity. Rather, the claim for local tradition and national identity is itself a product of modernization.

The Sadomasochistic Aesthetic of Wang Xiaobo

In the preface of his novella *Love in the Revolutionary Period* (*Geming shiqi de aiqing*), Wang Xiaobo (1952–1997) claims that "it is a book about erotica." This assertion is amazing, because the period he is dealing with—the Cultural Revolution—is commonly known as devoid of sex. However, as Wang Xiaobo says, "It is only in the era without sex that sex can become the theme of life, as eating becomes the theme of life during the hungry years."[19] Directed at the sadomasochistic relationship between men and women, individual and nation, Wang Xiaobo's representative book *Golden Time* exalts the "normal," the "manly," and cynicism over idealism and romanticism. Consisting of five novellas, *Golden Time* seeks to lay bare the origins and effects of national and individual self-hatred and self-destructiveness during the revolutionary period.

After receiving his master's degree from the University of Pittsburgh, Wang Xiaobo chose to go back to China and become a freelance writer. Wang's exploration of individualism and criticism of Chinese character are deeply influenced by Western liberalism. His fictional works have been categorized by critics such as Chen Sihe and Nan Fan as China's avant-garde literature (or literary high modernism) of the 1990s.[20] Wang Xiaobo often writes in a parodic mode, which alludes to his position as one of the "enlighteners." But in a departure in the 1980s, Wang shrugs off the burdens of national duty, social idealism, and moral sense and poignantly criticizes any kind of "savior sentiment" (*jiushi qingjie*)—Confucianism, Communism, utopianism—while championing individuals' independent thinking and experience. In his own words, "If a person cannot protect himself or help friends, how can he have the luxury of talking about saving the whole world? If a person does not have dignity, living like a pig, who needs him to help?"[21] Sarcastically ridiculing the social responsibility of Chinese intellectuals, Wang Xiaobo is not interested in searching for cultural roots or a new value system. Although influenced by Western liberalism and the discourse of enlightenment in the 1980s, he doesn't believe in any abstract concepts such as freedom or justice, nor does he advocate a return to national study (*guoxue*), especially Confucianism. His mockery of elitism goes hand in hand with his objection to hypocritical morality and authoritarian preaching. Explaining his opposition to utopianism, he said:

> From Plato to Marx, there have been too many people who want to design an ideal society for the world and human life. I respect those people, but hate this idea. . . . If someone gets happy, it is not necessarily through other people's efforts. One can only create happiness for himself. Some find a new savior for our world: Confucianism. Why must they impose it upon other people? That's what irritates me.[22]

Representing a new generation inclined to cynicism, Wang Xiaobo deconstructs various institutions of authority and value judgment. Different from the enlightenment tradition that originated in the May Fourth movement, his elite position is based on his own personal spiritual and linguistic home, from which he fights against narrow nationalistic thought and the totalitarian value system.[23] In rewriting the theme of revolution plus love, Chen Zhongshi replaces revolutionary ideology with local tradition; but Wang Xiaobo shifts from the moral high ground to the lowest common denominator of human desire and survival. In response to the turbulence of Chinese history, the former revitalizes but retotalizes traditional values, whereas the latter abandons and criticizes any existing traditions. As the literati worried about rebuilding Chinese spiritual structure under the pressure of commercialization, Wang Xiaobo suggested that Chinese intellectuals should first examine themselves from the perspective of Chinese tradition as well as foreign culture. When his novel *Golden Time* was criticized for lacking the elements to educate and encourage people as well as elevate the human soul, Wang responded that the only soul he hoped to elevate was his own. As he said, "This sentence is very despicable, very selfish, but truly honest."[24] Wang Xiaobo adopted a mode of discourse that fits the small self he privileges. The way he vehemently attacks tradition is very much in the spirit of the May Fourth generation, even if he would rather go back to the lonely and spiritual home of self rather than undertake the responsibility of enlightenment. Paradoxically, he vacillates between elitism and cynicism, mocks Chinese intellectuals' pretensions of enlightenment as well as their superior savior position but never gives up his own position as one of the enlighteners.

In this section, I read Wang Xiaobo's *Golden Time* as a form of sadomasochistic writing. I use these terms not in their usual clinical sense, but to describe Wang Xiaobo's discursive strategy to subvert the cultural politics of the Maoist era, and further, the existential social attitude. His use of the Western psychological terms is similar to what Chen Xiaomei has defined as "antiofficial Occidentalism," a discourse that uses the "Western Other as a metaphor for a political liberation against ideological oppression within a totalitarian society."[25] Wang Xiaobo is not interested in the "real" West but, like Su Xiaokang,

one of the writers of *He Shang,* merely uses an occidental Other as "a pretext to debunk current official ideology."[26] However, Wang Xiaobo's cynicism is incredibly distant from the idealist and romantic tone embedded in Su Xiaokang's writing.

Wang Xiaobo's essay "Foreign Devil and Gu Hongming" is reminiscent of Lu Xun's criticism of national character. Through a sadistic foreigner's gaze, Wang Xiaobo derides the Chinese political and cultural system as a sex game and a sex ritual of sadomasochism:

> Honestly speaking, we have everything that the foreign devil has in his secret room. This correspondence is not a coincidence. In the secret room, some masochists call themselves slaves and sadists masters. It is similar to when someone calls himself a servant and the other person a master in China. Some masochists in the secret room address themselves as worms and the others as sun; the Chinese replace worms with bricks and screws, but as for "sun," it is not enough for them, so they add the prefix of "the most red."[27]

Through the metaphor of sadomasochism, Wang Xiaobo sees the despicable side of Chinese character and society—callous, hypocritical, and perverted. His appropriation of these Western psychological terms is of course a reconstruction and imagination of the Western Other; however, it aims to rescue the self repressed by the national character as well as the official ideology. As such an allegorical form is used to characterize the Cultural Revolution, a strong irony stems not so much from Wang Xiaobo's reversal of the political authority as from his exposure of perverted sexual intentions behind the noble cause.

The five novellas in *Golden Time* all talk about the erotic life of a normal person, Wang Er, in the sexually distorted and repressive society during the Cultural Revolution. It is clear that Wang Xiaobo's works are concerned first of all with the sadomasochistic reality. The focus on the material and practical during the Cultural Revolution seems to create an unreal world but subverts and dismantles the so-called reality legitimated by social realism. Removing the sacred mask of the Sublime from the Red Guards' and other enthusiastic people's submission to their master—the red sun, Mao Zedong, the Party, and the people—Wang Xiaobo exposes their action as masochism; the dominant power's persecution of intellectuals and the innocent is sadism, deriving pleasure from inflicting pain on others. This narrative strategy delineates what Jameson calls a "politically symbolic act," expressing the "political unconscious." Within this sadomasochistic political and cultural trap, a normal sex life is both impossible and illegitimate. It is at this point that Wang Er's erotic life becomes a joke on the dominant power and realist discourse.

Wang Er, the first-person narrator-protagonist, has all sorts of erotic experiences while confronting power struggle in five novellas—*Golden Time, Established at Thirty* (*Sanshi erli*), *The Floating Years* (*Sishui liunian*), *Love during the Revolutionary Period,* and *My Two Worlds—Life and Death* (*Wode yinyang liangjie*). Reminiscent of Lu Xun's naming of Ah Q, Wang Xiaobo's choice of the casual name Wang Er is a way to explore symbolic space. Wang Er can refer to anyone in his generation; he is sent to the countryside by Mao's policy, then comes back to college and becomes an intellectual. Wang Er, as Wang Xiaobo himself explains, has many brothers with the same name; even the author was addressed by this name when he was young.[28] Lu Xun's naming of Ah Q ironically satirizes the national character of his time; but Wang Xiaobo's designation of Wang Er is a way to recover the lost self, especially the lost masculinity of his generation. Throughout different experiences in five novellas, Wang Er is described as a young man who is tall, ugly, and rebellious, and whose eminent mark is his huge penis. There is no question that his penis, which symbolizes unyielding masculinity within the repressive psychosocial environment, plays an important role in destabilizing the master-slave or sadist-masochist duality and collapsing the Maoist sociocultural structure embedded therein.

With a tone of black humor, Wang Xiaobo's *Golden Time* thrusts us immediately into the realm of absurdities and meaninglessness. It depicts Wang Er's erotic relationship with a female doctor, Chen Qingyang, who is smeared as a slut because of her beauty. The narrator sarcastically describes how Chen Qingyang is presumed to be and therefore is labeled a slut despite her innocence and has no way of escaping this categorization. Similarly, Wang Er is also blamed and persecuted for killing the leader's dog, though he didn't do it. Similar irrationalities abound in Wang Er's relationship with Chen Qingyang: they have no way to disprove the constant gossip about their nonexistent sexual relationship. The psychic reality that Wang Xiaobo attempts to delineate here is obviously shaped by his study of the West. Surrounded by sadists, who, according to Deleuze's analysis, externalize ego and turn into superego in order to practice domination and control, Chen Qingyang has no choice but to become a real slut by sleeping with Wang Er.

The most interesting part of the novella is the sensational intercourse between Chen Qingyang and Wang Er narrated through self-criticism, which can be seen as masochistic self-blame and self-accusation. Prescribed by the Party as a way to cultivate one's soul during the Cultural Revolution, self-criticism is associated with what Freud terms "masochistic wishes"—a sense of guilt and a desire for punishment and persecution.[29] However, Wang Er's and Chen Qingyang's self-exposure and self-criticism of their behavior is ironically transformed into an internalized self-affirmation. Exposing their sex acts in the most

primitive, sensational, and animalistic way, their self-criticism looks more like pornography than a political self-examination. The Party leaders enjoy reading it so much that they order them to write and expose more. Wang Xiaobo's black humor turns the serious political instrument into a spectacle of the production and consumption of sex. What is more intriguing is that this masochistic form does not remain passive; Wang Er and Chen Qingyang convert it into a means of relocating the lost self and understanding the meaning of love. At this point, the Party leaders lose their sadistic enjoyment of this young couple's self-criticism. Oddly, the masochistic form allows Chen Qingyang and Wang Er to affirm their sexuality and subjectivity instead of negating themselves and yielding to official demands. In the hands of Wang Xiaobo, the masochistic self-criticism becomes a powerful tool with which to disturb the revolutionary, regulated sex and gender roles as well as the dynamics of power and submission.

Here we may find it hard to apply Western theories of masochism or sadism in interpreting Wang Xiaobo's psychic reality, because his understanding of those terms is influenced by his creativity and imagination. But it is obvious that for him, masochism becomes a discursive strategy to subvert the master-slave opposition and to affirm the triumph of the masochistic ego or the lost individuality. The concept of masochism becomes an aesthetic and textual category, far beyond the power relationship implied by the Western understanding of the word. Although Wang's appropriation of the Western Other is problematic, he has created a specific object-world configured by the masochistic aesthetic—a discursive system that undermines and mocks the dominant power. In the story *Golden Time,* when Chen Qingyang is tied up and humiliated in a public meeting of criticism (*douzhenghui*)—a favorite practice of revolutionaries, a legitimate and politically correct form of violence, and a site for the sadist to vent power—she acts like a real masochist who gains satisfaction and pleasure through being punished. She finds that every man in the public meeting is sexually aroused by her bundled body and herself receives pleasure with the humiliation and criticism. Unlike writers of scar literature, who usually sentimentally depict torments, pains, and nightmares the degraded "devils and demons" (*niu gui she shen*) go through, Wang Xiaobo exposes the sadistic and masochistic desire behind revolutionary libidinal energy. Using Chen Qingyang's weakness as a source of strength, Wang puts her in the primary position of the sadist: in the exchange of pleasure-in-pain, she is the one who dominates and controls.[30] As a result, Wang not only subverts the political form of public criticism but also contests the reality the ideological hegemony sustains and endorses.

The narrative strategy of masochism is also evident in other novellas in *Golden Time*. In *Love in the Revolutionary Period,* the protagonist Wang Er is accused of something he hasn't done: drawing a naked body of his factory's

leader, Ms. Lu, in the men's room. Wang Er is chased and cursed by Ms. Lu everywhere in the factory and is classified as a bad young man who needs to be reeducated. The one who comes to give Wang Er political education is a progressive young woman, X Haiying, the leader of the Party's youth league in the factory. The process includes the masochistic self-criticism, attending meetings, and sitting in X Haiying's office for dialogues about political thought. Since Wang Er has hemorrhoids, the sitting part becomes torture for him. Contrasting sharply with narrators in the tearjerker scar literature, the narrator in Wang Xiaobo's story describes the sadomasochistic world with abundant black humor. He soon transforms the process of reeducation into a masochist sex game between Wang Er and X Haiying. Representing the Party, X Haiying is occupying the sadist position; however, during their sexual intercourse, she shows her masochistic desire by fantasizing herself being raped by a Japanese devil, a role of enemy and rapist that she orders Wang Er to play. This fantasy reveals that the progressive young woman X Haiying is not pure and virtuous, nor is the revolutionary discourse represented by her body transparent and sublime. Wang Xiaobo's ironic narrative drives us to question the political system that legitimizes the structure of sadism and masochism underlying revolutionary films, novels, and other means of propaganda. For instance, X Haiying is obsessed with scenes in which revolutionary women are raped by Japanese or heroes are tortured and beaten by enemies—the sort of sadomasochistic scenes prevalent in numerous novels and films during the revolutionary period, such as *Red Stone* (*Hongyan*), *The Song of Youth*, *The Flower of Bitterness*, and *An Old City Fought by Wild Fire and Spring Wind* (*Yehuo chunfeng dou gucheng*). Here Wang mocks the conventional representation of revolutionary heroes and ideology. Accordingly, the masochist fantasy of X Haiying takes on aesthetic meaning, stressing a psychic reality through which the common sense and history attributed to the political education program are mocked and challenged.

It is worth noting that Wang Xiaobo's exploration of the masochistic world is constructed by sexual differences. Wang reacts strongly against the dynamics of power and submission in the symbolic order of Communist culture. However, in the psychic reality he represents, masochistic women are only part of a discursive formation of sadism and masochism. In other words, they are only puppets of the dominant power; even their masochistic desire is manipulated by the whole ideological discourse. As the narrator explains X Haiying's masochist fantasy, he says:

> When X Haiying is arranged in the line like a puppet by the Japanese, she is aroused by the cruel Japanese devils in front of her. But she does not think that she is controlled in this way, and what she has seen is due to other

> people's efforts. Therefore her being aroused is also due to other people's efforts. Her every action and behavior, plus every idea, is due to other people's efforts. That is to say, she is not the real her from the beginning to the end.[31]

Although X Haiying's fantasy can be read as a subversion of the divine and the sublime, she is only a link in a psychic chain, a puppet who does not think for herself. Chen Qingyang in *Golden Time* is the same; her masochistic desire is trained by the distorted political system. The only one who can transgress this abnormal psychic reality is Wang Er. Marginalized by the ideological hegemony, he lacks a sense of morality and never follows social and political conventions. Conscious of being a normal man, he is prevented from becoming an object of the sadomasochistic world by his longing for love from the opposite sex. The comic nature of the first-person narrative also allows Wang Er to see clearly the psychic reality he lives in and detach himself from what he sees as absurd and abnormal. Furthermore, the narrator's exaggeration of Wang Er's manly potency, which makes women happy in a normal way, demonstrates that he has not been castrated by the dominant power. However, Wang Er's masculinity is established at the expense of fixing women in the abnormal position, as masochists. Gender difference is thus manifested by the hierarchical opposition of normal and abnormal.

Wang Er, however, lacks the savior sentiment of Lu Xun's madman, who condemns the whole cannibalistic world and hopes for a better future for children. Wang Er cares only about himself and his sexual life; in other words, he pays attention only to self-salvation. His search for the lost self and masculinity does not come from a desire to return to cultural roots and national identity. In sharp contrast to root-seeking writers, whose search for masculinity is closely affiliated with cultural potency, Wang Xiaobo ridicules manhood in relation to China's quest for modernity, representing the self as fragmented and decentered, another appropriation of the Western Other. His masculine imagination is devoid of any ideal radiance, but chooses a marginal position instead—fundamentally different from the elite position of Chinese intellectuals in the 1980s, who sought to rescue their country through a superior occidental Other.

There are certain similarities between Wang Xiaobo's and Wang Suo's novels. Both authors abhor hypocrisy, moral principle, and savior sentiments; both have a sense of humor and satire. The difference is that Wang Suo deals with the lower class, which earned his works the name literature of villains, whereas Wang Xiaobo focuses more on the intellectuals, represented by Wang Er, the author's alter ego. Wang Suo's villains lack any humanist spirit, and the self-salvation of Wang Er also appears impossible, because he is locked in an absurd world. Accordingly, Wang Xiaobo's novels, which use occidentalism to

poignantly satirize idealism, morality, and elitism, are very useful in describing domestic political struggle; however, they fail to provide a solution for Chinese intellectuals facing the various problems and contradictions brought by commercialization and globalization. On the contrary, the cynical tone is demoralizing and encourages degeneration, which fits with the phenomenon of the decline of morality associated with the consumer culture of the 1990s.

Conclusion

The consistent literary pattern of revolution plus love resulted from Chinese intellectuals' century-long quest for modernity under the urgency of national crisis. Similar themes—politics and gender, nationalism and love—existed in the indigenous classical Chinese tradition. For instance, in the Ming-Qing contexts, courtesans such as Li Xiangjun and Liu Rushi "often [serve] as the essential link between love and political commitment," as Kang-I Sun Chang has discussed in her book *The Late-Ming Poet Ch'en Tzu-lung: Crises of Love and Loyalism*.[1] However, what makes the theme of revolution plus love a typical modern product is its repeated performance in writers' struggle to come to terms with the intriguing relation between revolution and modernity. The tensions explored in this formula—between collective mythologies and personal happiness, the ideal and the real, the sublime and the quotidian, politics and aesthetics, masculinity and femininity—are ongoing discursive methods of representing and reinterpreting the meaning of "modern." Having conceived of the relationship between revolution and love in terms of interactive processes, I am struck by Chinese intellectuals' split personality as well as the conflicted modern consciousness manifested in the repetition of this formula. The problematic, intricate, and overdetermined relations between the collective power and the sensuous experience of the individual show how Chinese intellectuals went to extraordinary lengths to portray their utopian dream of a stronger and more modernized China.

Throughout this book I have explored how revolution and love affect each other and how their interdependence is produced through political ideologies and practices under different historical circumstances. Joan Wallach Scott's study of women's history and gender inequality emphasizes the formations of fantasy that enable the interplay between gender and politics. Quoting from Slovenian philosopher Renata Salecl, she writes, "Politics without fantasy,

without the manipulation of unconscious modes of enjoyment, is an illusion."[2] Both revolution and love are based on fantasies that express unconscious desires, which for Freud are the site of repressive instincts. Although one focuses on national and collective fantasies, the other on private and individual ones, they do not exist independently; they are instead inextricably combined, enveloped by the light of idealism. The lure of the ideal, through the possibility of illusion and fantasy, has shaped several generations in the twentieth century, projecting contagious longing for modernity, for a new and better nation. It is appeals to idealism that construct the theme of revolution plus love, which closely ties personal happiness with revolutionary collectivism, self with nation; it is the force of the ideal that makes Chinese intellectuals willing to suffer the split personality or to subject personal love to the sublime. It is also the utopian dream that differentiates previous generations of writers and intellectuals from the current one. Like many people in my generation, I am disillusioned with the utopian dream. Skeptical of the sublime and the grand narrative, we have largely replaced the national burden with the personal dream. As we waltz in its lightness and look back on bygone, naive, yet enthusiastic generations, we cannot keep from admiring their strong courage in pursuing the ideal as well as their bitter struggle in trying to fulfill it. Indeed, as China is experiencing rapid changes in the context of global marketization, it is easy to cynically ridicule or rail against lofty figures, idealistic projects, and the collective spirit, but hard to understand why previous generations embraced the utopian ideal as an undeniable force both in personal life and in politics.

Starting from what has been missing in my generation, I have used this book to develop a critical sensibility to view the theme of revolution plus love within its political context. The formula's pattern can be traced back to the emergence of the political novel in the later Qing; for instance, Liang Qichao's *The Future of New China* (*Xin Zhongguo weilaiji*) was just about to tackle this theme before the novel was aborted. Closely bound up with the anxiety of constructing a new cultural, racial, and national identity, the theme was carried on by other late-Qing novels such as *Women's Rights* (*Nüziquan*), *A Flower of the Women's Prison* (*Nüyuhua*), and *The Chivalrous Beauties* (*Xiayi jiaren*). The theme was continually in the process of being composed during the May Fourth period, during which sexual revolution and women's emancipation were regarded as the metonymic symbols for creating a new culture as well as new citizens for modern China. However, not until the period of revolutionary literature did the formulaic writing of revolution plus love formally emerge and proliferate.

Therefore, after setting out to delineate the origin and outcome of this theme in the introduction, I have focused in the first four chapters on the literary history of the period of revolutionary literature, examining the coexistence

of various sign systems that produced and reproduced the formula. Consciously highlighted by leftist writers as a perfect site to mix utopian desires with reality anxiety, the big "I" with the small "I," the revolution plus love formula became a self-recycling discourse, revolving around repetition and imitation. By examining different agents' reiteration, I have tried to challenge previous studies that reduced the period of revolutionary literature to a narrow phase associated with important political events and crises.

Although I recognize the driving force of utopian desires that stimulated the long-standing and numerous repetitions of this formulaic writing, I am also keenly aware that those repetitions were by no means simple. While based on certain predictable ideological presences and fixations, this formula at the same time pointed to various dynamic possibilities. Here Fredric Jameson's theory of the political unconscious is very appropriate. As he points out,

> The literary structure, far from being completely realized on any one of its levels, tilts powerfully into the underside or *impense* or *nondit,* in short, into the very political unconscious, of the text, such that the latter's dispersed semes—when reconstructed according to this model of ideological closure—themselves then insistently direct us to the informing power of forces or contradictions which the text seeks in vain wholly to control or master.[3]

My study is precisely an exploration of what has been repressed by the text and the revelation of "logic possibilities and permutations" that the formula itself fails to realize.[4] Many scholars who criticize the formula of revolution plus love take it as a given ideological formation, an established literary practice, but fail to realize that beneath the surface lie contradictions and possibilities that were not manifested in the structure of a particular political fantasy.

Three major practices of revolution plus love during the period of revolutionary literature have attracted my attention. The first involves an increasing desire to depart from the May Fourth predecessors by committing to proletarian literature. As leftist writers such as Jiang Guangci, Mao Dun, Hong Lingfei, and Hua Han seek to employ sex as an articulation of power relations, they see revolution and love as reciprocal rather than conflicting. The romantic subjectivity represented in these leftists' writing suggests their close ties to the May Fourth spirit. My study of the second practice, by female writers, makes women a focus of inquiry, agents of the narratives of political events and individual struggles. The disparate nature of this group of writers can lead to disturbing and confusing opinions of this historical period and makes impossible the usual fixed view of this formula, for it accentuates the variant meanings of gender itself. The third practice, by urban modernists such as Mu Shiying,

Liu Na'ou, and Shi Zhecun, puts this formula in the context of urban culture, in which the national ideal is no longer the major concern, thus revealing how repetitions can recontextualize the relation between revolution and love.

Although this formula was discarded and criticized by some leftists such as Mao Dun and Qu Qiubai around 1930, it consistently attracted followers during the Japanese occupation period, the first seventeen years, the Cultural Revolution, and the beginning of the 1980s. Thus, the rest of my book has looked at some of those historical periods, accounting for both synchronic and diachronic modes of production. It is commonly known that writers after 1949 avoided mentioning personal love because it was strictly manipulated and censored by the increasing power of collective revolution as well as Mao discourse. However, chapter 5 shed a little light on the period of the first seventeen years, in which we still can find some disturbing elements stressing personal happiness. Chapter 6 probed the predicament of Chinese intellectuals, who are disillusioned with the ideal as well as the grandiose figures but have not found their critical voice toward modernity in the new context of globalization.

My first and primary concern has been to make what was hidden from or buried by history visible. Many texts that I have dealt with are not first-class productions, according to traditional literary value judgments. But the critical assumption that motivated my inquiry into this theme is not the distinction between the canon and works outside it. Rather, my intent has been to investigate what has remained latent and unconscious in cultural politics and literary practices, why these hidden motifs and agendas have been deliberately erased or forgotten by linear history, and what kind of strategies we should adopt in rewriting literary history. A relatively neglected theme can be treated in terms of extraordinary tensions: between the framework of conventional history and the "bifurcated histories" (Prasenjit Duara's term); between received disciplinary standards and interdisciplinary interchange; between an objectively determined interest and a discursively produced concept of interest. Instead of focusing on the interconnection of revolution and love in different historical periods as a relational history, I have emphasized the formula's variability and volatility, through which the meanings of concepts are open to contest and redefinition and the modes of writing themselves are dynamic and unstable.

I therefore have underscored the performative nature of the interplay between revolution and love because it calls attention to the conflicting processes that establish and redefine meanings, to the ways in which discursive boundaries change with historical and political conditions. I have questioned the stable, self-identifying and ontological status of the formula itself. Moreover, performance of a formula suggests that by its repetition in different circumstances, the original ideological principle may be confirmed or altered. In other words,

various acts of repetition and reiteration can constitute a new reality or new context that has been deliberately forgotten by the collective narratives of history. Based on the theory of performativity, I have discovered that a seemingly fixed formula could prove true to its myriad and contradictory historical expressions, thereby helping us interrogate the false unity of nationalism, modernity, and collective memory. As this theme runs through many major periods in the history of modern Chinese literature, a uniform repetition of the utopian concept of nation and the predetermined modern identity has inevitably become an illusion.

As we discuss how revolution has grasped Chinese writers' imagination, I believe we must think about the relations between gender and politics, that is, as a reflection of the complex human psyche rather than of social fact based on linear history. If we underestimate the significance of the mutual interdependence of sexuality and revolution, we may fail to recognize that the ideology of newness is constituted by unconscious desires whose expressions take symbolic form, either condensing or displacing the given definition of modernity. Seeing complex human activity as a crucial component of the ideology of newness, we find that Chinese intellectuals' identity of modernity has never been finally settled; it has been secured only through their repeated performances, exultant, anxious, vulnerable, and painful. I have constantly asked the following questions: What are the relations between revolution and love in the particular contexts in which they are invoked? What are the manifestations of contradiction between the two terms? How are they represented, regulated, or repressed? How are power relations consolidated by appeals to instinct, desire, personal love, and sexual difference? How do sexual identities negotiate and conflict with revolutionary ideology through identification with various social positions? How does the complicated interplay of love and revolution, the private space and the public space, the self and the collective relinquish simple assessments of modern consciousness? These questions have prompted different definitions from those who have tried to understand Chinese modernity purely from the perspective of historical consciousness. By adding another dimension, unconscious desire, they ask how and why Chinese intellectuals are so obsessed with legitimizing the modern, yet so uncertain of their own modern identity.

The evolution of the theme of revolution plus love has largely expressed the changing meanings of "modern." If consciousness of personal freedom and happiness is regarded as one of the most important premises in the conception of modernity, then this theme has recorded how such self-consciousness has been stimulated or repressed by the collective modern ideal. If tradition has been constructed as the counterdiscourse of the modern, then this theme has shown how

individuals agonizingly vacillate between them. If revolutionary ideology has manipulated the modern subjectivity, then this theme has emphasized modern men and women's split psychology, which to an extent defies the sublime through the articulation of their sexual identities. As a result, we cannot assume the abiding existence of a homogeneous, collective modern identity. Rather, at the heart of this theme is the deep confusion between self-conscious modern subjectivity and the collective commitment of the modern nation.

Feminist approaches have been useful in my discussion of this formula, first, because sexual differences have played an important role in the articulation of the revolutionary ideology and power relations and, second, because the performative nature of gender (Judith Butler's theory) has made the interplay between revolution and love as well as the formula itself always in potential flux. As I have used women's bodies as a critical instrument to examine political representation, the core of my analysis has been the integral connection between biological "sex" and the social construction of "gender." Refusing to see a sharp distinction between the two, I regard women's bodies as social and historical constructions whose volatility can transgress the political boundaries they are supposed to secure. I have questioned both men and women as rational agents in producing and carrying on the rationality of modernity, again accentuating the complexity of the human psyche that leads to the conflicting subjective identities of modern.

If my analysis of revolution plus love has put too much emphasis on the internal differentiation of the formula itself, I need to restress that the production of this formulaic writing is derived from writers' utopian dream. The irreconcilable contradiction between that dream and cruel reality initiates this theme. The utopian ideal has given empty promises, requiring followers of this theme to forever postpone personal happiness and to transfer personal sexual desire to the sublime; its impelling power has unleashed the libido of love to fuel revolutionary frenzy. However, the private and the public characters coexisting in the theme remain in conflict, even if they have been united under the ideal. Driven by libidinal energy, personal love and sex cannot be easily or completely sublimated in the representation of this formula. Therefore, I have highlighted the split personality of its writers, an eminent sign of their complicated modern consciousness.

As we step into the new century, we face a global context in which China's issue of modernity has been brought back to the table, in which believers in the utopian dream have become disenchanted, in which the school of new leftists has republished the *Communist Manifesto* in *Frontiers* (*Tianya*) in order to call attention to the class issue that has reemerged in China's capitalist economy.[5] We have to pause and wonder if we need to rekindle the light of idealism, if literature

cannot be separated from its social concerns. The theme of revolution plus love has clearly documented the predicament of human existence in the revolutionary years, of literature as an instrument for social revolution, of the private space being swallowed by the public space. Now that the sublime, the collective revolution, the utopian dream have been seriously deconstructed and criticized, people no longer have any idealized goal to rely on and to strive for, and pure literature has lost its contact with society, we are left to ponder if something is missing, if we need to find and develop the so-called human spirit. What possibilities do we have for repeating and rekindling the light of idealism while at the same time fully respecting each individual's life? Is this repetition necessary? Can personal desire and collective utopia coexist in China's globalization? We must remain aware of the historical interplay between revolution and love if we want once again to use gender to articulate political identity, to associate literature with social and political concerns.

Notes

Introduction

1. Meng Yue, "Female Images and National Myth," 118–136.

2. Wang Ban, *The Sublime Figure of History,* 135–136.

3. Tang Xiaobing, *Chinese Modern,* 105.

4. Des Forges, "'Literary Modernity.'"

5. Ibid. Those works that des Forges refers to include Yvonne Sung-sheng Chang, *Modernism and the Nativist Resistance;* Zhang Xudong, *Chinese Modernism in the Era of Reforms;* David Der-wei Wang, *Fin-de-Siècle Splendor;* Rey Chow, *Woman and Chinese Modernity;* Shih Shu-mei, *The Lure of the Modern;* Lydia Liu, *Translingual Practice;* Leo Ou-fan Lee, *Shanghai Modern;* Tang Xiaobing, *Chinese Modern*.

6. Des Forges, "'Literary Modernity.'" Des Forges thinks "these fetishisms of modernity not only discount the social conditions under which the text appears as 'modern,' but also, and more significantly, refuse to admit that this modernity (like all modernities) is fabricated through interpretive labor."

7. David Der-wei Wang's term. In order to criticize the belated modernity that "is a self-imposed torture carried out by those who are aware of the hegemony of Western modern discourse," Wang disregards the demarcation between the premodern and the modern by suggesting the term "repressed modernities" to describe part of a Chinese contribution to modernity in the late Qing period that was subsequently denied, suppressed, or diminished in May Fourth discourse and the following modern literary movements. As he argues, "such repressed modernities keep finding their ways back by infiltrating, haunting, or distracting mainstream discourse, constituting another fascinating aspect of modern Chinese literature." The notion of "repressed modernities" puts into question the singular format of modernity commonly held by Chinese intellectuals since the May Fourth movement, and reveals what has been written off by the evolutionary perspective on literary history. See the first chapter of *Fin-de-Siècle Splendor*.

8. See Susan Buck-Morss, the preface to *Dreamworld and Catastrophe*.

9. According to Li Tuo, Gan Yang, in his introduction to the 1988 book *Contemporary Chinese Cultural Consciousness* (*Zhongguo dangdai wenhua yishi*), began to suggest that "Chinese intellectuals ought to re-assess Western modernization with a critical eye." See Li Tuo, "Resistance to Modernity," 137–138.

10. Zhang Yiwu and Li Shulei, "Reevaluate Modernity."

11. Li Tuo, "Resistance to Modernity," 143–144. As Li Tuo suggests, one alternative strategy "is to explore a critique of modernity in the interpretation of all kinds of texts, so as to gradually engender a discourse capable of establishing new kinds of subjectivity."

12. Perry Anderson, "Modernity and Revolution," 332.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid., 321.

15. Li Zehou, *Theory of the History of Modern Chinese Thought* (Zhongguo xiandai sixiang shilun), 44.

16. Li Tuo, "Ding Ling Is Not Simple."

17. Li Tuo, "Resistance to Modernity," 143.

18. Chen Jianhua, *The Modernity of Revolution,* 1–258.

19. Ibid.

20. Arif Dirlik, *After the Revolution,* 26.

21. See James Legge, trans., *The Book of Changes,* 254.

22. Chen Jianhua, "Chinese 'Revolution' in the Syntax of World Revolution," 355–374.

23. Liang Qichao, "A Study of Revolution in Chinese History."

24. Duara, *Rescuing History,* 139–140.

25. Liang Qichao, "Talking about the Relationship between Fiction and Mass Government" (Lun xiaoshuo yu qunzhi zhi guanxi), in Chen Pingyuan and Xiao Xiaohong, eds., *Theoretical Materials of Twentieth-Century Chinese Fiction,* 36.

26. Yan Fu and Xia Xiaohong, "Announcing Our Policy to Print a Supplementary Fiction Section" (Benguan fuyin shuopu yuanqi), ibid., 9. Here I use David Der-wei Wang's translation, in *Fin-de-Siècle Splendor,* 164.

27. The relationship between *xia* and modern revolutionaries was sufficiently discussed by David Der-wei Wang in *Fin-de-Siècle Splendor,* 164–169. Also see Hu Yin's discussion of the figure of Sophia Perovskaya in *Tales of Translation,* 112–113.

28. Quoted from Xia Xiaohong, *Late Qing Intellectuals' Concepts about Women,* 113.

29. Wang, *Fin-de-Siècle Splendor,* 167.

30. Hu Yin, *Tales of Translation,* 107.

31. Jin Tianhe, "Nüzi shijie fakan ci" (Foreword to *Women's World*), *Nüzi shijie* (Women's world) 1 (1904). Quoted from Xia Xiaohong, *Late Qing Intellectuals' Concepts about Women,* 92.

32. Haitian duxiaozi, *The Stone of Goddess Nüwa,* 478.

33. Chow, *Woman and Chinese Modernity,* 66.

34. Ibid., 43.

35. Jaroslav Průšek, *The Lyrical and the Epic,* 3.

36. Liu, *Translingual Practice,* 95.

37. Ibid., 86.

38. Duara, *Rescuing History,* 91.

39. Please see Rey Chow's argument about the protagonist's self-consciousness, which is caught between patriotism and masculinity. In *Woman and Chinese Modernity,* 138–145.

40. Leo Ou-fan Lee, *Voices from the Iron House,* 33.

41. Sigmund Freud, "'Civilized' Sexual Morality and Modern Nervousness," in *Collected Papers,* vol. 2, 82.

42. Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilisation,* 33.

43. Duara, *Rescuing History,* 12–13.

44. Hong Lingfei, *Front Line,* 100.

45. Quoted from T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 60.

46. Leo Ou-fan Lee, *The Romantic Generation of Modern Chinese Writers,* 274.

47. Quoted from T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 185.

48. Marcuse, *Eros and Civilisation,* 179.

49. Tsi-An Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 161–162.

50. David Der-wei Wang, "An Undesired Revolution."

51. Ding Ling, *The Autobiography of Ding Ling,* 51–54.

52. Qu Qiubai, "Superfluous Words," quoted from T. A. Hsia's translation in *The Gate of Darkness,* 45.

53. For a detailed account of Mao Dun and Qin Dejun's love affair, see David Der-wei Wang, "An Undesired Revolution"; also see Shen Weiwei, *The Biography of Mao Dun.*

54. For a detailed account of Jiang Guangci and Song Ruoyu's love affair, see T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 55–100; also see Lee, *The Romantic Generation of Modern Chinese Writers,* 201–221; and David Der-wei Wang, "An Undesired Revolution."

55. Ding Ling, *The Autobiography of Ding Ling,* 142.

56. For a detailed discussion of Bai Wei's and Yang Sao's love affair, see Meng Yue and Dai Jinghua, *Emerging from the Horizon of History,* 159–173; Amy Dooling, "Desire and Disease"; David Der-wei Wang, "An Undesired Revolution."

57. The term "mutual enrichment" is borrowed from Wang Ban, *The Sublime Figure of History,* 151.

58. Meng Yue, "Female Images and National Myth," in Tani E. Barlow, ed., *Gender Politics in Modern China,* 118–136.

59. Wang Ban, *The Sublime Figure of History,* 123–154.

60. Christopher Read, *Culture and Power in Revolutionary Russia,* 94. The term is also seen in Buck-Morss, *Dreamworld and Catastrophe,* 51.

61. Meng Yue, "Female Images and National Myth."

62. Wang Ban, *The Sublime Figure of History,* 217.

63. Marcuse, *Eros and Civilisation,* 170.

64. Ibid.

65. Duara, *Rescuing History,* 12.

66. "Raise Our Sense of Social Responsibility, Write about Love Accurately" (Tigao shehui zeren, zhengque miaoxie aiqing), *Renmin ribao,* November 11, 1981. Quoted from Kam Louie, "Love Stories."

67. For discussion of Zhang Jie's novels please see Lydia Liu, "Invention and Intervention." Also see Roxann Prazniak, "Feminist Humanism."

68. The debates can be read in Zhang San and Ma Mingren, eds., *The Controversial Description of Sexuality.*

69. See Clifford Geertz's interpretive strategies in *The Interpretation of Cultures.* For Robert Darnton, the aim of history is to read "for meaning—the meaning inscribed by contemporaries." See Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre,* 5.

70. Foucault's terms "a plurality of histories" and "a general history" are defined to criticize "total history." See Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge,* 8–10.

71. Austin critiques the older logocentric view by distinguishing between constative utterances, which describe a state of affairs and may be either true or false, and performative utterances, which are not true or false and which perform the action they describe. See J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words,* 1–22. Derrida's deconstructive reading has further questioned Austin's scheme for its own logocentricity when it excludes "nonserious" statements. What Derrida has emphasized is context rather than the meaning itself. See Jonathan Culler, *On Deconstruction,* 123.

72. Butler, *Gender Trouble,* 140. As she says, "gender ought not to be construed as a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts follow; rather, gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts."

73. See Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies,* 9.

74. See Luce Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One,* 9.

75. Liu Zaifu, "No Revolution to Literature."

76. Lu Xun, "Small Miscellaneous Thought," vol. 3, 532. See Lee's discussion in *Voices from the Iron House,* 139. Also see David Der-wei Wang's discussion in *Fin-de-Siècle Splendor,* 31.

77. Lu Xun, "Literature in the Revolutionary Period," vol. 3, 418.

78. David Der-wei Wang's term in describing revolution in *Fin-de-Siècle Splendor,* 31.

79. Calinescu writes:

> Modernity in the broadest sense, as it has asserted itself historically, is reflected in the irreconcilable opposition between the sets of values corresponsible to (1) the objectified, socially measurable time of capitalist civilization (time as a more or less precious commodity, bought and sold on the market), and (2) the personal, subjective, imaginative duree, the private time created by the unfolding of the 'self.' The latter identity of time and self constitutes the foundation of modernist culture. Seen from this vantage point, aesthetic modernity uncovers some of the reasons for its profound sense of crisis and for its alienation from the other modernity, which, for all its objectivity and rationality, has lacked, after the demise of religion, any compelling moral or metaphysical justification. But, being produced by the isolated self, partly as a reac-

tion against the desacralized—and therefore dehumanized—time of social activity, the time consciousness reflected in modernist culture also lacks such justifications. The end result of both modernities seems to be the same unbounded relativism.

See Matei Calinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity,* 41.

80. Lee, "In Search of Modernity," 125.

81. Ibid., 110.

82. Ibid., 126.

83. Franco Moretti, *Signs Taken for Wonders,* 27.

84. Kirk A. Denton, *The Problematic of Self,* 10.

85. Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften,* vol. 5, 494. Susan Buck-Morss uses Benjamin's theory of dreamworld to describe the Soviet phantasmagorias of revolution; see *Dreamworld and Catastrophe,* 208.

86. Kuang Xinnian, "No Way out of Numerous Mountains and Rivers."

87. Marcuse, *Eros and Civilisation,* 83.

Chapter 1: The Unusual Literary Scene

1. John King Fairbank, *The Great Chinese Revolution: 1800–1985,* 204.

2. Li Yu-ning, *The Introduction of Socialism into China,* 7–12.

3. Maurice Meisner, *Li Ta-chao and the Origins of Chinese Marxism,* 188.

4. Cheng Fangwu, "From Literary Revolution to Revolutionary Literature," 136.

5. Jiang Guangci, "About Revolutionary Literature," 138–146.

6. See Dirlik, *After the Revolution,* 20–38.

7. See Duara, *Rescuing History,* 12.

8. Ibid.

9. Cheng Fangwu, "Congratulatory Words."

10. Du Heng, ed., *Debates on Literary Freedom,* 302–307.

11. As Shih Shu-mei notes, "Post–May Fourth leftist reflection on the May Fourth era, though critical of the inscription of imperialist culture, nonetheless acknowledged the May Fourth legacy of science or scientific method as a positive agenda to be further developed to end feudalism. . . . In the end, Hegelian historical teleology underlay both the May Fourth enlightenment campaign and Chinese Marxism." See Shih Shu-mei, *The Lure of the Modern,* 146.

12. Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production,* 30.

13. Mao Zedong, *Complete Works,* vol. 2, 695.

14. Jiang Guangci, "Proletarian Revolution and Culture."

15. Jiang Guangci, "Modern Chinese Society and Revolutionary Literature," vol. 1, 208.

16. "Fellow travelers" was first used by Trotsky in his book *Literature and Revolution* (1923), referring to writers who, without being Communists, vaguely sympathized with the revolution. See Gleb Struve, *Soviet Russian Literature 1917–1950,* 71–82.

17. Mao Dun, "Talking about Proletarian Arts," vol. 5, 85–103.

18. Lee, *Voices from the Iron House,* 154.

19. Cheng Fangwu, "From Literary Revolution to Revolutionary Literature."
20. Ibid., 130.
21. Pierre Bourdieu, *The Rule of Art,* 224.
22. See Haili Kong, "What Did Literary Patronage Mean to an Individualistic Writer in the 1930s?"
23. See Zheng Boqi, "Memory of the Creation Society and the Leftist Alliance," 913–915. According to Zheng Boqi, this united announcement was published in *Shishi xinbao*.
24. Feng Naichao, "Arts and Social Life," 116.
25. Cheng Fangwu, "Finishing Our Task of Literary Revolution."
26. Jiang Guangci, "About Revolutionary Literature," 142.
27. Qian Xingcun, "The Dead Age of Ah Q," 189.
28. T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 161.
29. Qian Xingcun, "The Dead Age of Ah Q," 189.
30. Li Chuli, "Please See Our Chinese Don Quixote's Wild Dance."
31. Lu Xun, "The Ambivalence in 'The Drunken Eyes.'"
32. Lu Xun, "Literature in the Revolutionary Period," vol. 3, 422.
33. Lee, *Voices from the Iron House,* 154.
34. Lu Xun, "Literature in the Revolutionary Period," vol. 3, 418.
35. Guo Moruo, "The Hero's Tree."
36. Li Chuli, "How to Establish Revolutionary Literature"; idem, "The Critical Standard of Proletarian Literature."
37. Lu Xun, "The General Look of the Current New Literature," vol. 4, 136.
38. Mao Dun's "On Reading *Ni Huanzhi,*" in Kirk A. Denton, *Modern Chinese Literary Thought,* 304.
39. Qian Xingcun, "About Modern Chinese Literature."
40. Wang Hongzhi argues against such a presumption in his article "The Internal Debates among the Revolutionary Front Line."
41. Zheng Xuejia, *The Biography of Lu Xun.*
42. Qian Xingcun, "Jiang Guangci and Revolutionary Literature."
43. See Cheng Fangwu's "The Necessity of Complete Criticism.
44. Lu Xun, "The Wrong Way of Arts and Politics," vol. 7, 118–19.
45. Jiang Guangci, *Collected Works,* vol. 1, 3–4.
46. T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 82.
47. C. T. Hsia, *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction,* 259.
48. According to Jiang Guangci's wife, Wu Sihong, even after Jiang's books were banned by the GMD, some presses could still find ways to sell them. See Wu Sihong, "Jiang Guangci huiyi lu."
49. See Wu Tenghuang, *The Biography of Jiang Guangci,* 74.
50. Wang Zhihui, "Torrent of Time and Boat of Writers."
51. T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 71.
52. Ibid., 85.
53. Ibid., 63.

54. Qian Xingcun, "Introducing 'On the Yalu.'"

55. Struve, *Soviet Russian Literature 1917–1950,* 80.

56. Ibid.

57. Li Chuli, "How to Establish Revolutionary Literature."

58. Mao Dun, "On the Formula of Revolution and Love."

59. Struve, *Soviet Russian Literature 1917–1950,* 6.

60. Jiang Guangci, *Collected Works,* vol. 4, 68. Here I am using Leo Ou-fan Lee's translation. See Lee, *The Romantic Generation,* 209.

61. Jiang Guangci, *Collected Works,* vol. 4, 48.

62. See Lee, *The Romantic Generation,* 209.

63. Struve, *Soviet Russian Literature 1917–1950,* 139.

64. According to Joshua Rubenstein,

> The three novels—*The Life and Death of Nikolai Kurbov, Trust, D.E.,* and *The Love of Leanne Ney*—were all immensely popular and helped magnify Ehrenburg's reputation in Western Europe and in the Soviet Union. They were widely translated, not only owing to their charm and inventiveness, but also on account of Ehrenburg's willingness to ridicule both European and Soviet institutions. He was a Soviet writer of a different sort, one who did not adopt optimistic formulas or ignore troubling aspects of the new revolutionary order. Underlying his work for most of the 1920s is a brooding sadness over the fate of his country.

Rubenstein also records that the Moscow journal *Na Postu* (On guard) criticized Ehrenburg: writing in the journal's premiere issue in 1923, Boris Volin, who later served as head of Glavlit, considered *The Life and Death of Nikolai Kurbov* "nauseating literature [that] distorts revolutionary reality, libels, exaggerates facts and types, and without stop and without a twitch of conscience slanders, slanders, slanders the revolution, revolutionaries, Communists, and the party." As a result of orthodox critics' attack, this novel was banned for a period of time, and most the printing of the book was lost. See Rubenstein, *Tangled Loyalties,* 90–91.

65. Jiang Guangci, "The October Revolution and Russian Literature," in *Chuangzao yuekan* 1.7 (July 1927): 80–84.

66. Qian Xingcun, "About 'The Criticism of *Des Sans-culotters.*'"

67. Edward J. Brown, *Russian Literature since the Revolution*, 143.

68. Jiang Guangci, the preface to *Des Sans-culotters,* in *Collected Works,* vol. 1, 213.

69. Qian Xingcun, "Wild Sacrifice," 358.

70. David Der-wei Wang, "An Undesired Revolution."

71. "Jiang Guangci Expelled from the CCP," *Hongqi ribao,* October 20, 1930, 3. Quoted from T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 55.

72. Jiang Guangci, *Jufen*, vol. 1, 408.

73. Wu Sihong, "The Recollections of Jiang Guangci," 113–171. Quoted from T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 99.

74. "Jiang Guangci Expelled from the CCP"; quoted from T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 55–56.

75. Jiang Guangci and Wu Sihong's bittersweet marriage was meticulously analyzed by T. A. Hsia in *The Gate of Darkness,* 97–100.

76. Lee, *The Romantic Generation,* 213.

77. T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 84.

78. Quoted from T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 66.

79. "Jiang Guangci Expelled from the CCP"; quoted from T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 56.

80. Hua Han, "After Reading Feng Xianzhang's Criticism," 347.

81. Jiang Guangci, *The Moon Forces Its Way through the Clouds,* 135.

82. T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 83.

83. Mao Dun, "On the Formula of Revolution and Love." Here I am using David Der-wei Wang's summary of Mao Dun's criticism. Quoted from David Der-wei Wang, "An Undesired Revolution."

84. Ha Shi (Feng Xuefeng), "Revolution and the Intellectual Class" (Geming yu zhishi jieji), *Trackless Train* (*Wugui lieche*) 2 (September 25, 1928): 43–50. Here I am using Shih Shu-mei's summary of Feng's categorization of three kinds of intellectuals. Quoted from Shih Shu-mei, *The Lure of the Modern,* 244.

85. As Lynn Hunt points out, "Revolutionary language did not simply reflect the realities of revolutionary changes and conflicts, but rather was itself transformed into an instrument of political and social change. In this sense, political language was not merely an expression of an ideological position that was determined by underlying social or political interests. The language itself helped shape the perception of interests and hence the development of ideologies." Therefore, the coexistence of the language of love and that of revolution reflected the social and political condition but also served as "a means of persuasion, a way of reconstituting the social and political world." See Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution,* 24.

86. Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations,* 217–251.

87. Wu Tenghuang, *The Biography of Jiang Guangci,* 132–133.

88. Zhu Jinshun, *Theory of New Literature Materials,* 91–92.

89. Ibid.

90. Mona Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution,* 17.

91. Jean Baudrillard, *Jean Baudrillard Selected Writings,* 6.

92. Culler, *On Deconstruction,* 123.

93. Ibid.

94. Dai Wanye (Dai Pingwan), *Eve,* 144.

95. Leo Ou-fan Lee categorizes two dominant modes of the Western romantic legacy on the Chinese literary representation: Wertherian (passive-sentimental) and Promethean (dynamic-heroic). See *The Romantic Generation,* 279–289.

96. Lu Xun's preface is in Ye Yongzhen, *Little Ten Years,* 1–3.

97. Leo Ou-fan Lee has provided a convincing analysis of Lu Xun's view of "revolutionary men" and "revolutionary literature" during the period 1927–1928. See *Voices from the Iron House,* 137.

98. Lu Xun, "Revolutionary Literature" (Geming wenxue), in *Complete Works,* vol. 3, 544. Quoted from Lee, *Voices from the Iron House,* 137.

99. Mao Dun, *Eclipse,* 439.

100. Mau-sang Ng, *The Russian Hero in Modern Chinese Fiction,* 176.

101. Fu Zhiying, *Critical and Biographical Essays on Mao Dun,* 159–216.

102. Ibid., 689–693.

103. Ke Xing, "The Fault of the Literary Theory of Petit Bourgeois."

104. In "From Guling to Tokyo" Mao Dun confessed his indebtedness to both Tolstoy and Zola. According to David Der-wei Wang, "Zola's determinism looms large when Mao Dun writes about the ideological confinement of those who live in a pre-revolutionary dungeon, while Tolstoy's religious epiphany surfaces when his Chinese admirer describes a communist apocalypse descending around his characters." See *Fictional Realism in Twentieth-Century China,* 35.

105. The translation is from Denton, *Modern Chinese Literary Thought,* 304.

106. See Qian Xingcun, "Several Concrete Questions in the Newly Emerged Literature."

107. See David Der-wei Wang's argument for Mao Dun's assimilation of both Zola's and Tolstoy's realism, in his *Fictional Realism in Twentieth-Century China,* 25–110.

108. Mao Dun's "On Reading *Ni Huanzhi.*" The translation is from Denton, *Modern Chinese Literary Thought,* 304.

109. Ibid., 300.

110. Ye Shaojun, *Ni Huanzhi,* 236.

111. Marston Anderson, *The Limits of Realism,* 125.

112. Mao Dun, "From Guling to Tokyo," 684.

113. Mao Dun's "On Reading *Ni Huanzhi.*" The translation is from Denton, *Modern Chinese Literary Thought,* 305.

114. Ba Jin, *Trilogy of Love,* 228.

115. Arif Dirlik notes that in the 1920s Ba Jin still "include[s] the Russian nihilists within the heroic tradition of anarchism." See Arif Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution,* 72.

116. Mau-sang Ng, *The Russian Hero in Modern Chinese Fiction,* 197.

117. Ba Jin, *Trilogy of Love,* 169.

118. Alif Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution,* 1–46.

119. Feng Xuefeng, "The Recent Task of Chinese Proletarian Revolutionary Literature."

120. Ibid.

121. In Lu Xun's letter to Yao Ke on November 5, 1933; see letter no. 504 in *Complete Works of Lu Xun,* vol. 1, 431. The translation is from Lydia Liu, *Translingual Practice,* 219–220.

122. Qian Xingcun, preface to *Subterranean Spring,* 23.

123. See Michel Hockx, "In Defense of the Censor," 12. Also see "The 'Compendium of Modern Chinese Literature,'" in Liu, *Translingual Practice*.

124. See Michel Hockx's analysis of the transformation of Nationalist censorship in "In Defense of the Censor."

125. "The method of censorship" is in Zhang Jinglu, *Historical Materials of Modern Chinese Publication,* vol. 2, 50.

126. See the list of newspapers and magazines banned by the GMD from 1929 to 1931 in ibid., vol. 4, 153–176.

127. In Hockx, "In Defense of the Censor," 1–30.

128. T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 55–100.

129. It is the announcement published in *Red Flag Daily News* (*Hongqi ribao*), an underground Communist newspaper printed in Shanghai, on October 20, 1930.

130. See Wu Tenghuang, *The Biography of Jiang Guangci,* 152–154.

131. Shi Zhecun, *Traces on the Sand,* 13.

132. Shih Shu-mei, *The Lure of the Modern,* 245.

133. Ibid., 246.

134. Zhang Jinglu**,** *Historical Materials of Modern Chinese Publication,* vol. 2, 171.

135. See Liu Na'ou, the preface to *Erotic Culture*. Also see Zhang Jinglu, *Historical Materials of Modern Chinese Publication,* vol. 2, 88.

Chapter Two: In the Eyes of the Leftists

1. Tang Tao, ed., *A Brief Edited History of Modern Chinese Literature,* 305–322.

2. Those arguments can be found in T. A. Hsia's *The Gate of Darkness* and Leo Ou-fan Lee's *The Romantic Generation*.

3. Qian Xingcun, preface to *Subterranean Spring,* 23.

4. Wang Yichuan, "'Revolution Plus Love.'"

5. See Mao Dun, "About Writing." Also see Qu Qiubai, "Long Live the Literary Dictators" (Xuefa wansui), quoted from C. T. Hsia, *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction,* 609.

6. Ha Xiaosi, "Comrade Xia Yan Talks about Jiang Guangci.

7. *Red Flag Daily News* (*Hongqi ribao*) October 20, 1930, 3. Quoted from T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 55–56.

8. Here borrowing Luce Irigaray's use of "fluids" as an analogy for female expression or femininity, I also regard the representation of women's sexual bodies as a fluid whose meaning cannot be frozen into static metaphors.

9. Qian Xingcun, "Several Concrete Questions."

10. Yu Dafu, "Guangci's Late Years," 106–110.

11. Jiang Guangci, "The October Revolution and Russia Literature," in *Collected Works,* vol. 4, 68. Here I use David Der-wei Wang's translation of this sentence in "An Undesired Revolution."

12. Jiang Guangci, *The Moon Forces Its Way through the Clouds,* 64.

13. Marcuse, *Counter-Revolution and Revolt,* 76.

14. Both "female receptivity" and "male aggressiveness" are Herbert Marcuse's terms. As he says, "It is in the nature of sexual relationships that both, male and fe-

male, are object and subject at the same time; erotic and aggressive energy are fused in both. The surplus-aggression of the male is socially conditioned—as is the surplus-passivity of the female." Ibid., 77.

15. Jiang Guangci, *The Moon Forces Its Way through the Clouds,* 14.
16. Ibid., 87–88.
17. Ibid., 135.
18. Ibid., 151.
19. Hua Han, "After Reading Feng Xianzhang's Criticism," 349–353.
20. T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 82.
21. See Mao Dun, *Collected Works,* vol. 14, 69.
22. Chow, *Woman and Chinese Modernity,* 107.
23. Ibid.
24. Mao Dun, *Eclipse,* 177.
25. Ibid., 219.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid., 338.
28. See Shen Weiwei, *The Biography of Mao Dun.*
29. Mao Dun, "From Guling to Tokyo."
30. Lee, *The Romantic Generation,* 280.
31. Ibid.
32. Franco Moretti, *The Way of the World,* 5.
33. See Wang Hui's argument of "the concept of May Fourth," in *Wandering Nowhere,* 33.
34. Moretti, *The Way of the World,* 76.
35. See Yang Yi, *History of Modern Chinese Fiction,* vol. 2, 87–94. Also see Wu Fuhui, "Life Literature Lightened by the Fire of Time."
36. Hong Lingfei, *Transformation,* 11, 45, 174–175.
37. In his study of late Qing fiction, David Der-wei Wang points out the dialectic of rationality versus emotional excess in both late Qing literature and literary criticism. From his point of view, "praising or condemning, exaggerating or trivializing their subjects, late Qing writers cannot resist the impulse to transgress limits, to ornament a convention till it becomes a heavy-handed parody of itself." Therefore, excessive emotion puts late Qing works at strange odds with "a discourse informed by order, decency, and rationality." Wang, *Fin-de-Siècle Splendor*, 33.
38. Hong Lingfei, *Transformation,* 75, 79.
39. Georg Lukacs, *The Theory of the Novel,* 97.
40. Susan Suieiman, *Authoritarian Fiction,* 64.
41. Moretti, *The Way of the World,* 10.
42. Hong Lingfei, *Front Line,* 2.
43. Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle,* 7.
44. Ibid., 7.
45. Hong Lingfei, *Front Line,* 101.
46. Ibid., 201.

47. David Der-wei Wang, *Fictional Realism in Twentieth-Century China,* 92.

48. Hong Lingfei, *Front Line,* 177, 179.

49. Hong Lingfei, *Exile,* 150.

50. In my articles about expatriate literature, I point out the connection between feminist discourse and the mode of exile writing and argue that both writings are established on floating discourse. See Liu Zaifu and Liu Jianmei, *Understanding Life Together,* 164–167.

51. See Qu Qiubai, "Revolutionary Romance."

52. Marston Anderson, *The Limits of Realism,* 56.

53. See Hua Han's preface to *Subterranean Spring,* 27–38.

54. Ibid., 31.

55. From Qu Qiubai's, Zheng Boqi's, Mao Dun's, and Qian Xingcun's criticism of *Subterranean Spring,* we can see that the relationship between romanticism and proletarian literature becomes the center of debates. See Hua Han, *Subterranean Spring,* 1–38.

56. See Yang Yi's comparison of Hong Lingfei and Hua Han in *History of Modern Chinese Fiction,* 89.

57. See Qian Xingcun, preface to *Subterranean Spring.*

58. Martson Anderson, *The Limits of Realism,* 183.

59. Ibid., 182.

60. Hua Han, *Rejuvenation,* 84, in the trilogy of *Subterranean Spring.*

61. Ibid., 168.

62. Hua Han, *Subterranean Spring,* 103–104.

Chapter 3: Feminizing Politics

1. Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One,* 23–33.

2. Ibid.

3. As Judith Butler argues, "The subject is the incoherent and mobilized imbrication of identifications; it is constituted in and through the iterability of its performance, a repetition which works at once to legitimate and delegitimate the realness norms by which it is produced." See Butler, *Bodies That Matter,* 131.

4. Butler's theory of gender perfomativity refuses to seek recourse to any essentialist positions, such as a sexual nature or a precultural structuring of sexuality. Instead, it suggests that sexuality is constructed through a "performative dimension," which is neither a free play nor self-presentation, but is the forced reiteration of norms. Borrowing this first-world feminist theory does not mean I will not contextualize Chinese women's writings, exposing under what kind of repeated constraints their sexuality has been constituted.

5. Tani E. Barlow, "Theorizing Woman," 266–268.

6. Ibid., 267.

7. Xia Xiaohong, *Late Qing Intellectuals' Concepts about Women,* 56–129.

8. After the Chinese translation of Ibsen's celebrated play *A Doll's House* (1879)

appeared in *New Youth* (*Xin qingnian*) in 1918, the "Nora story" stimulated public discussion of women's oppression and emancipation. Hu Shi's *The Greatest Event in Life* (*Zhongsheng dashi*) is the most famous Chinese version of the "Nora story."

9. See Rey Chow, "Virtuous Transactions," and Ching-kiu Stephen Chan, "The Language of Despair." Also see Amy D. Dooling's essay on Yang Jiang, "In Search of Laughter."

10. For a detailed analysis on the projection of male anxiety onto images of the new woman, see Chan, "The Language of Despair." Also see Sylvia Li-chun Lin, "Unwelcome Heroines."

11. Some Chinese male writers' designation of new women's bodies coincided with their disillusionment with May Fourth ideology after the failure of the first national revolution in 1927, but not every writer had a clear idea how to represent the new ideology they chose to identify with. Therefore, some images of new women revealed male writers' ambivalent attitudes toward both the political situation and the women at that time. For instance, Mao Dun's representations of new women are more ambivalent than Jiang Guangci's.

12. See Rey Chow's reading of Mao Dun's fiction in *Woman and Chinese Modernity,* 103–107. Criticizing Mao Dun's descriptions of female physiological details, especially women's breasts, she says, "The eroticized, because fetishized, images of women's bodies, which no amount of narrative prose can penetrate enough the way it does women's 'mind,' remain to haunt the liberating rhetoric of revolution, including Mao Dun's new literary language."

13. Butler, *Bodies That Matter,* 2.

14. The scholarship on Bai Wei during the last decade can be found in Meng Yue and Dai Jinghua, *Emerging from the Horizon of History;* Amy Dooling, "Feminism and Narrative Strategies in Early-Twentieth-Century Chinese Women's Writing"; Jianmei Liu, "Engaging with Revolution and Love"; David Der-wei Wang, "An Undesired Revolution."

15. Chen Xiying introduced two female writers in *Modern Criticism* (*Xiandai pinglun*) in April 1926: Bing Xin, "whom almost everyone knows," and Bai Wei, "whom almost no one knows." After Lu Xun published her *Fight out of the Ghost Tower* (*Dachu youling ta*) in *Torrent* (*Benliu*), 1, 2, 4 (1928), she became "one of the top in the literary field." See Bai Shurong and He You, *The Biography and Criticism of Bai Wei,* 81.

16. Amy Dooling, "Desire and Disease."

17. Ibid.

18. David Der-wei Wang, "An Undesired Revolution."

19. Bai Wei, *Tragic Life,* 884.

20. Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies,* 157–158.

21. Bai Wei, *Tragic Life,* 746.

22. Ibid., 738.

23. David Der-wei Wang, "An Undesired Revolution."

24. Meng Yue and Dai Jinghua, *Emerging from the Horizon of History,* 164–167.

25. Mao Dun's case is different from that of Jiang Guangci. In his early fiction,

such as *Eclipse* and *Rainbow,* Mao Dun's heroines also feel uncertain about revolution. See David Der-wei Wang, *Fictional Realism in Twentieth-Century China,* 25–110.

26. Bai Wei, *A Bomb and an Expeditionary Bird,* 29.

27. Ibid., 143.

28. Although Mao Dun was also aware of the issue, he hesitated to articulate it. Of course, his vacillation after 1927 might have had a great influence on his narration, but to a certain extent it may be due to his position as a male writer writing about women and revolution.

29. In Judith Butler's words, "If a resemblance is possible, it is because the 'originality' of the masculine is contestable; in other words, the miming of the masculine, which is never resorbed into it, can expose the masculine's claim to originality as suspect." See *Bodies That Matter,* 51–52.

30. The term "gender parody" is borrowed from Butler, *Gender Trouble,* 137–139. As Butler mentions,

> The notion of gender parody defended here does not assume that there is an original which such parodic identities imitate. Indeed, the parody is of the very notion of an original; just as the psychoanalytic notion of gender identification is constituted by a fantasy of a fantasy, the transfiguration of an Other who is always already a 'figure' in that double sense, so gender parody reveals that the original identity after which gender fashions itself is an imitation without an origin. (138)

31. Shi Pingmei, "A Horse Neighing in the Wind," 296.

32. See Shi Pingmei, "Writing after Dreaming in the Remnant Light Alone," 140.

33. Zhou Wurong, "Two Novels Depicting the Early Communists' Love Lives."

34. Shi Pingmei, "To Lu Yin," 41.

35. Lu Yin, *Ivory Rings,* 190.

36. Leo Ou-fan Lee wrote,

> In the context of the changed political temper in the late twenties and early thirties, it seems as if love had become the lingering vestige of a gilded and irresponsible world of the past. That romantic world, according to Ting Ling, was passé, and the poet Chu Tzu-ch'ing issued a similar comment in 1928: "Romantic used to be a good term, but now its meaning is reduced to slander and a curse. Romanticism was to release to the utmost one's animated emotions, thereby expanding oneself. But now what is need is work and the animated emotions, undisciplined, cannot produce practical effects. Now is the time of urgency and such unimportant matters are not necessary."

See Lee, *The Romantic Generation,* 173.

37. See Shi Pingmei, "Ivory Rings," 95.

38. Ibid., 94.

39. See David Der-wei Wang's illustration of rationality versus emotional excess in his definition of the repressed modernity of the late Qing, and his close reading of *Traces of the Flower and the Moon,* in *Fin-de-Siècle Splendor,* 72–83.

40. Lu Yin, *Ivory Rings,* 141.

41. Ibid., 147–148.

42. Ibid., 149, 152.
43. Ibid., 104–105, 160.
44. Shi Pingmei, "Heartbroken and Tears Turn into Ice," 102.
45. In Shi Pingmei's letter to her female friend Yuan Junshan. See Yang Yang, ed., *The Collected Works of Shi Pingmei,* 108–115.
46. Ibid. In one of her letters to Yuan Junshan, Shi Pingmei adds, "If I died and you wanted to write some articles to analyze my life, this letter would be perfect evidence."
47. Lydia Liu, *Translingual Practice,* 33–60.
48. The translation is adapted from Yi-tsi Mei Feuerwerker, *Ding Ling's Fiction,* 53.
49. Ibid.
50. T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 3–54.
51. Ding Ling, *The Autobiography of Ding Ling,* 39–40.
52. Ibid., 45–48.
53. Quoted from T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 45.
54. Ibid., 44.
55. Ding Ling, *The Autobiography of Ding Ling,* 21.
56. Ibid., 50.
57. Ibid.
58. Ibid., 51.
59. T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 8.
60. Ding Ling, *The Autobiography of Ding Ling,* 52.
61. T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 51.
62. Feuerwerker, *Ding Ling's Fiction,* 55.
63. Ding Ling, "Weihu," in *Selected Short Stories of Ding Ling,* vol. 1, 53.
64. Ibid., 146.
65. Ibid., 151.
66. Ibid., 155–156.
67. Ibid., 161.
68. T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 183.
69. Tang Xiaobing, *Chinese Modern,* 109.
70. Naomi Schor, *Reading in Detail,* 43.
71. Ding Ling, *Shanghai, Spring 1930 (II),* 293.

Chapter 4: Shanghai Variations

1. As a result of Yan Jiayan's and Leo Ou-fan Lee's promotion, writers of the *xinganxue pai* have received escalating critical attention since the 1980s. Examples of the scholarship fascinated with the city of Shanghai as well as urban modernists such as Shi Zhecun, Liu Na'ou, Mu Shiying, and Ye Lingfeng can be found in the following titles: Zhang Jingyuan, *Psychoanalysis in China;* Heinrich Fruehauf, "Urban Exoticism in Modern and Contemporary Chinese Literature"; Yomi Braester, "Shanghai's Economy of the Spectacle"; Zhang Yingjin, *The City in Modern Chinese Literature and Film;* Shih Shu-mei, *The Lure of the Modern;* and Leo Ou-fan Lee, *Shanghai Modern*.

2. Lee, *Shanghai Modern,* 191.

3. See Wang Yao, *A Draft History of Modern Chinese Literature,* 62–66. Also see Tang Tao, *Modern Chinese Literary History,* vol. 1, 196–205.

4. Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge,* 10.

5. T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 55–100.

6. Shih Shu-mei, *The Lure of the Modern,* 287.

7. Shen Congwen, "Yu Dafu, Zhang Ziping and Their Influence."

8. As Leo Ou-fan Lee argues, the modernity as culture and aesthetics never launched serious criticism of the modernity as the doctrine of progress in China, as happened in the West. "The crucial point of difference, however, is that these Chinese writers did not choose (nor did they feel the necessity) to separate the two dominants of historical and aesthetic modernity in their pursuit of a modern mode of consciousness and modern form of literature." Instead, the cultural and aesthetic modernity "was not coequal with but ultimately subordinate to the new historical consciousness." See Lee, *Shanghai Modern,* 109–135.

9. Ibid., *Shanghai Modern,* 134.

10. See Shi Zhecun, "The Last Old Friend—Feng Xuefeng"; Shishkov, Seifulina, Kasatkin, et al., *The Flying Osip*.

11. Shi Zhecun, *Traces on the Sand,* 15.

12. Shi Zhecun, *Pursuit,* 35.

13. According to Shi Zhecun, *Trackless Train* was banned by the government in the name of "reddening" (*chihua*). See Shi Zhecun, "The Last Old Friend—Feng Xuefeng," 202.

14. Lee, *Shanghai Modern,* 191.

15. Yan Jiayan, *A History of the Schools of Modern Chinese Fiction,* 132.

16. Ibid., 139–140.

17. Shi Zhecun, "The Last Old Friend—Feng Xuefeng," 202.

18. Here Lydia Liu's term "translated modernity" can well explain Liu Na'ou's translation of modernities into China.

19. In terms of "Shanghai cosmopolitanism," Leo Ou-fan Lee points out, "Instead of colonial mimicry, I see this phenomenon of Chinese writers eagerly embracing Western cultures in Shanghai's foreign concessions as a manifestation of a Chinese cosmopolitanism, which is another facet of Chinese modernity." See Lee, *Shanghai Modern,* 313.

20. Ibid.

21. Shih Shu-mei, *The Lure of the Modern,* 277.

22. See the translator's preface to *Erotic culture* (*Seqing wenhua*).

23. Shih, Shu-mei, *The Lure of the Modern,* 286.

24. Braester, "Shanghai's Economy of the Spectacle," 40.

25. Liu Na'ou, "Flow," 39.

26. See Chen Bo, ed., *The Leftist Film Movement in China,* 142–174; also see Zhang Yingjin, *The City in Modern Chinese Literature and Film,* 154–155, 307n8.

27. Liu Na'ou, "Flow," 44–45.

28. Zhang Jingyuan, *Psychoanalysis in China,* 128.

29. Mu Shiying's first collection of novels, titled *The North and the South Poles* (*Nanbei ji*) contains a consciousness of the lumpen proletariat. It deals with the struggle between rich and poor and also depicts urban life, although the atmosphere is hardly exotic.

30. Shi Zhecun, *Traces on the Sand,* 23.

31. Shi Zhecun, preface to *An Evening in the Plum Rain.*

32. Mu Shiying, "Pierrot," 168–169.

33. Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations,* 172–173.

34. Braester, "Shanghai's Economy of the Spectacle," 46–47.

35. Lee, *Shanghai Modern,* 231.

36. Mu Shiying, "Pierrot," 185.

37. Yan Jiayan, *A History of the Schools of Modern Chinese Fiction,* 164.

38. Lee, *Shanghai Modern,* 231.

39. According to Zhang Ziping's own account, only in 1927 did he start to know something about revolutionary theory and proletarian art theory, and he was willing to recreate himself by this route. See Zhang Ziping, *The Self-Selected Works of Ziping,* 20.

40. Zeng Huapeng and Fan Boquan, "On Zhang Ziping's Fiction."

41. Lu Xun, "Zhang Ziping's Theory of Novels."

42. Zhang Ziping, *Long Journey,* 769.

43. Ibid., 767.

44. See "A Symposium of the Popularization of Arts," *Mass Arts* (*Dazhong wenyi*), 2.3 (March 1930). It records some leftist writers' discussions about mass arts (*dazhong wenyi*) and popular arts (*tongsu wenyi*).

45. Shen Congwen, "Yu Dafu, Zhang Ziping and Their Influence."

46. Zhang Ziping, *A Brief Summary of Arts History,* 73.

47. Zhang Jingyuan, *Psychoanalysis in China,* 122.

48. As Zhang Jingyuan points out, "Some literary critics are reluctant to include him as a major writer of the psychoanalytic school, not solely because of the obsessive focus on sexual desire in his writings, but also because of his political stand and personality—even Shi Zhecun mentioned that Ye was not popular among the literary writers at the time." Zhang Jingyuan, *Psychoanalysis in China,* 105.

49. Lee, *Shanghai Modern,* 262.

50. From 1926 to 1927, a writer with the pseudonym Yaling tried to define and promote "new hooliganism." As he claimed, only this could save people from the miserable situation in China. "New hooliganism has no slogan, no belief," as he said, "the most important thing is to rebel against whatever you are unsatisfied with." Lu Xun thinks Yaling is Ye Lingfeng's pseudonym, but Yang Yi believes it is that of Pan Hannian. See Yang Yi, *History of Modern Chinese Fiction,* vol. 1, 635–636.

51. As Matei Calinescu states, "No matter how we classify its contexts of usage, kitsch always implies the notion of aesthetic inadequacy." "Such inadequacy is often found in single object whose formal qualities (material, shape, size, etc.) are inappropriate in relation to their culture content or intention." See Calinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity,* 236.

52. Peter Burger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde,* 3.

53. Ye Lingfeng, *Red Angel,* 38–39.

54. Zheng Boqi, *Recalling the Creation Society,* 56.

55. Lee, *Shanghai Modern,* 232–234. Lee points out that since most Chinese intellectuals couldn't embrace decadence as a counterdiscourse of progress, literary decadence usually has a negative meaning in China.

56. Wu Fuhui, "The Disease of the Century."

57. T. A. Hsia, *The Gate of Darkness,* 55–100.

58. Yan Jiayan, *A History of the Schools of Modern Chinese Fiction,* 134

Chapter 5: Love Cannot Be Forgotten

1. Wen Jie, "The Melon-Planting Girl" (Zhonggua guniang), in *Pastoral Songs of Tian Mountain,* 5.

2. Meng Yue, "Female Images and National Myth."

3. David E. Apter and Tony Saich, *Revolutionary Discourse in Mao's Republic.*

4. See Wang Ban, *The Sublime Figure of History,* chaps. 4 and 6.

5. Feng Deying, *Bitter Flowers,* 112.

6. "Love became revolutionalized and revolution became romanticized" are the terms the critic Chen Shunxin uses to characterize revolutionary novels during the first seventeen years of the CCP. See Chen Shunxin, *Narratives and Gender in Modern Chinese Literature,* 98–103.

7. Ibid., 118.

8. Foucault, "Truth and Power," in Hazard Adams ed., *Critical Theory since Plato,* 1139.

9. Wang Ban, *The Sublime Figure of History,* 134.

10. Zhong Xueping, "'Long Live Youth' and the Ironies of Youth and Gender in Chinese Films of the 1950s and 1960s," 178.

11. Schor, *Reading in Detail,* 22–23.

12. According to Zhou Yang, Chinese literature before 1949 belonged to the period of "new democracism," defined by Mao Zedong as anti-imperialism and antifeudalism, whereas Chinese literature after 1949 was gradually transformed into the period of "new socialism," on the way to socialist realism. Such division of different literary periods is built on political concepts. See Hong Zicheng, *Brief Discussion of Contemporary Chinese Literature,* 1–2.

13. The film *Soldiers under the Neon Lights* (*Nihongdeng xiade shaobing*) was adapted from the play written by Shen Ximeng.

14. Xiao Yemu, "Between Me and My Wife," 38.

15. Chen Yong, "Some Tendencies in Xiao Yemu's Writing."

16. Disguised as a reader, Li Dingzhong, Feng Xuefeng, the editor in chief of *Wenyi bao,* gave Xiao Yemu's "Between Me and My Wife" serious criticism in the reader's letter titled "Fight against the attitude of playing with people, fight against the new low taste" (Fandui wannong renmin de taidu, fandui xinde diji quwei). When this so-called reader's letter was published in *Wenyi bao,* the editor also added "the editor's

comments" to support this opinion. This was a common way the Party's literary authorities controlled the literary field during the Mao years. Even in the 1990s, it was still used. See Hong Zicheng, *Brief Discussion of Contemporary Chinese Literature,* 24–25.

17. Ding Ling, "Looking as a Kind of Tendency"; quoted from Hong Zicheng, ed., *Theoretical Materials of Twentieth-Century Chinese Fiction,* vol. 5, 55–62.

18. Ibid.

19. Xiao Yemu, "I Must Correct My Mistakes"; quoted from Hong Zicheng, ed., *Theoretical Materials of Twentieth-Century Chinese Fiction,* vol. 5, 64–74. Xiao Yemu's other short stories and novellas, such as "On the Bank of Sea River" (Haihe bian shan) and "Practice" (Duanlian), were also criticized in 1951. He lost the status of a writer in 1957 when he became a rightist. He was tortured to death during the Cultural Revolution.

20. See Ding Ling, "Looking as a Kind of Tendency."

21. See Hong Zicheng, *Brief Discussion of Contemporary Chinese Literature,* 138–139.

22. In the play *Don't Ever Forget,* the authors wrote, "This drama not only points out that we must and should provide socialist education, but also raises the question of how to arrange social life. . . . In the drama we see that it cannot make sure to just arrange an eight-hour working time. Besides the eight-hour working time, eight-hour sleeping time, how to arrange the last eight hours?" This drama reflects both the political authority's fear of and invasion into people's daily life. See Cong Shen, *Never Forget,* 2. Also see Tang Xiaobing's introduction of *Never Forget* in *Chinese Modern,* 170.

23. During the Hundred Flowers movement, literary critics bought up polemical questions concerning the relationship between politics and arts, class concept and humanity, socialist realism and other writing methods, eulogy and exposure. For example, Ba Ren (the pen name of Wang Renshu), "Theory of Human Feeling" (Ren renqin); Qian Gurong, "Theory of the Study of Humans in Literature" (Lun wenxue de renxue); and He Zhi (the pen name of Qin Zhaoyan), "Realism—A Broad Road" (Xianshi zhuyi—guangkuo de daolu), all sharply criticized the current literary scene, which was suffused with political concepts, formula writings, and simple judgments. Some writing brought different voices to revolutionary works, such as Liu Bingyan's "The Inside Information of Our Newspaper" (Benbao neibu xiaoxi), Wang Meng's "An Up-and-Coming Youth in the Bureau of Organization" (Zuzhibu xinlai de nianqingren), Deng Youmei's "On the Cliff" (Zai xuanya shan), Zong Pu's "Red Beans" (Hongdou), Li Lunwei's "Love" (Aiqing), and Feng Cun's "Beautiful (Meili). See Hong Zicheng, *History of Contemporary Chinese Literature,* 138–143.

24. Lydia Liu points out:

> It cannot be coincidence that first-person fiction and autobiography written in a "western" form, one in which the individual takes himself or herself most seriously, asserts his or her absolute rights against society, and possesses an interiority fully representable in narrative, appeared in great profusion in and around the May Fourth period. Modern Chinese writers were immediately attracted to the idea of the individual, because it allowed them to devise a dialogic language with which to attack tradition on behalf of the individual as Lu Xun did in "The Diary of a Madman."

See Liu, *Translingual Practice,* 103.

Kirk A. Denton writes:

> The first-person mode supplies a ready-made form for entering directly into mind, and in the May Fourth period it played an important role in overthrowing the traditional rhetorical narrator, whose moral hegemony seemed to disavow the subjective lives of the characters. First-person narrative was a central form through which the May Fourth discourse of individualism was expressed.

See Denton, *The Problematic of Self,* 164.

25. Deng Youmei, "On the Cliff," 156.

26. Zhang Baoxin and Zhou Peitong, "Love Descriptions in Three-Mile Village."

27. Ibid.

28. Feng Cun, "A Case of Divorce," 10.

29. Yao Wenyuan, "The Revisionist Trend in Literature."

30. Liu Zaifu and Lin Gang, "The End of Twentieth-Century Chinese Revolutionary Literature in a Broad Sense," in Liu Zaifu, *Exile Gods,* 123–141.

31. Hao Ran, *Sunny Day,* chap. 35.

32. Hou Jinjing, "A Criticism on Lu Ling's Three Novels," vol. 5, 110.

33. Denton, *The Problematic of Self in Modern Chinese Literature,* 160.

34. Lu Ling, "Battle of the Lowland," 10.

35. Shu Yunzhong, *Buglers on the Home Front,* 122.

36. Hou Jinjing, "A Criticism on Lu Ling's Three Novels," 113.

37. See James Gao, "War Culture, Nationalism, and Political Campaigns in China, 1950–54," 180.

38. Ba Jin wrote, "There was a military discipline in the CPV that prohibited Chinese soldiers from dating Korean women, but the soldiers did not feel taunted with this discipline . . . because they saw Korean women as their mothers and sisters . . . and the CPV soldiers did not think of love even in their dreams." I am using James Gao's translation here. Ibid., 181. See Ba Jin, "Clearly Recognize the Counterrevolutionary Essence of 'Battle of the Lowland,'" 2.

39. See Denton, *The Problematic of Self in Modern Chinese Literature,* 155.

40. Lu Ling, "How Can There Be Such Criticism?"

41. For a detailed description of Lu Ling's imprisonment, see Denton, *The Problematic of Self in Modern Chinese Literature,* 117–157.

42. Ouyang Shan, "Talk about *Three-Family Lane.*" Joe C. Huang provides detailed comparisons between *Three-Family Lane* and *Dream of the Red Chamber* in his book *Heroes and Villains in Communist China,* 1–24.

43. Shanghai Revolutionary Mass Criticism Group, "A Reactionary Novel Which Commemorated an Erroneous Line—Comments on Ouyang Shan's *A Generation of Noble Spirit,*" *Chinese Literature* 3 (1970): 102; quoted from Joe C. Huang, *Heroes and Villains in Communist China,* 21.

44. Ouyang Shan, *A Romantic Generation,* 281.

45. Ibid., 771.

46. Ibid., 222.

47. Zhang Zhong and Hong Zicheng, eds., *A Brief Look at Contemporary Chinese Literature,* 447.

48. Ibid.

49. Meng Yue and Dai Jinghua, *Emerging from the Horizon of History.* Liu Huiying, *Walking out of the Masculinist Fetter.* Li Xiaojiang, "Reform and Women's Revolution."

50. Meng Yue, "Female Images and National Myth," 130.

51. Chen Shunxin, *Narrative and Gender in Contemporary Chinese Literature,* 79–103.

52. Liu Qing, *History of the Pioneers.* 457.

53. Ibid., 50.

54. Ibid., 327.

55. Ibid., 323.

56. Ibid., 565.

57. See Meng Yue's and Wang Ban's discussions of the novel and the movie of *Song of Youth* in Meng Yue, "Female Images and National Myth," 118–136; Wang Ban, *The Sublime Figure of History,* 123–154.

58. A term borrowed from Wang Ban's *The Sublime Figure of History,* 133.

59. Wang Ban, *The Sublime Figure of History,* 135.

60. Ibid, 135–136.

61. Yang Mo, *Song of Youth,* 558.

62. Ibid., 559–560.

63. Ibid., 512.

64. Yan Min, "From Personal Memory to Collective Memory."

65. Zong Pu's "Red Beans," 21.

Chapter 6: Farewell or Remember Revolution?

1. Duara, *Rescuing History,* 54.

2. Ibid., 16.

3. See Wang Xiaoming, ed., *Searching for Humanist Spirit.*

4. Wang Hui's essay as well as the debates of the "new leftists" can be seen in *Frontiers* (*Tianya*), 1 (1999).

5. Dirlik, *After the Revolution,* 60–86.

6. Chen Xiaomei, *Occidentalism,* 1–20.

7. Chang Guangyuan, Qu Yajun, and Li Lingze, "The Burdened National Secretive History," 34.

8. Chen Zhongshi, "Questions and Answers Related to *The Land of White Deer,*" 23.

9. Ibid.

10. Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide,* 56.

11. Lu Tonglin, *Misogyny, Cultural Nihilism, and Oppositional Politics,* 141.

12. The term "allegorical" that I use here is different from Fredric Jameson's well-known generalization that "all third-world texts are necessarily . . . allegorical, and in a

very specific way: they are to be read as what I will call national allegories." See Jameson, "Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism." What I mean is not a generalized situation of national allegories, but the specific narrative strategy that experimental literature employs.

13. In this novel, Tian Xiao-E's destructive power resembles the mother nature that Camille Paglia describes. See Paglia, *Sexual Personae,* 13.

14. Chang Guangyuan, Qu Yajun, and Li Lingze, "The Burdened National Secretive History," 33–37.

15. Chen Zhongshi, *The Land of White Deer,* 352.

16. Ibid., 472.

17. Dirlik, *After the Revolution,* 109.

18. See Dirlik's criticism of local resistance to globalization, ibid.

19. See Wang Xiaobo's preface to "Love during the Revolutionary Period" (Geming shiqi de aiqing), in *The Collected Works of Wang Xiaobo,* vol. 1, 183.

20. See Nan Fan, ed., *The Evening's Language,* 1–27. Also see Chen Sihe, ed., *Novels of Fin-de-Siècle,* 1–18.

21. Quoted from a letter of Wang Xiaobo. See Lin Chun, "The Sober Minority," 54.

22. Wang Xiaobo's essays on Wang are in *Collected Works of Wang Xiaobo,* vol. 4, 97–104.

23. Ibid., 310–312.

24. Ibid., 18.

25. Chen Xiaomei, *Occidentalism,* 7–8.

26. Ibid., chap. 1.

27. Ibid., 99.

28. See Wang Xiaobo's preface to "Love during the Revolutionary Period," in *The Collected Works of Wang Xiaobo,* vol. 1, 183.

29. Sigmund Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis,* 148–150.

30. Gilles Deleuze writes, "The masochistic ego is only apparently crushed by the super-ego. What insolence and humor, what irrepressible defiance and ultimate triumph lie hidden behind an ego that claims to be so weak. The weakness of the ego is a strategy by which the masochist manipulates the woman into the ideal state for the performance of the role he has assigned to her." Deleuze, *Masochism,* 124. Here Chen Qingyang's weakness is also her strength in manipulating those sadists into her ideal state.

31. Wang Xiaobo, *Golden Years,* 308.

Conclusion

1. Kang-I Sun Chang, *The Late-Ming Poet Ch'en Tzu-lung,* 16.

2. Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History,* 207.

3. Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious,* 49.

4. Fredric Jameson's term; ibid., 48.

5. Karl Marx's *The Communist Manifesto* was reprinted in the new leftist magazine *Frontiers* (*Tianya*), June 1999, 150.

Glossary

"Aide quanli" 愛的權力
Aide yingzhao 愛的映照
"Aiqing de weizhi" 愛情的位置
Aiqing sanbu qu 愛情三部曲
"Aishi buneng wangji de" 愛是不能忘記的
Ba Jin 巴金
Bai Jiaxuan 白嘉軒
Bai Wei 白薇
Bai Xiaowen 白孝文
Bailuyuan 白鹿原
Baimaonü 白毛女
Baosi 褒姒
Bei aiqing qiwang de jiaoluo 被愛情遺忘的角落
Beiju shengya 悲劇生涯
Benliu 奔流
bian 變
Bianjibu de gushi 編輯部的故事
Bin 彬
Bingxin 冰心
bingxue youyi 冰雪友誼
Biyun 碧雲
Caizhu di ernü men 財主底兒女們
caizi jiaren 才子佳人
Cao Xueqin 曹雪芹
Changtu 長途
Chen Duxiu 陳獨秀
Chen Huangmei 陳荒煤
Chen Jixia 陳季俠
Chen Qingyang 陳清揚
Chen Wendi 陳文娣
Chen Wenjie 陳文捷
Chen Wenting 陳文婷
Chen Wenying 陳文英
Chen Yong 陳涌
Chen Zhongshi 陳忠實
Cheng Fangwu 成仿吾
Chenlun 沉淪
Chongchu yunwei de yueliang 衝出雲圍的月亮
Chuangyeshi 創業史
Chuangzao she 創造社
Chuangzao yuekan 創造月刊
Cong wenxue geming dao geming wenxue 從文學革命到革命文學
cubao 粗暴
Dachu youlingta 打出幽靈塔
Dai Pingwan 戴平萬
Dai Wangshu 戴望舒
Dao Mosike qu 到莫斯科去
dawo 大我
dazhong wenyi 大衆文藝
Deng Youmei 鄧友梅
Dian 電
Ding Ling 丁玲
Diquan 地泉
Diyixian shudian 第一線書店
Dong Suyin 董素因

Dong'ou nühaojie 東歐女豪傑
Dongyao 動搖
douzhenghui 鬥爭會
Du Daxin 杜大心
Duanku dang 短褲黨
Dushi fengjing xian 都市風景線
ernü 兒女
Ernü yingxong zhuan 兒女英雄傳
Fang Luolan 方羅蘭
Feidu 廢都
Feixu 飛絮
Feng Cun 豐村
Feng Da 馮達
Feng Naichao 馮乃超
Feng Xianzhang 馮憲章
Feng Xuefeng 馮雪峰
Feng Youlan 馮友蘭
Feng Yuanjun 馮沅君
Fu Caiyun 傅彩雲
Furongzhen 芙蓉鎮
Fuxing 复興
Gaixia 改霞
Gao Junyu 高君宇
Gaobie geming 告別革命
Ge Fei 格非
geming 革命
geming jia lian'ai 革命加戀愛
Geming shiqi de aiqing 革命時期的愛情
"Geming yu lian'ai de gongshi" 革命與戀愛的公式
geren 個人
gong xingqing 公性情
Gu Hongming 辜鴻銘
Gu Hua 古華
guaiwu 怪物
Guangming zai women de mianqian 光明在我們的面前
Guo Kai 郭開
Guo Moruo 郭沫若
Guo Zhenshan 郭振山
guoxue 國學
Haibin guren 海濱故人
He 和
He shang 河殤
He Xueqiao 何雪樵
He Yuesu 何月素
Heini 黑妮
Hong 虹
Hong Lingfei 洪靈菲
Hong Zicheng 洪子誠
Hongde tianshi 紅的天使
Hongdengji 紅燈記
"Hongdou" 紅豆
Hongfen 紅粉
Hongloumeng 紅樓夢
Hongqi ribao 紅旗日報
Hongqipu 紅旗譜
Hongse niangzi jun 紅色娘子軍
Hongyan 紅岩
Hu Feng 胡風
Hu Shi 胡適
Hu Yaobang 胡耀邦
Hu Yepin 胡也頻
Hu Yuyin 胡玉音
Hua Han 華漢
Huaiqiu 懷秋
Huang Manman 黃曼曼
Huangjin shidai 黃金時代
Huanmie 幻滅
Huanzhou 幻洲
Huimie 毀滅
Huo Zhiyuan 霍之遠
huoshui 禍水
Jia Baoyu 賈寶玉
Jia xi ya 加西亞
Jiang Guangchi 蔣光赤
Jiang Guangci 蔣光慈
Jiang Hua 江華
Jiang Jieshi 蔣介石
Jiang Mei 江玫
Jiang Qing 江青
Jiang Xia 江霞
"Jiangjun de tou" 將軍的頭
Jianhe 健鶴
Jiao Shuhong 焦淑紅
Ji'e de Guo Su'e 飢餓的郭素娥
Jin Tianhe 金天翮
Jingqiu 鏡秋
jiushi qingjie 救世情結

Jufen 菊芬
Kewang 渴望
Kong Dezhi 孔德址
Kuang Xinnian 曠新年
Kucaihua 苦菜花
kudou 苦斗
"Kuilei meiren" 傀儡 美人
Langu 蘭姑
Lao Can 老殘
Lao Can youji 老殘遊記
Li Chuli 李初梨
Li Chuyan 李初燕
Li Cui'e 李翠娥
Li Dazhao 李大釗
Li Jie 李杰
Li Rui 李鋭
Li Ruoyan 李若嫣
Li Shangzhi 李尚志
Li Xiangjun 李香君
Li Zehou 李澤厚
Lian 戀
Liang Bin 梁斌
Liang Qichao 梁啓超
Liang Shengbao 梁生寶
Liangge nüxing 兩個女性
Lijia 麗嘉
Lin Daiyu 林黛玉
Lin Daojing 林道静
Lin Miaochan 林妙嬋
Lin Xiangqian 林祥謙
Lisha de aiyuan 麗莎的哀怨
"*Liu*" 流
Liu Bannong 劉半農
Liu Heng 劉恒
Liu Na'ou 劉吶鷗
Liu Qing 柳青
Liu Rushi 柳如是
Liu Suzi 劉素子
Liu Xinwu 劉心武
Liu Zaifu 劉再复
Liuwang 流亡
Lu Jiachuan 廬嘉川
Lu Jingqing 陸晶清
Lu Ling 路翎
Lu Xun 魯迅
Lu Yin 蘆隱
"Lun wuchan jieji yishu" 論無產階級藝術
Luo Pu 羅普
Lütu 旅途
makesi zhuyi wenyi luncong 馬克思主義論叢
"Manli" 曼麗
Manqing 曼青
Mao Dun 茅盾
Mao Zedong 毛澤東
Maogu 毛姑
Meilin 美琳
"Meiyu zhixi" 梅雨之夕
Meng Chao 孟超
Meng Yue 孟悅
Mengya yuekan 萌芽月刊
Mengyun 夢雲
Mo Yan 莫言
Mu Mutian 穆木天
Mu Shiying 穆時英
Nanren de yiban shi nüren 男人的一半是女人
Ni Huanzhi 倪煥之
Niehaihua 孽海花
Nihong dengxia de shaobing 霓虹燈下的哨兵
Ning Na 寧娜
niu gui she shen 牛鬼蛇神
"Nü fulu" 女俘虜
Nübing riji 女兵日記
Nüwashi 女媧石
nüxing 女性
Nüyuhua 女獄花
Nüziquan 女子權
Ouyang Shan 歐陽山
Pan Heling 潘鶴齡
Paoxiaole de tudi 咆哮了的土地
Peng Kang 彭康
"Pima sifeng lu" 匹馬嘶風彔
pizi wenxue 痞子文學
Qi Hong 齊虹
Qian Xingcun 錢杏村
Qianwan buyao wangji 千萬不要忘記
qianwei 前衛

Qianxian 前線
Qianye 前夜
qimeng 啓蒙
Qin Ainong 秦愛儂
Qin Dejun 秦德君
Qin Xueying 秦雪英
Qing 情
Qingchun zhige 青春之歌
Qingyun 青雲
Qiu Jin 秋瑾
Qu Qiubai 瞿秋白
Qu Tao 區桃
Qu Xi 區細
Ren Guozhen 任國楨
Ren Jun 任鈞
Renqing wei 人情味
ruanxing dianying 軟性電影
"Sanbajie you gan" 三八節有感
Sanjiaxiang 三家巷
Sanshi erli 三十而立
Seqing wenhua 色情文化
Shafei nüshi riji 莎菲女士日記
Shanghai de zaochen 上海的早晨
Shangshi 傷逝
Shanshan 珊珊
Shaonian piaobo zhe 少年漂泊者
Shen Congwen 沈從文
Shen Zhifei 沈之菲
"Shenji" 神蹟
Shenru 深入
Shi 蝕
Shi Pingmei 石評梅
Shi Xiu 石秀
Shi Zhecun 施蟄存
Shidai wenyi 時代文藝
shidaibing 時代病
shidaixing 時代性
Shiliuhua 石榴花
shiyan xiaoshuo 實驗小說
Shuhua 淑華
Shui 水
Shuimo shudian 水沫書店
Shuqing 淑清
Sima Qian 司馬遷
Sishui liunian 似水流年
Song Ruoyu 宋若瑜
Su Feiya 蘇菲亞
Su Tong 蘇童
Su Xiaokang 蘇曉康
Sun Wuyang 孫舞陽
Sun Yet-sen 孫逸仙
Taiyang she 太陽社
Taiyang yuekan 太陽月刊
Taiyang zhaozai sanggan heshang 太陽照在桑干河上
Tan Sitong 譚嗣同
Tang Tao 唐弢
Tang Wu geming 湯武革命
Tang Xueqiao 唐雪翹
Tangwen 堂文
Tao Jingsun 陶晶孫
Tao Zhu 陶鑄
Taoyu 濤語
Tian Han 田漢
Tian Tao 田濤
Tian Xiao-E 田小娥
Tianya 天涯
Tianye de feng 田野的風
tongsu wenyi 通俗文藝
Tuohuangzhe 拓荒者
Wadi shang de zhanyi 窪地上的戰役
Wang Duqing 王獨清
Wang Er 王二
Wang Jianhong 王劍虹
Wang Jingwei 汪精衛
Wang Manying 王曼英
Wang Meng 王蒙
Wang Shitao 王詩陶
Wang Shun 王順
Wang Xiaobo 王小波
Wang Yinghong 王應洪
Wangwei 望微
Wanqing 婉清
Wei Hui 衛慧
Wei Zi'an 魏子安
Weihu 韋護
Wen Jie 聞捷
Wen Kang 文康
wen yi zai dao 文以載道
Wenhua pipan 文化批判

wentan 文壇
"Wenxue buke geming" 文學不可革命
Wo de yinyang liangjie 我的陰陽兩界
women she 我們社
Women xuekan 我們月刊
Wozai xiacun de shihou 我在霞村的時候
Wu 霧
Wu Jianren 吳趼人
Wu Jianren ku 吳趼人哭
Wu Renmin 吳仁民
Wu Sihong 吳似鴻
Wu Yunsheng 吳雲生
Wugui lieche 無軌列車
X Haiying X海鷹
xia 俠
Xia Yan 夏衍
Xia Zengyou 夏曾佑
Xiandai 現代
Xiangya jiezhi 象牙戒指
Xiao Changchun 蕭長春
Xiao Su 蕭素
Xiao Yemu 蕭也牧
xiaowo 小我
Xiaoxiao shinian 小小十年
Xiaoying 曉瑛
Xiayi jiaren 俠義佳人
Xie Bingying 謝冰瑩
Xi'er 喜兒
Xin wenyi 新文藝
xin xieshi zhuyi 新寫實主義
Xin zhongguo weilaiji 新中國未來記
xin zoupai 新左派
Xingshi 性史
Xinhai 鑫海
xinliu yuebao 新流月報
xinmin 新民
Xinsheng 新生
xinxin renlei 新新人類
Xu Zhenya 徐振亞
Xu Zhimo 徐志摩
Xungen wenxue 尋根文學
"Yalujiang shang" 鴨綠江上
Yan Fu 嚴復
Yan Jiayan 嚴家炎
Yang Mo 楊沫
Yang Sao 楊騷
yangban xi 樣板戲
Yao Wenyuan 姚文元
Ye Lingfeng 葉靈鳳
"Ye qiangwei" 野薔薇
Ye Shaojun 葉紹鈞
Ye Yongzhen 葉永蓁
Ye Zhaoyan 葉兆言
Yehuo chunfeng dou gucheng 野火春風鬥古城
Yeji 野祭
Yidai fengliu 一代風流
"Yige lihun anjian" 一個離婚案件
Yige nüxing yu zisha 一個女性與自殺
Yijing 易經
yingxiong 英雄
Yinyin 茵茵
Yishu shehui xue 藝術社會學
Yonggui 永貴
yu 欲
Yu 雨
Yu Dafu 郁達夫
Yu Pingbo 俞平伯
Yu Yongze 余永澤
Yue 玥
Yuequn shudian 樂群書店
Yulihun 玉梨魂
Yuzhen 玉珍
Zai xuanya shang 在懸崖上
Zaoshu de gushi 棗樹的故事
Zeng Pu 曾樸
Zhadan yu zhengniao 炸彈與征鳥
Zhang Jie 張潔
Zhang Jingsheng 張競生
Zhang Kangkang 張抗抗
Zhang Liyun 張麗雲
Zhang Qiuliu 章秋柳
Zhang Shujun 章淑君
Zhang Wentian 張聞天
Zhang Xianliang 張賢亮
Zhang Ziping 張資平
Zhao Chizhu 趙赤珠
Zhao Nan 趙楠

Zheng Boqi 鄭伯奇
Zheng Yuxian 鄭玉弦
Zhongguo xiandai wenxue shi jianbian 中國現代文學史簡編
Zhou Bing 周炳
Zhou Erfu 周而復
Zhou Yang 周揚
Zhou Zuoren 周作人
Zhu Jingwo 朱鏡我
Zhuanbian 轉變
Zhuanhuan 轉換
"Zhui" 追
Zhuiqiu 追求
Zijun 子君
Ziyou jiehun 自由結婚
Zong Pu 宗璞
Zuihou de weixiao 最後的微笑

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