



**PRINTING, READING
AND REVOLUTION:**

**KAIMING PRESS AND
THE CULTURAL
TRANSFORMATION OF
REPUBLICAN CHINA**

Ling A. Shiao, Ph.D.

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PRINTING, READING, AND REVOLUTION:
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REPUBLICAN CHINA

BY

LING A. SHIAO

B.A., HEFEI UNITED COLLEGE, 1988

M.A., PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY, 1993

M.A., BROWN UNIVERSITY, 1996

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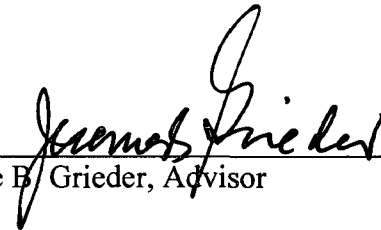
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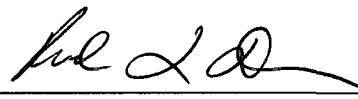
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Jerome B. Grieder, Advisor

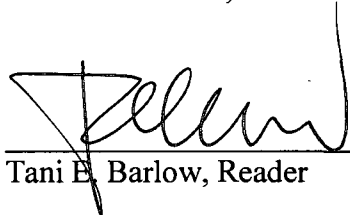
Recommended to the Graduate Council

Date June 18, 2008



Richard L. Davis, Reader


Date June 11, 2008



Tani E. Barlow, Reader

Approved by the Graduate Council

Date 7.1.08



Sheila Bonde, Dean of the Graduate School

Ling A. Shiao
Curriculum Vitae - June 2008
Department of History
Southern Methodist University
77 Dallas Hall
3225 University Boulevard
PO Box 750176
Dallas TX 75275-0176
Office Phone: 214-768-3683
Office FAX: 214-768-2404
Email: lshiao@smu.edu

EDUCATION

1996 Brown University, M.A., East Asian History

1993 Pennsylvania State University, M.A., American History

1988 Hefei United College (P. R. China) B.A. English, Magna Cum Laude

EMPLOYMENT

2007 – Present Southern Methodist University, Lecturer, Department of History

2004 – 2006 St. Mary's College of California, Visiting Lecturer, Department of History

2003 – 2004 U.C. Berkeley, Visiting Instructor, Department of History

2002 Wesleyan University, Visiting Lecturer, Department of History

2000 – 2001 U.C. Berkeley, Chinese Language Tutor, Department of History

1996 Brown University, Teaching Assistant, Department of History

PUBLICATIONS

Review of Christopher Reed, Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1879-1937, *Enterprise & Society*, 6 (4) (December 2005):714-716.

“Culture, Commerce, and Connections: The Inner Dynamics of New Culture Publishing in the Post-May Fourth Era.” In *From Woodblocks to the Internet: Chinese Publishing and Print Culture in Transition*. Eds. Cynthia Brokaw and Christopher Reed, forthcoming.

PAPERS PRESENTED

“Culture from Connections: Guanxi Networks that Shaped the Kaiming Press, 1925-1930.” Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, Washington D.C., January 2008.

“Culture, Commerce, and Connections: The Inner Dynamics of New Culture Publishing in the Post-May Fourth Era.” Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, Boston, Massachusetts, March 2007.

“Reading and Revolution: “Youth Anxiety” in the Republican China.” International Conference of Asian Scholars 4, organized by International Institute for Asian Studies, Leiden, the Netherlands in Shanghai, China, August 2005.

“Bridging Influence and Income: May Fourth Intellectuals’ Approaches to Cultural Economy in the Post-May Fourth Era.” Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, New York, New York, March 2003.

“Losing your Innocence, Losing your Job: Work and Chinese Youth in the Post-May Fourth Era.” Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, Chicago, Illinois, March 2001.

“Radicalism and Eroticism: Sexual Politics and the Problems of Discursive Binarisms in 1920s China,” Guest Speaker at Center for East Asian Studies, Stanford University, May 2000.

"Creating An Enlightened Community: Periodical Publishing and the Reading Public of Republican China," Annual Meeting of Western Conference of the Association for Asian Studies, Boise, Idaho, September 1999.

"Selling Sexuality: Profits and Politics in Women's Magazines in Republican China," Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, Boston, MA, March 1999, Panel organizer.

"Creating Lu Xun and His Audience," Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, Washington, D.C., March 1998.

"The Metamorphosis of Short Story Monthly and the Legitimation of Modern Chinese Literature," Annual Meeting of Asian Studies on Pacific Coast, Monterey, CA, June 1997.

FELLOWSHIPS AND HONORS

Young Scholar Award, China Times Cultural Foundation, 1999-2000
University Research Fellowship, Brown University, 1997-1998

FELLOWSHIPS AND HONORS (continued)

Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Summer Fellowship, 1996
University Fellowship, Brown University, 1993-1994

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Authors, Agents, and Audiences in the Production of A May Fourth World View, 1917-1989
Contesting the Cultural Revolution Memory in Cyberspace

TEACHING INTERESTS

Modern Chinese History through Fiction and Film
The History of Chinese Communism
The Cultural Revolution and Its Memory
Print Culture and Communications in China
Chinese Intellectual and Cultural History
Nation-building and Revolution in China
Nation-building and Wars in Japan
Gender and Chinese Society

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Association for Asian Studies
American Historical Association
Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Languages: Fluent in Chinese and English

Born: Hefei, Anhui Province, People's Republic of China, 1964

Citizenship: United States citizen

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INTRODUCTION

On a spring day in 1931, after returning to Shanghai from a two year-sojourn in Tokyo, Lou Shiyi (1905-2002) found himself at the office door of Xia Mianzun (1886-1946), the editor-in-chief of the Kaiming Press (Kaiming shudian). When Kaiming was first founded in 1926, young Lou managed to publish a few articles in Kaiming's magazines. He had regarded Xia as a mentor ever since. As he passed through the spacious offices of the publishing house located in the Hongkou district, he could not help being impressed by how much Kaiming had grown since its start in a one-room apartment five years before.¹ Kaiming reached the apex of its physical expansion in another two years when it moved its Retail and Distribution Department to a prominent location on Fourth Street (Sima lu, today's Fuzhou lu), in the heart of Shanghai's publishing world. There, it stood in close strategic proximity to the Commercial Press and China Press, the two largest publishing concerns in Republican-era China.

Lou was warmly greeted by the chief editor who, after learning that the young man was unemployed, offered him a job as an editor at Kaiming. Xia pointed out that the revolutionary tides had long subsided and it was time for the young radicals of the 1920s to settle down.² Xia probably spoke with the experience of his cohort in mind. During the time of cultural and ideological agitation of the May Fourth Movement (1917-1923) and the Great Revolution (1926-27, he and his friends, all self-styled May Fourth intellectuals, used the print media to make their mark on the cultural center stage.³ The very act of founding the Kaiming Press with his friend Zhang Xichen and others, was a culmination of the cultural battle that was characteristic of the on-going May Fourth New Culture project. The establishment of the Guomindang government in Nanjing in 1927,

however, had signaled a change in the political atmosphere as well as in reader expectations. In response, Kaiming had departed from its previous trademark of avant-gardism to reposition itself as an agent for popularizing New Culture ideas to a wider audience. In the process, it had secured its future, as well as the livelihood of those who worked for it. Lou politely declined Xia's job offer without a plausible explanation.⁴ He was, in fact, inconvenienced by his current activity in the newly formed League of Left-Wing Writers, whose organizers rejected Xia and most of the other key members of the Kaiming intellectual circle. Nonetheless, the personal tie he reestablished with Kaiming on the spring day in 1931 proved to be important, as Kaiming became the most reliable buyer of his manuscripts. Lou recalled nostalgically years later:

Without a book contract, I hurriedly translated a book and presented it to Mr. Xia or Mr. Zhang [Xicheng], announcing that I was in desperate need of money. One of them leafed through my manuscript before uttering the awaited instruction, "Well then, go to [the cashier's office] to get an advance on your book."⁵

This dissertation tells the story of the origin of Kaiming Press, founded and operated by a community of self-conscious May Fourth intellectuals, and its rise to a formidable cultural enterprise of its time. Broadly speaking, it is a case study of the cultural and social transformation of May Fourth intellectuals and their reading public from the 1920s to 1949 when the People's Republic of China was founded. The episode of Lou's visit is peripheral to both the story of Kaiming and my case study of May Fourth intellectuals. However, it invites us to ask a set of important questions about the intellectual sociability, cultural economy, and readerships that have been heretofore overlooked by the existing body of scholarship on the New Culture Movement and the May Fourth intelligentsia. How did personal ties and intellectual networks shape the ways in which ideas were formed and disseminated and polemic debates unfolded? After

the excitement of May Fourth as a movement, and behind the sound and fury of a string of well-studied cultural battles, how did the May Fourth writers sustain themselves and their cultural projects financially? How did financial concerns affect their cultural project and their relationship with readers? How did their engagement with the book market reshape their identity as intellectuals? Additionally, I ask the following questions: When Kaiming started to involve its student readers in public discourses carried in its magazines, how did these readers interact with the printed space and use it to articulate their collective identity and visions? And finally, what was the relationship between the identities of intellectuals and educated youth, and the discourse of revolution?

The Kaiming Press (1926-1953) provides a unique vantage point to explore these questions. One of the earliest so-called “new presses” (*xin shudian* or *xin shuye*), that is presses founded in the post-May Fourth 1920s and 1930s to promote New Culture, Kaiming was the only such press that rose to the list of top five Republican-era publishers.⁶ This was a remarkable rise, given that its counterparts typically enjoyed a fleeting existence of only a few struggling years. The press also enjoyed a symbiotic relationship with an elaborate intellectual network from its inception. The size, visibility, and diversity of what I call the Kaiming community was unmatched by any other supporting network behind a new press. As I argue, this was one of the most important factors contributing to Kaiming’s success, which in turn enhanced the writing careers and living standards of its supporters. On its unofficial roster, we find literary scholar Zhao Jingshen (its first editor), educator Xia Mianzun (its second chief editor), novelist Ye Shengtao (its third chief editor), political commentator and social activist Hu Yuzhi, literary critic and literary historian Zheng Zhenduo, Marxist and novelist Mao Dun,

cartoonist and essayist Feng Zikai, poet and essayist Zhu Ziqing, and anarchist Zhu Guangqian who was also the founder of the study of aesthetics in China. These are all established names in the pantheon of the May Fourth New Culture Movement.

Furthermore, Kaiming provides us with a view of the relationship of May Fourth intellectuals to the Communist victory in 1949 from the perspective of non-fellow-travelers, a topic that has not attracted sufficient scholarly attention, and yet is more telling of the intellectual trend toward acceptance of the ultimate Communist victory than the mere study of intellectuals associated with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). As mentioned earlier, despite the close Communist connections of a few of its supporters, most notably Mao Dun and Hu Yuzhi, Kaiming associates as a community were deemed insufficiently radical or un-Marxist and thus excluded from the CCP's close ally, the League of Left-Wing Writers in the 1930s.⁷ It was, therefore, all the more remarkable that towards the end of the 1940s and before the CCP takeover, leading members of Kaiming smuggled themselves out of Shanghai in order to take positions in the new Communist state in Beijing. Finally, unlike an avant-garde publisher serving a small, highly educated readership, or a profit-driven book merchant serving mainstream readers of entertainment literature and practical how-to manuals, Kaiming targeted the extensive readership of middle-school students in the seventh to twelfth grades. A study of their reading and writing activities allows me to tap deep into the *mentalités* of a social group comprising the most ardent participants in the Chinese revolution on both sides of the political fence dividing the Guomindang Nationalists (GMD) and the CCP.

By examining Kaiming intellectuals, their press, and their readerships, I discuss three central themes in the intellectual and cultural history of the Republican era. The

first concerns the emergence of a distinctive May Fourth intellectual sociability that I argue was both based on and departed from traditional literati sociability. The second theme probes the distinctive quality of May Fourth cultural production, its transformation by print capitalism in the late 1920s, and the resulting creation of a new cultural space that included ordinary readerships. The third addresses the reconstruction of the social identities of the intellectual elite and educated youth that occurred in the printed space and points to the cultural provenance of the triumph of Communism in China.

The Zigzagging Course of May Fourth Historiography

The May Fourth era is one of the most traveled territories of scholarship in the study of modern China. The May Fourth Movement is seen as a watershed event in modern Chinese intellectual, cultural, and literary history. The movement called for a fundamental repudiation of Confucian tradition and the adoption of the Western notions of individual liberty, equality, democracy, and science. At its core was a literary revolution that aimed at introducing into China new forms of Western-influenced literature for the dual purposes of individual and national awakening. Until recently, most intellectual and cultural historians as well as literary scholars of twentieth-century China initiated their research careers based on a May Fourth-related topic. The issue of a May Fourth legacy is also a highly contested topic due to its inextricable entanglement with contemporary cultural and ideological struggles inside and outside of China. Gu Xin, who published a monograph on a major debate in China in 1989 concerning the May Fourth legacy, deplores what he calls the political and ideological lenses with which leading Chinese intellectuals and scholars have viewed May Fourth.⁸ Since I do not see

history as prior to, or independent of interpretation, and do not view interpreters of the past as parties without subjective views, my discussion of the previous scholarship on May Fourth seeks to highlight the fact that it has been a product of a continuous dialogue between scholars and their prevailing historical contexts.

Before surveying the vast terrain of scholarship on May Fourth, it is necessary to take a look at what Vera Schwarcz calls the “May Fourth allegory” produced by May Fourth intellectuals and the Chinese Communist Party. Commentary about May Fourth and the interpretation of its meaning and legacy began before the tremor of the movement had hardly faded. Self-conscious about their ability to make history by writing it, May Fourth intellectuals took the first step towards the allegorization of May Fourth. On a lecture tour in Britain in 1926, Hu Shi identified May Fourth as the “Chinese Renaissance.” He called the famed movement of 1919, a “conscious emancipation of the individual man and woman from the bondage of forces of tradition” and “a movement of reason versus tradition, freedom versus authority, and the glorification of life and human values versus their suppression [by tradition.]”⁹ He thereby established the theme of May Fourth as a thought revolution against the tyranny of Chinese tradition and an affirmation of self in the emerging modern world. Three decades later in 1950, Luo Jialun, who in 1919 had been the first to refer to May Fourth as a “movement” and to promote the idea of a “May Fourth spirit,” defied ongoing criticism of the foreign-orientation of May Fourth by calling it nothing less than an enlightenment movement.¹⁰

In their efforts to define the May Fourth legacy, liberal-leaning intellectuals had a formidable competitor in the CCP, who styled itself as the legitimate heir of May Fourth since party founders Chen Duxiu and Li Dazhao, along with many of their young

followers including Mao Zedong, provided personal connections between May Fourth and the Communist movement. According to the CCP canonization of the movement since the 1940s, May Fourth offered the dual legacy of a patriotic movement against foreign imperialism and a cultural revolution against China's "feudal" tradition (*fandi fanfengjian*). According to Mao Zedong, however, the movement was "incomplete" because the bourgeois intellectuals who had led it lacked "the determination to merge with the masses."¹¹ Ultimately, the CCP pays tribute to May Fourth for its uncompromising iconoclasm, which it regards as having paved the way for the rise of Chinese Communism.

From the vast body of scholarship appearing since the 1960s, four persistent issues emerge. The first concerns the specific ideas and visions promoted during the May Fourth era. The remaining three address the relationships of the May Fourth project to Chinese cultural traditions, to the larger society, and to the Communist revolution. The May Fourth relationships to society at large and to the Communist triumph are among the main issues I explore in this dissertation. Despite the great complexities and nuances of existing scholarship and the vastly different positions they take, they share a continuing dialogue with or debate against the premises set by the "enlightenment" and Communist perspectives laid out above. Here, I will briefly review a few landmarks in the May Fourth historiography.

The enlightenment perspective received its first major buttress from Chow Tse-tung's *May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China* published in 1960. In this monumental study, Chow reaffirmed May Fourth iconoclasm against Chinese tradition and its enthusiastic cultural borrowing from the modern West – in

particular, the ideals of individualism, critical spirit, and democracy.¹² The theme of May Fourth liberal enlightenment (*qimeng*) continued to enjoy positive scholarly endorsement in the next three decades, notably by Jerome Grieder. During the late 1950s, when Grieder first took interest in Hu Shi, the CCP's attack on the leading Chinese liberal had been switched into high gear.¹³ In attacking Hu, the Communist regime seemed to make a final statement of hostility towards the liberalism represented by Hu and many of his May Fourth colleagues. Through a close examination of one of the most important May Fourth leaders, Grieder demonstrates Hu's steadfast and uncompromising commitment to his liberal vision – a vision characterized by an insistence on individual dignity, pluralistic skepticism, and cosmopolitanism. Such a vision, based on reason and order, betrayed no small amount of elitism, and quickly lost its relevance in the escalating violence of foreign imperialism and Chinese revolution. Ultimately, Grieder maintains in this and later work that the May Fourth enlightenment effort fell victim to its “claims of ideology,” which were infused with moral passion and an assurance of its own correctness as a fundamental solution to the country's crisis.¹⁴

The 1980s proved to be the decade most susceptible to the notion of May Fourth enlightenment both in the West and in China. In an important way, scholarship published in this first post-Mao decade represented a conscious effort on the part of scholars and intellectuals to break away from the shadow of Maoism and the twentieth-century intellectual tradition inscribed in Maoist terms. This is evidenced by the change of direction in Vera Schwarcz's work on May Fourth. When she first conceived her topic in 1969, she planned to pursue a theme of cultural revolution that “began in the late 1910s and ... then had culminated in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution of 1966-69.”¹⁵

Such a notion was famously put forward by Lin Yu-sheng in 1979. Lin insists, after a close examination of the works of Chen Duxiu, Hu Shi, and Lu Xun, that May Fourth iconoclasm was so thorough that it should be regarded as totalistic. He further argues that this tendency for intellectualism and totalism eventually culminated in the tragedy of the Cultural Revolution.¹⁶ Schwarcz later “came to see [the Cultural Revolution] in a new light” after living in China in 1979, however, and thoroughly revised her previous interpretation of May Fourth.¹⁷ Her turnabout was undoubtedly the result of a fruitful exchange of views with both the octogenarian May Fourth veterans she interviewed and younger intellectuals including philosopher Li Zehou. After surviving Maoism, especially the traumatic Cultural Revolution, these Chinese intellectuals became energetically engaged in questioning all officially sanctioned notions and interpretations of China’s recent past, in particular state-endorsed meanings of the May Fourth Movement. Schwarcz published her ambitious *The Chinese Enlightenment* in 1986. In the same year, Li Zehou published his musing on the May Fourth enlightenment theme, sparking a fierce debate in China between orthodox Communist historians, who continued to claim the May Fourth spiritual inheritance for the CCP, and what I call anti-establishment intellectuals, who suggested that the CCP high-jacked the enlightenment effort and that it was time to resume the May Fourth enlightenment project to enable China to truly embark on modernization. By the time of the 70th anniversary of May Fourth in 1989, a new consensus has been reached among Chinese intellectuals that confirmed enlightenment as the most profound legacy of May Fourth.¹⁸

To both Schwarcz and Li Zehou, May Fourth enlightenment was intimately entangled with the theme of national salvation (*jiuwang*) or anti-imperialist nationalism.

Schwarcz defines enlightenment based on Immanuel Kant's articulation and forcefully draws a positive comparison between May Fourth and its European predecessor.

Whereas the European Enlightenment was self-emancipation from Christian dogma and the Church, the Chinese enlightenment was self-emancipation from Confucian patriarchal authority and the ethic of self-submission. To support her thesis, Schwarcz moves away from the older generation of May Fourth leaders whom she characterizes as bitter, disillusioned loners who were unremittingly hostile to Chinese tradition to focus on their students, or the self-conscious "new youth" who enjoyed solidarity with one another and were willing to adapt aspects of their country's past while turning their critique of Chinese tradition into "a national movement for cultural and political awakening."¹⁹

Both Schwarcz and Li argue that since the cultural critique was premised upon the need for China's survival and modernization, the nationalist fever during the May Fourth student movement helped to spread enlightenment messages. Consequently, a generation of young men and women consciously broke away from traditional norms to assert their individuality. Ultimately, however, the ever pressing national crisis, in particular the need to resist Japanese invaders, made it imperative to assert Chinese identity based on its traditional heritage and to muscle collective strength at the expense of individual autonomy.

It is noteworthy that this interpretation of May Fourth stroked a sympathetic cord in the heart of the Chinese students who, at this particular historical juncture, took to the street to demand democracy from the Chinese government. Indeed, the student movement of 1989, of which I was a part, called for picking up the May Fourth banner from where it had fallen and resuming the Chinese enlightenment movement. Here, once

again, enlightenment was perceived both as an end in itself and as a means to catapult the country into modernity. Rebelling against tradition now included both “feudal” ideals and practices of the Confucian past, as well as the “feudal” ideas and practices that had made the Maoist dogma so oppressive.

The crushing defeat of the democracy movement sent Chinese intellectuals and China scholars both in and outside of China back to the drawing board with a sober mood. The aftermath of June Fourth 1989 called for fresh answers to China’s problems by looking at May Fourth anew. This coincided with the gradual introduction of critical theory to Chinese studies, in particular to the study of modern Chinese literature, resulting in a strong need to re-examine many established views. In China in 1986, literary scholars call for a re-writing of the history of modern Chinese literature as “twentieth-century literature,” indicating an urge to break away from the conventional May Fourth historical paradigm that marks the literary revolution as the beginning of Chinese literary modernity.²⁰ Outside of China, a series of discussions around the theme of “paradigmatic issues in Chinese studies” was published in *Modern China* between 1991 and 1993.²¹ This represents a new trend in modern literary studies to examine topics other than those related to May Fourth, as well as to look at the May Fourth literature with fresh perspectives, resulting in a vastly enriched field. Since modern Chinese literature has been perceived up to this point as being initiated by the May Fourth project, a re-evaluation of the May Fourth legacy became unavoidable.

Most scholarship on May Fourth and modern Chinese literature since the 1990s can be said to be self-consciously revisionist. Since the European Enlightenment itself had been under fire from Adorno and Horkheimer to Foucault and Derrida, the notion of

May Fourth as a Chinese enlightenment naturally came under critical scrutiny as well. More importantly, researchers are no longer satisfied with a focus on the great minds and great texts of the May Fourth era or with reading them based on authors' declared intentions and taking the words of enlightenment, progress, individualism, nationalism, revolution, and the like at their face value. Rather, it is discourses and strategies of discourse formation, rhetorical disposition, issues of cultural translation, and the use and abuse of symbolic capital and cultural politics that occupy the center of scholarly attention.

At the heart of this revisionist scholarship is an effort to discredit the May Fourth meta-narrative of enlightenment and progress and the cultural politics that gave rise to the May Fourth literary canon. The May Fourth project in this new view was about establishing a particular path to modernity that was manipulative and repressive of alternative approaches. What better place to start this re-examination than *New Youth*, the beacon of New Culture, and the Literary Research Association (*wenxue yanjiu hui*), the first and biggest literary organization for the New Literature envisioned by *New Youth* editors? In his 1991 article entitled, "A Magazine and a 'Society': On the May Fourth Literary Tradition", Wang Xiaoming dissects with witty clarity and insight the particular editorial style and strategy of *New Youth*, revealing its penchant for aggressive polemics, totalism (à la Lin Yu-sheng) as a way to perceive China's problems and in its proposal to solve them, and authoritarian assertiveness in setting the theoretical guidelines for creating new literature. As for the association, Wang interprets its all inclusive, "party-like" organizational principle as attempting to ensure dominance over the literary field. He further argues, less convincingly, that this inclusiveness allowed the association to

impose literary realism as the only legitimate mode of literary writing for decades to come. He concludes that the source for the disappearance of May Fourth individualism and the general flattening of literary imagination from the mid-1930s onward was not due as much to nationalistic fervor in the face of the Japanese aggression as to the notion of lineal progression of so-called literary evolutionism as dictated by the May Fourth leaders and their programmatic and domineering tendencies.²²

In the same spirit, scholars began in the 1990s to dismantle the enlightenment premise of the May Fourth literary canon. A volume edited by Ellen Wider and David Der-wei Wang in 1993, *From May Fourth to June Fourth*, examines the self and authorial voice in canonical texts to reveal the obsessions of the writers with themselves and with univocality. In her 1995 *Translingual Practice*, Lydia Liu traces the trajectory of “*geren zhuyi*,” the Chinese loanword of “individualism” and a key theory of the May Fourth enlightenment, in May Fourth texts and in public debates during 1910s and early 1920s to show the instability of its meaning and its frequent incorporation of qualities of collectivism and nationalism that radically altered the term’s original form.²³ In his *Witness Against History*, Yomi Braester writes about May Fourth writers inability to bear witness for history, that is for the May Fourth meta-narrative of progress. According to him, this is particularly evidenced by Lu Xun’s “iron chamber” metaphor that insists on the futility and even the cruelty of enlightenment.²⁴

The loudest denunciation of May Fourth enlightenment comes in an edited volume, *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital: China’s May Fourth Project*.²⁵ In it, Leo Ou-fan Lee demonstrates how *New Youth* and its discursive style squashed a “public sphere” already cultivated by the late Qing periodical press that was pluralistic and

inclusive. Rudolf Wagner portrays the May Fourth movement as a streamlining agenda and blames it for what he calls the “desertification” of the Chinese cultural landscape. The rest of the volume focuses on the May Fourth effort at “systemizing the national heritage” (*zhenli guoku*) as an “act of erasure” that ultimately impoverished the Chinese literary tradition. In an earlier work, David Wang referred to modern elements in late Qing fiction as “repressed modernities” that fell victim to the linear, teleological program of May Fourth.²⁶ Indeed, since the 1990s, a good number of monographs and countless articles in both English and Chinese have been published to rescue from historical obscurity every cultural and literary figure of the late Qing and Republican eras that was attacked by the May Fourth camp, and later the left-wing of the May Fourth writers.

Taken as a whole, revisionist scholarship has recast May Fourth as a hegemonic cultural project that foreshadowed the dissemination of Communist ideology. In their arguments about May Fourth “erasure” of the monumental literary achievements in China’s past, the revisionists are not too far from Lin Yu-sheng’s 1979 claim that the iconoclasm of May Fourth had reduced the Chinese tradition to an organic totality for the purpose of complete repudiation. According to Lin, the totalistic quality of May Fourth ideology was responsible for the destructive impulses of the Cultural Revolution.²⁷ Nor do the revisionists take us too far from Grieder’s penetrating insight on what he calls “ideological thinking,” which reduced a cultural vision that emphasized the qualities of individual character to a revolutionary dispensation, and by so doing categorized, systematized, and schematized a path towards a total solution to the complex problems China faced.²⁸ The difference is that Grieder sees ideological thinking as what defeated the Chinese enlightenment while the revisionists locate ideological thinking right in the

heart of May Fourth. In a paradoxical way, the negative reassessment of May Fourth of this revisionist scholarship joins forces with more conventional works that have compared May Fourth to the xenophobic Boxer Rebellion as two opposite extremes of the Chinese response to Western imperialism. These conventional works have also called for an end to the “enlightenment mentality.”²⁹ Just as paradoxically, the revisionist perspective parallels Communist interpretation by making a lineal connection between the May Fourth legacy and the triumph of Communism in China. The difference is that they judge this connection as negative while Communist historians see the connection in a positive light.

Traditional Publishing, Modern Publishing, and the Transformation of the Chinese Intellectual Elite

Despite the diametric opposition of the enlightenment and revisionist formulations, both view the May Fourth Movement as a watershed in the intellectual, cultural, and political history of modern China. After decades of dedicated research, and despite the significant theoretical and methodological innovations by revisionist scholars, studies of May Fourth intellectuals have not yet gone much beyond textual and discourse analyses of the core group of prominent May Fourth writers. By focusing on the Kaiming Press, this dissertation examines the May Fourth reconfiguration of modern Chinese culture from new angles of May Fourth publishing, May Fourth intellectual sociability, and May Fourth readership. Indeed, the Kaiming Press was the interface of May Fourth cultural politics, cultural sociology, and cultural economy.

Clearly, publishing occupied the center of the May Fourth project. Indeed, May Fourth can be characterized as primarily a publishing phenomenon. Before further

elaboration on the world of May Fourth publishing, a review of the role of the literati elite in publishing in pre-twentieth-century China and the role of modern publishing in the transformation of the intellectual elite is in order. Traditionally, Chinese *shidafu* or scholar-official elite drew their income either from bureaucratic office-holding or land-holding. After the mid-Ming period, the scholar-official class underwent significant changes. As degree-holders came to greatly out-number official posts, a majority had their hopes for official-administrative appointments dashed.³⁰ The saturation of the conventional bureaucratic job market forced them to look elsewhere for career and income unless their families had substantial wealth in land. This sent many straight down the path of trade and manufacturing and consequently creating a class of degree-holding non-officials that might be called literati gentry.³¹ A significant number opted to make a living or gain additional income in the printing and publishing boom of the late imperial era.

This was not the first time that literati engaged in the world of printing and publishing. After all, printing was invented in China by the eighth century. During imperial times, publishing had been organized into three distinctive categories: “official” (*guan ke*), managed by the state, “household” (*jia ke*) by literati families, and “shop printing” (*fang ke*) by commercial printers.³² The literati were the primary force in all three categories. As the custodians of culture, the imperial state sponsored or directly employed scholars to be in charge of compiling, editing, and publishing books. As part of officialdom, scholars either worked on temporary assignments³³ or filled more permanent positions in the central and local governments.³⁴ Household publishing by definition was by and of the literati elite. Wealthy literati-officials published their own

works or works held in their family collections. It was customary for them to give their printed literary works to their friends and colleagues as gifts so as to enhance their cultural status and leave a record for posterity. During the late imperial time, many wealthy degree-holders who failed to gain office took up printing and book and art connoisseurship as an essential component of their literati identity and elite lifestyle. As for the third category, shop printing, not a few scholars ran their own printing shops for commercial purposes. Non-literati printers with sizable operations also employed scholars as editors and proofreaders.³⁵

The issue of the relationship between culture and commerce merits some attention here. In the history of Chinese printing, the existing scholarship separates non-commercial and commercial printing into two distinct phases. Most scholars agree with Christopher Reed, who links “print culture” to what he sees as the millennium-old noncommercial publishing activities of both the imperial state and literati elite, and “print commerce” to the three-centuries-old commercial publishing and book trade that became prevalent in late imperial China. He uses the term print culture to refer to any type of publishing, whether official or private, that had the shared concerns of public service and cultural preservation, and was designed to complement the ideal of an elite lifestyle characterized by connoisseurship. It was only during the Ming dynasty, the existing scholarship contends, that Chinese printing rapidly entered a commercial phase, as evidenced not only by the growth and earnings of commercial printers but also by an increase in bibliophile-scholar printers who were previously thought to be too high-minded to have anything to do with the marketplace and the sale of their printed products.³⁶

Based on my research, the line between commercial and non-commercial publishing, however, was never this clearly drawn. While the commercial status of knowledge might have gained in legitimacy during the Ming, commerce in books was an age-old phenomenon traceable to the Han and paradoxically involved the state and its literati representatives, who actively discriminated against merchants.³⁷ For example, trade in hand-copied books started among the students of the Imperial University (*taixue*) in Chang'an during the Former Han (206 BCE-9CE), which created the site of the earliest known book market in China. Literati officials of the early dynasties often charged handsome fees for producing calligraphy, biographies, commemorative essays, and epitaphs for private clients.³⁸ The practice became so common that by the sixth century, the word “*runbi*” (brush-lubricant) was coined as a euphemism for the payments made to the writers.³⁹ There is evidence showing that imperial courts and government officials reproduced Confucian classics and other texts for sale since the reputed start of printing in the eighth century.⁴⁰ Likewise, printed religious texts, while commonly considered non-commercial, were also printed for sale.⁴¹ Indeed, philanthropy and profit often went hand in hand. It is safe to say that books in China were always characterized by the duality of culture and commerce.

What was new during the late imperial era was not that knowledge was traded but rather the emergence of a sizable group of proto-professional writers, editors, and publishers, who emerged out of the increasing population of unemployed lower degree-holders. I refer to these *littérateurs* as “proto-professionals” rather than “professionals” because of the lack of a professional identity among these writers themselves or any social recognition of such a vocation.⁴² Printing and publishing, especially in the

commercial sector, enjoyed rapid expansion under the Ming dynasty and reached its zenith under the Qing.⁴³ When the unemployed degree-holders of the time adopted writing and publishing for the general public as an alternative way of making a living, they became the primary force sustaining the growing commercial printing enterprise. Sometimes, these proto-professional men engaged in the freelance writing of compositions ranging from novels and plays for popular consumption to manuals on how to succeed in the civil service examinations. Other times, they offered their services to commercial printers for pay, and if they had some capital, became printers themselves.

There remained an important distinction between these proto-professionals on the one hand, and the *shidafu* scholar-official class who sometimes profited from their writing and printing activities on the other. The latter put their literary creativity and erudition into use primarily for noncommercial purposes since their preferred genres of poetry and lyrical essays typically attracted small audiences. When they traded their talent for a payment, payments were usually made and taken in a subtle or discrete manner. For the proto-professionals, however, writing and printing was their “rice bowl.” Since their priority was to earn an income, their work tended to be practical or entertaining in nature so as to cater to the needs of the larger reading public. As these poor scholars placed their knowledge and service on the open market, they enjoyed far less prestige within the elite class. Writing and publishing is one of the areas that allow us to see the changing stratification in the elite hierarchy in late imperial China.

Ultimately, the professionalization of literati as writers was severely hampered by lack of the concepts of intellectual property rights, legal copyright protection, and sometimes even a clear definition of authorship despite the commercialization of publishing in late

imperial times.⁴⁴ The phenomenon of authors paying publishers to print their manuscripts remained common as recently as the late nineteenth century.⁴⁵

The publishing boom of the late imperial era was a quantitative change but not a qualitative leap. It is not until the early twentieth century that we find a revolution in publishing as a means of cultural production. This revolution came about by three important developments: the spread of mechanized printing, a surge of interest in new manuscripts, and the establishment of copyright laws. Together, they propelled Chinese printing and publishing into its modern age. This process had profound implications for the Chinese intellectual elite.

The Western-style printing press was first introduced to China in the early nineteenth century. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the majority of Chinese printers and publishers had adopted the new Western-style technology.⁴⁶ Mechanized printing not only vastly increased the printed output, but more importantly, transformed the way in which print culture was produced and consumed. Mechanized printing and publishing was one of the first modern industries in China, as it was in the West some three hundred years earlier. It combined technical modernity and modern capitalism. Due to the high volume of capital required to invest in the expensive machinery, mechanized printing encouraged publishers to restructure themselves into limited liability stock companies in order to attract investments.⁴⁷ As Benedict Anderson put it, as “one of the earlier forms of capitalist enterprise, book-publishing felt all of capitalism’s restless search for markets.”⁴⁸ Modern publishing companies, once established, could no longer be satisfied with servicing merely local communities or specific clienteles of bibliophiles like their traditional counterparts. Rather, they aimed at building a national

market that would reach every corner of literate society. In this fashion, print capitalism brought about a new mass readership and mass cultural production in China.⁴⁹

Modern publishing departed from traditional publishing in four critical aspects. First, it focused decidedly on new titles while woodblock printing was characterized by the preponderance of reprints, despite the unprecedented numbers of new titles during the Qing. The political turmoil and agitations for reform during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries produced a new readership with cravings for new information and ideas, most of which came from the West. This in turn created market demand for translations and “new-style” works that prompted publishers to attract new manuscripts by offering their authors handsome fees. Consequently, the Republican period of less than four decades saw roughly the same amount of new titles as did the entire Qing dynasty of close to three centuries.⁵⁰

Second, before the advent of print capitalism, the pricing of manuscripts was subject to a multitude of variables such as the personal tastes and strategies of publishers and authors, needs of local readerships, and other regional particularities. The resultant unpredictability of the market for culture made the financial situation of the literati who relied on selling their writings precarious. Writing as an income-generating commitment was less than desirable. By the 1910s, a national market for manuscripts came into being. It regulated prices based on the general market demand and the marketability of particular manuscripts based on the prestige their authors enjoyed.

Third, previously writing and publishing for the book market had involved primarily the lower echelons of the elite who enjoyed little respectability within their own class.⁵¹ The turn of the twentieth century witnessed the rapid alienation of even the upper echelon

of scholar-officials from the Qing court. The failure of the Hundred Days Reform in 1898 turned many reformists into dissidents of the court. The dismantling of the civil service examination system in 1905 and the final fall of the Qing state in 1911 completed the long process of separating the literati elite from the state in terms of both political identification and economic ties. As the leading reformist officials, ex-officials, and higher degree-holders began to publish for profit in the early 1900s, writing for pay gained in social legitimacy even among the upper elite.⁵² In fact, it was in the modern publishing world of the early twentieth century that cultural capital, as measured by the possession of degrees, previous governmental office, and local or national reputation, was fast converted into economic capital. The higher the degrees and previous government office one held, the more payment he typically could expect for either his manuscripts or his editorial work.

Fourth, out of the cultural and intellectual ferment of the last years of the Qing grew the need for greater recognition and legal protection of the monetary value of knowledge, ideas, and artistic creativity. Yan Fu, the famous translator of Western works of social sciences, was a pioneer in pushing for this change. In 1899, he successfully convinced his friend, Zhang Yuanji, the head of the Translating Department of the state-sponsored Nanyang Academy [Nanyang gongxue] in Shanghai, to pay him a 20% royalty on top of a payment of 2,000 yuan for his translation of Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*.⁵³ He was also the first to put copyright stamps on his published books in 1904.⁵⁴ By the beginning of the twentieth century, authors and publishers had successfully lobbied several local governments to issue orders against pirate printers.⁵⁵ In 1910, the Qing court passed the first Chinese copyright law. The subsequent warlord and Guomindang

governments issued similar copyright laws in 1915 and 1928 respectively.⁵⁶ Changes concerning copyright laws and royalties served to directly connect the monetary value of an intellectual work to its market value. This legal step was instrumental in the institutionalization of authorship in China. Taken together the high demand for new manuscripts, the emerging nationwide book market, and the copy right law, I argue, were instrumental in giving rise to the new writing profession.

The modernization of printing and publishing contributed profoundly to the transformation of the traditional scholar-official class into a modern intelligentsia at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. The rapid deterioration of the imperial court and the new opportunities in modern publishing constituted a push and pull effect that led alienated members of the official class to break away from the state. Through the print media, emerging modern intellectuals articulated and spread their political visions to the new reading public while also building an identity as moral leaders of society. In economic terms, modern publishing allowed intellectuals to move from a reliance on state patronage to a reliance on popular patronage. In other words, their income now came from a reading public willing to pay to read their thoughts.

This transformation of the traditional literati-official class into a modern intelligentsia took a generation to complete. In the process, the reformist elite gradually built a flexible and dynamic relationship with the marketplace. Initially, their engagement with publishing was decidedly non-commercial and relied upon a combination of government subsidies, private donations, and editor-publishers' own money to finance their periodicals.⁵⁷ Very soon, especially after the failure of the Hundred Day Reform of 1898 when the reformists lost the support of the court, income-

earning became an integral part of their publishing activities. At the turn of the twentieth century, innovative commercial publishers started to lure former scholar-officials with handsome pay in order to increase their press' cultural status.⁵⁸ In 1901, for example, Commercial Press (Shangwu Yinshuguan), a fledgling commercial publisher, successfully attracted the attention and later investment of Zhang Yuanji, a Hanlin scholar who was banished by the court after the Hundred Days Reform of 1898. Two years later, Zhang joined Shangwu to be in charge of an emerging editorial department. His starting monthly salary was 350 yuan, 250 yuan more than when he was on the government payroll at Nanyang Academy.⁵⁹ Through their friendship with Zhang Yuanji, reformist intellectuals, including Liang Qichao, Yan Fu, and Cai Yuanpei, formed close contacts with Shangwu, which offered them handsome payments, often in advance, for their manuscripts and editorial work.⁶⁰ Yan Fu, in particular, became a Shangwu shareholder and *ad hoc* house author in 1903, publishing all eight of his important translations through the press and earning a massive 30,600 yuan in Shangwu stock a decade later.⁶¹ Like Zhang Yuanji and Yan Fu, many former Qing official-intellectuals took advantage of modern publishing to carve out for themselves a new career.

In sum, the Chinese intellectual elite experienced a profound transformation in late nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. As I have shown, after their disengagement with the state at the turn of the century, Chinese intellectuals lost both the privileges bestowed on them through the imperial civil service examination system and their identity as scholar-officials (*shidafu*). It was at this juncture that the rapid expansion of modern publishing produced a new cultural space where intellectuals could

articulate their ideas and visions. Moreover, this expansion created a social space for the intelligentsia to reconstruct their identities in relation to state and society, and it also provided economic resources that could grant them autonomy from state sponsorship and a middle-class existence. Subsequently, the intellectual elite also entered into a new relationship with the publishing world.

From Avant-Garde Publishing to the Business of May Fourth Enlightenment

Just as reformist intellectuals became the transitional generation of their era, May Fourth intellectuals represented the first generation of a modern intelligentsia independent of the state. Whereas reformists such as Liang Qichao, Yan Fu, and Zhang Yuanji, who held high imperial degrees and sometimes served the state in their early careers, embraced modern publishing in the waning years of the Qing, the May Fourth generations was never tied to the state. The May Fourth era was an era that called for a transformation of the Chinese consciousness through the press and education. For May Fourth intellectuals, it was also an era of publish or perish. Sharing neither the identity of reformist intellectuals nor that of professional revolutionaries of the preceding decades, the May Fourth generations found themselves in need of a new identity. It was through the press rather than bureaucratic offices or political parties that they found their public voice. It was through publishing that they became modern intellectuals.

The May Fourth Movement in turn inspired a sustained new publishing boom that lasted until 1937 when the War of Resisting Japan broke out. There were two discernable phases of this boom. The first that was between the late 1910s and the late 1920s was characterized by the mushrooming of periodical press, During this period, self-styled

new intellectuals and students who identified with New Culture launched hundreds of magazines across the country. Such magazines, otherwise known as *tongren* (comrade) magazines, were typically run by closely-knit groups of like-minded friends for the purpose of championing certain New Culture agendas. The vast majority of them, including those that captured national attention with their initiation or involvement in polemic battles, were unable to sustain themselves beyond a few years. Some disappeared as fast as they appeared, leaving only a handful of published issues behind.

Out of *tongren* magazine publications grew scores of full-fledged avant-garde presses that specialized in New Culture-inspired modern literature, sciences, and social sciences.⁶² These presses were either directly run by or closely associated with a society or network of May Fourth intellectuals. Referring to themselves as “new press-bookstores” (*xin shudian*), or “new publishing enterprises” (*xin shuye*) for “new publications” (*xin shu*), these avant-garde presses gave rise to the second phase of the publishing boom in the late twenties and pre-war thirties. As Zhang Jinglu, a leading new publisher and scholar of publishing history wrote, “[Unlike Commercial Press,] the new presses’ primary focus was New Culture and New Literature (*xin wenyi*).⁶³ In other words, the new presses were small publishers whose self-identity was intrinsically tied to May Fourth intellectual communities.

The vast majority of the new presses found their home in Shanghai. Since the late nineteenth century, the city, with its strong foreign influence, early industrialization, and concessions that provided a political haven from the persecution of the Chinese government, had become the publishing capital of the country.⁶⁴ New publishing in Shanghai reached its apex in 1928, with a total of 18 new presses established in that year

alone. In that year, the metropolis was home to as many as 55 new presses.⁶⁵ The most notable ones included Beixin Press (Beixin shuju, 1925-55), Guangzhou Press (Guangzhou shuju, 1925-35), Kaiming Press (1926-53), The Creation Society Publishing Office (Chuan Zhao she chuan, 1926-33), and Crescent Moon Press (Xinyue shuju, 1927-31), the last three of which were founded by May Fourth writers themselves. Not surprisingly, a contemporary commentator proclaimed, “In the last year the Shanghai publishing world has experienced a sudden show of vitality. The most direct [reason] is the arrival of the small presses.”⁶⁶ Indeed, the rise of the new presses breathed new life into the existing publishing world. As I have shown elsewhere, their success, and the success of their May Fourth authors, was evidenced by the fact that the publications of new presses attracted rampant piracy much more than those of the mainstream publishers and that mainstream publishers rushed to buy manuscripts from May Fourth authors or offer them book contracts.⁶⁷

As I have also argued, in a paradoxical way, the success of the new presses bore the roots of their eventual demise. By the late 1920s, new presses had found their niche in the book market. Yet, as the larger mainstream publishers who were armed with significantly larger capital resources, more sophisticated organization of production, and expansive distribution networks made the move to compete with the new presses, the latter were put at severe disadvantage. Neither did they have the resource to fight piracy. Finally, as the GMD established their capital in Nanjing in 1927, state control became increasingly effective. The proclivity of new presses for political radicalism and cultural avant-gardism often invited government censorship and shutdown. As a result, by the early 1930s, most of the new presses died out.⁶⁸ Only a few, such as the Kaiming Press

emerged triumphant because they turned to less politically risky publications, incorporated the business strategies of their competitors, and adopted a new and more democratic relationship with their readers to address their diverse needs.

By the late 1920s, the May Fourth generations also found themselves in a position they had not foreseen. This period witnessed a great influx of May Fourth writers to Shanghai. Many, such as Lu Xun, left Beijing to flee the repressive warlord government as well as their financial predicaments. Other politically active writers, including Mao Dun and Guo Moruo, sought refuge in Shanghai's foreign concessions from the GMD's White Terror that came in the aftermath of the Northern Expedition in 1927. The biggest attraction for writers to settle in Shanghai was undoubtedly its immense publishing and distribution capacity.⁶⁹ During the May Fourth Movement, the new intellectuals, who had self-styled as prophets of Chinese revolution, vehemently attacked professional writers of the older generation, or what Leo Ou-fan Lee calls the "treaty-port littérateurs," for profit-seeking. Now new intellectuals rubbed shoulders with their old cultural foes as they too came to write for a living.

It was in this historical context, the May Fourth generations, willingly or unwillingly, embraced cultural entrepreneurship as well as underwent a process of professionalization to become publishers, editors, and authors. As I argue through an examination of the Kaiming Press, May Fourth intellectuals of the late twenties and pre-war thirties were no longer concerned with hyperbolic polemics that had characterized their writing style and publishing activities during the May Fourth era. Neither did they succumb to crass commercialism. Their focus had now become a business of May Fourth enlightenment.⁷⁰

Over the past decade or so, new scholarly interest in the history of Chinese publishing has resulted in a score of fresh and illuminating monographs and articles in English, Chinese, and Japanese languages. Most of them focus on late imperial times, an exciting period when Chinese print culture and print commerce experienced unprecedented expansion.⁷¹ The last decade also witnessed the publication of a number of important studies on the rise of modern publishing and journalism in the late nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries.⁷² Despite a fervent involvement of May Fourth intelligentsia in publishing, there are surprisingly few studies for this subject. In studying *Kaiming*, my dissertation will fill an important gap in the history of modern publishing in China.

My interpretation of May Fourth goes against the grain of both the enlightenment and revisionist perspectives. My research demonstrates that during the May Fourth era and its immediate aftermath in the mid-1920s, *Kaiming* intellectuals, despite a professed commitment to awakening the nation, paradoxically focused on writing for a small elite of well-educated readers, and engaged in aggressive polemics to establish their intellectual identity and recognition. This seemingly confirms what Milena Dolezelva-Velingerova calls the “double bind” of May Fourth: it promised intellectual emancipation while only embodying elitism and cultural hegemony.⁷³ As Michel Hockx points out, however, “Aggression... has always been the hallmark of the avant-garde, of those literary producers trying to enter the literary field, rather than dominate it.”⁷⁴ Indeed, for the *Kaiming* writers, polemics and avant-gardism only marked the start of their careers. I particularly take issue with the revisionist arguments of May Fourth as a

hegemonic discourse. I demonstrate that the May Fourth intelligentsia faced formidable challenges in the post May Fourth 1920s, challenges of the market and professionalization. In response, Kaiming struck out on a new route to successfully navigate the commercial sea by adopting more sophisticated business organization, changing their target audience from a small group of hyperbolic “new youth” to a large population of mundane middle-school students, and opening up their journalistic space to include their new readership. By the beginning of the 1930s, Kaiming completed its reorientation from an avant-garde press to that of publisher for the country’s hundreds of thousands of middle-school student readers. I show that it was a potent combination of new market sensitivity and their original populist mission that ultimately led to the spread of May Fourth New Culture and, which marked the true beginning of a May Fourth awakening.

With a concern for social groups other than the intellectual elite, I find a study of May Fourth through publishing and reading particularly appealing. This is so because it offers the immediate advantage of breaking away from the usual binary opposition between intellectual history and popular culture studies by bringing together the three primary cultural groups that play equally important roles in cultural formation: authors, audiences, and cultural agents such as editors and publishers. My encounter with numerous writings by ordinary readers of Kaiming publications also lead me to depart from the notion of a dichotomy of cultural production and consumption, which implies that the cultural elite produces culture while the non-elite only consumes it passively. As Roger Chartier has pointed out, the best way to understand culture is to see it as a process of appropriation, in which social groups take over and remake themes, texts, and

practices of the intellectuals, and explore cultural production as an interactive process between the elite and their audiences.⁷⁵ Kaiming's new middle-school student readers played a significant role shaping Kaiming cultural production in three ways— by their level of demand through market, by their direct response to the writings of Kaiming intellectuals, and by their independent contributions to Kaiming magazines. In essence, these young readers consciously brought their ideas, values, and experience to bear on their readings, entering into a dialogical relationship with authors, texts, and publishing activities.

Here, I consider May Fourth as part of the larger historical process of Chinese awakening during the first half of the twentieth century. As John Fitzgerald observes, the nebulous concept of wakening is between the transitive form of awakening others (*huanqi, huangxing*) and the intransitive form of undergoing an awakening (*juewu, juexing*). The idea of awakening was also common to the European Enlightenment, in the form of awakening to reason and to universal human values.⁷⁶ The difference between an awakening and an enlightenment, as I see it, is that the former is an exposure to and identification with a set of new ideas and values while the latter emphasizes consciousness and reason on the part of the individual in his or her identification with new ideas and values. The May Fourth intellectuals were self-styled enlighteners who consciously invoked their European predecessors. Compared to the “awakening” projects engineered by the political parties and state, I demonstrate that the May Fourth enlightenment in the post-May Fourth era clearly welcomed readers' active and conscious appropriation of the public discourses of their time.

The five chapters of this study are organized both chronologically and thematically. Chapter One, “The Tempest at a Women’s Magazine,” charts the founding of Kaiming Press. It takes as its point of departure two historical moments when the leading publisher of the time, Commercial Press, appointed a young self-styled May Fourth writer to the editorship of its *Ladies’ Journal* in 1922, and its later decision to dismiss him in 1925. These events are used to illustrate the broader themes of conflict between mainstream and May Fourth avant-garde publishing and the generational power struggle among May Fourth intellectuals. These conflicts gave birth to the Kaiming Press, allowing its founders, who were members of the younger May Fourth generation, to stage a two-front battle against the commercialism of the Commercial Press and intellectual authorities allied with the press. I also argue that the intellectuals, their populist claims notwithstanding, paradoxically focused on writing and publishing for the small college-educated cultural elite, thereby gaining desired recognition from their peers.

A large network of friends was responsible for the founding of Kaiming. Chapter Two, “May Fourth Intellectual Sociability behind May Fourth Publishing,” I scrutinize friendships in both informal networks and formal organizations that founded and shaped the Kaiming cultural enterprise. A close look at the formation and inner workings of the Kaiming network reveal the distinctive May Fourth pattern of intellectual sociability marked by communal solidarity that both drew upon and departed from traditional literati practices. I first trace shared friendships, school ties, native place ties that were traceable back to the hubs of political and cultural activities of Zhejiang Province during the late teens and early twenties. Furthermore, three interlocking organizations: The Literary

Research Association, The Women's Question Research Association, and the Lida Society, gave the Kaiming network a particular flare of May Fourth communal solidarity. I argue that intellectual connections and mutual commitments amongst the Kaiming intellectuals not only laid the groundwork for the press's success but also contributed to its particular vision and style.

Books and magazines are at once the work of the creative mind and commodities bought and sold in the book market. In the early years of Kaiming's history, the market was reshaped by the maelstroms of the May Thirtieth Movement of 1925 and the Great Revolution of 1926-1927, featuring a surging demand for radical literature. Chapter Three, "Politics, Profits, and Professions," devotes special attention to the interactions and tensions between politics and the marketplace that defined the early Kaiming experience. Here, I show the creative ways with which Kaiming negotiated the market to make its avant-garde publications both popular and profitable. These early years also witnessed the professionalization of May Fourth intellectuals. Using the Kaiming community as a case study, I demonstrate that economic imperatives, the intellectuals' involvement in radical agitations and their subsequent political marginalization due to political violence, and the expansion of the book market, all worked together to accelerate this process of professionalization.

As radicalism subsided in the late 1920s, Kaiming was quick to adapt to the new circumstances by adopting a fresh approach to publishing that would sustain and expand its audience. Chapter Four, "Enlightenment as a Middle School Education Project," examines the variety of strategies Kaiming intellectuals employed in turning their avant-garde press into a modern corporation while simultaneously engaging in a low-profile,

long-term educational project for middle and high-school students, whose numbers increased nearly seven-fold during the 1920s and 1930s to form one of the largest cohorts within the reading public. In so doing, they skillfully combined a respectable populist mission to spread their ideas and visions with the economic necessity of finding a niche in a competitive publishing market. A close reading of Kaiming periodicals, including “unconventional texts” such as magazine layouts, editorial notes, letters from readers, and illustrations, uncovers the innovative formats, linguistic style, and topics that Kaiming adopted to address the specific concerns of its readers and encourage their participation. These publishing innovations, I argue, fostered a less hierarchical relationship between authors and audiences and opened up previously restricted cultural space to include tens of thousands of student readers.

The space allocated to readers’s contributions in Kaiming’s *Middle School Students*, the most widely read periodical for educated youth throughout the 1930s and 1940s, and readers’ creative writings collected in the periodical publication, *Middle School Students Literature*, constituted a site for students to articulate their collective sentiments and identity as well as their perceptions of the world. Much scholarly attention has been paid to the role of college students and their street protests in the revolutionary process. Chapter Five, “The Political Economy of Youth Anxiety,” turns to previously overlooked middle and high-school students, who were the vast majority of the Chinese educated youth and also Kaiming’s primary audience. I illustrate the contrast between the May Fourth ideal of China’s youth as intellectually privileged and morally pure members of society and the dismal reality of a youth saddled by financial insecurity, often forced to discontinue formal schooling, and living in constant fear of

unemployment. Their personal anxiety was transformed into political anxieties about class and nation. This insecurity played a pivotal role in their active appropriation of the master narratives of class, nation, anti-imperialism, and revolution, which, I argue, underscored their readiness to disengage from the established order. That middle school students were a main source of local cadres in the vanguard of the Communist Revolution reinforces this conclusion.

Among those who eagerly embraced the CCP victory were also the Kaiming intellectuals. “Epilogue” takes a quick look at the writings of Ye Shengtao and other key Kaiming figures on the role of intellectuals from the 1920s through the 1940s. It reviews an identity crisis parallel to that of their middle-school readers. Like many others of the May Fourth generations, the Kaiming intellectuals’ self-perception as the moral leaders of society and prophets of the Chinese revolution has been eroded by their economic dependency on the buying public, the political terror of the 1920s, and destruction and dislocation caused by the prolonged wars during the 1930s and 1940s. In addition, their promotion of the discourses of class paradoxically placed them in the predicament of having to re-categorize themselves as mere “knowledge elements” of the Chinese bourgeois class. In the years leading to the Communist victory of 1949, these intellectuals reinvented themselves in a more populist image as servants of the People by increasingly portraying and attacking such “knowledge elements” as the bourgeois Other. This, I argue, paved the way for their eventual entry into the Communist power structure.

In its particular attention to cultural politics, cultural economy, and audiences, my dissertation explores larger trends in cultural and social reconfigurations. While the 1949 revolution remains characterized as a rural, peasant phenomenon, I suggest that the

changed identities and perceptions among leading intellectuals and their reading public ultimately contributed to a new social and cultural environment that rendered the “Communist Revolution” conceivable and even welcomed within urban centers.

¹ The story is reconstructed from Lou Shiyi, “Nanwang de guli he bangzhu” (“The Encouragement and help that cannot be forgotten” in *Wo yu Kaiming* (Kaiming and I), compiled by Zhongguo chubanzhe xiehui (Beijing: Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe, 1985), p. 51-55.

² Ibid.

³ The May Fourth era is defined elastically. Some view it as beginning from 1918 when the *New Youth* group converged at Beijing University started to call for a literary revolution to 1921 when the Chinese Communist Party was founded. Others expand it from 1915, when *New Youth* was founded, to 1927, the year of the White Terror and the beginning of the Nanjing Decade. In the field of literature, scholarship tends to assign an even longer span that did not end until 1937 when the War of Resistance against Japan broke out. Here, I date the ending time in 1923-1924 when the May Fourth intellectuals show a clear sign of fatigue and disillusionment.

⁴ Lou Shiyi.

⁵ Lou Shiyi.

⁶ The five largest private publishers in the Republican era were Commercial Press (Shangwu yishuguan), China Press (Zhonghua shuju), World Press (Shijie shuju), Dadong Press (Dadong shuju), and Kaiming Press. Zhengzhong Press (Zhengzhong shuju), which ranked fourth in size, was an enterprise sponsored by the Nationalist regime.

⁷ See Shang Jinling, *Ye Shengtao zhuanlun* [A Biography of Ye Shengtao] (Hefei: Anhui jiaoyu chubanshe, 1995), pp. 493-94; Ye Zhishan, Interview, 1997. Ye Zhishan (1918-2006), the oldest son of Ye Shengtao, who started his career at Kaiming in the 1940s became a known writer, editor, and publisher in his own right.

⁸ Gu Xin, *Zhongguo qimeng de lishi tujing: Wusi fansi yu dangdai Zhongguo de yishixingtai zhi zheng* (The Historiographic Landscape of the Chinese Enlightenment: May Fourth and Ideological Debates in Contemporary China) (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1992), Introduction.

⁹ Cited in Ying-shih Yu, “Neither Renaissance nor Enlightenment: A Historian’s Reflection on the May Fourth Movement,” in *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital: China’s May Fourth Project*, ed. Milena Dolezelova-Velingerova, et al. (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2001), p. 300.

¹⁰ For fuller discussions of the evaluation of May Fourth by its supporters and detractors in the decades that followed, see Chow Tse-tung, *The May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), Ch. 14; and Vera Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment: Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), Ch. 6. Schwarcz’s chapter also addresses the issues of the political use of May Fourth by the GMD and CCP. It is interesting to note that throughout its entire tenure of two and half decades, intellectuals in the Kaiming circle published commemorative essays every year in the May issues of Kaiming periodicals in an effort to define and redefine the meaning of this event as well as to confirm their established place in the May Fourth tradition.

¹¹ Cited in Schwarcz, *Chinese Enlightenment*, p. 248. This criticism of May Fourth elitism, while sounding harsh, was nothing new to intellectuals themselves. As I demonstrate in the Epilogue, feeling marginalized in the post-May-Fourth 1920s, intellectuals had already begun to reflect upon their role in promoting cultural and social transformation and had tacitly admitted to their own elitism. In the early 1930s, Qu Qiubai, a May Fourth veteran and disgraced CCP leader who had recently returned to Shanghai, forcefully attacked May Fourth intellectuals for creating a new classical language by borrowing Western grammatical structure, syntax, and vocabulary and for creating a new literature inaccessible to the masses. See Paul G. Pickowicz, “Qu Qiubai’s Critique of the May Fourth Generation: Early Chinese Marxist Literacy Criticism,” in Merle Goldman, ed. *Modern Chinese Literature in the May Fourth Era* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977), pp. 366-72.

¹² Chow Tse-tsung, *The May Fourth Movement*, pp. 341-42, 359-61. While highlighting the emancipation of the individual as the core of May Fourth thinking, he acknowledges important differences between the May Fourth notion of self-emancipation and Western individualism. The May Fourth enlightenment, he points out, took place in the context of the crisis of the Chinese nation. Consequently, the individual in May Fourth thought was never entirely independent from social responsibility and collective endeavors to save the nation. Furthermore, May Fourth shared a broader notion of freedom with more radical strains of Western thought, including anarchism, nihilism, and various forms of socialism.

¹³ Jerome B. Grieder, *Hu Shih and the Chinese Renaissance: Liberalism in the Chinese Revolution, 1917-1937* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970).

¹⁴ See also Jerome B. Grieder, *Intellectuals and the State in Modern China: A Narrative History* (New York: The Free Press, 1981), Chapters 6-8.

¹⁵ Vera Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment*, pp. xi.

¹⁶ Lin Yu-sheng, *The Crisis of Chinese Consciousness: Radical Antitraditionalism in the May Fourth Era* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979), Introduction.

¹⁷ Vera Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment*, pp. xi.

¹⁸ For the discussion and debate on the May Fourth legacy in China in the late 1980s, see Gu Xin, *Zhongguo Qimeng De Lishi Tujing*. It is hard to say how much these Chinese intellectuals were influenced by Schwarcz since her book was not translated into Chinese until 1989. Few Chinese intellectuals at that time had enough command of English to read her work in original. Schwarcz did participate in the debate in China by contributing an article in Chinese to the anniversary volume on May Fourth in 1989. See Vera Schwarcz, “‘Wusi’: Mingzhu jiyi zhi jian” (“May Fourth: Lessons of A National Memory”) in *Wusi yundong yu Zhongguo wenhua jianshe—Wusi yundong qishi nian xueshu taolunhui lunwen xuan* (May Fourth Movement and Chinese Cultural Construction: Selected Scholarly Papers on the May Fourth Movement) (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 1989).

¹⁹ Schwarcz, *Chinese Enlightenment*, p. 7.

²⁰ See a roundtable among three literary scholars, Chen Pingyuan, Qian Liqun, and Huang Ziping, “Ershi shiji Zhongguo wenxue” (Twentieth-Century Chinese Literature), serialized in *Dushu*, 1-3 (January-March 1986). It was later reissued as a book, “Ershi shiji Zhongguo wenxue sanren tan (A roundtable of three on twentieth-century Chinese literature) (Beijing: Renmin wexue chubanshe, 1988).

²¹ See *Modern China*, vol. 17, no. 3; vol. 19, nos. 1-2.

²² Wang Xiaoming, “Yifen zazhi he yige ‘shetuan’: Chongping ‘wu si’ wenxue chuantong [A journal and a ‘society’: On the ‘May Fourth’ literary tradition].” It was first issued in *Jintian* (Today) in 1991 and then included in Chen Guoqiu, ed., *Zhongguo wenxue shi de xingxi* (Reflections on Chinese literary history) (Hong Kong: Sanlian shudian, 1993), pp. 149-85. In Chen Guoqiu’s edited volume, Michel Hockx offers a convincing point-by-point counter-argument against Wang’s article. See Michel Hockx, “Wenxue yangjiu hui yu ‘wusi’ wenxue chuantong—yu Wang Xiaoming shangque,” (“The Literary Research Association and the ‘May Fourth’ Literary Tradition—A discussion with Wang Xiaoming,” pp. 158-67.

²³ Lydia Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity-China, 1900-1937* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995).

²⁴ Yomi Braester, *Witness Against History: Literature, Film, and Public Discourse in Twentieth-Century China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003).

²⁵ Milena Dolezelova-Velingerova, Oldrich Kral, and Graham Sanders, eds., *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital: China's May Fourth Project* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002).

²⁶ David Der-wei Wang, *Fin-de-siecle Splendor: Repressed Modernities of Late Qing Fiction, 1849-1911* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1997).

²⁷ Lin Yu-sheng, Introduction.

²⁸ Jerome Grieder, *Intellectuals and the State in Modern China*, pp. 282-89.

²⁹ See for example Weiming Tu, “Beyond the Enlightenment Mentality: A Confucian Perspective on Ethics, Migration, and Global Stewardship,” *International Migration Review*, 30, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 58-75. Tu specifically faults Schwarcz and Li Zehou for having “defined the suppression of Enlightenment by the national sentiments of saving the nation as a central problem in the tragic history of China’s modernization” since the real tragedy of twentieth-century China, according to him, is having succumbed to “this Enlightenment mentality exemplified by the totalistic ideology of wholesale Westernization as a precondition for national survival, modernization as liberation, or modernity as a natural outcome of the inevitable historical process of progress....”, pp. 59, 63.

³⁰ According to Frederic E. Wakeman, Jr., by the middle of the nineteenth century, there was a total of 1.4 million degree-holders nationwide with only twenty-thousand available civil appointments. Frederic Wakeman, *The Fall of Imperial China* (New York: The Free Press, 1975), p. 22. See also Benjamin A. Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

³¹ Popular literary works, such as *The Dream of the Red Chamber* and *Gold Plum Vase*, offer ample evidence of the new prestige and sociopolitical power that the merchant class enjoyed in late imperial times. The line between the literati (*shi* or *shen*) and merchant (*shang*) classes was gradually blurred to such an extent that by the 19th century, the term “gentry-merchant” (*shenshang*) came into usage to refer to either gentry engaged in merchant activities or merchants with gentry status. See Chung-li Chang, *The Chinese Gentry: Studies on their Role in Nineteenth-Century Chinese Society* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962), pp. 149-195, cited in Christopher Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Mechanized Printing, Modern Publishing, and their Effects on the City, 1876-1937* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1996), pp. 259-60. See also Timothy Brook, *The Confusion of Pleasure: Commerce and Culture in Ming China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

³² Ji Shaofu, et al. *Zhongguo chuban jianshi* (Concise History of Chinese Publishing) (Shanghai: Xueling chubanshe, 1991), pp. 58-59.

³³ The most important compiling projects included *The Great Encyclopedia of Yongle* (Yongle dadian) and *Four Repositories* (Siku quanshu). The former, which included 22,877 chapters (*juan*), took 147 scholars and transcribers two years to complete, and an additional 2,160 scholars and scribes three years to copy it; and the latter, which consists of 79,337 chapters, took 4,186 scholars and transcribers five years to complete. See Ji Shaofu et al., *Zhongguo chuban jianshi* [Concise history of Chinese publishing] (Shanghai: Xueling chubanshe, 1991), pp. 139-40, 185.

³⁴ These included the Cultural Advancement Bureau (Xing wen shu) and Art and Culture Department (Yi wen jian) of the Yuan and the Classic Workshop (Jing chang) under the Administration of Rites Department (Si li jian) of the Ming. During the Qing, Emperor Kangxi set up the Printing Office of Wuying Palace (Wuying dian keshu chu) and Emperor Qianlong set up Siku quanshu guan. During the Tongzhi Restoration, central and provincial governments set up many official presses. In addition, the Imperial Academy (guo zi jian) of the Song and the Ming, and state-sponsored academies and schools at provincial and county levels all doubled as publishers. See Ji Shaofu et al., pp. 77-80, 113-14, 126-30, 169, 182-90, 243-47.

³⁵ For example, the famous printer of the late Ming, Mao Jin, had a staff of 13 scholars in the Classics Division and 17 scholars in the History Division of his printing shop. This practice can be traced all the way back to the Song dynasty. Fang Houshu, *Zhongguo chuban shihua* [History of Chinese publishing] (Beijing: Dongfang chubanshe, 1996), p. 219.

³⁶ Christopher Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1879-1937* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), pp. 4-7. Reed draws this conclusion based on and supported by the works of Craig Clunas, *Superfluous Things: Martial Culture and Social Status in Early Modern China* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1991); James Cahill, *The Painter's Practice: How Artists Lived and Worked in Traditional China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); and Cynthia Brokaw, *Commerce in Culture: The Sibao Book Trade in the Qing and Republican Periods* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asian Center, 2007). Lucille Chia, on the other hand, locates the rise of commercial publishing in the Song. See her *Printing for Profit: The Commercial Publishers of Jianyang, Fujian (1st-17th Centuries)* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).

³⁷ The story of the renowned printer Wu Zhaoyi of the Five Dynasties (907-960) is a case in the point. Wu suffered from poverty in his youth and could not afford books. Once, when he tried to borrow a book from a friend but was rejected, he made a vow that should he ever achieve prominence he would print classical and literary texts so that they would be available to all students of the realm. Later, when he became the Prime Minister of the Later Shu (934-965), he committed a large sum of his personal fortune to building a school and a printing house. What is remarkable about his cultural project is that it not only brought him greater fame but that the profits from selling the books he produced made him such an immense fortune that it “provided for his decedents for generations to come.” Fang Houshu, pp. 46-47, 58, 98.

³⁸ The pioneering Confucian revivalist Han Yu (768-824) of the late Tang was legendary in his ability to extract payment in gold from those who requested the honor of his writings, despite his own highly publicized moral posturing. See Ji Shaofu, p. 68. It was generally understood that the more famous the

writer, the higher the fee he would expect. Also, it was a prevailing practice for the writer to exact higher prices from clients who wanted exaggerated eulogies.

³⁹ Ji Shaofu et al., et al., p. 68.

⁴⁰ A case in point was the printing of the Confucian classics for sale by the Imperial Academy (*Guozhi jian*) of Later Tang (923-936) under the order of the famous minister Feng Dao of the Five Dynasties period. See Ji Shaopu, et al., pp. 56-57.

⁴¹ On the cover of one of the earliest extant printed Buddhist texts that dates from the first half of the eighth century, we find the printed words, "Prayer book printed for sale by the Bian Household." See Ji Shaopu, pp. 57, 71.

⁴² Such a lack of professional identity was evidenced by, among other things, the fact that many of these littérateurs continued their attempt, real or merely for appearance, at the traditional pursuit of higher degrees while engaging in writing and publishing activities for income. Writing and publishing was a vocation by default.

⁴³ The output of titles of books increased nine fold in comparison to the previous Ming dynasty. There were 14,024 titles of books registered in various dynastic and bibliographies under the Ming and 126,649 titles under the Qing. It shall not surprise us if the rate of increase of the total printed texts, including reprints, was also as staggering. Yang Jialuo, "Zhongguo gujin zhuzuo mingshu tongji" (A statistical study of Chinese books since antiquity), cited in Fang Houshu, pp. 359-60.

⁴⁴ Until late nineteenth century, authors often remained anonymous. Other times, a name connected to a piece of work does not tell us if the person authored, edited, annotated, compiled or proof-read the text or adapted it from a previously existing text. On this issue and the intellectual property and copyright issues, see Cynthia J. Brokaw, "On the History of the Book in China," and Anne E. McLaren, "Constructing New Reading Publics in Late Ming China," in Cynthia Brokaw and Kai-wing Chow, eds., *Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), pp. 19-20, 49n. 91-92, 163-67.

⁴⁵ When *Shenbao* (Shanghai Daily) announced that it would publish literary works free of charge in 1871, manuscripts flooded its office. See Ma Guangren, *Shanghai xinwen shi* (History of Shanghai journalism), 1850-1949 (Shanghai: Fudan daxue chubanshe, 1996), pp. 59-60, 82. An important writer of popular literature and an acute commentator of the cultural scene of his time, Bao Tianxiao maintained that, prior to the twentieth century, authors normally submitted original manuscripts for publication not with profits in mind but with the object of distribution among friends and to print for posterity. If the question of indebtedness arose at all, it was often the author who bore a debt to the printer. Bao Tianxiao, *Chuanying lou huiyilu* [Reminiscences of the Bracelet Shadow Chamber] (Hong Kong: Dahua chubanshe, 1972), p. 238. In a final analysis, what determined the profit potential of a work was (and still is) its genre and intended audience. Classical genres such as poetry and lyrical essays had less commercial value than popular genres such as drama and fiction.

⁴⁶ While movable type was first invented in China as early as the eleventh century, this method of printing involved more cost and time due to the nature of Chinese scripts and thus failed to gain wide usage. Until the late nineteenth century, the predominant mode of printing in China remained woodblock printing. Christopher Reed offers a detailed discussion of the introduction of Western-style mechanized printing. Reed, Ch. 1.

⁴⁷ For a detailed discussion of the business forms of the printing and publishing industry, see Reed, Ch. 2.

⁴⁸ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, rev. ed., 1991), pp. 37-38.

⁴⁹ For a discussion of the emergence of a mass culture tied to the dissemination of the modern print, see and Andrew J. Nathan and Leo Ou-fan Lee, "The Beginnings of Mass Culture: Journalism and Fiction in the Late Ch'ing and Beyond," in *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China*, edited by David Johnson et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), pp. 360-395.

⁵⁰ The combined total number of titles published during the Republican era that are included in the Beijing National Library, Shanghai Library, and Chongqing Library is 123,040. See Fang Houshu, p. 366.

⁵¹ Until the late nineteenth century, only lower degree-holders or people without any degrees were involved in the journalistic press. Take for example *Shenbao* (1872-1949), the longest running and most widely read newspaper in the history of modern journalist press until 1949. In an attempt to lure degree holders to join its staff, it offered its editors not only handsome salaries but also generous leave for them to take the civil service examinations for higher degrees. Still it failed to attract degree-holders. Among its first 15 chief

editors during its first three decades only one had a *juren* degree, while eight had low-ranking *xiuca* degrees. The rest were without elite status. Ma Guangren, pp. 63, 101-02, footnote 26.

⁵² The reformist movement of the second half of the 1890s was launched by the highest *jinshi* degree-holders who also tried to promote their political agendas through publishing. Among the reformists active in the periodical press at the turn of the twentieth century, Liang Qichao, Wang Kangnian, Xia Cengyou, Cai Yuanpei, and Zhang Yuanji not only had *jinshi* degrees but also occupied high offices in the imperial government or enjoyed significant influence in high political circles.

⁵³ Wang Shaozen, *Jindai chubanjia Zhang Yuanji* [Modern Publisher Zhang Yuanji] (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1995), pp. 21-22.

⁵⁴ Fang Houshu, p. 327. For other efforts by Yan Fu and Zhang Yuanji to promote copyright, see *Shangwu yinshuguan jiushi nian* [Ninety Years of the Commercial Press] (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1987), pp. 522-23.

⁵⁵ Ji Shaofu, et al., pp. 341-42.

⁵⁶ For provisions of the Chinese copyright laws during the first half of the twentieth century, see Liu Zheming, *Jin xian tai chuban xinwen fagui huibian* [The Collection of Laws and Regulations on Publishing and Journalism in Modern Times] (Shanghai: Xuelin chubanshe, 1992), pp. 10-16, 57-64, 157-205.

⁵⁷ For the funding behind early reformist periodicals, such as *Jiangxue bao* (1895), *Wanguo gongbao*, *Shiwu bao* (1896-1898), see Ma Guangren, pp. 104-23, 169, 173, 177, 182. While these early political papers were funded by influential official circles, the income of the editors had already become an issue. For example, Wang Kangnian earned only 20 yuan a month for his job as the manager and editor of *Shiwu bao* (1896-98). To make ends meet, he managed to earn another 40 yuan a month from translating and 40 yuan from distributing minerals for Hunan Province in Shanghai. For the funding situation of early reformist periodicals and Wang Kangnian's financial predicament, see Ma Guangren, pp. 104-23, 118, 169, 173, 177, 182.

⁵⁸ See Ji Shaofu, pp. 320-21.

⁵⁹ *Shangwu yinshuguan jiushi nian* [Ninety years of the Commercial Press] (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1987), p. 108.

⁶⁰ *Shangwu yinshuguan jiushi nian*, pp. 478-526.

⁶¹ Four of Yan Fu's early translations were first printed on woodblocks and lithography by other publishers. In 1903, he sold the copyright of these work to Shangwu. *Shangwu yinshuguan jiushi nian*, pp. 512-26; and *Shangwu yinshuguan jiushi nian*, pp. 651-53.

⁶² For a discussion of the shared characteristics and identity of May Fourth publishing, see Ling Shiao, "Culture, Commerce, and Connections: The Inner Dynamics of New Culture Publishing in the Post-May Fourth Era," a paper presented at the Conference on "From Woodblocks to the Internet: Chinese Publishing and Print Culture in Transition," Ohio State University, 2004.

⁶³ In a broad sense, the "new presses" included those who departed from the old practice of reprinting or printing without paying their authors royalties. However, the term "new press" was coined by publishers who emerged in the 1920s as a way to indicate their partnership with May Fourth authors and to set themselves apart from the existing publishing industry dominated by Commercial Press (Shangwu yinshuguan), China Books (Zhonghua shuju) and World Books (Shijie shuju), the largest publishing companies of the day. As such, the "new press" was often used in a narrow sense, excluding commercial publishing companies such as the three publishing giants. Zhang Jinglu, *Zai chubanjie ershinian* [Twenty years in the publishing world] (Taibei: Longwen chubanshe, 1938, reprinted in 1994), 110.

⁶⁴ For a discussion of the rise of Shanghai-based print capitalism, see Christopher A. Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai*, pp. 12-22.

⁶⁵ Bao Ziyao, "1928 nianjian Shanghai de shudian" [Publishers in 1928 Shanghai], in *Zhongguo chuban shiliao: xiandai bufen* [Source materials on Chinese publishing history: 1911-1949], ed. Song Yuanfang vol. 1 no. 2 (Jinan: Shandong jiaoyu chubanshe, 2000), pp. 444-47.

⁶⁶ Wang Yingdong, "Xiao shudian de fazhan yu houqi wenha yundong (The development of small presses and the post-[May Fourth] cultural movement)," in *Changye (Long Night)*, 3 (May 1928).

⁶⁷ Ling Shiao, "Culture, Commerce, and Connections."

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ For example, Lu Xun, who fled Beijing and spent an unhappy year teaching in the southern cities of Guangzhou and Xiamen, finally settled in Shanghai in 1927 to start a new career in free-lancing. In

addition to his unhappiness with the political atmosphere in Beijing, his southern migration was also fueled by the failure of the Education Ministry of the warlord government where he was employed to maintain its payroll. Also, Mao Dun and members of the radical Creation Society and Sun Society such as Guo Moruo, Qian Xincun, Jiang Guangci (who had joined the Northern Expedition during the previous year) came to Shanghai to flee the GMD purge. Also in 1927, Chen Duxiu parted company with the CCP that he had co-founded and took refuge in the Shanghai concession where Hu Shi returned after a lengthy around-the-world tour. Others who joined this historic migration to the city included Wen Yiduo, Shen Congwen, Hu Yeping, Ding Ling, Feng Xuefeng from Beijing; Xia Yan, Feng Naichao, and Li Chuli from Japan; Ba Jin from France; Liu Naou from Taiwan; and Liang Shiqiu and Yu Shangyuan from Nanjing.

⁷⁰ The phrase is taken from the title of Robert Darnton's classic, *The Business of Enlightenment* Publishing History of the *Encyclopédie*, 1775-1800 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979).

⁷¹ For overviews of the pre-twentieth century publishing, see Cynthia J. Brokaw, "On the History of the Book in China," in Cynthia Brokaw and Kai-wing Chow, eds, *Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China*, pp. 3-54; Cynthia Brokaw, "Book History in Premodern China: The State of the Discipline I," *Book History* vol. 10 (2007): 253-90; and Tobie Meyer-Fong, "The Printed World: Books, Publishing Culture, and Society in Late Imperial China," *The Journal of Asian Studies* Vol. 66, No. 3 (August 2007): 787-817.

⁷² These include Joan Judge's *Print and Politics: 'Shibao' and the Culture of Reform in Late Qing China* (1996), which looks at the newspaper's contribution to the emergence of China's public sphere; Denise Gimpel's *Lost Voices of Modernity: A Chinese Popular Fiction Magazine in Context* (2001), which examines the life of the literary journal, *Short Story Monthly* (Xiaoshuo yuebao) between 1910 and 1913; Barbara Mittler's *A Newspaper for China? Power, Identity, and Change in Shanghai's News Media, 1872-1912* (2004), which focuses on *Shanghai News* (Shenbao) and is part of the concerted effort at University of Heidelberg to study late Qing journalism; and Christopher A. Reed's *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1876-1937* (2004), which explores the issue of printing technology and business organizations of the period. Christopher Reed offers an overview of the scholarship on modern Chinese publishing which includes both the research on the entire span of Chinese book history that are published in twentieth century and scholarship on late nineteenth and twentieth-century Chinese publishing. Christopher Reed, "Gutenberg and Modern Chinese Print Culture: The State of the Discipline II," *Book History* vol. 10 (2007): 291-315. On modern journalism, also see Stephen R MacKinnon, "Toward a History of the Chinese Press in the Republican Period," *Modern China*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (January 1997): 3-32. More peripheral to publishing but interesting to note is Robert Culp's study of the construction of Chinese citizenship in Republican China in *Authenticating Citizenship: Civic Education and Student Politics in Southeastern China, 1912-1940* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007) which is based on his painstaking reading of Republican-era textbooks and campus-based publications in the Jiangnan area.

⁷³ Dolezelva-Velingerova, *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital*, p. 23.

⁷⁴ Michel Hockx, *Questions of Style: Literary Societies and Literary Journals in Modern China, 1911-1937* (Leiden and Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2003), p. 5.

⁷⁵ Roger Chartier, "Culture as Appropriation: Popular Cultural Uses in Early Modern France," in *Understanding Popular Culture*, ed. Steven L. Kaplan (Berlin: Mouton De Gruyter, 1984).

⁷⁶ For his insightful discussion of the concept of awakening, see John Fitzgerald, *Awakening China: Politics, Culture, and Class in the Nationalist Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), pp. 3-6.

CHAPTER 1 THE TEMPEST AT A WOMEN'S MAGAZINE

Morality and immorality are not absolute... Morality depends on whether it promotes the maximum happiness of both individuals and society and on whether it facilitates Progress of individuals and society...Such is [also] the way we should look at sexual morality...Under the new sexual morality, a sexual relationship is a private matter that should not be judged by the society as long as it is voluntary and causes no harm to society...It is to facilitate every individual's quest for freedom and equality. While a marriage that involves a husband and two wives or a wife and two husbands may be deprived of chastity, it should not be judged as immoral since it brings no harm to other people.¹

Such is the central message carried in the special issue on “new sexual morality” of *Ladies' Journal* [*Funu zazhi*], a monthly owned by the Commercial Press (*Shangwu yishuguan*, hereafter Shangwu, 1897-), which advocated gender equality and women's emancipation. The time was 1925, a year when the issues of gender had already generated enormous popularity among the Chinese educated elite. Even so, it is not hard to imagine how shockingly heretical the notions of moral relativism and tolerance of free and even polygamous unions, especially those with one wife and two husbands, must have sounded to the contemporary reading public. Immediately, cries of protest were heard from writers and intellectuals across a broad cultural spectrum. Bitter polemical exchanges ensued between *Ladies' Journal's* editor, Zhang Xichen (courtesy name Xuecun, 1889-1969), and his assistant, Zhou Jianren, on the one hand, and Chen Daqi, a Beijing University professor and editor of the leading liberal voice, *Xiandai pinglun* (*Modern Critique*), on the other.² For fear of further controversy, the Shangwu management removed Zhang and Zhou from the monthly. Defiant of this decision and supported by his intellectual friends, Zhang immediately proceeded to publish an independent women's monthly, *New Women* (*Xin nuxing*), which would soon graduate to books and evolve into the Kaiming Press (*Kaiming shudian*) in the summer of 1926.

This episode resembled a series of tumultuous events six years earlier that had culminated in a dramatic reshuffling of Shangwu's Editorial Department that brought Zhang Xichen, a self-identified May Fourth intellectual, to *Ladies' Journal* at the beginning of 1921. In 1916-1917, the reformist editor of Shangwu's prestigious *Eastern Miscellany* wrote two articles proposing a "complementary approach to the Chinese and Western cultures" (*dong xi wenming zhi tiaohu*) in creating "a twentieth-century new civilization".³ His writings prompted a disparaging review from Chen Duxiu, the editor of *New Youth* (*Xin qingnian*) and the acknowledged dean of the New Culture, who accused him of committing to a position of anti-Modernity and anti-Progress.⁴ Soon, *New Tide* (*Xinchao*), a student-run publication out of Beijing University supported by editors at *New Youth*, joined in the attacks, making *Ladies' Journal* and other Shangwu's periodical publications their targets for those magazines' alleged conservatism.⁵ Shangwu responded by transferring the editor of *Eastern Miscellany* from his prominent post to head the less politically sensitive Division of Physics and Chemistry. Cowed by the pressure, the editor of *Ladies' Journal* resigned from his magazine, which was taken over by Zhang Xichen.

The ascendance of Zhang Xichen in 1921 to the editorship at *Ladies' Journal* to replace its previous reformist editor, and Zhang's removal by the Shangwu management in 1925 were historic moments that serve to illustrate two broader themes: the two distinctive and sometimes conflicting modes of cultural production, each represented by Shangwu and May Fourth intellectuals; and the generational battle within the May Fourth camp during the 1920s. This chapter will illustrate the power dynamics between the May Fourth intellectual practices (including writing, publishing and other forms of public

discourse) and the larger field of cultural production that led to the founding of the Kaiming Press. I use “power” in the non-pejorative Foucaultian sense as diffuse and often concealed in broadly accepted and often unquestioned ways of seeing and describing the world. The three primary groups of actors discussed in this chapter are Shangwu, which, to a great extent, dominated the publishing industry and employed the future founders of Kaiming; the established liberal intellectual Chen Daqi and *Modern Critic*, which enjoyed close ties with Shangwu; and the emergent young and radical Kaiming intellectuals, who challenged the existing cultural authority. Although I will discuss at length the contentions over the issues of gender and sexuality that developed, it is the underlying cultural politics between the three groups and the distinctive mode of May Fourth cultural practice that form the core of my analysis.

Under the banner of science and democracy, the New Culture Movement aimed at a thorough reorientation of Chinese culture and consciousness. During its aftermath in the 1920s, May Fourth intellectuals continued to hammer out their specific cultural and social agendas under the general rubric of the New Culture. Both stages of the New Culture construction were accompanied by a strong undercurrent of power struggles by the rising May Fourth intellectuals, first against their reformist counterparts and then amongst themselves for cultural influence and ideological leadership/[symbolic authority].⁶ Of the former, primary targets of the May Fourth intellectuals included *fin de siècle* popular fiction and writings by reformists carried in Shangwu’s influential magazines. As for the latter, many took the form of a group of latecomers, or what I call “junior intellectuals,” challenging the more established intellectual figures or groups. Spearheaded by the boldly visionary and polemical *New Youth* magazine, the New

Culture enterprise as a whole shared these two essential traits of its leadership. Here, the notion of intellectual generations does not neatly correspond to biological age. The junior intellectuals were those who arrived at critical turning-points in their careers as the result of their effort to respond to the agitation of their intellectual mentors, the leaders of the New Culture Movement. Their “junior” status was due either to their relatively young age or to the peripheral positions they occupied in the cultural field. The latter included the lack of intellectual pedigree obtained by studying abroad or at leading universities at home. Despite their biographical or social “belatedness,” these junior members engaged in rigorous polemics as part of their quest for legitimacy and leadership in the field of May Fourth cultural production.

The Shangwu Medley Surviving the May Fourth Storm



1. The Commercial Press complex
Source: the “Shangwu yinshuguang” website

2. Zhang Yuanji (1867-1959)
Source: the “Shangwu yinshuguang” website

Prior to the ascendance of the May Fourth intelligentsia in Beijing and their active involvement in publishing, Shangwu, headquartered in Shanghai, exerted seminal influence in the field of cultural production.⁷ Founded in 1897 by a group of typesetters, the company was no more than a printing shop until 1901 when its poorly educated but bold and visionary founder Xia Ruifang managed to interest the former Hanlin scholar and reformist Zhang Yuanji in investing in the company and later in becoming its first editor-in-chief.⁸ Previously, Zhang was among those high officials who were banished by the court for their involvement in the Hundred Day Reform of 1898. After fleeing the capital, many of them settled in Shanghai and turned this emerging center for modern publishing into a hotbed for reformist and revolutionary activities. Zhang, for his part, became the brains of Shangwu. Together with Xia, whose brilliant management quickly built up the company's financial muscle, Zhang transformed the company into a publishing house whose success and reputation was second to none during the Republican era.

Textbooks and established authors were the keys to Shangwu's success in achieving its twin goals of profit and prestige. At the beginning of the twentieth century, as schools scrambled to create new curricula to modernize themselves, a new textbook market emerged and rapidly expanded. Being one of the pioneering textbook publishers, Shangwu relentlessly exploited this lucrative market and quickly achieved supremacy over it, which lasted for nearly half a century until 1949. It is no exaggeration to state that textbooks underwrote Shangwu's rapid rise and sustained growth. Even at its inaugural stage, Shangwu's textbook industry was intricately tied to its policy of wooing prominent intellectuals. Xia Ruifang's invitation of the well-connected Zhang Yuanji

reflected the general trend of the time when the leading publishers staffed their newly-formed editorial office with imperial degree-holders headed by a former Hanlin scholar.⁹ Zhang, in turn, brought in his close friend and former Hanlin colleague Cai Yuanpei, a leading light in both the reform and revolutionary movements, to head up the textbook compilation group.¹⁰ Thanks to Zhang, Shangwu was able to turn many renowned intellectuals into its virtual house authors. They included, in addition to Cai, Liang Qichao, Yan Fu, Lin Shu, and many others.¹¹ With all these illustrious names and its conscious support for China's modernization, the press established itself as a foremost cultural agent while enjoying unparalleled financial success.

A more nuanced aspect of Shangwu's strategy of combining business savvy with modernizing zeal was its eclecticism designed to meet the needs of large audiences with different interests, tastes, and levels of education, and intellectual and political persuasions. In addition, when it came to introducing new ideas and values, it usually stayed within the contemporary trajectory of mainstream modernizing ideologies, rather than venturing beyond it. These traits were clearly manifested in Shangwu's periodical publications. Among them, *Eastern Miscellany* was one of the most prestigious as well as popular, with a wide circulation of 15,000 by the year 1910.¹² The magazine was characterized as being "diverse" and "non-opinionated."¹³ Indeed, inclusiveness and acceptability were the hallmarks of all Shangwu's publications.

These characteristics were also manifested in *Ladies' Journal* (1915-). Since the beginning of the twentieth century, reformist intellectuals such as Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao had been promoting women's emancipation as an integral part of their nation-building and modernization programs. Female exploitation came to be conceived

as a symbol of “feudal” oppression, a primary hindrance to China’s progress. In the spirit of open exploration of ways to engender reform, reformist women magazines often encompassed a wide spectrum of opinions, offering views on extending social, political, economic, and educational rights to women.¹⁴ *Ladies’ Journal* was no exception, which was also in accordance with Shangwu’s generally inclusive style. Within its pages, we find a curious juxtaposition of a wide range of issues, ideas, positions, and even linguistic styles: from practical how-to manuals such as cake recipes and cosmetics to serious discussions of abstract gender questions and reports on the women’s movement at home and abroad, from the promotion of relatively conservative bourgeois modern motherhood and scientific home management to the radical advocacy of complete gender equality in economic and political life, from elegant classical compositions to the latest vernacular tracts. The magazine’s four editorials (*fa kan ci*) of the inaugural issue typified this diversity. One calls for “virtuous wives and good mothers” (*xianqi liangmu*). It was immediately preceded by an emotional plea for women’s rights (*nuquan*) and gender equality.¹⁵ In this mix, it is virtually impossible to pinpoint a theme on the gender issue beyond a bottom-line agreement on the need for change. The monthly’s target audience was an increasingly large body of female students and young women of well-to-do families with basic literacy who were looking for new ideas about gender roles and practical knowledge about creating modern living. It was on the subscription list of many elementary and middle-level women’s schools for their libraries.¹⁶

In sum, Shangwu offered its readers a smooth flow of wide variety of medleys. Its conscious eclectic striving for wide marketability sharply contrasted with the mood of May Fourth New Culture intellectuals, whose priority was to seek a new cultural

paradigm for the purpose of engineering a rapid transformation of Chinese culture and, in the meantime, establish their central role in it. Whereas Shangwu and general pre-May Fourth modernizing discourses tried to negotiate between the traditional and the modern, May Fourth discourses theorized the two as opposing totalities. A declaration by a Beijing University student carried in *New Tide* was most indicative of this binary thinking. “The new is singular, and the old is plural,” he declared. “The former is singular for being absolutely unique, whereas the latter is plural for being open to infinite multiplication.” To him, the old would inevitably be replaced by the new, which he posited as modern and superior.¹⁷ Impatient with reformist intellectuals and their publishers’ practice of setting one foot in the new while dragging the other in the old, the May Fourth proponents sought a redefinition of legitimate cultural practice that was more integrated and exclusive and thus would give cultural formation and transformation a clear, powerful forward-thrusting momentum. They pushed for iconoclasm in braving the new world. In other words, they rejected potentially disorienting moderate pop medleys, calling instead for stirring marches by a militant drum-beating, trumpet-blowing band. As for the mass readership and market that Shangwu persistently tried to create and expand for profit, the cultural revolutionaries could only hold them in contempt. Using as their weapon “*tongren*” periodicals, or independent and non-profit periodicals released by friends who shared the same agendas, they battled what they saw as the conservatism and consumerism represented by Shangwu and other big publishers.

Prompted by these differences, and perhaps also by an attempt to gain wider public attention, new intellectuals stirred up a big storm in Beijing in pushing for rapid and fundamental change. In 1918-1919, *New Youth* and *New Tide* started coordinated

attacks on the periodicals by the country's most widely circulated and respected magazine, *Eastern Miscellany*. Its editor Du Yaquan (1873-1935) was a pioneer of popular science education.¹⁸ He was responsible for turning the magazine from a little-known entity into a powerful modernizing force by introducing Western ideas and knowledge and advocating reforms in its pages. According to Zhang Xichen who once worked under him, Du's eclectic ideas included a deep loyalty to Confucianism as well as profound admiration of Western liberal democracy. The unprecedented destruction and human toll during the World War I seriously dampened his enthusiasm for Western modernity. Vehemently opposed to capitalist exploitation and imperialist aggression, he was in favor of utopian socialism and Kropotkin's proposal of mutual aid, which ironically made him more radical in many ways than Chen Duxiu who at the time was championing liberal democracy.¹⁹ The fundamental difference between the two men was their attitude toward Confucian tradition—Du attached to it a high value while Chen insisted on rejecting it in toto.²⁰ Following his mentor, Luo Jialun, an editor of *New Tide*, ridiculed Du and his magazine as the “school of sundries.”²¹ “[The magazine] at times covers industry, at times politics, then agriculture and commerce, then mystical philosophy. Indeed, it is infinitely various, offering everything to satisfy your fantasies (*wuhua bamen, wuqi buyou*).” Then the critic goes for what he must saw as the heart of the problem, “If you call [the magazine] old school, it looks new. If you call it new school, it really does not deserve such a title.”²² Luo then turned his critical gaze on *Ladies' Journal*. Perhaps blinded by his rage at the conservative notions in its pages, he failed to see that it too, by his categorization, belonged to the “motley school.” “[*Ladies' Journal*] speaks persistently about [notions that would turn] women into slaves of men,”

he claimed with characteristic hyperbole. As such, the magazine was guilty of committing “a crime against humanity,” he concluded.²³ Elsewhere, the young feminist Wang Huiwu also accused *Ladies’ Journal* of preaching the traditional female ideology of submissiveness and the notion of virtuous wives and good mothers.²⁴

Indeed, May Fourth feminism assumed a new ideological clarity and rigor. Despite its inner complexity and tension, it was marked by an unequivocal rejection of the presumed female role in Confucianism, contrasting sharply to the ambiguous position occupied by *Ladies’ Journal*. In the midst of their iconoclastic fanfare, May Fourth intellectuals borrowed from modern Western feminism along with a host of other ideologies such as liberalism, scientism, and various socialisms for their promised redeeming qualities. Feminist ideas and activities infused with the proposed revolution in family relations and structure constituted a powerful weapon in the fight against Confucian patriarchy, the core of the perceived “oppressive Chinese tradition.” In the May Fourth-inspired women’s magazines, the notions of female passivity, domesticity, and subordination were firmly repudiated and modern womanhood became tied up with self and nation rather than marriage and family.

Never reluctant to show their abhorrence of the commodification of culture, the May Fourth critics also reacted negatively against the commercial motive of Shangwu’s inclusive editorial policy. In the same essay, Luo Jialun asserted that Shangwu’s strategy was to maximize sales by making its periodical publications appeal to a diverse readership. “One should know that [a magazine designed] for all readers would end up with no readers,” he warned, “and that when it tries to offer everything, it would end up offering nothing [in terms of themes].”²⁵ He also pointed out that some editors “tried to

advertise their [Western] learning, but in fact have neither true expertise nor the enthusiasm to acquire it. They were merely beating the drum [of Western learning] to sell more copies of their magazines.”²⁶ Luo’s attack on Shangwu’s commerce in culture was part of the May Fourth campaign against popular literature and popular magazines published by the old-style writers in Shanghai, or the “treaty-port littérateurs” in Leo Ou-fan Lee’s terminology, in 1919-1922.

When he made the above observation, Luo might very well have had in mind the editor of *Ladies’ Journal* Wang Yunzhang (1884-1942). Like most other reformists of the time, Wang Yunzhang was eclectic and adaptable to the changing historical environment.²⁷ As the New Culture Movement spread from Beijing to Shanghai and other major cities, he began in earnest to upgrade the magazine’s profile by giving more space for feminist theories. He enlisted the help of Shen Yanbin (pen name Mao Dun after 1927), a copyeditor at Shangwu and future literary giant, and of some other young writers whose contributions moved the magazine decidedly toward the women’s emancipation position in the years of 1919-1920. It is noteworthy that Wang was also concurrently the editor of *Short Story Monthly* (*Xiaoshuo yuebao*, 1910-1931) whose frequently contributors had been predominantly the members of the Southern Society (*Nanshe*) to which the editor also belonged.²⁸ Not surprisingly, traditional belles-letters filled the pages of the journal.²⁹ In late 1919, it was Shen Yanbin again to whom the editor entrusted with one-third of the magazine's space to create a new column of "New Trends in Fiction" to be devoted to the introduction of Western literature. This step was followed by gradual changes that brought the journal more in line with the demands of the New Culture.³⁰ At the end of 1920, Wang went as far as announcing his specific

measures “to meet the demands of the new literary movement” and to solicit contributions of “new literature.”³¹

While Wang Yuzhang might be eager to jump on the bandwagon of the New Culture Movement, the Western or Western-style educated May Fourth intellectuals demonstrated no interest in taking him along. As cultural revolutionaries, May Fourth intellectuals naturally deemed it imperative to push the established cultural group into the status of the outmoded. This was evidenced by their refusal to acknowledge the effort of many reformist intellectuals to incorporate the New Culture agendas and their insistence on labeling the latter as “old” or “decadent.” *Ladies’ Journal* under Wang’s tenure went down in history influenced by the May Fourth as conservative and Wang himself as a writer of the so-called “Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School.”³²

Zhang Yuanji, thanks to his triple role as a veteran progressive, a cultural leader, and a shrewd entrepreneur, had a quick grasp of the impending shift in the ideas, paradigm, and power in the cultural field. It seemed apparent to him and his colleagues in the Shangwu leadership that their old editors were handicapped by their mastery of old-style literary writing and their reformist impulses too create a new image for the Shangwu magazines. Indeed, their fame of yesteryear had become Shangwu’s liability. Zhang’s focus was on bringing new blood, in particular from the Beijing University progressive campus, to Shangwu’s editorial department so as to renew the press intellectually and symbolically.³³ Even before Chen Duxiu’s attack on *Eastern Miscellany*, Zhang and colleagues in the Shangwu management started to cultivate close ties to the Beijing cultural radicals and to incorporate the increasingly influential New Cultural intellectual agendas into the press. Zhang Yuanji made two extended trips to the

capital in the summer of 1918 to mingle with the leading intellectuals of various persuasions, including the *New Youth* editors Chen Duxiu and Hu Shi.³⁴ While the trips did not prevent Shangwu from being attacked, they laid a foundation for future collaboration between the two sides. After the opening shots from *New Youth* and *New Tide*, while Du Yaquan proceeded to produce a counter-rebuttal to Chen Duxiu, his status as an employee of a commercial publishing company, not an independent periodical, would seal his fate.³⁵ From the perspective of the Shangwu management, the charges leveled by the New Culture camp on its magazines were damaging to the company's image and a protracted debate would hurt its prospect for future alliance with the rising New Culture celebrities in Beijing. Very soon in 1921, Shangwu managed to stem the tide of the press' marginalization when new, often radical, thinking became the new mainstream in the aftermath of the May Fourth Movement. It reestablished itself as the leading sponsor of the New Culture by putting Chen Duxiu and another *New Youth* editor on its payroll and gaining Hu Shi as a close ally and intellectual advisor.³⁶ In addition, in the drastic reshuffling of the Editorial Department in 1920-1921—the reformist editors of the magazines were all pressured to vacate their posts, which were then filled by culturally radical junior editors with personal ties to the New Culture circle.³⁷

Although this promotion of the junior editors led to drastic changes in its periodicals, Shangwu's incorporation of the New Culture agenda and personalities represented not a departure but rather a continuation of its policy of inclusiveness and its commitment to capturing the broadest possible audience. Sensitive to the fickle and ever-shifting winds of the market, Shangwu continued to maintain a balance between its twin goals of cultural prestige and commercial success. This reform did not take away from

Shangwu's continued focus on their profitable mainstay of textbooks and publications directed at a general audience. Indeed, the reform was designed to win back Shangwu's lost readership and revenue. According to Shangwu's statistics, the revenue of its fiscal year ending in August 1918 was 181,908 yuan less than the previous fiscal year, or a 7% decrease.³⁸ Put in the context of the steady increase in almost all of the previous years in the company's revenue, this decrease was alarming.³⁹ The revenue declined much more markedly in the periodical department at 24%.⁴⁰ This negative growth did less to vindicate Luo Jialun's warning against Shangwu's eclectic editorial policy than to mark manifest changes in the tastes and demands of the reading public, and the rapidly growing consumer appetite for New Culture authors and their works. The statistics also indicated that the Shangwu's new engagement of New Culture celebrities, infusing its editorial department and leadership with new blood, had successfully brought the company back on track, and it enjoyed steady annual growth throughout the 1920s.⁴¹ After all, his fingers ever testing society's pulse, Zhang Yuanji had long since grasped the link between cultural capital and economic capital. On one occasion, he instructed the sales department to offer Beijing University special discounts because, in his words, "by gaining a trusting relationship with the University, we are also winning ourselves future business with them."⁴² In a letter to Shangwu's general manager who initially opposed to his moves on the grounds of financial risk, Zhang attributed the company's financial gains to his own policy of constantly incorporating new ideas and recruiting new people. He wrote,

Due to my predisposition to detest the old in favor of the new [which conflicted with governmental politics of our times], I have chosen to quit my official career for good. But I dare say that my detesting-the-old-in-favor-of-new "ism" has contributed to a good degree to our company's success.⁴³

Indeed, as long as the “new” was not too much ahead of its time, it would promote the sales after all. Such cultural sensitivity and business acumen safeguarded Shangwu’s phenomenal success during its long career that spanned the entire first half of the twentieth century.

In a final analysis, notwithstanding a strong commitment to cultural modernization, Shangwu was a business. This posed a sharp contrast to both revolutionary agents as well as the cultural avant-gardes. In order to keep a leadership role in the elite cultural field, Shangwu constantly re-evaluated its production to maintain a progressive profile and cultivate a close relationship with the rising new elite. Yet it refused to take any political risks that might hurt the company’s business interests. In the middle of the radical agitation of 1919, for example, Shangwu declined to release a manuscript of the collected writings by Sun Zhongshan (Yat-sen) . In his response to pacify the infuriated GMD leader, who had threatened to print notices in all major newspapers denouncing Shangwu for its failure to support his revolutionary movement, Zhang Yuanji clarified the press’s position, “We were unable to print [Mr. Sun’s manuscript] due to our fear of retaliation by our authoritarian government. Being *merchants* [emphasis added], we dared not rebel against [an oppressive government]...”⁴⁴

Neither was Shangwu willing to get involved in intense cultural politics. When the *Citizen* Society, a radical activist group composed of Beijing University students, requested Shangwu’s help in printing and distributing their *Citizen* (*Guomin*) monthly, Zhang responded, “since [*Citizen*] is competing group with *New Tide* and the two might engage in open conflict with one another...I feel that we should politely decline.”⁴⁵ The publishing house worked even harder to restrain its own editors in the interest of keeping



3. With calligraphy and traditional-style painting of a women in traditional clothes reading a book, the cover of *Ladies' Journal*, vol. 1, no. 1 (January 1915) projects an image of continuation rather than a break with the past.

4. With traditional painting of peonies and modern print fonts and clean lines, the cover of *Ladies' Journal*, vol. 8, no. 9 (September 1922) manifests Shangwu's inclusive orientation.

a profile of intellectual neutrality. At the end of 1922, two years after he took over *Short Story Monthly*, Shen Yanbing's tenure as its chief-editor was cut short when he engaged in polemics against the old style treaty-port littérateurs. The Shangwu management replaced him with his friend Zheng Zhenduo. The move was not dissimilar from the personnel choice of *Eastern Miscellany* two years earlier, which was designed to placate the old camp while not offending the new. Again, when the principal of a famous Shanghai middle school filed a complaint against Yang Xianjiang, the editor of *Student Magazine* who had publicly criticized the school in 1927, the young editor was promptly transferred to a different division.⁴⁶ It is in this context, then, that we must frame Zhang Xichen's controversial editorial in *Ladies' Journal* in 1925 that led to his dismissal. All

these personal changes, effectively, were determined by Shangwu's cultural and intellectual balancing act, policy driven not by ideological convictions but by the capricious winds of the market.⁴⁷ It is noteworthy that the future Kaiming Press, when first founded, radically departed from the Shangwu's policy of holding fast to the mainstream only to later abandon its new avant-garde cause.

Trumpeting Sexual Radicalism

As the foremost publisher in the country, Shangwu's 1921 reform and promotion of its New Culture-inspired junior editors to positions of importance changed the distribution of power in the cultural field. It not only lent further legitimacy to the May Fourth intelligentsia in its struggles against reformists, but also reallocated important journalistic space to be used to advance the May Fourth cause. May Fourth feminism gained a valuable new ally in *Ladies' Journal* against the traditionalists and reformists when Shangwu appointed Zhang Xichen to its editorship. In the revamped magazine, Zhang immediately started to trumpet radical transformation of existing gender relations which would eventually culminate in his advocacy of complete sexual freedom (*xingjiao ziyou*). In this final stage, he challenged not only the gender reformism promoted by his predecessor, but also the liberal gender ideology championed by the May Fourth camp. The latter which was recognized as the mainstream May Fourth feminism, never moved beyond the notion of "freedom to love" (*lianai ziyou*) as a counterweight to the conventional arranged marriage.

At the time of this promotion, Zhang Xichen had already worked at Shangwu for nearly a decade. When studying at a normal school in Shaoxing, he became a protégé of

the principal and the esteemed member of the local gentry, Du Haisheng. With Du's help, Zhang found his first teaching job in Shaoxing. Right after the 1911 Revolution, he was appointed ad hoc principal of Shaoxing Women's Normal School. Soon entangled in the unhappy local politics of education, Zhang asked his patron to help him find a position elsewhere. Du subsequently requested his nephew, none other than the famous Shangwu editor of *Eastern Miscellany* Du Yaquan, to hire Zhang as an assistant and take the young man under his wing. Years later, Zhang showed the ultimate confidence in Du Haisheng by making him the general manager of Kaiming Press.⁴⁸



5. Zhang Xichen, 1889-1996

source: Wu Yonggui, "Zhang Xichen: Kejing de jingming yu qidu," *Guangming wang* (December 2006).

http://www.gmw.cn/content/2006-12/20/content_525045.htm

During the next nine years, Zhang took advantage of the convenient access to the magazine's space and published close to 300 essays and translations.⁴⁹ While working

under Du Yaquan, he recalled in a post-1949 biographical essay, that he “came to be heavily influenced by Du’s intellectual position.” It was the May Fourth Movement, he continued, that awakened him to the realization that “imperialism and feudalism were China’s twin archenemies.”⁵⁰ His mentor’s downfall due to his differences with the dean of New Culture perhaps also demonstrated to Zhang in a concrete way the dawning of a new intellectual era. Zhang was ready to commit to May Fourth anti-traditionalism. After Du’s departure in 1919, Zhang quickly won the favor of the new editor of *Eastern Miscellany*, Qian Jinyu, who subsequently recommended Zhang for the editorship of *Ladies’ Journal*.⁵¹

Zhang’s new May Fourth position was quickly manifested in the reform he undertook at *Ladies’ Journal*. His predecessor Wang Yunzhang, as shown earlier, gave equal space to essays on theoretical and practical topics and expressed both traditional and modern views. With Zhang as editor, the physical appearance of the magazine remain unaltered: Chinese traditional paintings still adorned the periodical’s covers. However, the conventional look of the magazine was only the old wine bottle into which Zhang was pouring fresh new wine. Immediately, the amount of articles on conventional topics such as child-rearing, fashion, and home-management, were reduced, and within a year disappeared completely.⁵² The new wine showed the characteristic flavors of May Fourth journalistic discourses: a decided modernist perspective, a uniformity of opinion against tradition, a strong sense of larger purpose, a clear focus in theoretical and social matters, and a penchant for special issues on singular topics. As Zhang announced soon after he assumed office, the magazine was now “more specialized (in gender issues) with less miscellany.”⁵³ It featured concerted discussions and debates on the major May

Fourth feminist issues including the abolition of the traditional family system, the development of women's selfhood (*gexing*) and independence, love and sexual morality in a modern age, women's education, employment, political rights; women's participation in government, and the women's role in labor movement and revolution. When readers complained that the magazine was over-emphasizing issues of women's emancipation and sexuality at the expense of home-management and other practical issues, the editor responded, "Love and gender equality is the precondition for a happy family life. Therefore, we have to focus on these fundamentals."⁵⁴ To further clarify his position, he remarked:

We do not oppose women engaging in housework and child-rearing. Not only are we not against [women engaging themselves in domestic chores], we are even convinced that men have to learn [the job] so as to share in them. Things like simple sewing, women should learn to do it. So should men. However, since the public today is more concerned with the [fundamental] issues we are discussing, rather than the matters of household, we have to give priority to these issues."⁵⁵

These same fundamental issues of women's emancipation were also given an organizational dimension when Zhang and his friends and contributors formed the Women's Questions Research Association (*Funu wenti yanjiu hui*) in 1922. During the May Fourth era, politically conscious and socially engaged aspiring writers and young students frequently organized themselves into societies of various sorts. Unlike informal loosely-organized poetry societies of the literati in the past, these May Fourth societies had clearer agendas, typically articulated in a manifesto, and closer organizations bound by bylaws and guidelines.⁵⁶ Invariably, they would also issue a *tongren* periodical as a vehicle to publicize their ideas. The Women's Questions Research Association was one such organization. Its founding members included Zhang Xichen, the assistant editor of *Ladies' Journal*, Zhou Jianren, their Shangwu colleague Shen Yanbing, and fourteen

other frequent contributors to the magazine.⁵⁷ Zhang's office at Shangwu functioned as their headquarters. In characteristic May Fourth fashion, the association portrayed Chinese women as total victims of the Confucian gender ideology, while the modern West was the shining example of progress:

Since the late eighteenth century, Europe has been awakened to its women's question. After two hundred years [of the women's emancipation movement].... its cause is close to its final triumph.... At such a moment, what is happening in China? The vast majority of our women are still been crippled with their bound feet. Being [submissive] wives, concubines, domestic servants, or prostitutes, they are forced to either serve as the slaves of the family, toil as the beast of burden for men, or to trade their bodies as commodities. The vast majority of Chinese women are denied the access to education which is fundamental to a [meaningful] life. They are also denied the access to work which is the economic foundation of freedom. What an enormous disgrace it is to our nation!⁵⁸

The association's proposed agenda included the study and promotion of gender equality in all realms of life, including education, job opportunity and financial security, marriage law, political rights, and the abolition of the deeply embedded double standard gender morality.⁵⁹ In other words, it sought a revolution in gender relations.

Unlike his predecessor, Zhang exercised a much tighter editorial control in the selection of topics and the layout of *Ladies' Journal*. Underlying the discourse in the reformed *Ladies' Journal* was the same notion of the stark dichotomy between the traditional and the modern, i.e. the Western, as in the Women's Questions Research Association publications. Whatever was considered to be Chinese tradition was now viewed as the archenemy of modernity. In the meantime, it gave centrality to a good variety of theories from the modern West on family, gender, and sexuality which were translated in great quantity and were being vigorously discussed and promoted. In addition, unlike the older reformists, who favored China's modernization but retained some detachment from socio-political and culture movements, the new editor and his

contributors were mission-driven cultural revolutionaries committed to a quick and fundamental change. While the association did not own *Ladies' Journal*, the close association between the two and the monthly's focus on gender politics and theories, instead of the practical concerns of its women readers, moved it decidedly toward the direction of a *tongren* magazine.

It is noteworthy that the magazine's ownership by Shangwu did force Zhang to address profit concern of a commercial publication that was not often shared by *avant-garde* independent periodicals—the issue of reader reception and circulation. The new editor made a noticeable effort to build close ties with his readership. During the first year of his tenure, he tried to solicit readers' comments about “my hope for future *Ladies' Journal*” and subsequently printed them.⁶⁰ As he further cut down on the coverage on mainstream topics and increased the dose of contributions promoting complicated modern Western feminist concepts, readers' complaints about their inaccessibility started to flood in.⁶¹ Reluctantly, he took a more conciliatory tone and pleaded for “the magazine to carry more easily understandable writings to suit the need of ordinary readers.”⁶² In addition, he created two new sections, “Reading Previous Issues” (*Du qian hao*) and “Chatting Place” (*Tanhuahui lan*) to involve more readers' participation and response.⁶³ In the remaining years of his tenure at *Ladies' Journal*, he continued to reassure the audience of his effort to enhance “the practical and entertaining elements,” although in practice the magazine carried no more than a couple of light-weight bits on cosmetics, nutrition, and domestic hygiene as garnishes to the main courses concerning May Fourth gender discourses.⁶⁴

Ultimately, however, Zhang aimed to situate *Ladies' Journal* solidly in May Fourth gender discourse. The most conspicuous new feature of the magazine under Zhang was the frequent appearance of special issues that focused on particular topics chosen by the editor to facilitate focused discussions. Since the late 1910s, printing such special issues had come into vogue among May Fourth periodicals. Beginning in 1922, Zhang issued a series of special issues on widely contested and hotly debated topics: freedom to choose marriage partners (versus arranged marriage), divorce, birth-control (in conjunction with Margaret Sanger's triumphant Asian tour), feminist movements, prostitution, reform of the family, choice of spouses, women's professional careers, mutual understanding between the sexes, and, finally new sexual morality. This brings us back to the historical moment from which the chapter began.

Until this last special issue that sparked a huge controversy, the magazine mostly explored issues within the parameters of liberal feminist discourse.⁶⁵ However, the last special issue on "new sexual morality", published in the beginning of 1925 not only carried the usual assault on Confucian gender ideology, but radically departed from the liberal model of family and sexuality. It featured four authors: the editor Zhang Xichen, the assistant editor Zhou Jianren, literary critic Shen Yanbin, and his younger brother Shen Zeming.⁶⁶ These four authors demonstrated two distinct tendencies. Zhang and Zhou find inspiration in a variety of early twentieth-century European experts on sexology, especially the theories advanced by the Swiss sexologist August Forel and the Swedish feminist, Ellen Key, whom the editors cited at length.⁶⁷

Both editors dwelt on the changing nature of morality over time and place. By insisting on moral relativism and making a distinction between sexual morality and

chastity based on sexual exclusivity between two partners, they betrayed a strong utilitarian tendency. They vehemently attacked the age-old practice that reduced women to the status of men's property and further questioned the very notion of private property. They declared that the current law or moral codes are entirely irrelevant in determining whether a marriage is legitimate or moral and that love between free and equal partners should be the primary criterion in assessing legality and morality. Once such love ceases to exist, they continue, the marriage should be dissolved. Following the biological argument of the European sexologists, Zhou also asserts the existence of female sexuality and the importance of female sexual pleasure, while insisting that the traditional notion of female chastity is harmful to her body and soul. Both editors maintain that female sexuality is an essential part of the construction of a woman's modern individuality (*rengē*). According to them, the bourgeois insistence on monogamous marriage and nuclear family has served as a straitjacket on genuine free love and sexuality. By placing love at the center of the new sexual morality and eroticizing the gender discourse, the two authors assumed the most avant-garde position to date in China.⁶⁸

While also attacking liberal democracy, the Shen brothers, on the other hand, politicized sexuality. By 1925, they had both secretly become members of the Chinese Communist Party. Their perception of sexuality is solidly grounded in Marxian historical materialism according to which morality is economically based and subject to change as the economic system develops. The subjugation of women thus relates intimately to the denial of women's access to the income-producing economic activities, leaving men in sole control of resources. Capitalism, however, erodes the traditional gender relations by turning both men and women into wage slaves, they continue. Gender oppression,

therefore, becomes part of the larger social injustice under the capitalist system. In their view, gender inequality assumes a secondary status as part of larger problem of class.⁶⁹

The special issue that promoted moral relativism and toleration of free and even polygamous unions prompted stormy responses. Indeed, ever since Zhang assumed his editorial responsibilities, readers had raised issues with his editorial style and the magazine's new position. Back in 1922, the magazine's first special issue on "divorce" prompted a male reader to advise the editor to "stop promoting such heresy" unless he was ready to "swallow some bullets."⁷⁰ Again, the March 1923 issue, which published a translation of a description of women's sexual anatomy, invited immediate protest from many of its readers.⁷¹ In addition, Zhang's rejection of most submissions from the old-school writers who had been long-term Shangwu associates would invite their hostility and they attacked him through other periodicals under their control. All the protestors incurred the displeasure of the Shangwu management.⁷² Luckily, the management was placated for the time being by the magazine's new-found success in sales.⁷³ According to Zhang, the magazine enjoyed a marked increase in sales since his taking over.⁷⁴ The special issues were particularly popular. The first special issue of April 1922, for example, was reprinted twice.⁷⁵ This once again proved that new ideas enjoyed profitability in the aftermath of the May Fourth movement.

Responding to the radical shift of *Ladies' Journal* on gender discourse, old-style reformist writers and new-style liberal intellectuals voiced their violent indignation in unison. *Jingbao* (*Crystals*, 1919-1946) and *Qingguang* (*Green Light*), the supplement of *Shishi xinbao* (*New Current News*, 1907-1949), both run by the reformist writers, accused the editors of promoting sexual promiscuity and leading the youth astray from time-

honored moral values.⁷⁶ In the leading liberal periodical, *Modern Critique*, Chen Daqi expressed his outrage at what he saw as a betrayal of the feminist cause by *Ladies' Journal*. Since the beginning of the New Culture Movement, new intellectuals had sanctified “freedom to love” as the ultimate manifestation of one’s individuality in their search for the means to break the shackles of Confucian tradition on the individual. They tirelessly campaigned to replace the traditional arranged marriage, concubinage, and the patriarchal family with the liberal ideal of freedom to love, monogamous marriage, and the nuclear family. This new liberal sexual mode insisted that the marriage should be monogamous based on the love between the two free and equal partners. This love intrinsically involves *exclusivity* and *commitment*. By the mid-1920s, these notions had generated considerable popularity among the educated elite.

Not surprisingly, Chen Daqi was appalled by the notion of ethical relativism and complete sexual freedom. Singling out the tolerance of multi-partner sexual unions advocated by Zhang and Zhou for his attack, he branded the editors as traditionalists clothing their ideas in radical modern garb.

Twenty years ago, reformist fighters and return students cried out for the abolition [of concubinage]. Regrettably, many of them [later] fell back on the old morality so as to [justify their] taking concubines. But at least the evil of concubinage has been exposed. We could not help to harbor a hope that, with gradual social progress... there would be one day when concubinage becomes a thing of past. Who could have expected that *New Women* whose manifested goal is to advise new women would one day offer a kind of notion that can sufficiently be a new rationale for retaining concubinage?⁷⁷

According to Chen, polygamy and indulgence in carnal pleasure are intimately related and the latter harms both the individual and the society. On the other hand, monogamy not only prevents such sexual excess, so it was argued, but also, with exclusivity of love by two partners, maintains matrimonial harmony and avoids spousal jealousy and

conflicts. Monogamy, he therefore reasons, is the ideal form of union between the sexes and a hallmark of social progress.⁷⁸

In response to the controversy, Shangwu made its characteristic move by transferring the two editors to politically non-sensitive responsibilities, Zhang to the Chinese Language Division, Zhou to the editorship of the newly founded *Nature (Ziran jie)*.⁷⁹ Apparently, Zhang intended to keep filling his rice bowl at Shangwu, while simultaneously putting on a rival show by issuing *New Women*. In order to avoid trouble with his employer, Zhang accepted his friend Wu Juenong's offer to act as the new magazine's nominal editor and use his residence on Sande Alley (Shade li) as the location of the new magazine.⁸⁰ Alas, his activities failed to escape the watchful eye of Shangwu. When the first issue was released in January 1926, Du Yachuan, Zhang's old mentor at *Eastern Miscellany* who had acted as his patron, felt that his protégée had too far beyond the parameters of acceptability and requested his dismissal.⁸¹ This left Zhang at a point of no return. He was forced to commit to the new magazine which soon set him on a new career of independent publishing.

Monogamy vs. Free Love: A Generational Battle

The controversy surrounding the special issue of *Ladies' Journal* and the subsequent birth of *Kaiming* brought into sharp relief the dynamics of May Fourth cultural politics. It was clear that the new sexual morality, even with its tolerance of polygamy, was based on the tenet of individual freedom and sexual equality and thus was fundamentally different from traditional Chinese polygamy, which sanctioned the arranged marriage and patriarchal dominance. Chen Daqi's accusation that his opponents had produced a new

theoretical justification for concubinage missed the point completely if *also* deliberately. The controversy underscored the ideological conflict between liberal modes of sexuality and sexual radicalism. More significantly, the manner of the exchanges and the strategies of the debate revealed the symbolic competition between the established intellectuals and their challengers, a power struggle for cultural legitimacy and authority. May Fourth feminism was never a single, static, clearly-defined entity. Rather the ever-shifting ideological and political grounds of the participating individuals and groups shaped a continuous discursive process. Feminism, while a cause in its own right, was also a site for different intellectual groups contending to become the orthodox voice of interpretation. It was at this juncture that Zhang Xichen and his radical friends challenged the authority of the liberal intellectuals. By employing a radical sexuality to negate the prevailing liberal-inspired mode of sexuality, they thrust themselves into the spotlight.

It is interesting to note that Zhang and his assistant Zhou Jianren had completely different reactions toward their reformist and liberal critics. It was old-style reformist writers who fired the first rhetorical salvo at *Ladies' Journal*. Furthermore, *Crystals* and *Green Light*, which carried their accusations, were among the most wide-circulated periodicals in the country.⁸² The editors completely dismissed “those oldies.”⁸³ However, highly sensitive to the critical judgment of the May Fourth intelligentsia, they “wrote [their] responses right after reading [Chen’s essay] and sent them to *Modern Critique* the very next day.”⁸⁴ This was because they had embraced the new hierarchy of symbolic power in the cultural field established in the wake of the New Culture movement, which featured the May Fourth intelligentsia in the dominant position, while

relegating the old cultural elite to a peripheral status. Already stigmatized as the producers of the decadent “Mandarin Duck and Butterfly” literature, the old elite were no longer in the position to obstruct the editors’ claim to cultural legitimacy and could, therefore, be safely ignored. As for the general audience, it held little importance in the cultural politics within the intellectual field. When it came to Chen Daqi’s rebuttal, however, since the radicals sought to subvert the authority of the established liberal intellectuals, it was perhaps paradoxically desirable. Not only did it offer the radicals an opportunity to attract public attention by engaging in polemics, but the very response from a recognized Chinese liberal and his involvement in the debate conferred a sense of cultural legitimacy on the challengers. Small wonder that the editors so promptly and energetically produced lengthy counter-attacks against Chen and the rest of the liberal camp.

On the part of the liberal intellectuals, Chen Daqi and his colleagues at *Modern Critique* objected not so much to the radically politicized notion of sexuality associated with the Shen brothers as to the sexual radicalism of Zhang and Zhou. They too seemed to have a clear understanding of the symbolic stake involved in the struggle. During the first half of the twenties, gradually the Chinese intellectual environment became radicalized politically. By the mid-1920s, Western liberalism had lost significant ground to radical political thinking. Even liberal-leaning intellectuals often voiced their disapproval of the capitalist economic system. In this context, the Shen brothers’ position had been well publicized, if by no means accepted, in intellectual circles. On the other hand, the liberal notions of the sanctity of love and monogamous union still dominated the discursive construction of the modern self and nationhood. Therefore, it is

the sexual radicalism promoted by Zhang and Zhou, rather than political radicalism of the Shen brothers, that posed a threat to the authority of the established liberal intellectuals.

It is worthwhile to look into the profile of the participants on the two sides in terms of their cultural prestige and political alliances. While belonging to the same age group as many of the first generation May Fourth leaders, Zhang Xichen and Zhou Jianren were both late bloomers. Not surprisingly, until they took charge of *Ladies' Journal* in 1921, they suffered from relative obscurity. Ironically, their obscurity persisted in May Fourth-dominated historiography for the reason that their sexual radicalism, while conflicting with the liberal vision opposed by radicals, still fell outside of the mainstream radical political thoughts. This perhaps explains why only scanty materials are available on their lives and work.

When looking into the biographical information on Zhang and Zhou, I immediately noticed the one thing they shared—a lack of educational capital and intellectual pedigree. Indeed, both men, with only a few years of formal education between them, seemed to be very self-conscious of this deficiency. Zhang began an autobiographical essay in 1931 with a conversation he once had with someone inquisitive about his educational background:

“Misituo [Mr.] Zhang, are you a graduate from Tokyo Imperial University?” a Dr. Public Relations (*jiaoji boshi*) I once encountered asked me.

“No....” I shook my head, smiling.

“Waseda University then?” He persisted.

“No, no....I haven't even set my foot on Japan.” I rushed the words out so as to forestall more names of [famous Japanese] schools coming out of him. But at the same time, I couldn't help to feel a bit embarrassed.

At that time, I just started my editorship at Shangwu's *Ladies' Journal* for which I often translated writings from Japanese into Chinese. In our society, high degrees are of paramount importance [for someone to get a job like that]. That was why Dr. Public Relations was misled.

He then continued,

[In my youth,] I was inspired by Mr. Liang Qichao and Mr. Ding Fubao's claim that "it would only take three days to learn basic Japanese and three months to master the language." I thought to myself, even though there wasn't a chance for me to study in Japan, it would still serve me well if I could read new books in Japanese.... Alas, my desire to read some new books was at crossed purposes with my family's expectation of me [to become a petty merchant].⁸⁵

Born to a family of small shopkeeper in a rural market town near Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province,⁸⁶ Zhang Xichen never had the opportunity to follow a recognized mentor or attend a notable modernized school.⁸⁷ He acquired a classical education at traditional private schools (*sisu*) and even caught the tail of the soon to be abolished Civil Service Examinations to sit twice, unsuccessfully, at the county-level examination. After the abolition of the examination system, he indeed enrolled himself in a three-month fast-track Japanese language program in Shaoxing. After failing to pass the entrance examination for the modernized county middle school, he spent half a year at a private academy in the city. From his perspective, university education and studying abroad were far beyond his family means and his own abilities. At the age of 18, a summons from his father to go home to be married forced him to shelve his educational pursuits.

After remaining idle at his parents' home for a year, his family requested him to teach his younger brothers and the sons of relatives and friends. Since there was no school in his small town, the number of his students rapidly increased to over-crowd his ad hoc classroom. He then collaborated with a friend to start an elementary school in an unoccupied family house, appointing the friend as principal and himself vice-principal. The two teenagers were also the only instructors in the school. While townspeople were immensely impressed and Zhang started to style himself a modern educator, the inspector dispatched from the county education bureau "would not stop shaking his head in

disapproval and refused to give proper certification for the school.” This prompted Zhang to depart for Shaoxing again and enroll in a one-year program at a normal school so as to gain some teaching qualifications.⁸⁸ After the program, he ended his student career for good.

As mentioned earlier, Zhang’s patron Du Haisheng steered him away from a career as educator by finding him employment at Shangwu as a professional editor. For ten long years at *Eastern Miscellany*, Zhang’s primary responsibility was the unglamorous job of compiling “Chronology of Major Events,” a section at the back of the magazine, and translating essays in Japanese periodicals into Chinese. When he finally was chosen to replace the departing editor of *Ladies’ Journal* in 1921, he recoiled from the appointment at first, as he recalled, since he knew little about gender issues at the time. Qian Zhixiu, his new boss at *Eastern Miscellany* who recommended him for the job, boosted his confidence by promising help. Zhang noted that his promotion to the editorship of *Ladies’ Journal* was also due to the fact that the monthly had very small circulation and thus ranked very low in terms of importance among Shangwu’s periodicals.⁸⁹ It is safe to say that prior to his taking charge of the women’s magazine, a lack of educational pedigree and intellectual distinction characterized Zhang’s life and career. He finally managed to mark his place in the rapidly changing cultural landscape by turning the lukewarm reformist magazine for women into a platform for banner-waving radical feminism.

The same thing can be said about the assistant editor Zhou Jianren (1888-1984). Jianren, the youngest and the least well-known of the Zhou brothers, Shuren (otherwise known as Lu Xun, 1881-1936) and Zuoren (1885-1967), two towering May Fourth

writers, lived in the shadows of his elder brothers. The big brother Lu Xun was the first to go to Japan for higher education. When he returned to Japan in 1906 after a visit with his family, he took Zuoren with him, leaving the eighteen-year-old Jianren with responsibility for caring for their widowed mother in their hometown of Shaoxing. That was where he remained until 1919 when Lu Xun, with a lucrative position as an official in the Education Ministry of the warlord government, was able to purchase a spacious three-house compound in Beijing and move his entire family there, including his two married younger brothers and their families. Prior to the move, the combination of his family responsibilities and his own poor health prevented Zhou Jianren from seeking formal education beyond junior high-school level. Even in his old age, Zhou Jianren would still lament his failure to pursue further education.⁹⁰

Zhou Jianren built his first career teaching elementary schools at Shaoxing for fourteen years. With the help of his eldest brother, who sent him books and equipment, he also tried to become a self-taught botanist. During this period, the second brother Zhou Zuoren returned from Japan, took up teaching in middle schools in Shaoxing, then moved onto the capital in 1917 to join the faculty of the Beijing University at the invitation of its newly-appointed president and Shaoxing co-provincial Cai Yuanpei. There, together with Lu Xun, he joined the editorial board of Chen Duxiu's *New Youth* to launch the New Culture Movement. All the while, Jianren continued to be bound to his hometown, leading the quiet life of an elementary schoolteacher. Later, he spoke of the inspiration he took from Darwin,

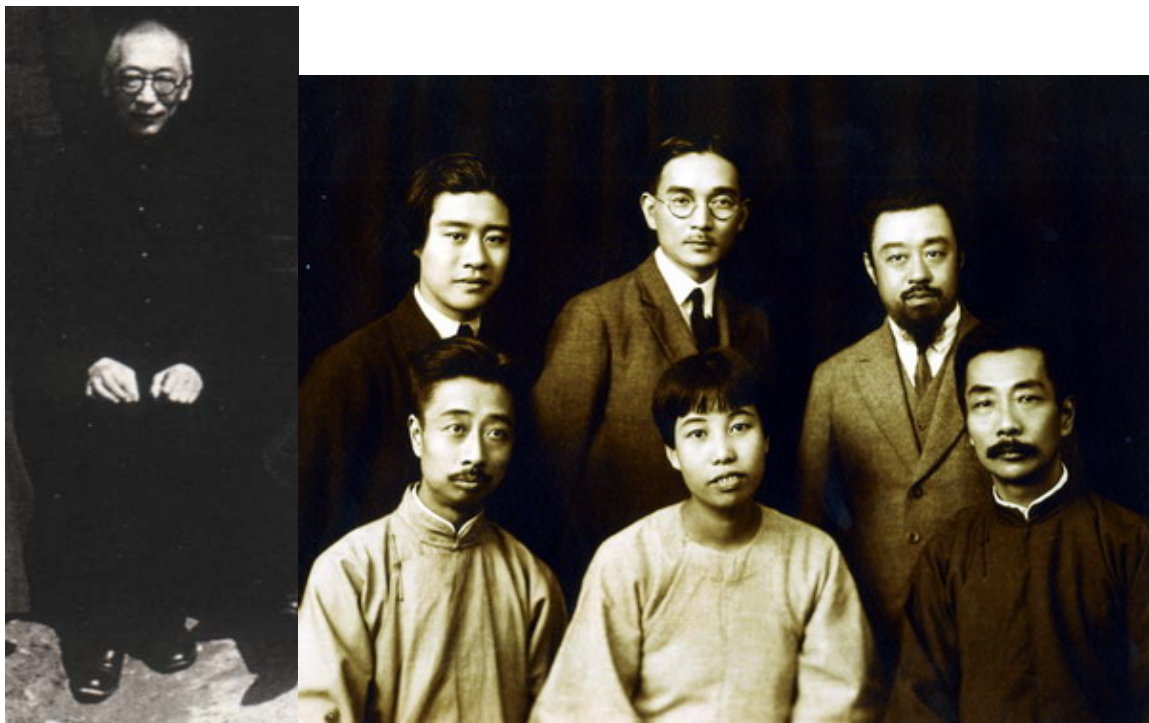
In his autobiography, Darwin wrote that both his teachers and his father considered him a very mediocre boy, with a far-below-average intelligence.... However, Darwin had his own quiet ambition and he was persistent in endeavoring to realize it.... He concluded his autobiography this way, 'As a

scientist, my success, no matter how impressive it may seem, is, in fact, a product of my [persistence rather than some extraordinary intelligence]. My biggest assets have been my love for science, my boundless patience in pondering on various questions, and my diligence in observing [the natural world] and collecting data....' Darwin's great contribution to science, his theory, and his modest biography touched me deeply.⁹¹

Perhaps it was in reading about what he saw as the humble beginning of Darwin's extraordinary career that Zhou Zuoren retained his faith in his own ability to thrive despite the slow development of his career. His two brothers certainly played an important role in helping him to realize his dreams. Soon after joining them in Beijing and with their help, Jianren, at the advanced age of 32, was enrolled in the Beijing University as a special auditor. In 1921, through his brother Zuoren's connection, he was hired by Shangwu as Zhang Xichen's assistant and moved back to the south. Here, provincial ties are also noteworthy since Zhang was also from Shaoxing. This new job at *Ladies' Journal* set him on the new career path as an editor and writer, a role in which he would eventually enjoy considerable success.

Chen Daqi (courtesy name Bainian, 1887–1983), on the other hand, did not suffer from any of the handicaps that his opponents did. He traveled the typical journey of an intellectual of the first May Fourth generation, despite the fact that he was of similar age as Zhang and Zhou. Studying in Japan, he graduated from the Tokyo Imperial University at the age of twenty-four. In 1917, he too was recruited by Cai Yuanpei to join the new faculty of Beijing University. There he founded the very first psychology lab in the country, conducted a highly acclaimed study of school students, and published several books and translations, all of which laid the foundation of modern psychology in China. While not a member of the *New Youth* inner circle of editors, Chen was an active contributor, joining the fight against the reformist generation.⁹² At the time of the

controversy over the 1925 special issue of *Ladies' Journal*, he was chairing the Philosophy and Psychology Departments of Beijing University and was soon to be its acting President.⁹³ Finally, to add to his already impressive vita, he also became a contributing editor of the influential *Modern Critique* when it was first released in late 1924.



6. Chen Daqi (1886-1983)
Source: "Xinli jiankang" website,
http://web3.fimmu.com/xlx/showart.asp?art_id=5341

7. Zhou Jianren with family and friends in Shanghai in 1927. Front row from left to right: Zhou Jianren, Xu Guangping, Lu Xun. Back row far right is Lu Xun's student Sun Fuyuan
Source: "Renmin" website, <http://www.hnsc.com.cn/news/2006/09/29/115949.html>

From the perspective of the Shangwu management, the decision to remove the "trouble-makers" at *Ladies' Journal* was an easy one. On a personal level, *Modern Critique* enjoyed a particularly close tie with Shangwu. Its leader Hu Shi, who acted as the publisher's advisor during its 1920-1921 reform, was responsible for bringing its current editor-in-chief, Wang Yunwu, previously quite obscure, into his current powerful position.⁹⁴ Naturally, Wang owed a personal debt to Hu Shi. More importantly,

Shangwu's move reflected both its assessment that the radical track taken by Zhang and Zhou was not a sustainable market strategy and its natural tendency to ally itself with the established cultural authority. To the management, Chen Daqi was a commanding presence on the New Culture scene. Zhang Xichen and Zhou Zhuoren, on the other hand, were merely employees without intellectual pedigree. As I shall discuss in the next chapter, the vocation of editor was a new and relatively humble job created as a result of the expansion of modern publishing. For these reasons, Zhang and Zhou had yet to gain high visibility in the elite cultural field.

Finally, Shangwu's decision once again demonstrated the incompatibility of the two modes of cultural production—the large-scale commercial practice targeting general audiences for profit represented by the Shangwu and ideologically-driven May Fourth cultural practice represented by its editor Zhang Xichen. The political economy of large-scale cultural production demanded flexibility and neutrality. It was true that the May Fourth campaign brought changes in the taste and expectations of a significant sector of the young readership among whom cultural radicalism was at once idealistic and fashionable. It was also true that Zhang's proclivity toward avant-gardism spurred an increase in sales for his magazine. But when its editors started to incur animosity from old and new intellectual allies alike, the stakes became too high in the eyes of the Shangwu management. During the May Fourth era and the 1920s, controversy and polemics carried out in *tongren* magazines frequently brought individual participants overnight fame and a temporary increase in the sales of their magazines. As an established publishing enterprise, however, Shangwu would not succumb to the seduction of either gaining celebrity status for its editors or temporary financial benefit at the

expense of its long-term interests in maintaining a harmonious relationship with known authors and the general reading public. Charting such a middle course in the judgment of the management served its ultimate interest of overall growth and steady market share.

Shangwu's decision to discard its own editors notwithstanding, Zhang Xichen and Zhou Jianren were not about to be victimized by cultural politics without putting up a spirited fight. Zhang wrote indignantly,

Our countrymen frequently exhibit an enduring and demeaning habit—Doctor-professor-celebrity-worshipping. Mr. Chen is not just a professor, but a renowned professor at the “nation's top institute of higher education,” Beijing University. As a result, his criticism of us constitutes no less than a death sentence. Since the release of his review, explicit and implicit reproach, attacks, and persecution have been flying at us from all directions.⁹⁵

As it was out of question that *Ladies' Journal* under changed editorship would provide them space to fight back, they sent letters and rebuttals to *Modern Critique*, but were ignored. After the liberal weekly turned a deaf ear to their inquiries, Zhou wrote sarcastically, “Their [silent] severity has inspired tremendous awe in us.”⁹⁶ But their fighting spirit was not to be damped. Zhang wrote,

While being a very weak and vulnerable person, how can I not make my final struggle at this life-and-death moment? ... [I want to] let those few who do not share the degrading tendency [of professor-worshipping] to know that we are being slighted for no better reason than that we have never been university professors.⁹⁷

At this critical juncture, the stage where they could perform their “final struggle” became available with the birth of *Mangyuan* in Beijing in April 1925. Between May and June, it printed five of their essays refuting the famous professor. *Mangyuan* was a literary weekly founded by none other than Lu Xun, who intended to create a venue for “those who strive to talk, to tear off the mask of the old society even after having their tongues cut off.”⁹⁸ When he wrote this, Lu Xun probably had in his mind his students at

Beijing Women's Normal College, who had been engaging in an escalating conflict with their government-backed president—a conflict in which he, Zhou Zuoren, and several other faculty members would soon join on the side of the students against the “*Modern Critique Clique*” (dubbed by Lu Xun), especially Chen Yuan (Xiying) who became a self-appointed spokesman for the school's president and the Education Ministry.⁹⁹ About the controversy over sexual morality, Lu Xun commented, “I am afraid that what Mr. Zhang and Mr. Zhou said is too much ahead of our times even though these new ideas are pretty widespread in the West....Mr. Chen is uttering [that they are] “harmful, harmful” all the way. I am afraid that he only worries about their social effects without giving any regard to the issue of truth.”¹⁰⁰ Thus sexual radicalism and student radicalism would go hand in hand in the pages of *Mangyuan* against *Modern Critique*. This was perhaps the time when the three brothers came closest to join forces against a common foe.¹⁰¹

In addition to *Mangyuan* and the help from Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren, the dismissed editors also enjoyed the solidarity of their own intellectual network, especially the Women's Questions Research Association and the *Women's Weekly* (*Funu zhoubao*) which was co-sponsored by the Association. Therefore, when they were engaged the heated debate with Chen Daqi, Gu Junzen and other Association members published supporting commentaries.¹⁰² Gu later became one of the leading editors of the Kaiming Press.

Evolutionism, Scientism, and the Authority of the West

The dismissal of radical elements Zhang and Zhou from *Ladies' Journal* gave the liberal professors an easy victory. However, the polemical battle had just begun. Polemics were an important feature of the May Fourth journalism. More often than not,

new intellectuals won attention and acceptance by inserting themselves in these tempestuous debates. In this, the *New Youth* group seemed to have set a precedent during the late teens. The most dramatic example was their debate against the old elite over the issue of literary reform.¹⁰³ With their characteristic rhetorical combativeness, the new intellectuals proclaimed triumph over the old forces of reformists. During the 1920s, newer cultural avant-garde and political radicals would likewise use the same strategy against what they perceived as the “old bourgeois” liberals to the same good effect. In symbolic competitions, the participants needed to build their arguments upon the intellectual premises and vocabularies in circulation in order to make them convincing to the rest of the May Fourth community. In this particular case, the radicals mobilized the fundamental premises in the May Fourth thinking and practice—evolutionism, scientism, and the penchant to privilege the West as the source of intellectual authority. All these gave them a decided advantage over the established liberal opponents whose failure to do the same sealed their fate.

Evolutionism had enjoyed the unquestioned homage of all Chinese intellectuals since the beginning of the 20th century. During the New Culture Movement, the first generation of May Fourth intellectuals, with their self-conscious iconoclasm, attached to “newness” a temporal continuum, a continuous need to upgrade the new that would thrust China into a modern future.¹⁰⁴ As mentioned earlier, the first generation of May Fourth intellectuals used this newness as an effective weapon to topple the “old” conservatives and reformists. The junior radicals tried to beat their seniors at their own game, insisting that in the name of progress it was imperative that radicalism, both political and cultural, should be intellectually successful enough to leave bourgeois liberalism outmoded.

When it came to marriage, monogamy based upon equality and freedom of choice was what capitalist society could best produce, Zhang wrote. Society, however, would continue its march toward the next evolutionary stage, i.e. socialism which meant that the liberal insistence on monogamy would become a limiting moral code. Alternatively, he touted the socialist mode of sexuality that was taking shape in Soviet Russia as an exemplar of the new sexuality. China should identify with the latest and the most progressive social-cultural forces in the world.¹⁰⁵

The older May Fourth generation continued to function in the same intellectual paradigm regardless of their particular agendas. Therefore, in response to Chen Daqi's notion that "morality should be upheld so as to offer social constraints where laws fail to enforce [proper conduct]", the sharp-tongued Lu Xun asked rhetorically, "Laws do not require a rape victim to die. But should we support the [current] morality that expects her to commit suicide?" In other words, he tried to portray Chen as an old-fashioned Confucian moralist. Likewise, Chen understood that to accuse his junior challengers for being too new or too radical would only backfire. To win his case, he had no choice but to misread his opponents' arguments as pro-tradition or "feudal". All the parties endeavored to discredit each other on the ground of repudiating the Confucian past. Chen, however, was obviously at a disadvantage. It is curious to note that post-1949 memoirs and essays would invariably label Chen and his Shangwu allies as "defenders of feudal morality."¹⁰⁶ It seems that their authors considered Chen so reactionary that calling him "liberal" would not be enough of an indictment.

The widely-accepted notion of intellectual evolutionism among the May Fourth generations—the inevitable progress from traditionalism to liberalism to socialism—also

provided grounds for Chinese radicals to argue that while liberalism and the capitalist system it supported represented a necessary step in the collective severance from Confucian norms, it was itself constraining and oppressive. It was only a half-step toward the truly free and democratic future of socialism.¹⁰⁷ Due to socialist and Modernist attacks on the bourgeoisie, May Fourth intellectuals during the 1920s generally shunned association with what was regarded as bourgeois ideology. In the sexuality debate, Zhang and Zhou cited the arguments advanced by Bertrand Russell, a social democrat, who not only denounced Victorian morality, but also openly practiced free love; and August Bebel, a German socialist and a pioneer feminist.¹⁰⁸ More devastatingly, they pointed out that Chen's notion of love being exclusive in his refutation of polygamy was intimately linked to the "banal bourgeois preoccupation with ownership." Indeed, in the context of the rising revolutionary tides of the mid-1920s, the notion of material possessions and ownership, often linked to selfishness by traditional scholars, had become a concept that the new intelligentsia was also eager to shun. The word "bourgeois," if not "liberal" itself, had acquired a less than glorious connotation. The cultural radicals further proclaimed that exclusive love fundamentally deprived the beloved of his/her individuality, or *renge*, one of the most sacred May Fourth concepts. True love, they insisted, was about giving love rather than possessing it as property.¹⁰⁹

Secondly, as a member of the May Fourth intelligentsia who was fiercely opposed to the empty moralism of Confucian tradition, Chen not surprisingly attempted to ground his argument in a scientific understanding of the human body. He thus argued that male sexual indulgence endemic to polygamy weakened the constitution of a man's body and mind, and by extension, the health of the society.¹¹⁰ Little did he know that he had

played right into his opponents' hands. Scientism and modernism were exactly what the radicals invoked to make their points, as indicated by the titles of Zhou's two essays in the special issue: "Scientific Foundation of the [New] Sexual Morality," and "The Future of Modern Sexuality". Since taking over *Ladies' Journal* four years earlier, Zhang and Zhou had immersed themselves in topics and theories of gender and sexuality.

Subsequently, they had abundant information at their disposal to rebut their amateur opponent. Moreover, Zhou Jianren was on his way to establishing himself as a leading science writer and was especially apt at making physiological and biological elucidations. The existing notion of male sexuality, Zhang and Zhou pointed out sharply in their counter-arguments, was socially constructed to assert male domination over female. Traditional polygamy, likewise, was a product of male drive for power rather than a result of sexual craving. A man's possession of multiple wives or concubines furthermore served the purpose of demonstrating his wealth and authority to the rest of society. Citing scientific findings and theories of the British sex reformer Walter Gallichan, Finish anthropologist Edward Westermarck, and many more leading Western sexologists and feminists, Zhang and Zhou demonstrated that sexual desire was an innate physical attribute that varied from individual to individual and was unrelated to the emergence and persistence of traditional polygamy.¹¹¹

Clearly, access to references to the latest theories of sexology and feminism from the West afforded the radicals no small tactical advantage in strengthening their position. In a sense, the debate reflected May Fourth intellectuals' shared penchant for citing Western authors and theories to legitimize their proposed agendas. In his reply to Chen's accusation that the special issue produced a rationale for traditional concubinage, Zhang

sneered,

...Our proposal for sexual liberation had nothing to do with the current practice of concubinage. Had Professor Chen ever encountered works of some progressive, modern thinkers and sexologists such as *The Theory of Social Reconstruction and Roads to Freedom [Socialism, Anarchism, and Syndicalism]* by [Bertrand] Russell, *Love's Coming of Age* by [Edward] Carpenter, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* by [Havelock] Ellis, *The Question of Sexuality* by [August] Forel, and *Women under Polygamy* by [Walter] Gallichan, he might not have registered his protest against us. This is because all the ideas we have proposed are borrowed from theirs. Had Professor Chen [read and] found their theories objectionable, he would have protested against them.¹¹²

In Chen's weak attempt to enlist Western thinkers to buttress his argument, he managed to cite only a single foreign author, German psychologist Wilhelm Wundt, on the intimate relation between polygamy and male sexual indulgence.¹¹³ Unfortunately, this only provided his opponents a chance to point out his misreading of Wundt. In turn, Zhang and Zhou bombarded Chen with many more citations from Western authors. The debate at this point almost acquired a comic dimension. Completely outmaneuvered, Chen used self-parody in his final note to try to protest his ridicule.¹¹⁴ He subsequently announced his withdrawal from the debate, giving his opponents the opportunity to have the last word in *Mangyuan*.

If the 1921 appointment of Zhang represented Shangwu's acknowledgement and even enhancement of the influence of the May Fourth agendas, its 1925 dismissal of Zhang signaled the perhaps inevitable rift between two modes of cultural production—the mainstream publishing of commercial enterprises and avant-garde publishing of the May Fourth intellectuals. By discussing the entangled developments surrounding *The Ladies's Journal* and the conflicts of views on the issue of gender that led to the birth of the Kaiming Press, I have also highlighted the unique thrust of May Fourth discourses

upon the general cultural field in stark contrast to the mainstream cultural production represented by Shangwu. Being a “business of enlightenment,” Shangwu built its prestige around sponsoring renowned progressive authors while targeting a mass audience. As for the New Culture advocates, despite their idealistic commitment to a national awakening that reached down to the vast majority of their fellow countrymen and countrywomen, paradoxically wrote mostly for a small, highly-educated young readership that had the education to comprehend and the proclivity to enjoy their avant-garde and frequently abstract and difficult writings. Consequently, their enlightenment remained an idealistic notion until the late 1920s, when economic imperatives and changed socio-political environment led to their developing better strategies to reach a broader audience. This will be the subject of Chapter Four. For the time being, their goals and success were anchored in terms of acquiring recognition and prestige. After they successfully pushed the reformist elite into the intellectual backwater, they found themselves challenged by a younger May Fourth generation who employed the same polemical strategies to compete for cultural leadership. In the meantime, the importance of intellectual sociability and community became readily apparent in their quest for acceptance and influence for their ideas. This I will discuss further in the next chapter.

¹ Zhang Xichen, “*Xin xing daode shi shenmo?* (“What is New Sexual Morality?”), *Funu zazhi* (*Ladies’ Journal*) 11, no. 1 (January 1925): 2-7.

² My use of the terms “liberal” or “liberal intellectuals” in this study is not meant to imply that liberalism in the context of Republican China is synonymous with Western liberalism of the early twentieth century or any other time periods. The Chinese intellectuals who identified themselves with Western liberalism (which was itself a broad and often ill-defined school of theories) were not the equivalent of Western liberal intellectuals in their varied appropriations of the theories and their relationship with the state. I opt for “liberal” rather than “liberalized” for the convenience of discussion. *Xiandi pinglun* (*Modern Critique*) was founded in Beijing in 1924 by Hu Shi. It was relocated to Shanghai in 1927.

³ Du Yaquan, “Tong de wenming yu jing de wenming (Tranquil civilization and dynamic civilization) 3, no. 10 (October 1916) and “Zhanghou dongxi wenming zhi tiaohu” (Negotiation between Eastern and Western civilizations in the post-war times), *Dongfang zazhi* (*Eastern Miscellany*) 14, no. 4 (April 1917).

⁴ Chen’s articles attacking Du were “Zhiwen *Dongfang zazhi* jizhe” (“My questions to the editor of *Eastern Miscellany*”) *Xin qingnian* (*New Youth*) 4, no. 9 (September 1918) and “Zai zhiwen” (“More questions”).

⁵ Luo Jialun, "Jinri Zhongguo zhi zazhi jie (The magazine world of today)," in *Xinchao (New Tide)* (April 1919), reprinted in Zhang Jinglu, ed. *Zhongguo xiandai chuban shiliao (Historical materials of modern Chinese publishing)* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1954), pp. 79-86.

⁶ I use the term "symbolic" à la Pierre Bourdieu to refer to the often informal and non-institutional dimension of the cultural relations and activities that involves recognition, prestige, and authority.

⁷ For a general history of Shangwu, see Jean-Pierre Drege, *La Commercial Press de Shanghai, 1897-1949* (Paris: Institut des hautes études chinoises, Collège de France, 1978). The book was translated into Chinese by Li Tongshi and published by Shangwu in 1996. There are two collections of Chinese language writings on Shangwu, *Shangwu yinshuguan jiu shi nian [Ninety years of the Commercial Press]* and *Shangwu yinshuguan jiu shi wu nian [Ninety-five years of the Commercial Press]* (Beijing: Shangwu jinshuguan, 1987, 1992).

⁸ For biographies of Zhang Yuanji, see Manying Ip, *The Life and Times of Zhang Yuanji, 1867-1959* (Beijing: Commercial Press, 1985); Kui Yingtao, *Zhiming Zhi Meng: Zhang Yuanji zhuan [The dream to enlighten the people: Biography of Zhang Yuanji]* (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1995); and Wang Shaozen, *Jindai chubanjia Zhang Yuanji* (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1995). Zhang's diary written between 1912-1926 is released in Zhang Yuanji, *Zhang Yuanji riji (Diary of Zhang Yuanji)*. 2 vols (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1981).

⁹ This hiring practice was noted by the popular writer Bao Tianxiao who advised Xia to follow suit if he wanted to expand Shangwu. See Christopher Reed's discussion in his *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1879-1937* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), pp. 195-96.

¹⁰ Through Zhang's connection, Cai became Shangwu's first chief editor. His official affiliation with Shangwu was cut short in only a few months however by his decision to study in Germany. Thereafter, Zhang took over the chief editorship himself. Sharing a passionate belief in education as the main means for national regeneration, both men had already planned modern textbook compilations and thus responded enthusiastically to Xia's request. See Gao Pinshu, "Cai Yuanpei yu Zhang Yuanji (Cai Yuanpei and Zhang Yuanji)," in *Shangwu Yinshuguan Jiushi Nian*, ed. Shangwu yinshuguan (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1992), pp. 566-67; and Kui Yingtao, *Zhiming zhi meng: Zhang Yuanji zhuan*, p. 62.

¹¹ In his capacity as the editor-in-chief and then the general manager of Shangwu, Zhang enabled the most celebrated collaborations between a publishing house and leading authors. Shangwu issued all the important works of the aforementioned authors. These collaborations were based on Zhang's close personal relationships with them. Zhang Yuanji, Cai Yuanpei, and Liang Qichao all passed the provincial examination in 1889 which laid the foundation for their life-long friendships. Zhang and Cai were also co-provincials, passed palace examinations, and entered Hanlin Academy in the same years. All these promised a close relationship between the two in the scholar-official cultural of the imperial times. In addition, the two shared similar political convictions and intellectual predisposition and assisted each other throughout their lives and careers.

¹² For the magazine's circulation, see Shangwu yinshuguan, *Shangwu yinshuguan jiu shi wu nian*, p. 679. Much has been written on *Eastern Miscellany* and *Short Story Monthly*. See Lee Ou-fan Lee "The Cultural Construction of Modernity in Urban Shanghai: Some Preliminary Explorations," in *Becoming Chinese: Passages to Modernity and Beyond*, ed. Wen-hsin Yeh (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), pp. 31-61.

¹³ Luo Jialun, an editor of the student-run *Xin chao* (New Tide) at Beijing University, scoffed at the magazine, "...When everyone can read it, it is the same as no one is reading it; and when it contains everything, it's the same as containing nothing." Luo Jialun, "Jinri Zhongguo zhi zazhi jie" (The magazine world of today), *Xin chao*, [New Tide] 4 (April 1919), in *Zhongguo xiandai chuban shiliao jibian (Historical materials of modern Chinese publishing)*, ed. Zhang Jinglu, first collection (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1954), pp. 81-82.

¹⁴ Between 1912 and 1919, the existing women's magazines, mostly published in Shanghai, included the moderate *Nuduo bao* (Women's Bell, 1912-1942, 1944-50) by Shanghai Guanxue Hui (Shanghai Guanxue Association), *Zhonghua funu jie* (The world of Chinese women, 1915-1916) by the Zhonghua shuju, and *Funu Xunkan* (Women's ten-daily, 1917-1935, 1946-1948) by Zhonghua funu xueshe (China Women's Study Society). See Wang Huiling and Zhu Hanguo, eds. *Zhongguo baokang cidian (1815-1949)* (Taiyuan, Shangxi: Shuhai chubanshe, 1992).

¹⁵ See *Ladies' Journal*, 1, no. 1 (January 1915): 5-7. For the advocacy of radical feminism between 1915-1918, see *Ladies' Journal*, vol. 1, no. 6, (June 1915): 1-3; vol. 1 no. 12 (December 1915): 6-10; vol. 2. no. 1 (January 1916): 1-3; vol. 4. no. 3 (March 1918): 1-2; vol. no. 5 (May 1918): 11-12; and vol. 4, no. 8 (August 1918): 5-6.

¹⁶ Zhou Xuqi, *1910-1920 niandai duhui xin funu shenghuo fengmao: yi Funu zazhi wei fenxi shili (The life of new women in metropolis in the 1910s and 1920s, based on an analysis of Ladies Journal)* (Taipei: Taiwan University, 1996), p. 46.

¹⁷ Cited in Lydia Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity—China, 1900-1937* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 81. I also follow Liu's translation.

¹⁸ Du Yaquan published China's first science magazine in 1900. He was responsible for translating and printing many works by western authors, including Schopenhauer and Kropotkin. He joined Shangwu on the recommendation of Cai Yuanpei in 1904. For the circulation of *Eastern Miscellany*, see *Shangwu yinshuguan iushiwu nian*, p. 679. Since the 1990s, in the midst of a major effort among Chinese intellectuals and scholars to reevaluate the May Fourth legacy, there had been a surge of new interest in this previously obscured May Fourth opponent. Important works include Wang Yuanhua, "Du Yaquan yu Dong Xi wenhua wenti lunzhan," a preface to *Du Yaxuan wenxuan (Selected Work of Du Yaquan)* (Shanghai: Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe, 1993); and Gao Like, *Tiaoshi de zhihui: Du Yaquan sixiang yanjiu (The Wisdom to selectively adopt Western civilization: A study of Du Yaquan)* (Zhejiang renmin chubanshe, 1998)

¹⁹ At times, Du demonstrated a willingness to put a higher value on the Chinese tradition by perceiving it as a "thread" to tie all the "[war] scattered pieces of Western civilization together, see Du Yaquan, "Duiyu weilai shijie zhi zhunbei ruhe" (How to prepare for the world's future) in *Eastern Miscellany* 15, no. 10 (October 1919). For Zhang's comments on Du, see Zhang Shiyang, et al., "Zhang Xichen siansheng xiaozuan (A short biography of Mr. Zhang Xichen)," in *Zhang Xichen Xiansheng Dancheng Yibai Zhounian Jinian Wenji (Collected Essays Commemorating Zhang Xichen on his 100th birthday)* (Shanghai: Chuban shiliao bianji bu, 1990), p. 220.

²⁰ See the chapter on Chen in Lin Yu-sheng, *Crisis of Chinese Consciousness: Radical Antitraditionalism in the May Fourth Era* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978).

²¹ Luo Jialun, "Jinri Zhongguo zhi zazhi jie (The magazine world of today)," pp. 79-86.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Wang Huiwu, in *Shaonian Zhongguo (Young China)* 4 (October 1919), cited in Zhou Xuqi, *1910-1920 niandai duhui xin funu shenghuo fengmao*, p. 135. Wang became an early Communist and the first leader of the Chinese Communist women's program.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Wang Yunzhang was a teacher of English in his earlier career.

²⁸ Southern Society was an anti-Manchu poetry society of classicists founded in the waning years of the Qing rule whose committed agenda was the preservation of the Chinese classical tradition.

²⁹ This conservatism should not be confused with a commercial orientation. Even the cultural radical Luo Jialun, who was famous for his disdain for entertainment literature, did not find *Short Story Monthly* under Wang's editorship to be a decadent "Butterfly school" magazine. He criticized it only for being the headquarters of the unconstructive but, in his word "harmless" *biji* school. See Luo Jialun, "Jinri Zhongguo zhi zazhi jie."

³⁰ For example, in the March 1919 issue, a "New Trends in Literature" column was created to cover new styles of vernacular poetry. The May 1919 issue includes not only translated Western poems but also new vernacular poems by Chinese authors.

³¹ *Short Story Monthly*, 11, no. 11.

³² For historical studies that accuse the magazine of promoting "virtuous wives and good mothers," see Jacqueline Nivard, "Women and the Women's Press: The Case of the *Ladies' Journal* [*Funu zazhi*], 1915-1931," *Republican China* 10, no. 1b (November 1984): 38-39; and Zhou Xuqi, Chapters. 2-3; and the latest study by Wang Zheng, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), pp. 68-79.

³³ Zhang met resistance from the general manager of Shangwu, Gao Hanqing. For the conflicts in the Shangwu leadership, see Chen Shutong, "Huiyi shangwu yinshuguan jiushi nian," in *Shangwu jinshuguan*

jiushinian, pp. 131-39. For Zhang's emphasis on recruiting new talents from Beijing and his conflict with the general manager, see Zhang's diary, *Zhang Yuanji riji*, pp. 659, 728-32. Zhang's official title was Shangwu's manager thus sat below the company's general manager. Due to his prestige cultural status, which contrasted with Gao's humble background, however, Zhang would be the ultimate decision-maker.

³⁴ For the two trips, see Zhang Yuanji, *Zhang Yuanji riji*, pp. 408-16, 423-35.

³⁵ See Zhang Xichen, "Mantan Shangwu yinshuguan," in *Shangwu yinshuguan jiushi nian*, pp. 112-13. Leo Ou-fan Lee offers perceptive analysis of the controversy between Chen Duxiu and the editor of *Eastern Miscellany*. Leo Ou-fan Lee, "The Cultural Construction of Modernity in Urban Shanghai: Some Preliminary Explorations."

³⁶ Zhang paid Chen Duxiu a courtesy visit in early 1920 when the latter was seeking medical treatment in a Shanghai hospital. Soon Chen was contracted to be Shangwu's so-called out-of-the-press editor, i.e. an editor on Shangwu's payroll who works at his own place and pace and usually on the materials of his own choice. See Mao Dun, *Mao Dun zizhuan [Autobiographical essays of Mao Dun]* (Nanjing: Jiangsu weiyi chubanshe, 1996), p. 108. Liu Bannong secured an absentee part-time position at Shangwu to earn 50 yuan a month for some translation work. For Shangwu's interaction with Chen, Hu, and Liu, see Zhang Yuanji, *Zhang Yuanji riji*, pp. 576, 677, 699, 718, 719-21. Shangwu also waged an unsuccessful campaign to woo Hu Shi to become its new editor-in-chief, a position that had been occupied by Gao Mengdan. Guo willingly resigned in the interest of recruiting. Not wanting to be bogged down in editorial responsibilities and administrative responsibilities, Hu recommended his old English teacher Wang Yuwu instead. For the full story of Shangwu's effort to woo Hu, see Chen Dawen, "Hu Shi yu Shangwu yinshuguan (Hu Shi and the Commercial Press)," in *Shangwu Yinshuguan Jiushi Nian*, pp. 573-605. Earlier, Shangwu also commissioned Hu Shi to seek young talent in Beijing.

³⁷ Mao Dun took over *Short Story Monthly*, Li Shicheng and Zhou Yutong *Education Magazine*; and Zhang Xichen *Ladies' Journal*. While *Student Magazine* did not change editorship, the primary editorial responsibility was shifted to its assistant editor, Yang Xianjiang, a young radical who soon joined the CCP. This group of new periodical editors and the budding new intellectuals would be instrumental in the founding and growth of the Kaiming Press. For its most influential *Eastern Miscellany*, Shangwu cautiously replaced Du Yaquan with Qian Zhixiu, a senior editor who was known both for his expertise in Chinese classical learning and his enthusiastic endorsement of the West. The immediate successor of Du Yachuan was Tao Xingcun, but the primary editorial responsibility fell on the shoulders of Qian Zhixiu who took over when Tao died of cancer. The choice of the new editor was apparently meant to ensure some continuity of editorial policy and stability of readership and yet at the same time appease the New Culture elite. See Zhang Xichen, "Mantan Shangwu yinshuguan," p. 113.

³⁸ The figures are cited from Zhang Yuanji, p. 467. Zhang noted his company's poor performance in many other entries of his diary during the year of 1918. In the September 12 entry, he complained about "bad business." In the September 18 entry, he recorded that "the total revenue of last six months has fallen from the previous year by more than 20,000 yuan." See Zhang Yuanji, pp. 444, 447. A different set of revenue figures which shows a 6.7% increase are given in Zhuang Yu's article. It is most likely a result of setting a fiscal year at the end of calendar year. See Zhuang Yu, "Sanshiwu nian lai zhi Shangwu yinshuguan," first published in 1931 and reprinted in *Shangwu jiushiwu nian*, p. 751.

³⁹ For Shangwu's business performance between 1902 and 1930, see Zhuang Yu, pp. 751-52.

⁴⁰ The revenue of all Shangwu periodicals was 146,000 silver yuan in 1917 and declined to 111,000 silver yuan the following year—a significant 24% decrease. In an attempt to stall the trend and, in Zhang Yuanji's words, "to counter [the rising popularity] of *New Youth*," the Shangwu leadership decided to drastically cut the price of *Eastern Miscellany* at the end of the year. See Zhang Yuanji, pp. 475, 504-05.

⁴¹ The mid-1920s proved to be an exception when Shangwu suffered another decline in sales perhaps due to another major change in readership taste in the context of radical agitation. Like before, it quickly adapted and revenue bounced back on a rising curve. See Zhuang Yu, p. 751.

⁴² Zhang Yuanji, p. 435.

⁴³ Shen Ji, "Duxiu yu Shangwu yinshuguan", Shangwu's website, <http://www.cp.com.cn/>, <http://66.102.7.104/search?q=cache:DMH7CCMe6okJ:www.cp.com.cn/ht/newsdetail.cfm%3FiCntno%3D581+%E9%99%88%E7%8B%AC%E7%A7%80%E6%9D%9C%E4%BA%9A%E6%B3%89&hl=en>, accessed on April 26, 2004.

⁴⁴ Zhang Yuanji, pp. 567, 651.

⁴⁵ See the February 28, 1920 entry in Zhang Yuanji, pp. 716, 717. The *Citizen Society* had a complicated relationship of cooperation and rivalry with the *New Tide* society. It is uncertain whether Shangwu eventually manage to refuse to take on the *Citizen* the project. Only a couple of days after Zhang gave his instruction with regard to their request, Zhang was told that it was a request “difficult to decline” perhaps due to the status of its recommender. Zhang proceeded to list conditions for the magazine to be released by Shangwu. For the different intellectual orientations and agendas of the two celebrated Beijing Student societies, see Vera Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment*, pp. 68-76, 86-90.

⁴⁶ Zhang Xichen, “Mantan Shangwu yinshuguan,” p. 115.

⁴⁷ For the purpose of retaining the market share and its profit-earning capacity, Shangwu maintained an amicable relationship with old authors whose work continued to appeal to the general readership. For example, soon after it placed young May Fourth writers in charge of *Short Story Monthly*, Shangwu started a new literary magazine, *Short Story World* (*xiaoshuo shijie*), expressly designed to carry works of its previous authors for the consumption of the general reading public.

⁴⁸ Mi Xian. “Zhang Xichen xiansheng nianbiao (A chronology of Mr. Zhang Xichen's life),” in *Zhang Xichen Xiansheng dancheng yibai zhounian jinian wenji*, p. 237.

⁴⁹ Ibid. One of his translations, “Fengmi shijie zhi weilai zhuyi” (Futurism sweeping the world) printed in the February 1914 issue of *Eastern Miscellany* marked the first introduction of futurism which heralded the civilization of modern machines.

⁵⁰ See Zhang Shiyang, et al., p. 220.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² These articles were most likely already purchased by Zhang's predecessor, Wang Yunzhang. According to Mao Dun who succeeded him, Wang had already bought sufficient manuscripts from alleged Mandarin Duck authors to fill twelve issues. Mao Dun, *Mao Dun Zizhuan*, p. 99.

⁵³ “Bianwan yihou,” (“Editorial postscript”), *Ladies' Journal*, 8, no. 11 (November 1922): 126.

⁵⁴ “Bianwan yihou,” (Editorial postscript), *Ladies' Journal* 8, no. 7 (August 1922): 124.

⁵⁵ “Bianwan yihou,” (Editorial postscript), *Ladies' Journal* 8, no. 11 (November 1922): 126.

⁵⁶ A May Fourth society's manifesto typically featured a statement of the society's purpose and activities, usually including issuing a *tongren* periodical. They held regular meetings and had membership qualifications and responsibilities, kept a list of its founding members and acting committee members, and rules for the election of the acting committee members.

⁵⁷ “Funu Wenti Yanjiu Hui xuanyan.” *Ladies' Journal* 8, no. 8 (1922): 119-21.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ In the early 1920s immediately following the May Fourth Incident, the feminist movement bifurcated into the bourgeois liberal wing who gave centrality to female participation in politics, and civil, property, and family law reform, and the socialist wing that argued that female exploitation was rooted in the social-economical system and was actively promoting women's participation in the labor movement. The feminism the WQRA espoused betrayed the coloration of the former, which might explain the sparse documentation and studies on it under Communist rule.

⁶⁰ *Ladies' Journal*, 7, no. 12 (December 1921).

⁶¹ Readers also started to complain the Europeanization of some Chinese translations in *Ladies' Journal*. See for example, “A discussion of Europeanized syntax [of Chinese],” *Ladies' Journal*, 8, no. 10 (October 1922):121-22.

⁶² In his “Editorial Postscript” of the January 1923 issue, Zhang noted that “many readers expressed their feelings that the magazine had become more and more abstruse.” See *Ladies' Journal* 9, no. 1 (January 1923). The same “Editorial Postscript” announced the creation of the new sections.

⁶³ “Bianwan yihou,” (Editorial postscript) *Ladies' Journal* 9, no. 1 (January 1923).

⁶⁴ For Zhang's later pronouncement, see *Ladies' Journal* 10, no. 5 (May 1924).

⁶⁵ Other leading May Fourth periodicals on gender issues include Funu pinglun (*Women's review*, 1921-1923), a *Minguo ribao* supplement and *Xiandai funu* (*Modern Women*, 1922-23), the official magazine of Women's Question Research Association. The two merged in 1923 to become *Funu zhoubao* (*Women weekly*, 1923-26).

⁶⁶ In the special issue, Zhou authored two articles using a pen name, Qiao Feng, for the second article.

⁶⁷ August Forel (1848-1931), a Swiss psychologist and social reformer, is considered one of the “founding fathers” of sexology. Ellen Key (1849-1926) was a moderate Swedish feminist who advocated, among other things, monogamous free unions based solely on love (against the notion of “free love” which was

regarded as sexual promiscuity) and elevated the status of motherhood. She enjoyed broad appeal among the May Fourth intellectuals and youth in the 1920s.

⁶⁸ Jianren (Zhou Jianren), "Xin daode zhi kexue de biao zhun" and Qiao Feng (penname of Zhou Jianren), "Xiandao xin daode de qingxiang," *Ladies' Journal*, 11, no.1 (January 1925): 8-12, 22-27. They are reproduced in *Xin xing daode taolun ji* (Shanghai: Funu wenti yanjiu hui, 1925) which was again reprinted by the Kaiming Press in 1927.

⁶⁹ Yanbin (Shen Yanbin), "Xin daode di weiwu shiguan" and Zhen Zeming, "Ellen Key de 'lianai yu daode'" *Ladies' Journal*, 11, no.1 (January 1925): 13-21, 28-43; reprinted in *Xin xing daode taolun ji*.

⁷⁰ Zhou Jianren, *Xin nuxing (New women)* 2, no. 12.

⁷¹ See Jacqueline Nivard, pp. 38-39.

⁷² Zhang Xichen, "Cong shangren dao shangren (From a merchant to a merchant)," in *Zhang Xichen Xiansheng dancheng yibai zhounian*, p. 257.

⁷³ See Zhang Xichen, "Mantan Shangwu jinshuguan" (Cursive remarks on the Shangwu Press), p. 117

⁷⁴ The circulation went from a couple of thousand to over ten thousand. See Zhang Xichen, "Cong shangren dao shangren," p. 257.

⁷⁵ Ibid. Still, the pressure on Zhang to bring profit to the magazine must have been great. It was because prior to his taking over, Wang Yunzhang who was responsible for one of the most important Shangwu monthlies, *Short Story Monthly*, concurrently edited *Ladies' Journal* as a minor project. Now, Shangwu not only hired Zhang full time to be in charge of the monthly but also had to add Zhou Jianren on their payroll as the assistant editor.

⁷⁶ *Jing bao* was a Shanghai "small periodical" (*xiao bao*), so named because of their size was as big as a regular book and the wide popular audience that they target) run by Yu Daxiong, a returned student from Japan who was actively involved in the constitutional reform in the waning years of the Qing. The periodical (published once every three days in its early years and once a month later) was a middle-brow publication that carried general news, prose essays, fiction, and other writings on art and entertainment. *New Current News* was the official publication of the Progressive Party (*Jinbu dang*) in Shanghai headed by Liang Qichao and Zhang Dongxun since 1911. One of its supplements, *Xue deng (Learning Light, 1918-28)*, was an active supporter of the New Culture Movement in the late teens and early twenties but later turned away from this commitment. In a word, these so-called "old-style" writers were not readily distinguishable from the "new-style" writers. For more information on the two periodicals, see Fang Hanqi, et al., *Zhongguo xinwen shiyan tongshi (History of Chinese journalism)* (Beijing: China Renmin University Press, 1996), vol. 2, pp. 112-13, 195-96; Wang Huilin, ed., *Zhongguo baokan cidian, 1815-1949 (Dictionary of Chinese periodical press, 1815-1949)*, pp. 48, 84. For the attack, see *Xin xing daode taolun ji*, p. 75; and Song Yunbing, "Kaiming Jiushi" (Reminiscences of Kaiming)," *Wen shi ziliao xuan ji (Selected materials on cultural history)* zhong 31 (1962): p. 3.

⁷⁷ Chen Bainian, "Yifu duoqi de xing hufu" ("New rational for polygamy"), *Xiandai pinglun* 1, no. 14 (March 1925); reprinted in *Xin xing daode taolun ji*.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Zhang Xichen, "Mantan Shangwu yinshuguan," p. 117.

⁸⁰ Wu was a close friend of Hu Yuzhi through whom he became a friend of Zhang. His residence on Sande Alley was chosen because it was away from Baoshang Road where both Shangwu's Editorial Department and Zhang Xichen's residence were. Wu Juenong, "Wo he Kaiming shudian de guanxi," in *Wo Yu Kaiming (Kaiming and I)* (Beijing: Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe, 1985), pp. 81-82.

⁸¹ Zhang, Xichen. "Mantan Shangwu yinshuguan," pp. 117-18.

⁸² *Jing bao* enjoyed a circulation of 50,000 in the 1920s, the largest by little periodicals of the time. See Fang Hanqi, et al., *Zhongguo xinwen shiyan tongshi*, vol. 2, pp. 195-96. *Shishi xin bao* was one of the most widely read newspapers of the Republican era. Its exact circulation during in the mid-1920s is unknown. In 1931, its circulation was 50,000, which marked it as the third largest among the daily newspapers in the country. See *Shengbao nianjian* (Shanghai: Shengbao Press, 1933), R2-3.

⁸³ Zhou Jianren, "Da 'Yifu duoqi de xin hufu' (A response to 'New Rational for the practice of concubinage)" *Mangyuan* (May 1925): 75.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Zhang Xichen, "Cong shangren dao shangren," p. 249

⁸⁶ At the time, Shaoxing was still under its old name, Kuaiji.

⁸⁷ There are no studies on Zhang available. This biological sketch is based on two autobiographical essays by him and two short biographical essays on him by his children. See Zhang Xichen, "Cong shangren dao shangren." and "Yige pingfan de ren" (An ordinary person), reprinted in Wang Zhiyi, *Kaiming shudian jishi* (*Essays on the Kaiming Press*) (Taiyuan, Shanxi: Shanxi renming chubanshe, 1991), pp. 212-19. Zhang Shiyang, "Zhang Xichen xianshen zhuanlue," in *Wo yu Kaiming* (*Kaiming and I*), pp. 172-177; and Zhang Shiyang, et al., "Zhang Xichen xiansheng xiaozuan (A short biography of Mr. Zhang Xichen)," in *Zhang Xichen xiansheng dancheng yibai zhounian jinian wenji* (*Collected essays commemorating Zhang Xichen on his 100th birthday*) (Shanghai: Chuban shiliao bianjibu, 1990), pp. 206-34.

⁸⁸ Since the dawn of the twentieth century, in order to attract students to be trained in modern curriculum and become schoolteachers and meet the high-demand of rapid modernization of education, consecutive Chinese governments set up normal schools and teaching colleges in provinces that were not only tuition-free, but also offered free room and board. In exchange, the graduates would serve in the teaching profession for a certain number of years. Predictably, the students came from middle level, rather than the upper crust, of local society.

⁸⁹ See *Shangwu yinshuguan jiuushi nian*, pp. 16; Zhang Xichen "Cong shangren dao shangren."

⁹⁰ My biographical sketch is based on the following sources: *Mingguo renwu da cidian* (*Dictionary of Republican personalities*), p. 523; Zhou Jianren, "Daerwen jinhua lun shi zenyang xiying zhe wo de—zaonian xue kexue zhuyi" (How did Darwin's evolution theory inspire me: A recollection of my early years of studying science) and Ku Minruan's preface to Zhou's *Hua niao chu yu yi qita* (*Flower, Birds, Worms, Fish, and Others*) (Fuzhou: Fujian kexue jishu chubanshe, 1999). I have also consulted various biographies of Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren.

⁹¹ Zhou Jianren, "Daerwen jinhua lun."

⁹² In 1918, Chen wrote a series of articles attacking mysticism and superstition for *New Youth*. Lu Xun took note of Chen's role in the cultural battle, see Lu Xun, "Wo zhi zhenjie guan" (My views on chastity), *New Youth* 5, n. 2 (August 1918).

⁹³ *Ibid.* In the 1930s, Chen served as the secretary general of the Examination Branch of the Republican government. He followed the GMD government to Taiwan in 1948.

⁹⁴ After he declined Shangwu's offer of the editor-in-chief position, Hu recommended Wang Yunwu in his stead. Wang once taught English at Zhongguo gongxue where Hu Shi was a student.

⁹⁵ Zhou Jianren, "Da 'Yifuduoqi de xin hufu'", Zhang Xichen, "Bo Chen Bainian jiaoshou 'Yifuduoqi de xin hufu'," in *Xin xing daode taolun ji*, pp. 75, 79-80.

⁹⁶ Zhou Jianren, "Da 'Yifuduoqi de xin hufu'", in *Xin xing daode taolun ji*, p. 75. Chen eventually printed the responses by Zhang and Zhou in *Modern Critique* as courtesy required, claiming that he had been on a trip away from Beijing when the responses from Shanghai arrived in the mail and thus failed to give immediate attention to the matter.

⁹⁷ Zhang Xichen, "Bo Chen Bainian jiaoshou 'Yifuduoqi de xin hufu'," in *Xin xing daode taolun ji*, pp. 79-80.

⁹⁸ Lu Xun, "Lu Xun zai ge Xu Guangpin de xing" ("Lu Xun's letter to Xu Guangpin"), April 28, 1925.

⁹⁹ In the fall of 1924, the autonomous student union at the Beijing Women's Normal petitioned President Yang Yinyu to withdraw her decision to dismiss three fellow students for their failure to return to school on time after the summer recess. When their petition was rejected, the students started a movement the following spring to oust Yang. Eventually in May, they won the support of Lu Xun, Zhou Zuoren, and many others who were teaching there part-time. Escorted by the army, Yang soon made a come back which was immediately followed by a decree from Zhang Shizhao, then the education minister, that the college be dissolved and all students dismissed. Zhang also fired Lu Xun who was employed by the Education Ministry. In this political struggle, Chen Yuan was a personal friend and supporter of President Yang and wrote a series of articles in *Modern Critic* attacking the protesting students and their faculty supporters. This conflict continued when the students of the Beijing Women's Normal joined the street demonstration against the warlord government's concession toward an aggressive Japan and was fired upon by government soldiers. Lu Xun and his colleagues were outraged by the March 18 Massacre while Chen Yuan and his colleagues at *Modern Critic* expressed the view that the students were victims of political manipulated by their radical teachers and politicians.

¹⁰⁰ Lu Xun, "Bianwuan xieqi" (Postscript), reprinted in *Xin xing daode taolun ji*, pp. 98-99.

¹⁰¹ This collaboration was all the more remarkable because Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren had a bitter breakup two years earlier and never spoke to each other for the rest of their lives. For family reasons, the relationship between Zhou Zuoren and his younger brother Jianren had also grown tense.

¹⁰² The essays by Gu Junzhen and others in *Women's Weekly* (March 22 and June 10 issues, 1925), *Jin bao supplement* (April 16, 1925) were reprinted in *Xin xing daode taolun ji*, pp. 149-176.

¹⁰³ Its later glory notwithstanding, *New Youth* during its first couple of years had a very limited audience and the radical calls for a “literary reform” by Hu Shi and a “literary revolution” by Chen Duxiu at the beginning of 1917 went unheeded. The editors started to look for a potential opponent and found one in Lin Shu, the celebrated classicist and translator of Western literature. Despite their attacks on Lin, they failed to produce any response from leading reformists, including Lin himself. The following year, in order to spur heated debate and thereby arouse public interest, Qian Xuantong faked a reader’s response written in archaic classical prose defending Confucian notions of literature and making unsubstantiated attacks on the *New Youth* editors. He then wrote a much longer rebuttal ridiculing the established reformist writers. This otherwise comic act miraculously turned around the fate of the magazine and of the New Culture project it promoted. Enraged, Lin Shu famously walked into the trap by siding with the fictive opponent to *New Youth* and producing point-by-point counter-rebuttals. The ensuing polemics, this time for real, ironically turned the *New Youth* “lonely” campaign into a genuine literary revolution. The episode was subsequently celebrated in May Fourth historiography since the 1920s, its texts compiled into May Fourth anthologies. For more details of the story, see Chow Tse-tsung, *The May Fourth Movement*, pp. 66-67.

¹⁰⁴ See Lydia Liu’s discussion in her *Translingual Practice*, p. 81.

¹⁰⁵ Zhang Xichen, “Bo Chen Bainian jiaoshou ‘Yifuduoqi de xin hufu,’” p. 85.

¹⁰⁶ See for example many articles in *Wo yu Kaiming (Kaiming and I)*, pp. 11, 39, 81, 289. The May Fourth iconoclasm, to which the Communists claim to be heirs, had made any association with “Confucianism,” “tradition,” or “feudalism,” a kiss of cultural death.

¹⁰⁷ The CCP has made a similar argument in regard to the May Fourth Movement. According to its dogma, the May Fourth Movement was one inspired by bourgeois liberalism that demolished the authority of Confucian tradition. But May Fourth intellectuals proved to be ineffective in the face of political brutality. They therefore could only redeem themselves and their cause by merging with the masses in a socialist revolution.

¹⁰⁸ Zhang Xichen, “Xin xing daode yu duoqi: da Chen Bainian xiansheng,” and Zhou Jianren, “Lianai ziyou yu yifuduoqi: da Chen Bainian xianshen,” in *Xin xing daode taolun ji*, pp. 42-43, 52. Since the height of the May Fourth and throughout the 1920s, Russell and Bebel both enjoyed exalted status among new intellectuals and students in China.

¹⁰⁹ For Chen’s argument, see his “Yifuduoqi de xin hufu,” and “Da Zhang Zhou er xiansheng lun yifuduoqi,” in *Xin xing daode taolun ji*, pp. 39, 62-64. For the Zhang and Zhou’s, see “Xin xing daode yu duoqi,” and Zhou Jianren, “Lianai ziyou yu yifuduoqi,” respectively, pp. 46-47, 52-53, 93-96, 114, 118-130.

¹¹⁰ Chen Bainian, “Yifuduoqi de xin hufu,” p. 38.

¹¹¹ *Xin xing daode taolun ji*, pp. 44, 89-92, 142-43.

¹¹² *Xin xing daode taolun ji*, p. 79.

¹¹³ *Xin xing daode taolun ji*, p. 61.

¹¹⁴ *Xin xing daode taolun ji*, pp. 102-103.

CHAPTER 2 MAY FOURTH SOCIOBILITY BEHIND MAY FOURTH PUBLISHING

Kaiming Press was born out of intense polemics between established liberal intellectuals and their younger and lesser-known radical counterparts. Despite the common notion that Zhang Xichen was the founder of the Press, the project was far from being his solo undertaking. Instead, the Press was the brainchild of an intellectual collective. Zhang's removal by Shangwu from *Ladies' Journal* outraged friends and supporters who regarded it as their loss of ground and publishing space which led them to push for the founding of an independent women's magazine. Zhang recalled the events surrounding the founding of *New Women*, the precursor of the Press,

[After I lost my editorship at *Ladies' Magazine*,] several of my friends egged me on to form another women's magazine, entitled *New Women*, making me the editor while promising me funding. Taken in by these buzzing friends, I accepted their proposal, thus breaking my rice bowl of fifteen years at Shangwu.¹

Elsewhere, he also wrote,

The founding of Kaiming was not my initiative. It was all due to my friends' urge, conception, and help. Now that the press has survived several major changes [in press's history] and wars [in the national history] all depended on the efforts of these friends.²

When removed from the editorship of *Ladies' Journal*, Zhang managed to retain employment at Shangwu. He ran considerable risk in view of Shangwu's rule which prohibited its editors from publishing competing periodicals so Zhang was the least unlikely to be the one to initiate the Kaiming project. Indeed, his fear proved to be warranted when his clandestine activity was exposed to the Shangwu management right after the release of the inaugural issue of the new monthly, leading to his prompt dismissal from Shangwu all together. Wu Juenong, one of the early supporters, confirmed Zhang's story. "We as Zhang's friends...especially Hu Yuzhi and Zheng

Zhengduo, were outraged [about Shangwu's action]. Yuzhi initiated the idea to found our own women's magazine and keep Zhang Xichen and Zhou Jianren running it."³ Hu Yuzhi and Zhen Zhengduo were assistant editors of *Eastern Miscellany* and *Short Story Monthly* respectively at Shangwu and Wu was Hu's childhood friend. Quickly, friends and friends' friends were contacted and mobilized. As many as 40 to 50 self-styled supporters came together to form the Society for *New Women*. Since the magazine was to be a cause rather than a business, its supporters each made a five-yuan donation to pay for the initial printing and distribution costs and wrote for the magazine on a voluntary basis.⁴ In January 1926, the new monthly was launched from the humble one-room apartment of Wu Juenong, a close friend of Hu Yuzhi since childhood.⁵ After Zhang lost his employment at Shangwu, his friends again helped him find a job and then rallied behind him to launch *Kaiming*. Two years later, this same circle of friends, led by Xia Mianzun and others, worked together to successfully incorporate the press, a critical step that would lead to its future prominence.

Exclusively committed to publishing May Fourth-inspired modern literature, sciences, and social sciences, *Kaiming* was one of the first avant-garde new presses, setting a new publishing trend that would change the dynamics of the publishing and reading world during the second half of the 1920s. Unlike some new presses owned by professional publishers who hired new writers to be partners or editors, *Kaiming* was initiated, staffed, and run entirely by the writers themselves. One of the early supporters, therefore, called it a press where "shareholders, editors, and authors are all rolled into one."⁶ These men were from a constellation of conjoined coteries of friends who enjoyed close personal, intellectual, and financial ties to *Kaiming* during its early years and

through most of its 26 year span. Zhang Xichen, who assumed the position of the manager at the beginning of the Press's operation, remained a central figure throughout its history. So were Kaiming's two long term editors-in-chief, the educator Xia Mianzhun (serving from 1927 to 1946) and the celebrated novelist Ye Shengtao (as senior editor from 1932 to 1946 and editor-in-chief from 1946 to 1953). These few names were only part of the core of the Kaiming network. Many more names will be introduced here to give a concrete sense of the networking process and the network's extent and effects. While not all of them sound familiar to English-language readers, these are all shining stars on the May Fourth cultural landscape and thus well-known to their contemporary public as well as Chinese readers of later generations. It was the concerted effort of this large network that defined the intellectual orientations of the press at different historical points and turned it into an effective cultural enterprise whose powerful and extensive influence touched more than one generation of educated Chinese youth. The press in turn transformed these intellectuals, allowing them to play not only the traditional role of authors but also the new role of agents, i.e. publishers and editors, in the exciting and tension-ridden drama of the production of modern print culture.⁷

In this chapter, I direct my critical scrutiny to the friends and friendships in both informal networks and formal organizations that shaped the Kaiming enterprise. Conversely, their own career success was often tied to the easy publishing access provided by Kaiming, thus forming a symbiotic relationship with the press they supported. It is noteworthy that the Kaiming network was a heterogeneous one. Its memberships were consistent but not exclusive. Many members were well connected to other cultural and political circles. Neither was the network bound by a particular

ideology. Rather they were linked together through personal friendships that transcended sometimes even open ideological disagreement.⁸ Such heterogeneity and openness that characterized the Kaiming network proved to lend to it power, flexibility, and longevity. At the most visible level, Kaiming's founding is backed by three societies in Shanghai all of which had Zhang as a member—the Literary Research Association (1921-the early 1930s), the Women's Question Research Association (1922-the late 1920s), and the Lida Society (1925-the early 1930s).⁹ If one looks beyond these organizational structures, one can see personal connections that ultimately proved to be more powerful and long-lasting mechanisms in the support of Kaiming. The aforementioned societies were, in fact, built upon existing personal networks which outlasted all the societies they supported. My examination of these clusters of friends reveals that, while the city of Shanghai plays a key role in the publishing and distribution of print culture, as well as in a variety of cultural and educational experimentations which involved the three societies, the metropolis was only half the story. The other half is traceable to cultural hubs of the imperial era—the prosperous towns of northern Zhejiang and southern Jiangsu Provinces, otherwise known as Jiangnan.

May Fourth societies and cultural battles are often seen as among the most salient features of the history of New Culture from its inception in 1917 to the eve of the War of Resisting Japan (1937-1945). Indeed, for many scholars, the history of New Culture is a delineation of the ideas espoused by the leading societies and the polemics between one another. Here, I move away from the canonical view that stresses the shared literary, cultural and political ideology that brought together the individual members into a society. Instead, I highlight the dynamics of personal friendships and intellectual networks behind

a society's formation and the May Fourth cultural production in general. I argue that a (re)configuration of social, cultural networks which functioned as historical agents of ideological formation and that May Fourth New Culture hinged as much on this (re)configuration of networks as on avant-garde thoughts or texts. Interpersonal relationships and networks not only helped to shape identities, germinate and spread ideas, initiate organizations, and in this case, create media access but also defined the dynamics of ideas, organizations, and media. A close look at the formation and inner workings of the Kaiming network reveal the distinctive May Fourth pattern of intellectual sociability marked by communal solidarity that both drew upon and departed from traditional literati practices. Set against the backdrop of the rise of May Fourth-inspired independent publishing in the mid to late-1920s, I demonstrate Kaiming's distinctive style and role in providing a charged forum for polemics and avant-gardism that was characteristic of the May Fourth project.

Network and Networking, Traditional Style

It is perhaps not coincidental that the Chinese term, *guanxi*, has acquired universal usage when referring to social networks. Social capital, defined by Pierre Bourdieu as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of... mutual acquaintance and recognition," seems to carry more weight in China than anywhere else in the world.¹⁰ Throughout history, due to their access to more elaborate family connections with the outside world, richer educational and work experience, and greater access to communication and transportation means, the literati elite in China were especially apt at building complex and powerful networks that generated social capital for them to sustain their status and identity. Social networks,

long studied by sociologists and social historians, have drawn attention from intellectual and cultural historians only in the past decade as a vital form of resources and even historical force. Recent scholarship has demonstrated how events, be it the origins of the Opium War of 1839-1842 or the Republican revolution of the 1910s and 1920s, look different when we consider the dynamics of networks.¹¹ It is through this same lens that I view the May Fourth cultural project which lends us a fresh understanding of it.

In his study of the political use of literati networks in promoting agendas ranging from establishing a particular poetic style as dominant to foreign policy, James Polachek observes, “[The] over-competitiveness of examination life tended in and of itself to breed a psychology of moral bravado and a taste for membership in close-knit loyalty groups, especially among scholars at the early, insecure stage of their careers.”¹² In his cynicism towards moralism, Polachek may have overstated his case against the Han-Chinese scholar-officials who insisted on banning opium, which he interpreted as mere political maneuvers to strengthen their hands in court politics. Nonetheless, his assessment of the propensity of yet-to-be-established members of the literati class in late imperial times to form elaborate networks was not only perceptive, but also applicable to the self-styled young intellectuals of the early republican era. If the over-competitiveness of the examination system led to acute anxiety of the lettered class about their identity and place in their society, its abolition in 1905 could only serve to increase rather than to reduce it. While the examination system was rigidly hierarchical and competition grueling, and the degree it rendered offered only a meager opportunity for official advancement, it was nonetheless a familiar path that offered at least public certification of elite social status for degree-holders. With their alienation from the state, a process started in the waning

years of the Qing and completed by the abolition of the examination, the educated class faced an even more uncertain future in a brand new world undergoing cataclysmic change. Many old avenues were closed. In the meantime, new possibilities became available to those who dared to explore and those with a network that offered them rich social capital in their effort to reinvent themselves.

Social capital was exactly that critical ingredient that helped future members of the Kaiming network to carve out a successful career path and then exert tremendous influence over the cultural development in Republican China. Compared to those who had gone to the most prestigious Beijing University or studied abroad, the Kaiming personalities had a shared disadvantage which must have been an added source of that acute anxiety suffered by all aspiring intellectuals —the lack of educational pedigree and academic degrees, or what Pierre Bourdieu calls “cultural capital”. With only rare exceptions, the active members of the group, including Zhang Xichen, Hu Yuzhi, Xia Mianzun, Feng Zikai, and Ye Shengtao had never crossed the college threshold, much less basked in the glory of Beijing University like many of their more fortunate peers who, by virtue of being the students and followers of the May Fourth leaders at the University, became readily identified as being at the forefront of the New Culture. In this light, their social-capital-generating networks became essential. By unpacking the web of interpersonal relationships among the Kaiming personalities, I will illustrate the inner dynamics and power of the Kaiming network.

In examining the polemics over the issue of sexuality, we have already had a taste of the kind of bravado and belligerence demonstrated by Zhang Xichen, Zhou Jianren and others, which was a mechanism typically adopted by those who were “at the early,

insecure stage of their careers”.¹³ Here, I will show that the networking propensity among these self-conscious new intellectuals was an equally pronounced characteristic. In a rapidly modernizing China, networks continued to be built based traditional categories of social connections such as school and workplace affiliations, student-mentor bonds, and native-place ties.¹⁴ The importance of such friendship networks lay not only in their careerist utility, as Polachek has shown in his work on late Qing literati politics, but also in their role of forging identities, as Keith Shopper has demonstrated in his study of the revolutionary intellectual Shen Dingyi. In the post-examination, post-imperial times, when social class and cultural identity became extremely fluid, the way one defined oneself and the way society defined him became tied more than ever to his or her association.

To forge a connection, places that shaped one’s experiences and identities, such as the native place and the places of school and work, were central to initiating the networking process. Native place had always been a key component to one’s identity in China, and native place ties a key ingredient in one’s networking initiative. It is important to note that the native-place tie only took on meaning outside one’s native place among sojourning co-provincials. During the late Qing and Republican era, no other place hosted bigger congregations of sojourners than Shanghai.¹⁵ The metropolis, with its burgeoning publishing industry, offered both belletrists and mission-driven intellectuals a new opportunity to distinguish themselves while making a living by writing and editing. The extra-territoriality in its foreign concessions also offered revolutionary intellectuals of all persuasion and their publishers relative political freedom. Located in Shanghai, the Kaiming Press drew its supporters primarily from Jiangnan.

According to Zhu Lianbao, a veteran in the Shanghai publishing industry, of the 177 he knew who were either the founders or in charge of a Shanghai press or both, 79 were from Zhejiang and 56 from Jiangsu, comprising more than 75% from these two provinces.¹⁶ The vast majority of those who pursued writing and editing careers in Shanghai in the 1920s and 1930s were also from Jiangnan, a continuation of the region's dominance of the Chinese cultural scene since late imperial times. This means that co-provincial ties alone became insufficient in creating interpersonal bonds underlying one sojourning network that was distinctive from or even competing with another. As the Kaiming network demonstrated, it was common school and work affiliations and common experience and interests, combined with ties to a specific native place *within* Jiangnan that created affinity among its members.



8. The Yangzi Delta Region

source: "Zhongguo Zhejiang" website,
<http://www.zhejiang.gov.cn/gb/node2/node50/node51/node2183/index.html>



9. Irish crochet lace

The Shaoxing Connection

To outline the Kaiming network is like tracing an Irish crochet pattern where separately crocheted pieces of different motifs and textures are assembled on a mesh background. I selected Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province as my starting point, for it was the birthplace of Zhang Xichen and several other Kaiming personalities and thus one of the important conjoined pieces of the Irish crochet. With cultural roots traceable to the ancient kingdom of Yue in the sixth century, BCE and a history glittering of famous names, Shaoxing was the seat of an administrative center overseeing Shanying and Kuiji counties.¹⁷ During the late imperial and republican times, Shaoxing also became a prefecture administering seven to 14 counties in the environs.¹⁸ As a result, Shaoxing

was the name of the city, the county, and the prefecture. Shaoxing native place ties subsequently could be defined both narrowly for close bonds based on exclusivity or broadly in the interest of wider personal network-building. In general, however, the residents of the city and Shangying and Kuiji counties shared a stronger Shaoxing identity. People from the other six counties, such as Shangyu, retained their own specific identities while bearing a certain degree of affinity to Shaoxing. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Shanghai had eclipsed the glow of Shaoxing and other cultural hubs of imperial times, such as Suzhou in Jiangsu Province which is another location where one finds roots of the Kaiming network. However, Shaoxing, like its Jiangsu counterpart, continued to be an important place on the cultural and political map of China during this period. In fact, due to the geographic proximity between Shanghai and Shaoxing, which was within reach by a day's trip, the two places interacted closely, creating mechanisms that helped to shape the course of early twentieth-century China.

In the early decades of the twentieth century, a good number of Shaoxing's favorite sons and daughters claimed national attention. The first names inscribed in the Shaoxing pantheon of the new century included Cai Yuanpei, Xu Xiling, Qiu Jin, and Tao Chengzhang. The four were leading figures in the anti-Manchu Restoration Society (*Guangfu hui*) which was formed in Shanghai in 1904 with Cai as its chairman.¹⁹ Xu and Qiu became revolutionary martyrs in 1907, Tao fell to the assassin's bullet in 1912, while Cai went on to continue a long and influential career. All of them built their revolutionary careers on publishing and building schools in addition to direct political action, thus exerting an immense impact on their hometown during the 1900s. This was

especially evident in Shaoxing's new school system, which contributed to the formation of the first nexuses of future Kaiming personalities which I will elaborate in a moment.²⁰ In the late teens and twenties, many more names appeared in the Shaoxing pantheon, all directly or indirectly connected to Kaiming personalities. They included the Lu Xun (Zhou Shuren) and Zhou Zuoren brothers, two pillars of New Culture whose younger brother Zhou Jianren was Zhang Xichen's assistant editor at *Ladies' Journal*; Shao Lizhi, a leading left-leaning intellectual in the GMD who would chair Kaiming's board of directors from 1930 until 1953, offering Kaiming assistance and political protection in his capacity as GMD's Propaganda Minister and other important posts;²¹ and Liu Dabai, a radical during the May Fourth period who published almost all his five volumes of poetry through Kaiming and who, in his capacity as the deputy minister of education, helped Kaiming in winning its victory over World Books in a textbook controversy in 1930.²²

The individual who provided the personal link between the new Shaoxing schools and the emergence of a coterie of friends in Shaoxing, connecting the future Kaiming members, was Du Haisheng, a progressive gentry who exemplified the literati-gentry tradition of patronizing promising young people in his hometown.²³ Du founded Shangying-Kuaiji Lower Level Normal School (Shang-Kuai chuji shifan xuetang) in 1909 and served as its headmaster. Zhang Xichen became its first student and one of his disciples, sometimes receiving his personal financial assistance.²⁴ This school was part of the local initiatives sanctioned by the New Policy, in the last round of reform efforts before the Qing dynasty's demise in 1911. It was Cai Yuapei, freshly returned to his hometown after the failure of the Hundred Days Reform in 1898, who provided the leadership for these gentry initiatives. Cai first took over as headmaster of the most

prestigious school in the town, Shaoxing Prefecture Middle and High School, a post Du would hold in 1910 during which time he offered Lu Xun his first job as an instructor. In 1902, Cai founded the Education Association of China (*Zhongguo jiaoyu hui*) in Shanghai. In response, Du Haisheng and his second nephew (*tangzhi*) Du Yaquan, the soon-to-be editor of Shangwu's *Eastern Miscellary* who gave Zhang Xichen a job in the press, joined his fellow Shaoxing's progressive gentry to form the Shaoxing Educational Association (*Shaoxing jiaoyu hui*) the following year. Indeed, Du Haisheng occupied a noted place in local Shaoxing history for this period, which has heretofore eluded researchers' attention. When the city was taken over by the revolutionary forces headed by a comrade of Qiu Jin in 1911, Du was forced out of the school he founded for his alleged failure to rescue Qiu from her Qing captors. It was Lu Xun who replaced Du and was urged to collect materials to implicate Du in his alleged crime.²⁵ The school under Lu Xun's headmastership produced a number of students who later acquired their prominence in cultural circles. Among them were the brothers Sun Fuyuan and Sun Fuxi.²⁶ Due to their school and native-place ties, the Sun brothers became close friends of Zhang Xichen.²⁷ Fuyuan was an ardent supporter during Kaiming's initial conception, giving the press its name and calligraphy on its logo, while Fuxi remained in the inner circle of the press's authors. After the founding of Kaiming, the Shaoxing connection continued as Du continuously sponsored aspiring young Shaoxing natives by sending them to Kaiming for work opportunities. It was said that Zhang never declined help to anyone with a letter of introduction from his mentor.²⁸ In 1928, in gratitude to Du's help in his earlier career, Zhang invited Du to become the general manager of Kaiming.

Additionally, old connections in Shaoxing would be called upon when the press needed to raise funds.²⁹



10. Chunhui campus nesting among the White Horse Lakes surrounded by mountains, Shangyu, Zhejiang
Source: "Zhejiang Shangyu" website,
<http://www.shangyu.gov.cn/zjsy/syjk.jsp?LayId=25&LayName=%C3%82%C3%83%C3%93%C3%8E%C3%97%C3%8A%C3%94%C2%B4>



12. The Main Hall, 1921
Source: "Baima hu zaixian" website

The Chunhui Connection

The neighboring Shangyu county in Shaoxing Prefecture nurtured the growth of several interconnected clusters of friendships, often more closely-knit than its Shaoxing counterparts to which they also enjoyed tangible bonds. The linchpin of these clusters was Xia Mianzun (1886-1946), a Shangyu native who joined Kaiming in its second year and was instrumental in the reform of the press in 1928, and who devoted the rest of his life to the press.³⁰ In 1922, Xia found himself to be the strategic link between his patron, the venerable progressive educator and co-Shangyu native Jing Hengyi (courtesy name: Ziyuan, 1877-1938) who was to build a brand new school in their hometown and thus in need of a group of teachers, and a large cohort of personal friends that Xia had managed to make in various places who were willing to staff the new facility. Jin, a member of Sun Yat-sen's Revolutionary Alliance, had been closely associated with Cai Yuanpei and his

various education reform efforts.³¹ Chunhui was also to become the largest coterie of friends who firmly stood behind the Kaiming Press.

Xia Mianzun's relationship with Jin Hengyi began in the 1900s when both were studying in Japan. In 1908 when he was appointed the headmaster of Zhejiang Public Higher and Lower Normal School (Zhejiang guanli liangji shifan xuetang), Jin immediately hired Xia as the schools' dorm proctor and Japanese language translator.³² Xia was reappointed as an instructor of Chinese in 1919. The school was renamed Zhangjiang First Normal School (Zhejiang diyi shifan xuexiao) in 1913. During the May Fourth student movement in 1919-1920, the school became the hotbed for radical thinking and agitation in the lower Yangzi region.³³ For their role in reforming curriculum by adopting vernacular, introducing students to new ideas, and offering moral support to the student iconoclasm, Xia Mianzun and his colleagues including Chen Wangdao, Liu Dabai (a Shaoxing native mentioned earlier), and another Chinese instructor, earned the title of the "Big Four" [*si da jingang*] of the Zhejiang First Normal.³⁴ Zhejiang authority ordered the Jin to dismiss the four "agitators" but the headmaster stood behind them, after which all five resigned. Thereupon Jin started to work out a plan with a Shangyu retired businessman and philanthropist who committed 200,000 silver yuan to build Chunhui Middle School on the county's scenic White Horse Lakes.³⁵ In the spring of 1922, Chunhui opened its door to the first enrollment of fifty-seven students. With Jin's vision of the moral education of socially conscious modern citizens, a major generous private endowment, and an enthusiastic and talented faculty, Chunhui Middle School would soon gain national renown.

Earlier, Jin requested Xia to join him and entrusted him with the responsibility of recruiting new teachers.³⁶ Not surprisingly, Xia Mianzun's recruitment effort was directed at his former classmates, friends and former colleagues who were sometimes mutual friends of Jin Hengyi, as well as his former students. To narrate Xia's friendships with them entails the unfolding of his early biography.³⁷ Having passed the lowest county-level civil service examination in 1900, Xia had to face the post-examination world before he could advance further on the traditional ladder of success. After studying in Shanghai briefly and then teaching in his hometown at his father's school, Xia spent three years in Japan studying its language in preparation for college enrollment only to be forced to return for a lack of funds. During this time, he built his first network of friends including Jin Hengyi and Liu Shuqing, the latter joining the first group of teachers to arrive at Chunhui. Xia's much bigger coterie of friends and disciples emerged during his long tenure at Zhejiang First Normal. Among them, he invited Feng Zikai, a graduate of the school, to come aboard. Later in 1931, Xia invited another First Normal graduate Fu Binran directly into Kaiming in 1931 to be a co-editor of the press's primary monthly, *Middle School Students*, an addition that would push the magazine further to the left. After he was pressured to leave Zhejiang First Normal in 1919, Xia had a stint teaching at the China Public Academy (Zhongguo gongxue) in Shanghai, where he became acquainted with Zhu Ziqing who was also teaching there. A graduate of Beijing University, active member of the celebrated New Tide Society, and future leading poet and essayist, Zhu had been leading the harsh life of itinerant school teacher after leaving the university, changing jobs five times in the less than three years.³⁸ Learning of Zhu's predicament, Xia extended the invitation to Zhu to join the Chunhui faculty. Also

through his affiliation with the China Public Academy, Xia met Zhu Guangqian, the future leading theorist of aesthetics. When warfare between warlords interrupted school in 1924, Xia successfully persuaded Zhu Guangqian to become Chunhui's English teacher.³⁹



12. Xia Mianzun (1886–1946)
Source: Lou Shiyi, "Huanian Xia Mianzun xiansheng," *Chuban shiliao* 4 (December 1985): 30.



13. Friends saw Hu Yuzhi off to France in front of Xia Mianzun's house at Chunhui in 1925. From left to right: Ye Shengtao, Hu Yuzhi, Zhu Ziqing and others, at far right Xia Mianzun
Source: "Baima hu zaixian" website

The most important episode of Xia Mianzun's life journey with regard to the early intellectual orientation of Kaiming was his two-year sojourn in Changsha at Hunan First Normal. In 1920, Yi Peiji, who can be said to be the Hunan Province counterpart of Jin Hengyi, took over Hunan First Normal and proceeded to disband the existing faculty, which he replaced with a group of cultural radicals whom he attracted from all over the country, turning Hunan First Normal into a hotbed for radicalism. In addition to Xia, Kuang Husheng (1891-1933), a hot-blooded Hunanese, was among those invited. Kuang had already made his fame by creating, with his friends from Beijing Normal College, the most dramatic episodes in the May Fourth student movement, the beating of Zhang Zongxiang at the house of Cao Ruling, the ambassador to Japan and pro-Japanese foreign

minister under the warlord Beijing government respectively, and setting the house on fire.⁴⁰ Kuang and his friend Liu Xunyu were committed anarchists during their college years. In befriending Kuang and Liu and subsequently offering them jobs at Chunhui, and in particular the position of principal to Kuang, Xia helped to bring strong anarchist influence to Chuhui.⁴¹ Anarchism enjoyed enormous popularity among Chinese intellectuals in the first decades of the twentieth century. All mentors at Chunhui at this time, including the headmaster Jin Hengyi, had been attracted to the ideology at one point or another. It was the arrival of these anarchists that would rekindle the enthusiasm of their fellow colleagues at Chuhui for anarchist experiments, which I will discuss later. Once Chuhui started its operation, many more cultural celebrities and future celebrities would frequent the campus such as Liu Dabai, Chen Wangdao, Ye Shentao, Hu Yuzhi, and Yu Pinbo, would frequent the campus.

Not all who arrived at Chuhui did so simply because of their connection to Xia. They shared friendships amongst themselves. It was indeed a web of friendships we find at Chuhui, an Irish crochet pattern, rather than a Roman map where all the roads lead to the capital as the center. Xia was important but not central in this network. The next intersecting narrative I am to offer started in Suzhou in southern Jiangsu Province, a city with a history also traceable to Spring and Autumn times and known for its prosperity and cultural refinement since the beginning of the second millennium. At the opening of the new century, Ye Shengtao, at age six, was sent to a traditional private *sishu* school where he found kindred spirit in Gu Jiegang who lived in the same neighborhood as Ye.⁴² In a few years, the boys joined Wang Boxiang, and Guo Shaoyu as friends and playmates.

In the late 1910s, one by one, Ye, Gu, and Wang entered Suzhou First Public Middle School. While still in their early teens, the three started a poetry society and issued their own “little magazine.” Gu later went to Beijing University while Ye stayed behind in Jiangnan, too poor to follow suit. In 1919, on the recommendation of Gu, Ye became the only non-student member of the celebrated *New Tide* Society at Beijing University, through which he became connected to many promising young writers, including the brothers of Sun Fuyuan and Sun Fuxi, Zhang Xichen’s classmates from Shaoxing, and Zhu Ziqing. Later that year, Guo Shaoyu and Wang Boxiang also entered Beijing University for their college studies. Naturally, the two immediately joined the *New Tide* Society. The following year, Ye Shengtao and Zhu Zhiqing were both invited to teach Chinese at the middle school division of the China Public Academy where they met Feng Zikai and Zhou Yutong, a close friend of Kuang Husheng and Liu Xunyu, a fellow anarchist who was also an actor in the episode of the burning of the house of Cao Yuling.⁴³ With the exception of Gu Jiegang, all these friends became close Kaiming associates. While Gu’s connection to the press was limited to its publication between 1926 and 1941, his groundbreaking *Investigating Ancient Histories* (*Gushi bian*), a seven-volume work that led to his becoming the foremost historian of his generation.⁴⁴ Back to the group, Ye Shengtao and Zhu Zhiqing soon left China Public Academy to join the faculty of Zhejiang First Normal on the heels of the fervent iconoclast activities that led to the departure of Jin Hengyi and the Big Four. But in the Chinese *guanxi* culture, that was sufficient to make the necessary connection.

The Shangwu Connection

Many in this web of friendships eventually ended up at Shangwu in Shanghai before Kaiming got its start. As mentioned earlier, it was through his Shaoxing patron, Du Haisheng that Zhang Xichen acquired his job at Shangwu back in 1912. Two years later, a young man from Shangyu, arrived and moved straight to his dorm room provided by the press. His name was Hu Yuzhi (1896-1986), a man who would become a noted writer and activist in the twenties, a CCP member in 1933, a leading figure in left-wing circles throughout the thirties and forties, and the first director of the National Publishing Bureau responsible for reorganizing and supervising the entire publishing industry under the new Communist regime in 1949. Back in 1914, at the tender age of eighteen and without being able to afford a college education due to his family's genteel poverty, Hu managed to enter Shangwu's Editorial Departments as an "apprentice" (*lianxi sheng*) through a family connection and the strength of his essays.⁴⁵ Two years later, Zhang and Hu worked on the same editorial staff of the most influential *Eastern Miscellany*. During Shangwu's reform of the early 1920s, Zhang became the editor of *Ladies' Journal* in 1922 and Hu *de facto* chief editor of *Eastern Miscellany* in 1924. The close friendship that developed between the two young men during their Shangwu years would last for a lifetime.⁴⁶ Although Hu never joined the soon-to-be-founded Kaiming Press, he played a critical role at every stage of its development, including its founding in 1926, its general reform in 1928, and its turning into a state and private joint ownership in 1950.⁴⁷ When Zhang was forced out of Kaiming in a *coup d'état* in 1949, Hu offered his old friend a job as a senior official at the National Publishing Bureau.⁴⁸ Although Hu was seven years junior to Zhang, he seemed to be in a position to lead in their relationship due to his more

assertive personality, greater renown, and better connections to the publishing and political worlds.

In 1916, Zhang Xichen and Hu Yuzhi were joined by Shen Yanbin (1896—1981, otherwise known by his penname Mao Dun after 1927), a fresh graduate from the three-year undergraduate program of Beijing University.⁴⁹ Since Shangwu's Editorial Department was sizable, involving more than 160 editors, the vast majority of whom were young men at the lower rungs of the hierarchy, being in the same department did not immediately facilitate a bond between the three.⁵⁰ A momentous decision by the Shangwu leadership in 1920-1921 had a greater impact on the relationship between the three young men as well as the dynamics of its Editorial Department. After a failed effort to attract new intellectual celebrities from Beijing University to give its magazines a fresh image, the Shangwu leadership decided to use its own home-grown talent to do the job. Shen Yanbin was selected to be the new editor of Shangwu's embattled *Short Story Monthly* due to his Beijing University affiliation as well as the fact that some of his prolific writings and translations had appeared in the intellectual trend-setting periodicals such as *Learning Light (Xuedeng)*. As mentioned earlier, Zhang Xichen was chosen to take charge of *Ladies' Journal* around this time.

The launching of the first issue of the revamped *Short Story Monthly* can best be described as serendipity of history at work. Intending to throw out all the manuscripts by “old school” authors purchased by his predecessor, Shen had only a couple of weeks to put together the issue from scratch. Since nobody in his Shanghai circle of friends could contribute creative work, he picked the author of a short work printed in an old issue of *Short Story Monthly*, found his Beijing mailing address and wrote him requesting

contributions from him and his circle of friends. At the time, Wang was involved with a group of aspiring writers who had recently failed a bid for Shangwu's sponsorship for their proposed literary magazine. At this juncture, they were in the process of forming a literary society, named Literary Research Association, for the purpose of enhancing their bargaining power with publishers. When Wang circulated Shen's letter among his friends, the group's self-appointed leader Zheng Zhenduo responded to Shen enthusiastically, promising all the manuscripts Shen would need and in turn inviting Shen to be a founding member of their society. In the first revamped issue appeared Shen's "Manifesto on Reform" and Zheng Zhenduo's "Manifesto on the Founding of Literary Research Association." Thus the reform of an old-image magazine and the birth of a new-style literary society went hand in hand. Hereafter, the magazine was committed to printing the work of the society's members.⁵¹



14. The founding of the Literary Research Association in Beijing, 1921.
Source: "Laijin yuxuan" website, <http://www.ljyx.com.cn/history.htm>

Once allied with Shangwu's magazine, the Association quickly absorbed into its ranks Zhang Xichen, Hu Yuzhi, and other young willing editors at Shangwu. At the same time, Shangwu also opened up employment opportunities to many of the Association's

members. In the early 1920s, we see an influx of such new blood including Zheng Zhengduo, Zhou Yutong, Wang Boxiang, Ye Shengtao, and Fan Shoukang. Over the years, Zhang Xichen would tighten his bond with these intellectuals and subsequently solidify their collaboration during the founding of *New Women* and *Kaiming*. After his departure in 1926, Jin Zhonghua, Song Yunbing, and Zhang Mingyang joined *Shangwu* and became included in the network. The aforementioned all later became *Kaiming* editors or authors or both. Much of this transplantation was caused by *Shangwu*'s massive layoff of its staff after suffering heavy losses during Japan's bombing of Shanghai in January 1932. Without working at *Kaiming*, Zheng Zhengduo was always part of the *Kaiming* project. As one of the press's shareholders from the start, he became its supervisor (*jiancha ren*) when the press was incorporated in 1928.⁵² Since all of these intellectuals started their editing career at *Shangwu*, it can be said that *Shangwu* acted as a networking platform as well as professional training ground for future *Kaiming* personalities. [see Appendix A] The last three *Shangwu*-turned-*Kaiming* editors, Song, Jin and Zhang were left leaning Marxists. When Song and Jin joined the editorial board of *Kaiming*'s most important *Middle School Student* in the early 1930s and Zhang in the late 1940s, they added a decidedly leftist bent to the monthly.⁵³

The networks illustrated above started to connect in the early 1920s. Zheng Zhengduo, who grew up in Fujian and was an organizer *par excellence* in the Republican-era culture circles, connected with a couple of native Fujian students at Beijing University through a native place organization. By the time he was pushing for the founding of the Association, he had already befriended through his co-provincials at the university Zhang Xichen's middle-school friend Sun Fuyuan, and Ye Shengtao's

middle-school friend Guo Shaoyu. Evidently, Guo in turn introduced to him Ye Shengtao. As a result, Guo and Ye were among the twelve founding members of the Association.⁵⁴ Now Ye, both as an Association member and Shangwu editor, was in a position to facilitate connections between his Shanghai circle and friends at Chunhui Middle School. Other friends might have also connected independently with one another or discovered native-place ties among them, feeling added closeness.⁵⁵ The influx of visitors and temporary teachers to Chunhui enhanced the vibrant atmosphere at this rural school. As a member of this newly enlarged network, Zhang Xichen also made his presence felt at Chunhui and was even asked by Xia to teach a class there, an invitation he failed to accept due to his busy schedule.⁵⁶ Many members of the Chunhui circle also joined the Association. This helped to complete the Irish crochet pattern that was the Kaiming network. All of this double threading with multiple mutual friendship ties served to tighten and strengthen the Kaiming network. [See Appendix 1]

Close interactions on both the intellectual and mundane levels of life characterized each of the conjoined coteries of friends that constituted the Kaiming network. This was especially true at Chunhui, which provided an intimate community setting regulated by the rhythm of campus life. Feng Zikai contrasted this intimate rural setting with the more impersonal metropolitan environment, “Life in Shanghai seems to be busy with human interactions but it is actually lonesome; while life in the mountains seems to be lonesome, but it is actually full of human interactions.”⁵⁷ This almost idyllic communal life would continue at the Lida Academy in the northeast suburb of Shanghai founded by this same group of teachers who left Chunhui in early 1925. Once Kaiming was formed in 1926, its

physical location became the center of intellectual socialization for its supporters. The early Kaiming office was located in on Baoshang Lu, only a stones-throw away from Shangwu' Editorial Department. According to Qiang Juntao, one of the earliest Kaiming full-time editors, those friends still working at Shangwu would stroll by after work in threes and fours on a daily basis. During the long war years, the press, which relocated to the interior, frequently functioned as a temporary shelter in addition to a gathering place for its friends.⁵⁸



15. "Common House": Xia Mianzun's home built in 1921
Source: "Baime hu zhuixian" website



16. "Little Willow House": Feng Zikai's home built in 1922

The friendship circles reflected a continuation of traditional literati sociability. At Chunhui, friends frequented the house of Xia Mianzun, whose "love for entertaining friends equaled to his love for life," according to Zhu Ziqing.⁵⁹ Feng Zikai, Liu Xunyu, and Liu Shutong, whose houses were all next to Xia's residence also took their turn to entertain. Friends from elsewhere visited frequently, providing additional occasion for gatherings. Poetry writing, painting, and appreciation of traditional art connoisseurship, discussing issues of common interests were accompanied by a great deal of Shaoxing wine, with most becoming big social drinkers.⁶⁰ The drinking party tradition established here would continue at Kaiming for years to come. Qian Juntao recalled that a dozen friends who could down five bottles of Shaoxing wine at a single event formed a drinking

club at Kaiming that met every Saturday evening with catered dinners. The club's dinners were also attended by many non-regulars. "I could only handle three bottles in a sitting," Qian continued. But his boss Zhang Xichen lobbied on his behalf: "Let's relax our rule (of five-bottle drinking capacity) to include Juntao."⁶¹ Kaiming personalities, like the rest of their generation of educated elite regardless whether they belonged to old or new, and conservative or revolutionary camps, continued to use traditional literary and art forms for private expression and socialization. Classical poems and couplets were routinely composed and exchanged. Most enjoyed calligraphy-writing and seal-carving and some were quite good at it.⁶² Whenever possible, sightseeing trips were also among the favorite things for the friends to do together, allowing more occasion for poetry exchange. With the network deeply imbedded in the everyday life of the young intellectuals, their families also participated in building their interpersonal closeness. The wives played *majiang* together and children became playmates. In the some cases, social relationships were transformed into familial relationships as one family bonded with another through children's marriages.⁶³

Intellectual Sociability, May Fourth style

Friendships and networks were not just social capital for job opportunities and career advancement. More importantly, they functioned as informal organizations that facilitated the emergence or transmission of new ideas, new literary and artistic forms, and the formation of formal organizations. It was through this second set of functions that May Fourth generations redefined their sociability as *also* departing from the literati tradition. Their modern sociability was underscored by a conscious and declarative break

from what was perceived as traditional—Confucian ideas of family and hierarchy, classic literary forms, and classic literary language. For them, the “new” was perceived as qualitatively different from the traditional and intimately associated with the modern West. In the realm of ideas and practice, it meant liberalism, anarchism, other socialisms, and nationhood. The new social relations were governed by the principles of individual independence, equality, and mutual aid. When it came to organization, May Fourth societies were also characterized by new dynamics, marking themselves distinct from literati poetry societies of the imperial past. Ultimately, networks defied any attempt to be perceived simplistically along polarizing categories of the traditional and the modern. Keith Schoppa has shown how networks in which Shen Dingyi moved shaped his revolutionary experience and the revolution itself during early Republican era. I will similarly demonstrate how the Kaiming network promoted the May Fourth brand of modernity.⁶⁴

New Language, New Style, and New Identity



17. Ye Shengtao (1894-1988)

Source: “Renmin” website,
<http://culture.people.com.cn/GB/52471/52494/74628/5070229.html>



18. Ye Shengtao and Zhu Ziqing in 1921

Source: “Dongfang” website,
<http://www.dfxj.gov.cn/dfxjw/dfxj/node2832/jyda/userobject1ai61691.html>

A network has always functioned as a cradle for new ideas, styles, and identities. Indeed, we should always treat the mind as a communicative process involving interpersonal interactions. The Kaiming network departed from traditional literati sociability in that the ideas, styles, and identity nurtured by this network were consciously tied to modernity by the network's participants. The trajectory of Ye Shengtao's early career illustrated the importance of one's network in shaping ideas and identity. During the first half of the 1910s, Ye was an active contributor of classic-language short stories to *Saturday (Libailiu)* and other literary magazines run by litterateurs who would later be labeled by the New Culture camp as writers of the decadent Mandarin Duck and Butterfly literature. He was also absorbed in consuming such literature, subscribing to half dozen of literary magazines of the day. In his diary, he listed *Short Story Monthly* under the editorship of Wang Chunnong and fictional work of Xu Zhiyan as the best literary magazine and best literary writer respectively.⁶⁵ Wang and Xu were among the most prominent writers of the pre-May Fourth era. A great number of leading writers of popular literature were from Ye's hometown of Suzhou⁶⁶. Ye could easily have been drawn into their circles when he too sojourned to Shanghai, teaching at an elementary school in 1915-1916. Thanks to his best friends who went to the elite Beijing University, and especially Gu Jiegang who spent seven long years at the University, Ye assumed a different direction. Gu specifically cautioned Ye against succumbing to a career path as a popular fiction writer.⁶⁷ He apparently kept him updated on the intellectual events and trends in the capital, and, as a disciple of Hu Shi, most likely brought Ye's attention to *New Youth*, and its call for a literary revolution in

1917. Despite the fame it acquired in 1919, *New Youth* had a very limited circulation of two thousand in its first few years and would surely not have reached the small town of Lujiao outside of Suzhou where Ye was an elementary school teacher in 1917 by sheer market forces.⁶⁸ In other words, it was the network rather than more recognizable means such as schools and book market that provided the effective means of transmission of *avant-garde* ideas.

It was also through his personal friendship with Gu that Ye became the only non-student member in the New Tide Society at Beijing University when it was first founded in 1919, securing his New Culture identity and access to *New Tide* monthly and other progressive periodicals. Subsequently, Ye abandoned classical language in his writing and became committed to experimenting in new literary forms in the vernacular. Through these connections and activities, he would be invited to be a founding member of the Literary Research Association. When the tension between the old and new literary camps erupted into open hostility in the late teens and early twenties, Ye joined in the fight against the old-style writers, attacking them for their commercialism. He subsequently marked the beginning of his writing career with the publication of his first vernacular short story in *New Tide* in 1919, rather than his earlier work in *Saturday*.⁶⁹ Ye's friendship with Gu altered the trajectory of his career. It can also be further argued that since Ye's pioneering creative work written in the spirit of the literary revolution was among the foundational building blocks of New Literature, their friendship indeed affected the early history of New Literature. Recently, scholarship has undermined the conventional interpretation of the pre-May Fourth literary practice as fundamentally conservative and resistant to modern influence. Scholars start to see the relationship

between the May Fourth generations and the reformist writers, or writers of the so-called Mandarin Duck literature, as characterized by continuity rather than a fundamental rupture. In this light, Ye's switch from the old to new camp was as much an issue of cultural politics as a change of literary style and purpose.

The cohort at Chunhui was all about transmitting new ideas and visions up close and personal. Recently, some literary scholars in China have ventured to portray a "White Horse Lakes literary community" at Chuhui defined by a shared literary style and sentiments which would be continued when these writers re-converged at Kaiming.⁷⁰ What I argue here is that it was not a shared style that attracted these writers to Chunhui, but rather, it was the friendships, the place, and the intimate interactions on both the intellectual and mundane levels of life among community members that shaped their common style and outlook. Zhu Guangqian, the first and foremost aesthetics theorist and a leading essayist, presents a case in point. By Zhu's own account, Kuang Husheng opened his mind to anarchism which greatly influenced his work and activities; and Xia Mianzun, Zhu Ziqing, and Ye Shengtao convinced him to give up classical language to adopt the vernacular in writing.⁷¹ In Feng Zikai whose biggest claim to fame was his innovative and minimalist sketches called *manhua*, we find a similar story. In the preface to his first *manhua* collection released in 1925, his former teacher Xia Mianzun wrote in a manner befitting a mentor, "It was really I who pushed Zikai to take his style of sketches seriously."⁷² Trained as a general humanist in modern schools, Feng was interested in poetry, essay-writing, violin, oil painting, art theory, and so on, but had not decided on a particular direction for his future career development. In his free time, he liked to draw simple sketches and tape them to the wall of his living room for self-

amusement. Due to the encouragement of Xia and other friends, he submitted one of these sketches to the campus periodical publication which printed it on the cover of a 1922 issue. Two years later, Zhu Ziqing printed a second sketch by Feng in a publicly circulated poetry periodical issued by a group of friends. In the following year, Zheng Zhengduo, at the time the editor of a better-circulated *Literary Weekly*, started to print a series of the sketches and call them “*manhua*” or casual sketches. In 1926, it was the newly formed Kaiming Press that published his first collection.⁷³ This unleashed the floodgate of Feng’s artistic creativity. In the next three years, he published his sketches at the rate of one collection per year, quickly establishing himself as one of the foremost artists (authors) of his generation.



20. “The Editor:” Feng Zikai’s sketch of Liu Xunyu
Source: Feng Yiyin, *Wode fuqin*, p. 108.



An illustration in *Education of Love* by Feng Zikai
Source: Xia Hongning, *Xia Mianzun sanwen yiyen jingxuan*, p. 252

Xia Mianzun himself was not beyond the influence of his network. Chuhui, like Zhengjiang First Normal before it, was built to realize Jin Hengyi’s notion of education

for the purpose of building moral character (*rengē jiaoyu*). Teachers were not just transmitters of knowledge and skills. Their mission was also to transform their students' outlook and behavior by moral examples and compassion rather than disciplinary rules. In so doing, teachers and students worked together to build moral communities where everyone was resolved to combine independent personhood (*duli rengē*) with desire to serve the public good.⁷⁴ Such conviction combined the Confucian approach to the training of moral humanists with the modern ideas of citizenry and nationhood. It offered an alternative to the utilitarianism and pragmatism of the vocational school education model promoted by Huang Yanpei in Jiangsu Province that had come into vogue in the late teens and twenties.

In this light, it was no surprise when, embarking on his first major translation effort at Chunhui in 1923, Xia chose *Cuore (Heart)* by the Italian author Edmondo de Amicis, a novel strong on these themes. Set in the backdrop of the Italian independence wars and unification, the novel glorifies patriotism and national strength. Even more pronounced in the novel, written in the form of a schoolboy's diary, are the themes of the power of love that transcend class barriers, ethics of equality and labor, and education through moral example and persuasion. This was exactly what Xia tried to convey to his readers as he wrote in his translator's preface

The affective bond between parents and children, teachers and students, and between friends, the bond that manifests our humanity towards one another sounds like something perhaps only exists in a utopia. Even so, after we gain a real feel of the ideal society from this book, we cannot help but want our society to be like that.⁷⁵

In order to underscore theme of the human bond in the book, he titled the Chinese edition, *Education in Love (Ai de jiaoyu)*. It is noteworthy that, when writing this novel,

Edmondo de Amicis was on his way to embracing socialism. He had joined Italian Socialist Party a few years afterwards. Not surprisingly, the ideas and sentiments expressed in the novel struck a sympathetic cord in Xia and others at Chunhui, who were under the influence of their anarchist colleagues.

Once it was complete, the translation manuscript of *Heart* bore an even greater imprint on Xia Mianzun's friendship network which helped it to become arguably the most widely circulated translation work of literature during the Republican era. In his preface, Xia thanked Hu Yuzhi for helping to get the manuscript serialized in *Miscellany* in 1923. "My neighbors Liu Xunyu and Zhu Peixuan (Zhu Ziqing) were my earliest readers, critiquing and editing every section of my manuscript as soon as I was done", he continued. "And the cover design and inside illustrations were all done by another neighbor of mine Feng Zikai."⁷⁶ Xia's translation came out in book form first through Shangwu. It was said that the first day the book reached Shangwu's retail store, Xia rushed with great excitement only to be told by an impudent clerk that he could not locate this little book among the rich collection of Shangwu new titles. Indignant, Xia terminated the book contract with Shangwu and transferred its publishing rights to Kaiming, which was still in the process of being formed.⁷⁷ In fact, after being released by Shangwu, the book did not attract much public attention. After the switch to Kaiming, it was rigorously promoted through various advertising channels, including the subscription-free *Kaiming* magazine.⁷⁸ In 1930, Kaiming even issued a book, *An Account of Practicing Education in Love*, a story of how teachers and their students followed the examples in the book to make love central to the teacher-student relationship, teaching and learning experience.⁷⁹ More significantly, the novel was

discussed and its excerpts used in Kaiming's textbooks and school reference books compiled by Ye Shengtao, Zhu Ziqing, Wang Boxiang, and Xia himself.⁸⁰ Consequently, following its initial release in 1926, Xia's translation enjoyed enduring popularity through thirty-nine print runs in two decades.⁸¹

Three May Fourth Societies

Perhaps more important than new ideals and styles, it was a new type of organization that ultimately defined May Fourth intellectual sociability and May Fourth identity. The May Fourth era was characterized by fervent organizational activities among aspiring young writers. Every cluster of friends strove to form a society which would be brought to life by publishing a *tongren* periodical, a non-profit, agenda-driven, independent publication by a group of like-minded friends. These societies tended to optimize the aggregate social capital within a network. Always tied to avant-garde periodical publishing, May Fourth societies offered their individual members ideal mechanisms to enter the field of cultural production.

For centuries, the Chinese literati class enjoyed a tradition of forming poetry societies which they sometimes exploited for political and career purposes. In that sense, May Fourth societies can be said to be a continuation of traditional practices. There were qualitative differences between the two, however. First, even the most politicized poetry society of imperial times shunned the self-image of being a politically motivated organization. Typically, they carefully cultivated an air of scholarship and literary

erudition that was detached from the political and social issues of their day. In contrast, a May Fourth society by definition was formed by politically conscious and socially engaging self-styled new intellectuals who came together with a clearly articulated and well publicized agendas aimed at bringing about cultural and social change. Second, a traditional poetry society tended to be very loosely organized, its membership was not always clear, and its members met infrequently and irregularly. Collective actions in the society's name were rare. Sometimes the contour of the society and the trajectory of its history were indistinguishable from those of its underlying social network. A May Fourth society, on the other hand, was invariably an organization bound by bylaws and guidelines, its founding accompanied by the issuance of a manifesto. Memberships usually required registration and a regular fee. Finally, a literati poetry club sometimes engaged in compiling and printing the anthologies of its members. The circulation of such publications rarely reached beyond its members social networks. By contrast, the tenure of a May Fourth society started only when it managed to issue a *tongren* periodical. The success of such a society strongly relied upon the circulation of its periodical assisted by the book market.

As mentioned earlier, the Kaiming Press was supported by three May Fourth societies in Shanghai: the Women's Questions Research Association, the Literary Research Association, and the Lida Society. These societies were in turn products of the intellectual networks illustrated above. Their memberships were interlocked as most of the Kaiming intellectuals were actively involved in more than one of the above societies. (See Appendix B) Each of the three societies focused on one of the themes that most captured the imagination of the May Fourth intelligentsia: feminism, new literature, and

anarcho-communism. The relationships between these societies and their times were dialectic in that they both reflected and changed the historical trajectory of 1920s China.

Prior to the official launching of the Kaiming Press, the majority of Kaiming's books were issued in the name of the Women's Question Research Association (hereafter referred to as the WQRA) in the form of the WQRA Book Series. The association was initiated in August 1922 on the heels of Shangwu's installation of Zhang Xichen as the editor of *Ladies' Journal*.⁸² Typically, a society was formed first to launch a periodical. In this case of reverse chronology, the sudden availability of a commercially published magazine offered aspiring writers in Zhang's circle an excellent opportunity to appear in front of the reading public as experts on the issue of women's emancipation. From its roster of seventeen founding members, we can see that more than half of the names belong to the constellation of friends that I mapped out earlier, including, in addition to Zhang himself, Mao Dun and Hu Yuzhi from Shangwu, and Xia Mianzun from Chunhui Middle School. The WQRA's manifesto proclaimed its commitment to the study and promotion of reforms in the areas of women's education, job opportunity and financial security, marriage law, political rights, and the abolition of the deeply embedded double standard gender morality.⁸³ Specific plans were elaborated as to ways to address each of the above categories of issues. Indicative of the prevailing sentiment of the time, the association called for the righting of the wrongs done to women, so as to achieve the goals of furthering the "development of the [Chinese] culture and the evolution of the [Chinese] race."⁸⁴ In sum, with such a broad but concrete agenda, the WQRA gave the fledgling feminists legitimacy and organizational support in their endeavors.

To decrease its reliance on a Shangwu periodical and to strengthen its organizational image and effect, the WQRA started to build connections with other organizations involved in women's issues through existing personal ties, collaborating with the newly formed Chinese Contraception Research Society (*Zhonghua jieyu yanjiushe*) immediately after its founding and the more politically radical *Women Critic* (*Funu pinglun*, 1921-1923) edited by Chen Wangdao from the Zhejiang First Normal connection the following year. *Women Critic* was a supplementary of *Republic Daily* (*Minguo ribao*) at the time edited by Shao Lizi from the Shaoxing connection. Together with the Contraception Society, the WQRA issued a *tongren* magazine, *Modern Women* (*Xiandai funu*). In August 1923, the two societies merged their weekly with *Women Critic* to become the influential *Women's Weekly* (*Funu zhoubao*, 1923-26) which continued to be funded by *Republic Daily* as its supplement. Again, the familiar names of Chen Wangdao, Mao Dun, and Shao Lizi appeared as its editors. The weekly folded in early 1926, shortly after Shao Lizi left *Republic Daily*.⁸⁵ This coincided with Zhang's removal from *Ladies' Journal*. The WQRA managed to continue its tenure with Zhang's independent publishing activities. This short history of WQRA again highlights the importance of its supporting network. The society's fate was subjected to major changes in the career paths of the main personalities of the supporting network.

From the perspective of the life experiences of Kaiming intellectuals, feminism was only a short-term passion, waxing and waning as the May Fourth tide rose and receded. This was true even for Zhang Xichen and his colleagues at *Ladies' Journal* and later *New Women*. In the early twentieth century, especially since the May Fourth Movement, feminism occupied the center stage of national debate. By the end of the 1920s, however,

the preoccupation with the gender issue had all but dissipated as the political climate turned toward social conservatism after the KMT's bloody purge of the Communists and labor unionists in 1927. The Kaiming intellectuals' allegiance to the immediate goal of the New Culture movement to create a literary revolution and a New Literature proved to be much more lasting. The Literary Research Association (hereafter the "LRA") inaugurated in the beginning of 1921, represented the first initiative of the new intellectuals to institutionalize New Literature. First through Shangwu-owned *Short Story Monthly* and then through its own *tongren* magazine, *Literary Weekly (Wenxue zhoubao)*, which also was designed to lessen its dependence on a Shangwu publication, the Association successfully defined the parameters of legitimate literary practice, rendering the writings of litterateurs whom decadent "Mandarin Duck and Butterfly literature" for entertainment.⁸⁶ Through Shangwu, the LRA also began publication of a "Literary Research Association Series" (*Wenxue yanjiuhui congshu*) in 1921 as its bylaws stipulated. Over the next few years, as the LRA set up branches in Shanghai and other major cities, its membership grew to include close to two hundred.⁸⁷ It was arguably the largest and the most influential literary society of the 1920s.

As mentioned earlier, many core members of the LRA were active supporters of the Kaiming Press. It is, therefore, not surprising that Kaiming would play a significant role in charting the course of modern Chinese literary history.⁸⁸ From the Kaiming network sprang a succession of influential individuals, molders and architects of New Literature. For example, at the request of Ye Shengtao, Kaiming published a collection of four short stories in 1928 by the young, lonely wife of a minor poet, under the pen name of Ding Ling and thus launched the career of the most accomplished female writer

during the Republican era.⁸⁹ In the following year, Kaiming produced its second literary star under the pen name of Ba Jin.⁹⁰ While leading a lonely existence in Paris studying French, the passionate young anarchist wrote the manuscript of his first novel and sent it to his comrade Suo Fei, an editor at Kaiming. Suo Fei promptly presented it to Ye Shengtao who, again acting as a talent scout, recommended its publication.⁹¹ This initial success unleashed a reservoir of Ba Jin's artistic creativity. Ba Jin went on to become the icon for generations of youth in revolutionary China. With Kaiming, he published a total of eleven novels, one collection of short stories, and three collections of essays.⁹² Other artists whose writing careers intertwined with Kaiming included the critic-turned-novelist Mao Dun, the Modernist poet and novelist Fei Ming, the leading "Native" (*xiangtu*) novelist Li Jingming, pioneering new poets Liu Dabai, Wang Jingzhi, Wei Congwu, Zhu Xiang; renowned essayists Zhu Ziqing, Yu Pingbuo, Zhu Guanqian, Feng Zikai, and Sun Fuxi. During the 1930s and 1940s, prominent novelists such as Zhang Tianyi, Shen Congwen, Duanmu Hongliang, and the celebrated playwrights, Xia Yan (who published translations on the gender issues under his real name Sheng Duanxiang before turning to plays) and Wu Zuguang would also make Kaiming their primary publishing outlet. From this glittering list, we can see that most of these literary stars, especially the essayists, who published through Kaiming were members of the Kaiming network prior to the press' founding.

An Anarchist Experiment

Ultimately, the Kaiming intellectuals held fast to their avowed lifelong commitment to education as a means of social transformation and national salvation.

Most Kaiming intellectuals started their careers as school teachers and almost all were involved in teaching at one point in their career. Not surprising, it was the Lida Academy (Lida xueyuan) founded in 1925 and its supporting organization, the Lida Society, that offered the strongest link to the future Kaiming Press. It can even be said that the Academy was the first product of the Kaiming network. As such, this educational experiment would invariably pass on its ideals, style, personality and personnel to the Kaiming Press when it came into being a year later. For this reason, Lida deserves our special attention.

The catalyst of the Academy's founding was a dispute at Chunhui Middle School towards the end of 1924 which put the friendship nexus to an extraordinary test. A student came to his PE class wearing a hat and proceeded to argue with the instructor who demanded its removal. Very quickly, the seemingly insignificant incident snowballed into a major showdown between some school officials, backed by people from provincial educational board, who then expelled the defiant student and other student protestors. The principal Kuang Husheng and his supporters, however, saw the discipline as excessive and likely marginalize popular teachers. While there might be at stake other issues concerning national or personal politics, the incident also underscored the difference between the idealists who believed in "education in love" and the educators who resorted to a mainstream approaches.⁹³ Convinced that Chunhui was no longer the idealist school they embraced earlier, Kuang Husheng, his younger friend and newly converted anarchist Zhu Guangqian, and a number of their student followers, suddenly departed for Shanghai, never to return. They were followed by two other fellow anarchists Liu Xunyu and Zhou Weiqun as well as Feng Zikai, Xia Mianzun, and several

others the following spring. Thus almost all the faculty members recruited by Xia over the previous two years to Chunhui would leave as a group.⁹⁴ With shared conviction about “education of love” and “education to build moral character,” this idealist band of brothers arrived in Shanghai to explore possibilities for a new educational experiment, to build a purer, perhaps more visible and influential school that would allow them to put their convictions into practice in the nation’s cultural center.

It is interesting to note not all those who left severed ties with Chunhui, like Xia and others, made frequent visits back.⁹⁵ And, Chunhui did not make a marked turn towards conservatism after their departure.⁹⁶ The exodus was more a testimony to solidarity among like-minded friends than differences with Chunhui. In other words, their idealism went hand in hand with their need for group solidarity and group action, perhaps serving the purpose of what Bourdieu calls “position-taking,” i.e. gaining political or social capital and intellectual recognition. This reminds us again of James Polachek’s critical observation of the junior intellectuals taking the moralistic anti-opium position in the nineteenth-century for the purpose of advancing their careers. Nonetheless, it is important to recognize that idealism and the fighting for recognition by means of networking and collective action, did not necessarily sit in mutually exclusive positions. Rather than a mere tool for career advancement, idealism was often also a motivating force in its own right, demanding sacrifices from the individuals involved in its cause.

Once in Shanghai, the network that I have mapped out earlier was mobilized for the formation of the Lida Academy. To better support this cause, the Lida Society was formed and quickly grew to as many as fifty-one members.⁹⁷ In essence, the society was the formalization of the vast intellectual network that was already in place. The

members bore the dual responsibility of fund-raising and teaching at the school. The initial funds of 1,000 yuan to start the academy were raised from the faculty's personal pockets and included the proceeds from the sale of Feng Zikai's house at Chunhui and Xia Mianzhun's entire savings. The rather run-down rented building that housed the Academy in the city's Huangpu District served both as classrooms and student living quarters, many of which were separated only by hanging pieces of cloth. Kuan Husheng used the downstairs kitchen as his office and bedroom. In order to build a permanent home for the school in the northeastern suburbs of the city, the Lida Society solicited private donations, lobbied for government funding, and eventually mortgaged half of the land and construction for a sum of 15,000 yuan. To pay off the debts, most of the faculty offered classes without pay for several years while teaching elsewhere or working as editors for a living. Those who could not afford to do so, or worked at Lida full-time, received a small monthly allowance of twenty-yuan, a fraction of their usual salaries.⁹⁸

With Guang Husheng at its helm, and involvement of several anarchists including Sheng Congjiu and Li Shicen who were well known, Lida bore clear anarchist imprints. Equally important, the Academy had brought all its participants closer to an anarchist cause without making a recorded conversion. Among competing ideologies during the first two decades of the early twentieth century, anarchism exerted the strongest hold upon the Chinese radical imagination. Like the vast number of young radicals of the time, many of the Lida participants had more than a mere fling with anarchism. Back in 1912-1913, Ye Shengtao and his circle of friends, for example, were all members of an anarchist party by the name of the Chinese Socialist Party (*Zhongguo shehui dang*).⁹⁹ During the 1920s, while it was rapidly marginalized organizationally by the Communist

movement, anarchism continued to be a highly visible current in social movements and an influential ideology in radical discourses. The impact of the ideology can be found in the Chinese Esperanto movement very much in vogue during the twenties in which Hu Yuzhi was deeply involved.¹⁰⁰ In establishing Lida, the friendship network as a whole embraced an anarchist approach to education and social change. For this reason, Liu Xunyu referred to those who supported Lida as *tongzhi*, or one's who shared the same political conviction.¹⁰¹ His fellow anarchist Zhu Guangqian simply stated, "Lida was run by anarchists."¹⁰²

Anarchism took education to be the cornerstone of revolution because education was perceived not only as a process of transmitting knowledge but more importantly as a process through which equal and free individuals could forge dramatic social changes. In their ambitious and experimental vision of education, Chinese anarchists tried to turn schools into the institutions that contained, in embryo, the society of the future.¹⁰³ Such a conviction was evident in Lida's motto, "Reform society and promote [advanced] culture by cultivating moral individuals and leading a life of mutual aid." A similar vision was reflected in the school's name, "li" and "da," or "establish" and "open," come from the Confucian *Analects*: "As for the good man: What he wishes to achieve for himself, he helps others achieve [*li*]; what he wishes to obtain for himself, he enables others to obtain [*da*]."¹⁰⁴ This is just another example that in the mind of the the May Fourth generations, radical modern thoughts were not necessarily a fundamental break from Confucian tradition. The second part of the school's name, "xueyuan" or "academy" was chosen over "school" to invoke the image of a Platonic Academy.¹⁰⁵ In the anarchist spirit of repudiating authority and hierarchy and fostering a truly democratic environment, the

Academy consciously chose not to set up the office of the headmaster, or principal. Instead, a faculty committee shared equally the decision-making power as well as the responsibilities. Students were not treated as passive receivers of education being supervised and disciplined by their teachers, but as the equal participants in this new educational process. As such, they were expected to share the responsibility of the school's operation. Back at Chunhui, Kang Husheng ate his meals with his students at the student cafeteria. Here, all faculty and staff shared the same dorm rooms and the same simple cafeteria food with their students based on the principle of equality.¹⁰⁶ Operating on the anarchist principle of creating equal and "whole" individuals through the combination of education and physical labor, the Academy started a farm to instill in its students the virtues of self-sacrifice for the common good with their beekeeping; it promoted a scientific spirit by raising chickens; and advanced empathy with peasants through vegetable-growing.¹⁰⁷ It also introduced courses on factory operation and apprenticeships at industrial workplaces. Lida would soon become a model for the famed Labor University established in Shanghai in 1927, the product of the last concerted anarchist activities in China.¹⁰⁸

Ultimately, however, Lida was not a party school, nor a training facility funded by a political organization. Lacking continuous government funding and major private donations, it relied financially on intellectual networks. Despite its general sympathy towards an anarchist experiment, the network was built more on personal friendships than on ideological commitment. As a matter of fact, from the very beginning, the Lida Society had exhibited political allegiances that were divergent and often times in conflict between some of its members. For example, it included the leading theorist Chen

Wangdao as well as GMD leftist intellectual Liu Dabai, the two friends from their Zhejiang First Normal days. Most of its members were not overtly political. As an organization, the society's stated purpose offered no blueprint for collective action that went beyond its primary objective of supporting the school.¹⁰⁹ As such, unlike the Labor University modeled after it, the Lida Academy was able to withstand political storms of both the White Terror of 1927 and the fallout between anarchists and the GMD in the following year. The Academy's adaptability was also evident in financial management. As time went by, Kuang Husheng came to accept the fact that the school had to be run as a financially independent operation, rather than an idealistic cause that would continuously tap the resource of its supporting network. For instance, the school's farm, which was initially set up as a nonprofit operation for educational purposes, was later reoriented to make a profit to support the school.¹¹⁰

The link between the Lida Academy and the Kaiming Press was multi-dimensional. First and most visible was that both the Academy and the press were supported by the same network of friends. On its 51-person roster, we encounter many very familiar names such as Xia Mianzun, Feng Zikai, Hu Yuzhi, Zheng Zhengduo, and Zhang Xichen, who formed the nucleus of the Press. For its founding, those at Lida also went out of their ways to raise funds and rally support. That was how the young writer Qiang Gechuan became the Press' first shareholder. He recalled, "When I went to visit my friend Feng Zikai at Lida, he said to me with an air of solemnity that they needed my help with both *New Women* and the press [that they were planning to form].... Subsequently, I contributed articles to the magazine and made an investment in the press."¹¹¹ That first investment was an impressive 500 silver dollars.¹¹² This close connection led Zhu

Guangqian to claim that it was the Lida Society who founded the Press.¹¹³ Second, the anarchist influence of Lida spilled over to Kaiming through two entities: Lida's *tongren* magazine, *The Common (Yiban)*, 1926-1929) was one of the first two magazines the Press released, and anarchists entered the Kaiming circle as editors and contributors to *New Women*.¹¹⁴ As a result, in the time of the Great Revolution (1926-1927) when Marxism was tremendously in vogue, Kaiming's publication bore a more anarchist flavor instead. Third, the Lida educational experiment epitomized the idealism of the Kaiming intellectuals and their notion of the centrality of education to social change. It was no accident that when the Press moved away from a focus on radical discourses and high-brow May Fourth culture, it reinvented itself by committing to an education mission aimed at transforming a vast number of young middle school students. Finally, in terms of style, the Press was as adaptable as the school to changing circumstances. As the product of an intellectual network rather than a champion for a particular political or social cause, Kaiming demonstrated a flexibility that would enable it to survive the change of temper in the reading public caused by the 1927 White Terror and the GMD conservative cultural policies during the Nanjing decade (1927-1937).

Network for *Avant-garde* Publishing

In an era of modern mechanized printing and publishing, the May Fourth generations enjoyed a new relationship with print media by which they also fundamentally redefined their new social identity as modern intellectuals. Access to publishing was of paramount importance. Modern publishing experienced rapid proliferation during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Even so, it remained a daunting challenge for an unpublished author identified with the New Culture cause to gain acceptance with an

established mainstream publisher since, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, his or her intended audience, more likely than not, were the *avant-garde* youth rather than the general reading public and thus such work had limited market potential. Without published work, one's assumed intellectual identity would only be a private and transitory affair. Not surprisingly, the resources of a social network of new intellectuals were frequently mobilized to support a small press aimed at gaining for their members acceptance and even prominence in the cultural circles.

When surveying the May Fourth landscape, it is not hard to find that at the center of many prominent clusters of successful writers stood an *avant-garde* press devoted to releasing works by the group members. As I have argued elsewhere, new intellectual communities and new presses were locked in a symbiotic relationship, so the lucky stars within the community rose alongside their presses.¹¹⁵ Such community-press pacts included that of Chen Duxiu and his *New Youth* circles who worked closely with the Yadong Press (Yadong shuju);¹¹⁶ Lu Xun and his young protégés within his patronage network who formed a special relationship with the Beixin Press (Beixin shuju),¹¹⁷ and the members of the Creation Society who tied themselves first to the Taidong Press (Taidong shuju) and then to the Guanhua Press (Guanhua shuju). The relationship between the Kaiming network and its press was no different.

Another shared feature of the Republican-era *avant-garde* presses was what I called the *tongren* (or collegial) magazine initiative, which set them apart from big publishers. A *tongren* periodical was a non-profit, agenda-driven, independent publication founded by and committed to printing the work of a group of like-minded friends. As such, it was cheap to publish, costing only a small printing fee of a couple of

hundred yuan since everyone contributed without charge. It was relatively easy to distribute for a low price. Taking advantage of the ready availability of network contributions, they served as a sounding board for the future publishing venture as well as an advertisement for its contributors. As a result, *avant-garde* presses were invariably born or reborn out of a single periodical publication. In contrast, big publishers such as Shangwu, China Books, and World Books, started big with tens of thousands of yuan of initial investment and grew bigger by publishing lucrative textbooks.¹¹⁸

New Women

New Women was born out of the battle over the issue of sexuality and intellectual legitimacy illustrated in the previous chapter. Unlike its predecessor, *Ladies' Journal*, owned and ultimately controlled by a profit-conscious publisher, *New Women* was a collective cultural endeavor, a *tongren* magazine firmly under the control of young writers whose status in the cultural field was yet to be confirmed. Through the magazine, Zhang Xichen and his friends strove to establish themselves as leading voices on the gender issue and to redefine the legitimate discourse on sexuality, with the ultimate goal of confirming their intellectual credibility and authority in the face of formidable challenges.

In every way, *New Women* manifested the collective strength of its supporting network. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, 40 to 50 young writers banded together with their five-yuan donations and promise of free contributions. For at least the next three years, the contributors only received copies of the magazine or the books in the Women's Question Research Association Book Series.¹¹⁹ While Zhang was the actual editor, he only held the official title of "manager" (*ganshi*), leaving the editorship in the

name of the WQRA. This gave the magazine a collective image, reflecting the anarchist impulses of the leaders. It is important to note that, in an act testifying to their loyalty to the group, those who had been frequent contributors to *Ladies' Journal* when it was under Zhang Xichen's editorship severed their ties to this Shangwu magazine with their friend's departure. Many stepped forward to attack the old magazine for its alleged turn to conservatism and even falsely claimed that its circulation plummeted as a result.¹²⁰ The truth is that Shangwu's decision to fire Zhang was for the purpose of avoiding controversy rather than reorienting the magazine, which continued on the same path that Zhang Xichen had set. According to Zhang's successor, the magazine's circulation continued to increase.¹²¹ After the storm was over, Shangwu appointed Ye Shengtao to be in charge of editing with Jin Zhonghua as his assistant.¹²² These events led me to conclude that *New Women* was less the product of competing gender ideologies and more a product of competing intellectual networks between the emerging Kaiming group and the *Modern Review* group who enjoyed Shangwu's backing in this controversy.

With a well-defined agenda, coordinated voices, and autonomy from the book market, a *tongren* magazine was a formidable fighting vehicle that provided momentum to the May Fourth New Culture Movement.¹²³ Likewise, what the *New Women* group benefited from most was its freedom and its collective strength. The new magazine greeted the reading public with the solid modern image of a genuine *avant-garde* periodical, targeting a readership that is highly educated, mostly radical and predominately male. First, unlike *Ladies' Journal* under Zhang Xichen with the traditional cover, the new monthly's cover for the inaugural issue was designed by Zhang

Xichen's Shangxing classmate Tao Yuanqing, China's earliest modern book cover designer famous for packaging Lu Xun's work.¹²⁴

The inside illustrations included neo-classical, impressionist, and post-impressionist paintings. Secondly, the choice of the new magazine's name echoed the May Fourth cult of the new. Thirdly, the magazine furthered its commitment to cutting-edge issues by making sexuality, which had landed the editor in hot water earlier, its primary focus, slighting other less controversial issues such as women's rights and family reform. Finally, as a result of regular submissions by a group of active anarchists, its sexual radicalism started to acquire a strong anarchist undercurrent, which could be summarized as opposition to all social institutions including marriage and family.¹²⁵ The combination of avant-garde sexual politics and anarcho-communism distinguished *New Women* from the many other feminist magazines of the mid-1920s, which typically dealt with the gender issue by emphasizing social, political, and economic perspectives.¹²⁶ With these changes, the new monthly effectively assumed a more provocative posture in the public discourse on gender and sexuality than *Ladies' Journal* had ever taken.

With the collective strength of its like-minded contributors, *New Women* would win the ultimate battle against its opponents over the issues of love and sexuality. At first, the magazine tried to carry on its debate against Chen Bainian and the liberal circle he represented. Chen's name and his arguments about the possessiveness of love and the sanctity of monogamy were explicitly cited for ridicule.¹²⁷ By this time, however, Chen wanted no part in this circus. As the time went by without participation by the necessary opponent, the magazine managed to sustain the debate by elevating it to an entirely new level of avant-gardism. The editor continued to reiterate the notion of love as a union of

the body and soul, and purported monogamous marriage should be sustained by the free will of the both partners, rather than by external social and moral constraints. In the meantime, he temporarily shelved the issue of “new sexual morality,” which had proven gravely troubling to liberals, and instead provided space in the magazine for anarchists to voice their opposition from the far left. The anarchist contributors regarded all institutions, including marriage and family, as fundamentally oppressive and thus insisted on their ultimate destruction. The anarchist views, however, differed widely on the definitions of love and its relationship to sex. One side acknowledged and valued the emotional and spiritual dimension of love, which, it believed, gave stability to a sexual union. The other side equated love with sexual desire, comparing both to the biological need humans have for food, thereby de-mystifying both in the process.

This new turn in the debate served to redefine the parameters of the sexual discourse in the magazine. In spite of their belligerence towards one another, all the parties shared the common belief that any sexual union should be based completely on free will while acknowledging free will is subject to change. In addition, all displayed hostility towards capitalist socio-economic system, which were deemed the source of gender and sexual oppression. All three opposing arguments were repeatedly presented in feature articles, topical discussions and letters to the editor, lending momentum to the *New Women* discourses. In the meantime, other perspectives were either attacked or dismissed. The debate that drew heat in the spring of 1927 did not end until 1929 when the magazine was about to fold. Over the course of the debate, the liberal conception of sexuality represented by Chen Banian was rendered utterly irrelevant.

The mid-1920s was a time of unprecedented patriotic mass mobilization and political violence which threw into question many of the early May Fourth positions, especially its iconoclasm and exaltation of the individual. This was evidenced by a series of on-going high-profiled polemics that involved multiple issues and personalities. They included the battle of May Fourth personalities against their critics from the so-called *Critical Review (Xueheng)* clique¹²⁸ and against the so-called *Tiger Magazine (Jiayin)* clique.¹²⁹ Within the New Culture camp, there was open hostility between the increasingly radicalized Lu Xun and his circle, and the Anglo-American-influenced liberal circle behind *Modern Review* led by Hu Shi and Chen Yuan.¹³⁰ These intellectual alignments betrayed the influence of the networks of involved individuals. This is not to say that the positions taken were not in accordance with one's convictions. Rather, one's convictions tended to be affected by the circle in which one traveled. Thus a conviction was shared within one's cohort, gaining the support of an intellectual collectivity which would advance it with the effective weapon of the *tongren* magazine.

During Zhang Xichen's five-year tenure as editor of *Ladies' Journal*, polemics were completely absent in the monthly. As a publisher that valued cordial relations across cultural and political lines as well as diverse readerships, Shangwu restrained its editors from involvement in any controversies for fear of alienating any sector of the literate society. Now completely unrestricted, Zhang and his Kaiming colleagues inserted the new monthly directly into controversies of the day. Its debut issue defined its position on such controversies and featured an essay by Lu Xun deftly attacking *Modern Review*.¹³¹ This was immediately followed by Zhang Xichen's rebuttal to Wu Mi's insistent defense of Confucian moral codes.¹³² When Zhang Dongxun, the leading theoretician on the

Nationalist Left tried to refute Lu Xun's notion of the cannibalism intrinsic to Confucianism and to attack individualism, identifying it as the source of current moral corruption, *New Women* responded immediately with a vehement counter-rebuttal.¹³³ These articles contributed to an intricate intellectual positioning of the magazine, i.e. its siding with May Fourth iconoclasm against the traditionalists, radicalism against liberalism, individualism against the radicalism of the Nationalist Left and the Communists. This intellectual stand secured Kaiming a favorable but not exalted place in the May Fourth-influenced Communist historiography.



21. *New Women* cover
Source: *New Women* 2, no. 4 (April 1927)



22. Kaiming Press logo

May Fourth Enlightenment *Is Avant-garde*

After his dismissal from Shangwu, Zhang Xichen contemplated returning to his hometown to resume his rural teaching career and to use translating to supplement his teaching salary. But that was not to happen. He wrote a few years later,

Since *New Women* had just gotten off the ground, all my friends insisted that someone had to be in charge of it. And in their mind, that someone was me. They had Xie Liuyi give me a part-time teaching job at Shengzhou Girl's School, making sure that I had something to subsist upon.¹³⁴

Xie was in charge of the school, but he also presided over the general running of the LRA where his many friends were members. Quickly, the friends started to give Zhang their manuscripts to be published as part of the "Women's Question Research Association Book Series." Zhang commissioned Wenyong Printing Co. for all the printing jobs and the Guanghua Press (Guanghua shuju) for distribution.¹³⁵ Essentially, the WQRA functioned as an *ad hoc* publisher. In August 1926, a small wooden plaque with "Kaiming Press" written on it appeared on the door of his rented alleyway-house on Baoshan Road.¹³⁶ Almost a year later, Shi Zhecun, a Modernist poet who published his first translation through Kaiming, walked into the new press and still found it so informal that it did not betray the presence of a publishing establishment.¹³⁷ Such was the humble origin of what would become one of the largest publishing houses of the Republican era.

The founding of *New Women* and the Press, while seemingly the result of unexpected turn of events, fit perfectly with what many of the Kaiming friends had in an mind all along. As early as 1923, the heyday of the Literary Research Association, many members had been hatching a plan for an independent press. After work, they frequently met at Zheng Zhenduo's home in Zhabei District which was dubbed as the LRA office. There were apparently two interwoven topics, one concerned the issue of intellectual autonomy; the other, publishing access without compromising autonomy. The highly publicized guiding spirit of the LRA was "art for life," which contrasted its position against what was perceived as art for entertainment practiced by popular litterateurs. In their quest for a paradigm change in the cultural field, they were confronted with

obstacles from multiple fronts. While they won the sponsorship of Shangwu, they did not enjoy the full autonomy and influence at Shangwu to which they aspired. This was evidenced by their general attempt to “sweep [writers of popular literature] out of the art and literature circles,”¹³⁸ and more specifically, their fierce objection to Shangwu’s publication of *Short Story World* (*Xiaoshuo shijie*) in 1921 to accommodate popular authors whose previous publishing outlet, *Short Story Monthly*, had been taken over by the LRA.¹³⁹ Such aspiration was thwarted by Shangwu’s response which replaced Mao Dun with Zheng Zhenduo as the editor of *Short Story Monthly*, thereby pacifying the popular writers while maintaining its alliance with the LRA. Thus Shangwu doggedly continued its policy of artistic pluralism and inclusiveness.¹⁴⁰ The disappointment with Shangwu must have been felt more acutely due to the bombardment from fellow writers in the newly formed Creation Society, backed up by its avant-garde Taidong Press, for the LRA’s alleged attempt to dominate the literary field “under the patronage of capitalists,” i.e. Shangwu.¹⁴¹ Finally, the LRA’s collaboration with another mainstream publishing company, China Books, also went sour when the latter terminated its support of a poetry magazine *Poetry* (*Shi*, 1922-23) edited by Ye Shengtao and others. The condition of China Book’s sponsorship can be described as more than stringent since the publisher paid neither the magazine’s editors, nor its contributors.¹⁴² Ultimately, a commercial press simply would not support a publication without market appeal.

Under the circumstance, those LRA members who gathered at Zheng Zhenduo’s home reached a consensus—they needed an independent press of their own. In a letter to a friend, Gu Jiegang, who also worked at Shangwu and was accountant of the proposed press, articulated his thoughts as follows:

We want all writers to be able to devote to his/her vocation without being controlled by capitalists and oppressed by the market. [For our intellectual and financial independence,] we should rely on neither the government nor capitalists. We have no other way except relying on ourselves to create such a condition for our work.¹⁴³

Zheng Zhenduo proposed that they raise money for this press by each putting ten yuan per month into a common bank account. A couple of dozen writers endorsed the plan and their press Pu Society was formed.¹⁴⁴ The word “*pu*” came from “*pu xue*” or textual study of the Chinese classics advocated by scholars during the late Ming and early Qing dynasties, thus identifying the press with serious cultural pursuits and academic erudition while distinguishing it from commercial writing and publishing. Clearly, the members of the Pu Society wished to distinguish themselves from the mainstream writing and publishing world. Unfortunately, this project ended before it got off the ground when the Japanese troops moved to the Zhabei District of Shanghai, where the Pu Society’s members resided, during the May Thirtieth Incident in 1925, forcing everybody to flee. This bank account was emptied out to help with relocation costs.¹⁴⁵ Gu Jiegang, who had earlier moved to Beijing, reorganized the Pu Society with a different circle of friends, thus leaving his Shanghai friends without an independent press.

Now, Zhang Xichen’s predicament presented everyone, including Zhang himself, with the best opportunity to revive their plan for an independent press. Efforts were made to raise the necessary funds by selling the press’s shares within the network. And indeed everyone made a pledge to buy the shares. When it was time to collect the money, however, only a few such as Qian Gechuan managed to come up with the necessary cash. Unemployed and apparently in a position to shoulder the responsibility of keeping the operation going, Zhang gradually contributed the two-thousand-yuan severance pay he had received from Shangwu. When that was used up, he borrowed from his brother.

When the prospect of the Press looked good, his brother joined forces with him as Kaiming's accountant. Therefore, early Kaiming was sometimes called a press owned by brothers (*xongdi shudian*).¹⁴⁶ Although the Zhang brothers's investment constituted a lion's share of the operating capital at the Press, it did not alter its relationship with the friendship network, which continued to offer indispensable resources and support. For years, for example, Kaiming's authors managed to make a significant contribution by accepting shares in the Press as royalty or payment for their manuscripts, making it possible for Kaiming to expand. Not surprisingly, when the press was at a crossroads and ready for a major reorientation in 1928, it was a team led by Xia Mianzun rather than the Zhang brothers who oversaw its reform.

The intellectual orientation, organization, and image of the Kaiming Press reflected its founders' close identity with May Fourth New Culture. By this, I refer to a May Fourth-style cultural standpoint it adopted that consisted of three inter-related proclamations: first, a professed commitment to the construction of New Culture that consciously departed from the past; second, an insistence on a polar opposition between high brow and low brow, serious and commercial cultures; third, a disclaimer of interest in profit-making, or to borrow Pierre Bourdieu's phraseology, an interest in disinterestedness. No name could be more fitting for an avant-garde publishing house than "*Kaiming*." It was suggested by Sun Fuyuan, now the editor of the cutting-edge *Jinbao Supplement*.¹⁴⁷ Like many neologisms circulated in the early twentieth century, "kaiming" was value-laden. The first character, "*kai*," means "to open," "to clarify," and "to teach;" and the second, "*ming*," both a verb and an adjective, refers to "bright," "intelligent," and "to understand." The compound invoked the theme of the French

Enlightenment that the leaders of the May Fourth movement tried to borrow in their campaign for individual and national awakening. “‘*Kaiming*’ IS ‘enlightenment’,” asserted Zhu Guanqian unequivocally. “The [choice] of the name bares the influence of the French Enlightenment of the Encyclopedists.”¹⁴⁸ *Kaiming*’s logo, designed by Feng Zikai, is an open book with half of a sun radiating from its pages.¹⁴⁹ *Kaiming*’s message was clear—reading and education would open a passage to enlightenment and that *Kaiming* was not about mainstream publishing for entertainment.

As befitting a Press launched by May Fourth intellectuals, *Kaiming* issued a “Manifesto of the Press’s Founding” on August 1, 1926. “Manifesto” or “*xuanyan*” had been a favorite act accompanying the formation of a *tongren* magazine since the beginning of the May Fourth Movement. *Kaiming*’s founding manifesto stated its policies including a high standard for selecting manuscripts; first-rate quality for the physical products; lowest possible prices, and, most important of all, it was dedicated to work for the advancement of culture rather than profit-seeking.¹⁵⁰ To distinguish itself from the practice of big publishers, *Kaiming*, according to Hu Yuzhi, “vowed not to get involved in textbook publishing” for high profit and focused on books of new arts and literature (*xin wenyi*).¹⁵¹ In the same year of the Press’ founding, Hu wrote about the LRA’s *tongren* publication, *Literary Weekly* which was now issued by the Press,

Whenever a fresh issue is printed, a dozen of us would sit around to fold, check, wrap and address packages, apply stamps. As a busy buzzing crowd, we feel very proud [of our enterprise]. We use our own paper and ink to write what we want to write from the bottom of our hearts without concerns of any external restrains. We use our own money to print our own writings. Then we use our own labor to distribute them. In sum, we offer what is in our heart directly to our readers. How can we not feel proud?¹⁵²

To a good extent, this sense of commitment to a cultural cause was shared by Kaiming staff during its first years. Song Yubin, a long-time Kaiming editor, described the good old days this way,

... There were only a few people working there, all friends who shared common interests. There were no real rules and regulations, no clear division of labor. [The press operated] completely in the style of an artisan workshop [and thus] was full of [collegial] warmth. [This] naturally encouraged everybody's interest in and commitment to work without concerning themselves about working hours and pay."¹⁵³

Adding to this collegial warmth was a family environment where the press provided its needy young staff room and board, and Suo Fei, much in accordance to his anarchist belief, helped out in the kitchen where Zhang Xichen's wife was in charge.¹⁵⁴

Ultimately, Kaiming was a publisher *created* by the writers in its network *for* the purpose of establishing their identity with, and career in the New Culture cause. Zhang Xichen explicitly stated that the press was founded to “release good books by friends in the circle.”¹⁵⁵ The Kaiming network boasted a long list of prominent writers, poets, artists, and scholars, mostly men. Prior to the founding of the press in the summer of 1926, however, only a few of its members had a book under his name.¹⁵⁶ These few were invariably editors of Shangwu or members of the LRA who enjoyed a special relationship with the publishing giant. The majority, however, including Xia Mianzun, Liu Dabai, Feng Zikai, and Zhu Guangqian, released their first book and almost all the rest of their work through the press they helped to found. As an avant-garde publisher, it was also willing to take risks by publishing unknown writers, thus functioning as a showcase for New Literature. For example, at the request of Ye Shengtao, Kaiming published a collection of four short stories in 1928 by the young, lonely wife of a minor poet under the pen name of Ding Ling and thus launched the career of the most accomplished female

writer of the Republican era. In the following year, Kaiming produced its second literary star under the pen name of Ba Jin, a devout anarchist who sent his manuscript of a first novel to his comrade Suo Fei, one of the first editors at Kaiming.¹⁵⁷ This opened the floodgate of artistic creativity as Ba Jin went on to become the icon for generations of youth in revolutionary China. With Kaiming, he published a total of eleven novels, one collection of short stories, and three collections of essays.¹⁵⁸ Other artists whose writing careers started or closely intertwined with Kaiming included the critic-turned-novelist Mao Dun, the Modernist poet and novelist Fei Ming, the leading “Native” (*xiangtu*) novelist Li Jingming, pioneering new poets Liu Dabai, Wang Jingzhi, Wei Congwu, Zhu Xiang; renowned essayists Zhu Ziqing, Yu Pingbuo, Zhu Guanqian, Feng Zikai, and Sun Fuxi, and the celebrated playwright Xia Yan. When closely examining Kaiming’s publishing catalogue, I find that, with the notable exception of Ding Ling, all early authors had prior connections to the press either as members of the LRA or through personal friendship with one of the core Kaiming members.¹⁵⁹

In the decade following the literary revolution, most of the New Literature publications nation-wide were translations from the Western and Japanese modern literature. Kaiming was the one of the first few publishers to actively promote modern literature produced by Chinese authors. More than half of the titles published during this period belonged to the category of highbrow New Literature (marked in the table as “Literature”) authored or translated by the members of the LRA. Slightly over half of the literary work was authored by contemporary Chinese writers. These titles included collections of new poetry (*xin shi*), essays (*sanwen*), short stories (*duanpian xiaoshuo*),

novels (*changpian xiaoshuo*), folk literature (*mingjian wenxue*), and children's literature (*ertong wenxue*), all of which were newly created modern Chinese literary genres during the literary revolution. Visibly absent were entertainment literature, practical how-to manuals, and textbooks. These early publications made it clear that the Kaiming enterprise was in service to the New Culture, the new intelligentsia and its small, highly educated audience.

TABLE I

Kaiming Book Publications, 1926-28

Year	Literature	Literature Trans	Sexuality	Art/Music	Children's Lit	History	Social Science	Education Theory	Total
1926	4	2	6	2	1	1	0	1	17
1927	10	5	3	4	0	0	0	0	22
1928	12	17	4	6	6	3	2	1	51
Total	26	24	13	12	7	4	2	2	90
%s	29%	27%	14%	13%	8%	4%	2%	2%	100%

SOURCE: *Kaiming shudian tushu mulu, 1926-1952 (Catalogue of Kaiming Publications)* (published by Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe in the 1990s for internal circulation).¹⁶⁰ Book ads from *New Women* (Shanghai: Kaiming shudian, 1926-29) and *Kaiming* (Shanghai: Kaiming shudian, 1928-31)

It is noteworthy that having an anti-commercial position and a highly educated, politicized new youth as intended audience became the hallmarks of all the avant-garde publishing houses identifying with the New Culture. Among the most celebrated ones in Shanghai were Yadong Press, Taidong Press (converted to the New Culture cause with the help of the Creation Society in 1922), Beixin Press (1925), Guanhua Press (1925), Kaiming Press, and Xinyue Press (1927). As their numbers grew rapidly in the climate of

the Great Revolution of 1926-27, these publishers started to categorize themselves as “new publishing” (*xin shuye*), and all the previous publishers as “old publishing” (*jiu shuye*). The word “new” was significant in early twentieth-century Chinese discourses. Newness denoted a progressiveness and modern-ness in a lineal, evolutionist scheme of things, as well as, the obvious implication of superiority. May Fourth publishers tried to create two distinct and implicitly opposing categories of “old” and “new” publishing houses to give themselves a symbolic advantage over the existing companies. Prior to the arrival of May Fourth intellectuals, publishers organized themselves into the Association for Book Publishing (*shuye gonghui*) which was presided over by the general managers of Shangwu and Zhonghua. In 1928, the avant-garde publishers made an unsuccessful attempt to institutionalize the distinction and to gain institutional power by attempting to organize the Association for New Book Publishing (*xin shuye gonghui*).¹⁶¹ While the move was unsuccessful, it underlay the May Fourth yearning for exclusivity, intellectual and moral superiority.

Kaiming Press was born out of the intense cultural politics sparked by the controversy over the issue of sexuality. Anchoring themselves in an elaborate social network and predisposed to high-brow cultural practice, the Kaiming intellectuals insisted on their autonomy from the confines of large, profit-minded publishing companies. Their exclusive May Fourth-style cultural production, however, was part of the larger cultural production that was increasingly influenced by a capitalist marketplace. During the late 1910s, the intellectual leaders at *New Youth* enjoyed handsome salaries of professorships at Beijing University and could afford to run their *tongren* magazine

without much consideration of its profitability. Their protégés issued *New Tide* with subsidies from the University. In the 1920s, the young and less established May Fourth intellectuals enjoyed no such luxury. They had to engage in writing and publishing as an income-earning profession. Although the Kaiming Press was conceived to advance New Culture, before long the Kaiming intellectuals found themselves in the challenging position of having to respond to economic imperatives. In the next chapter, I will discuss their effort to create a large and stable audience and to promote their work as cultural commodities in the book market that their intellectual mentors could afford to shun.

¹ Zhang Xichen, "Cong shangren dao shangren," pp. 258-59.

² Zhang Xichen, "Yige zui pinfan de ren [A most undistinguished person]," in *Kaiming Shudian Jishi* [Essays on the Kaiming Press], ed. Zhiyi Wang (Taiyuan: Shangxi renmin chubanshe, 1947), p. 219.

³ Wu Juenong, "Wo he Kaiming shudian de guanxi," in *Wo yu Kaiming (Kaiming and I)*, pp. 81-82. In his recollection, Hu Yuzhi also wrote, "New Women was founded by Zhang, a few other friends, and myself." See Hu Yuzhi, "Jinian Kaiming shudian chuangujian liushi zhounian," in *Wo yu Kaiming, op. cit.*, p. 39.

⁴ Chen Xuezhao, "Wo he *Xin nuxing*" in *Wo yu Kaiming*, pp. 11-12. Chen was sister to Wu Juenong's wife who, because of her brother-in-law's connection, became one of the few frequent female contributors to *Ladies' Journal* and then *New Women*. She went on to become a leading journalist in the 1930s and 1940s. See Chen Xuanzhao, "Yi Juenong," in *Shangxu wenshi ziliao* no. 5, p. 23-30.

⁵ Wu devoted his life to agriculture research and tea trade. His early writings on the rural economy were used by Mao Zedong as references for his lecture series at his celebrated Guangzhou Peasant Movement Training Institute in 1925.

⁶ Cited in Wang Zhiyi, "Kaiming shudian jishi (History of the Kaiming Press)," *Chuban shiliao (Historical documents in publishing)* (1985): 17. See also "Kaiming Shudian gudong mingce" [Roster of registered shareholders, Kaiming Bookstore], Ministry of Economics Archives, Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taipei, 17-23/25-(2).

⁷ In the 1930s and 1940s when the Kaiming editors enjoyed great cultural prestige, some contemporaries referred to them as the "Kaiming school" (*Kaiming pai*). See Wang Zhiyi, "Kaiming shudian jishi," p. 11.

⁸ For example, Zhang Kebiao who had previously attacked Zhang Xichen publicly for his notion of new sexual morality, in 1924 became Xia Mianzun's colleague when they both taught at National Jinan University in Shanghai two years later. Through Xia's introduction, Zhang Kebiao found temporary lodging at Zhang Xichen's home which started his close relationship with Kaiming. Kaiming, who first released books through the press, and then became a shareholder by converting the royalty of the books into shares, until finally becoming an editor. Zhang Kebiao, "Jinan Zhang Xichen xiansheng," in *Chuban shiliao bianji bu*, ed. *Zhang Xichen xiansheng dancheng yibai zhounian*, 70-71. Leading Marxist writers close to Kaiming include Mao Dun, Fu Binran, Song Yunbin, Hu Yuzhi, and Xia Yan who all joined the CCP at various points. Leading anarchist writers who published or worked for the press were Ba Jin, Zhu Guangqian, and Zhou Yutong. Liu Dabai and Shao Lizi, who were left-leaning GMD intellectuals, were also important members of this network.

⁹ It is easy to establish dates of these societies in which all issued manifestoes for their founding but not their closing date. Typically, a society grew less and less active and gradually disintegrated.

¹⁰ Pierre Bourdieu, "Forms of Social Capital," in John G. Richardson, ed., *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (Oxford, Greenwood Press, 1986), p. 249.

¹¹ See for example James M. Polachek, *The Inner Opium War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Council on East Asian Studies, 1992); and Keith R. Schoppa, *Blood Road: The Mystery of Shen Dingyi in Revolutionary China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

¹² James M. Polachek, *ibid*, 12.

¹³ See James Polachek's characterization.

¹⁴ For obvious reasons, the civil service examination system ceased to play an important role in networking among new intellectuals.

¹⁵ According to Bryna Goodman, immigrants from other parts of China constituted more than half of Shanghai's population in the late nineteenth century. Bryna Goodman, *Native Place, City, and Nation: Regional Networks and Identities in Shanghai, 1853-1937* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), p. 16.

¹⁶ Zhu Lianbao, *Jin xian dai Shanghai chubanye yinxiangji [Impressions of Shanghai publishing in the modern era]* (Shanghai: Xueling chubanshe, 1993), p. 13.

¹⁷ For more information on the history of the city, see

<http://www.0575ly.com/sxfq/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=385> accessed on June 15, 2007.

¹⁸ For the most part, Shaoxing Prefecture included Shangyin, Kuaiji, Zhuji, Xiaoshan, Yutao, Shangyu, Chenxian, and Xinchang counties. For Shaoxing's brief history, see Shaoxing municipal government website: http://www.sx.gov.cn/portal/main/article_list.jsp?catalog_id=20050328000020, accessed on June 13, 2007.

¹⁹ The society was a secret organization initiated by the Zhejiang leading intellectual, Zhang Bingling (courtesy name Taiyan) during his sojourn in Japan which aimed at overthrowing the Manchu Qing dynasty and restoring Han rule. At the time of its founding in Shanghai in 1904, he was in jail for the Subao incident and charged with sedition by the Qing court. As a result, Cai Yuanpei was made to head the society. Cai acquainted with Xu when working at Shaoxing Sino-Western Academy (Shaoxing zhong xi xuetang) as its headmaster where Xu was an instructor. Cai knew Tao through his same-year (*tongnian*) connection of earning civil service examination degrees with Tao's uncles. It was through these traditional literati ties that Cai recruited Xu and Tao to be the earliest members of the Restoration Society. It is also interesting to note that Xia Mianzun, the second Kaiming editor-in-chief, had Xu as his classics and topography teacher for half a year. See his autobiographical essay, "Wo de zhongxue shidai," in *Middle School Students*, no. 16 (June 1931), reprinted in Xia Hongning, ed. *Xia Mianzun sanwen yiwen jingxuan (Selected essays and translations by Xia Mianzun)* (Beijing: Zhongguo wenlian chubanshe, 2003), pp. 53-59.

²⁰ Xu Xiling and Tao Chengzhang established Datong Academy (Datong xuetang) in Shaoxing in 1905 whose headmastership was taken over by Qiu Jin in 1907. Qiu founded and edited *Chinese Women Monthly* (Zhongguo nubao) in Shanghai in 1917. Cai Yuanpei was involved in editing a number of periodicals, included the Toyko-based *Min bao*, the mouthpiece of the Revolutionary Alliance. Cai's career was deeply involved in publishing and education. Among other things, he founded *Wajiao bao (Diplomacy ten-daily)* in 1901, Patriotic Academy (Aiguo xueshe) in 1902, Education Association of China in 1903, and served as the president of Beijing University between 1916-1922, reshaping the university in a way such that it became the cradle of the May Fourth New Culture Movement.

²¹ Ye Shengtao recalled that whenever Kaiming ran into trouble, Xia Mianzun would hurry to Nanjing to find Shao Lizi. A branch manager also recalled that in Shao used his connection to help Kaiming obtain a bank loan as well as with the purchasing of a street-front store space in Taiwan in 1945. See Ye Shengtao, "Shao Lizi xiansheng he Kaiming shudian," and Zhong Daxuan, "Kaiming shudian de jingying fangshi he zuofeng," in *Wo yu Kaiming*, pp. 106-07, 259-60..

²² It is noteworthy the importance of personal connections and their place in shaping the ideas and activities of many of Shaoxing's heroes. Cai became acquainted with Xu when working at Shaoxing Prefecture Middle and High School (Shaoxing fu zhong xuetang) as its headmaster where Xu was an instructor. Cai knew Tao through his same-year (*tongnian*) connection of earning civil service examination degrees with Tao's uncles. It was through these traditional literati ties that Cai recruited Xu and Tao to be the earliest members of Restoration Society. Cai, upon his appointment to the ministry of education of the newly formed republic, promptly offered Lu Xun a post in the ministry, bringing Lu Xun to Beijing for the next twelve years. Lu Xun grew up in a family compound only a few hundred yards away from Qiu Jin's family estate. Despite his lack of enthusiasm in the audience listening to Qiu's speeches while in Japan, the latter's revolution activities and subsequent public execution in Shaoxing inspired him to write "Medicine,"

one of his most penetrating symbolic short stories of the anti-Manchu revolution. He also wrote Xu Xiling into his “Madman’s Diary” as the victim of cannibalistic China because it was said that at his execution, Xu’s heart was cut out and consumed by the followers of the Manchu Governor of Anhui assassinated by Xu as revenge.

²³ In addition to Zhang Xichen, we have the recollections of at least two young women, Wang Manzhi and Wu Sihong, which testify to Du’s generous patronage. For her membership in the CCP’s youth league, Wang had to seek and was given year-long refuge in Du’s house during the GMD purge of the CCP in 1927 after which time Du sent her to Zhang for a job at Kaiming. In Wu’s case, Du first sent her to Shanghai for Zhang’s help, then took her in after the loss of her common-law husband, famous Communist writer Jiang Guangci, to tuberculosis and when herself was infected with the same disease. It is noteworthy that personal connections transcend difference in political convictions since Du was far from being a sympathizer of the leftist movement. See Wu Sihong, “Qinqie tixie, zhiqing nanwang,” and Wang Manzhi, “Lizhi chuangye, mianwei wanren,” in *Zhang Xichen xiansheng dancheng yibai hounian*, pp. 96, 108. For Du’s biographical information, see *Mingguo renwu da cidian*.

²⁴ The school became the precursor of Zhejiang Fifth Normal School. For Du’s patronage of Zhang, see Wu Sihong’s recollection, pp. 89-90.

²⁵ For Du’s trouble with the new authority, see Sun Fuyuan, “Sun shi xiongdi tan Lu Xun,” <http://lz.book.sohu.com/serialize.php?id=5724>, accessed on June 12, 2007. Lu Xun did not share the view that Du was in a position to save Qiu Jin and believed that even if Du tried, his efforts would have been in vain.

²⁶ In addition to Zhang Xichen and the Sun brothers, the school’s other famous graduates included Tao Yuanqing, Xu Qinwen, and Xu Jie. With the exception of Zhang Xichen and Xu Jie, these young men owed a great deal of their success to Lu Xun’s promotion. Xu Jie became an early author of Kaiming.

²⁷ Song Yunbing, “Kaiming jiushi” (“Past events of Kaiming”), *Wen shi ziliao xuan ji (Selected materials on cultural history)* zong no. 31 (1962): 13.

²⁸ These young people included Wu Sihong who later became an actress in Tian Han’s group and companion of the famous Communist writer Jiang Guangci. See Wu Sihong’s recollection.

²⁹ For example, Zhang Xichen managed to raise 15% of the investment in a new round of fundraising from his contacts in Shaoxing in 1930, eighteen years after leaving his hometown. See the archive in Zhongyang yanjiu yuan jindai lishi suo dang-an guan, juanzong ming: shangye si, guancang hao: 17-23-0-00-00-093-02.

³⁰ For more information on Xia’s early life, see his autobiographical essay, “Wo de zhongxue shidai.”

³¹ For Jin’s biographical information, family background, and education ideals, see Wen-Hsin Yeh, *Provincial Passages: Culture, Space, and the Origins of Chinese Communism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 76-93.

³² The school offered the headmastership to Jin through the recommendation of Zhejiang native place association in Tokyo. See “Jin Ziyuan xiansheng,” in Cao Juren, *Cao Juren zawen ji (Collected essay of Cao Juren)* (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1994), pp. 321-24. Between 1909-1910, Lu Xun also taught here. In those days, the school hired several Japanese teachers who needed translators both in class and in dealing with their lecture notes.

³³ While only a middle-level education establishment, this normal school was very prestigious and coveted in Zhejiang where the first college was not built until 1920s. For a lengthy discussion of the school and Jin’s educational ideas, see Wen-Hsin Yeh, *Provincial Passages*, pp. 74-93.

³⁴ The fourth person was Li Cijiu, the only one in the group whose career did not intertwine with Kaiming. Chen Wangdao, the young writer to whom Chen Duxiu entrusted the editorship of *New Youth* in 1920 after his break with Hu Shi, often wrote for Kaiming magazines. Chen also tried his hand, eventually unsuccessfully, at independent publishing. He later sold his Dajiang Press to Kaiming in 1933. On Dajiang Press, see Zhu Lianbao, *Jin Xian Dai Shanghai Chubanye Yinxiangji*, pp. 35-36.

³⁵ For more information on the donation and the donor Chen Chunlan, see Chen’s biography on Chuhui Middle School website: <http://chwh.zjchzx.com.cn/ReadNews.asp?NewsID=223>, accessed on June 2, 2007.

³⁶ See Yan Lu, “Chunhui da gongchen: Xia Mianzun xiansheng yu Chunhui zhongxue,” on the Chunhui school website: <http://chwh.zjchzx.com.cn/ReadNews.asp?NewsID=1544>, accessed June 12, 2007.

³⁷ Ouyang Wenbin, “Xia Mianzun xiansheng nianpu,” in *Xia Mianzun wenji: Pinwu wenji* (Hangzhou: Zhejiang renmin chubanshe, 1983), p. 13.

- ³⁸ For Zhu's early teaching career, see Chen Xiaoquan, *Zhu Ziqing Zhuan (Biography of Zhu Ziqing)*. (Beijing: Shiyue wenyi chubanshe, 1991), pp. 32-90 passim.
- ³⁹ Zhu Guanqian. "Huiyi Shanghai Lida Xueyuan he Kaiming Shudian [My recollections of the Lida Academy and Kaiming Press in Shanghai]," *Chuban shiliao* (1985): 1-2.
- ⁴⁰ For more biographical information on Kuang Husheng, see Cai Duan, "Kuan Husheng he Lida xueyuan (Kuan Husheng and the Lida Academy)," *Wen shi ziliao xuanji zong* 83: 98-120. For his place in the larger Chinese anarchist movement, see Arif Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 20-25, 148-49, 261-69.
- ⁴¹ Zhou Weiqun, who would become Kaiming's long-term editor, was a fellow anarchist and a classmate of Kuang at Beijing Normal College. He soon joined Chunhui, strengthening the anarchist presence at the school. It is interesting to note that during Kuang's tenure as the principal of Hunan First Normal, Mao Zedong, a recent graduate from the school, was working under him as the headmaster of its affiliated elementary school.
- ⁴² For Ye's early life and his friendships with Gu Jiegang, Wang Boxiang, Guo Shaoyu, and other future Kaiming intellectuals, see Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao Nianpu (Chronology of the life of Ye Shengtao)* (Nanjing: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe, 1989), pp. 2, 5, 8, 12, 15, 19, 22-23, 29-30, 61-64, 68, 71, 73. See also Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao zhuanlun (Biography of Ye Shengtao)* (Hefei, Anhui: Anhui jiaoyu chubanshe, 1995), pp. 1-190, passim.
- ⁴³ See Zhou Yutong's short biography at Shanghai Archival Information website: <http://www.archives.sh.cn/hshrw/kjy/200510080005.htm>, accessed on June 21, 2007. For Feng Zikai's early teaching experience, see Feng Yiyong, *Wo de fuqin Feng Zikai*, pp. 78-79.
- ⁴⁴ *Kaiming Shudian Tushu Mulu* (Beijing: Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe, internal circulation), 54.
- ⁴⁵ For more biographical information on Hu, see his autobiography, *Wo de huiyi [My Recollections]*. Nanjing: Jiangsu renming chubanshe, 1990). See also Hu Yuwen, "Hu Yuzhi he Shangwu yinshuguan," in *Shangwu Yinshuguan Jiushi Nian [Nighty Years of the Commercial Press]*, pp. 125-30; Hu Yuzhi dashi nianbiao," *Shangyu wenshi ziliao* (Special issue on Hu Yuzhi), no. 6 (1991), 14-33.
- ⁴⁶ Hu Yuzhi, "Jinian Kaiming Shudian Chuangjian Liushi Nian (Commemorating on the Sixtieth Year of the Founding of the Kaiming Press)," in *Wo Yu Kaiming*, pp. 39-41.
- ⁴⁷ For his relationship with Kaiming, see Ye Zhishang, "Hu Yuzhi xiansheng he Kaiming shudian" in CBSL, no. 4 (December 1985): 26-27; and nos. 45 & 46.
- ⁴⁸ *Zhang Xichen xiansheng dancheng yibai zhounian*, p. 245.
- ⁴⁹ From 1912 to 1922, the education at the university (*daxue*) level consisted a 3-year "yuke" (preparation program), the equivalent of today's undergraduate program and then 3 or 4-year "benke" (specialized studies), the equivalent of today's graduate programs. Normal colleges (*benke gaodeng shifan xuexiao*) and technical colleges (*benke zhuanmen xuexiao*) offered 4 to 5-year undergraduate programs. Li Huaying, *et al. Mingguo Jiaoyu Shi (the Education History of the Republican Era)* (Shanghai: Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshi, 1997), pp. 198-102.
- ⁵⁰ Chen Dawen. "Hu Shi Yu Shangwu Yinshuguan [Hu Shi and the Commercial Press]." In *Shangwu Yinshuguan Jiushi Nian [Nighty Years of the Commercial Press]* (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1987), 582. Hu Shi gave the figure of 168 in 1921.
- ⁵¹ Ling Xiao (Ling Shiao), "The Metamorphosis of *Short Story Monthly* and the Legitimation of Modern Chinese Literature," paper presented at Annual Meeting of Asian Studies on Pacific Coast, Monterey, CA, June 1997.
- ⁵² "The Registration of Kaiming as a Joint-stock Limited Liability Company," Ministry of Economics Archives, Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taipei, 172309301.1.
- ⁵³ Both Jin Zhonghua and Zhang Mingyang also worked closely with Hu Yuzhi in running the pro-CCP and later CCP-sponsored *World Knowledge (Shijie zhishi)* bi-monthly (1934-41, 1945-66, 1979-Present) which was issued by pro-CCP Shenghuo Press. For Jin's biographical information, see Zhang Mingyang. "Jin Zhonghua de bianji shengya (the Career of Jin Zhonghua)," *Chuban shiliao zong* no. 13-14, no. no. 3-4 (1988): 23-30.
- ⁵⁴ Chen Fukang, *Zheng Zhenduo Zhuan [Biography of Zheng Zhenduo]* (Beijing: Shiyue wenyi chubanshe, 1994), pp. 45, 65-68.
- ⁵⁵ For example, Hu Yuzhi was also from Shangyu. It was through him and the Shangyu connection that Hu's younger brother, Zhongchi, joined Xia Mianzun and others to reform Kaiming in 1928.
- ⁵⁶ Zhang Xichen, "Cong shangren dao shangren (From merchant to merchant)," 110-111.

- ⁵⁷ Cited in Feng Yiying *Wo de fuqin Feng Zikai*, pp. 83.
- ⁵⁸ Feng Yiying, "Feng Zikai yu Kaiming shudian," in *Wo yu Kaiming*, pp. 116-19.
- ⁵⁹ Chen Xiaoquan, pp. 96.
- ⁶⁰ For vivid description of faculty's social life on campus, see Feng Yiying, *Wo de fuqin Feng Zikai*, pp. 82-84; and Chen Xiaoquan, pp. 95-96.
- ⁶¹ The club members included Xia Mianzun, Ye Shengtao, Zheng Zhengduo, Wang Boxiang, Zhou Yutong, Feng Zikai, and Zhang Xichen. See Qiang Juntao, "Huiyi Zhang Xichen xiansheng" in *Zhang Xichen Xiansheng dancheng yibai zhounian*, pp. 43-44. Zhang Kebiao also recalls the frequent dinner parties. See Zhang Kebiao, p. 73.
- ⁶² For example, Ye Shengtao and Mao Dun are known by their friends as good at seal-carving. See Chen Fukang, *Zheng Zhenduo Zhuan*, p. 133; and Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao Zhuanlun*, p. 209.
- ⁶³ Xia Mianzun's daughter married Ye Shengtao's son and Wang Boxiang's daughter Zhang Xichen's son. See *Zhang Xichen xiansheng dancheng yibai zhounian*, pp. 117, 140.
- ⁶⁴ Incidentally, Zhang Xichen was on friendly terms with Shen Dingyi who was from Xiaoshan county, Shaoxing Prefecture. In 1927, at Zhang's request, Shen successfully intervened in the family affairs of Wang Manzhi, who was working at Kaiming as a proofreader. He persuaded Wang's uncle, a prominent businessman, to provide funds to support her college education. Wang was from a very established family in Shaoxing. Her father was martyred during the anti-Manchu revolution. Due to her own radical activities as a teenager, she was estranged from her family. See Wang Manzhi, pp. 108-09.
- ⁶⁵ See Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao zhuanlun*, pp. 144-50.
- ⁶⁶ Suzhou writers dominated popular literary production in the teens. They included Xu Zhenya, Bao Tianxiao, Zhou Shoujuan, Cheng Zhanlu, Cheng Xiaoqing, Xu Xuodai who was Ye Shengtao's neighbor, and Fan Yanqiao who was Ye's middle school classmate. See Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao zhuan*, pp. 176.
- ⁶⁷ Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao zhuan*, pp. 149-50.
- ⁶⁸ Gu was at Beijing University from 1913 to 1920. The university offered a three-year preparation program for qualified students with high school diploma and four year program, which was closer to a graduate program than an undergraduate program.
- ⁶⁹ For Ye's experimentation with vernacular language and New Literature forms, and his firm identity with the New Culture camp since 1919, see Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao zhuan*, pp. 156, 213-16.
- ⁷⁰ Wang Xiaochu, "Lun Baimahu wenxue xianxiang" ("On the 'White Horse Lake Literature Phenomenon,'" *Xinan shifan daxue xuebao (renwen kexue ban)* 5 (2005); Wang Jianhua and Wang Xiaochu, eds., *Baima hu wenxue yanjiu (Studies of White Horse Lake literary phenomenon)* (Shanghai: Sanlian shudian, 2007).
- ⁷¹ Zhu Guanqian, "Huiyi Shanghai Lida xueyuan he Kaiming Shudian."
- ⁷² Xia Mianzun, "Zikai manhua xu," in *Xia Mianzun sanwen yiwen jingxuan*, p. 132.
- ⁷³ For more biographical information on Feng, see Feng Yiying, *Wo de fuqin Feng Zikai*, pp. 84-88, 139-43.
- ⁷⁴ Wen-hsin Yeh, *Provincial Passages*, 83-88.
- ⁷⁵ Edmondo de Amicis, *Ai De Jiaoyu (Education in Love)*, trans. Xia Mianzun (Shanghai: Kaiming shudian, 1928). The entire translation is reprinted in Xia Hongning, ed. *Xia Mianzun sanwen yiwen jingxuan*, 245-488. The entire book is also available online. The novel's Chinese preface is available at <http://www.oklink.net/a/0009/0903/adjy/001.htm>, accessed on June 24, 2007.
- ⁷⁶ Xia Mianzun, "Translator's Preface." For the translation's serialization, see Ouyang Wenbing, "Xia Mianzun nianpu," p. 495.
- ⁷⁷ Fearing that Shangwu would not easily let go of the book contract, Xia deliberately overpriced his manuscript's copyright for 2,000 yuan and insisted on selling it to the publisher. As expected, Shangwu rejected the book since that figure meant it would pay the translator at the unprecedented rate of 20 yuan per thousand words. See Song Yunbing, "Kaiming Jiushi (Reminisces of Kaiming)."
- ⁷⁸ Zhang Xichen, p. 107.
- ⁷⁹ Wang Zhicheng, *Ai de jiaoyu shishi ji* (Shanghai: Kaiming shudian, 1930).
- ⁸⁰ See for example, Ye Shengtao and Zhu Ziqing, *Guoxue luedu zhidao [A guide to a survey of national learning]* (Shanghai: Kaiming shudian, Reprint in Hong Kong, 1955), pp. 219-40.
- ⁸¹ "Ai de jiaoyu de jizhong banben (The Editions of *Education of Love*)." *CBSL*, no. 4 (1985): 155.
- ⁸² The WQRA used Zhang's office at Shangwu as its physical location and postal address, its manifesto and bylaws were printed in the August 1922 issue of *Ladies' Journal*.

⁸³ In the early 1920s, the feminist movement bifurcated into the bourgeois liberal wing while gave centrality to female participation in politics, and civil, property, and family law reform; and the socialist wing on the other hand viewed the socio-economic system as the root cause of female exploitation and also actively promoted women's participation in the labor movement as a critical component of the solution. The feminism the WQRA espoused betrayed the coloration of the former, which might explain the sparse documentation and studies on it under the Communist rule.

⁸⁴ "Funu yanjiu hui xuanyan" (The Women's Question Research Association manifesto") *Ladies' Journal* 8, no. 8 (August, 1922): 119-120.

⁸⁵ See *Wusi shiqi qikan jieshao (Introduction to May Fourth periodicals)* (Beijing: Sanlang chubanshe, 1959). v. 2, no. 1, pp. 222-31.

⁸⁶ See Ling Shiao, "The Metamorphosis of *Short Story Monthly* and the Legitimation of Modern Chinese Literature" (paper presented at the annual meeting of Asian Studies on Pacific Coast, Monterey, Calif, June 1997) This argument is also made by Michel Hockx in Michel Hockx, ed., *The Literary Field of Twentieth-Century China* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1999). *Literary Weekly*, originally named *Literary Ten-Daily* (*Wenxue xunkan*), was first issued as a supplement of *New News Daily* (*Sheshi xinbao*) in Shanghai between 1921 and 1925. Afterwards, it was published independently and distributed through the Beixing Press in Beijing before it was turned over to Kaiming in Shanghai in 1926.

⁸⁷ After Zheng Zhenduo and many of the LRA members left Beijing for Shanghai soon after its founding, the Shanghai branch became the main body of the organization. For membership roster, see Jia Zhifang, et al, ed., *Wenxue yanjiu hui ziliao [Source materials on the Literary Research Association]* vol. 1 (Shijiazhuang: Henan renmin chubanshe, 1983), pp. 14-48.

⁸⁸ The Beixing Press was the other important early publisher of New Literature. But it focused primarily on Lu Xun's work and the works by his young disciples in his patronage network.

⁸⁹ Ding Ling, pen name of Jiang Bingzhi, was living with Hu Yeping, an unsuccessful poet who soon joined the CCP and was then martyred in 1931. Ding's short stories were first released in *Short Story Monthly* under Ye Shengtao's editorship. For Ding Ling's life around the time she started her writing career, see Ding Ling, *Ding Ling zizhuan (Autobiography of Ding Ling)* (Nanjing: Jiangsu wenyi chubanshe, 1996), pp. 60-66.

⁹⁰ Prior to the publication of his first novel, Ba Jin contributed to both *Ladies' Journal* and *New Women* under his real name, Li Fugan.

⁹¹ For Ba Jin's recollection of his life in France and the beginning of his career as a novelist, see Ba Jin, *Ba Jin xiezuo shengya (The writing life of Ba Jin)*, ed. Jia Zhifang, et al, pp. 74-102. See also Cheng Dan, *Ba Jin pingzhuang (Liberary biography of Ba Jin)* (Shijiazhuang: Huashang wenyi chubanshe, 1982), pp. 48-9.

⁹² *Kaiming Shudian Tushu Mulu* (Beijing: Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe, internal circulation), pp. 30-35.

⁹³ Jin Hengyi had earlier taken another position as the headmaster of Zhejiang Fourth Middle School in Hangzhou and was splitting his time between Hangzhou and Shangyu. So it is hard to determine whether he was in direct confrontation with Kuang and others who later left Chunhui.

⁹⁴ The only person recruited by Xia who failed to join the group was Zhu Zhiqing. By now, Zhu had already had the heavy financial burden of raising a family with four children and thus could not leave a well-paying job at Chuhui to join his friends in their utopian endeavor. Late in 1925, he too left Chunhui for a professorship at Qinghua University in Beijing that his Beijing University classmates Yu Pingbo helped him to gain. Chen Xiaoquan, *Zhu Ziqing zhuan (Biography of Zhu Ziqing)* (Beijing: Shiyue wenyi chubanshe, 1991), pp. 102-13.

⁹⁵ In 1928, Xia Mianzun, Jin Hengyi, Feng Zikai, and others built a retreat for Li Shutong, their friend and mentor at Zhejiang First Normal who then became a monk. Also Xia maintained his house on the campus and was buried at Chunhui according to his will.

⁹⁶ Some sources claim that the second group left Chuhui in early 1925 after the headmaster rejected their proposal to enroll female students. This claim is unreliable since Jin had initiated a co-ed program at Chunhui two years earlier. See Fan Shoukang, "Jin Hengyi xiansheng zhuan (A biography of Jin Hengyi)," *Shangyu wenshi ziliao (Yida shibiao: Jinian Jin Hengyi zhuanji)*, no. 2 (1987): 4. See also Chunhui's school history website <http://chwh.zjchzx.com.cn/ReadNews.asp?NewsID=526>, accessed on July 6, 2007.

⁹⁷ The roster of the members of the Lida Society included Kuan Husheng, Zhu Guangqian, Xia Mianzun, Liu Xunyu, Feng Zikai, Liu Shuqing, Zhu Ziqing, Fang Guangshou, Zheng Zhenduo, Hu Yuzhi, Zhang Xichen, Ye Shengtao, Zhao Jingshen, Zhou Yutong, Wang Boxiang, Zhou Jianren, famous anarchist Sheng Zhongjiu and Li Shicen, former Hunan First Normal headmaster Yi Peiji, and two of the Zhejiang First

Normal “Big Four”—Chen Wangdao, Liu Dabai. See Feng Yiyang, *Wo de fuqin Feng Zikai*, pp. 91-97. See also Song Yunbing, “Kaiming Jiushi.”

⁹⁸ See Liu Xunyu, “Lida zhongxuexiao” (“Lida Middle School”), *Jiaoyu zazhi* 17, no. 6 (1925): 1-6; and Zhao Jingsheng, “Chule zhongxue yihou (After graduating from the middle school),” *Middle School Students* 11 (January 1931): 33. The salaries of middle school teachers in the 1920s varied greatly. A teacher with experience or college education in Shanghai most likely earned around 100 yuan. For teaching salaries, See Li Huaying, et al., *Mingguo jiaoyu shi (The education history of the Republican era)* (Shanghai: Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshi, 1997), p. 515.

⁹⁹ In 1913, Ye Shengtao also joined Three-Two Society (San er xueshe), so called because it followed the anarchist principle of no family, no religion, and no government as “three nos;” and from each according to one’s ability and to each according to one’s needs as “two musts.” He and his enthusiastic teenage buddies also formed their own short-lived anarchist-inspired Liberty Society (Fang she). See Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao Nianpu*, pp. 103-40.

¹⁰⁰ See Hu Yuzhi, “Wo de huiyi,” p. 8. Since anarchism was denounced by the CCP and Hu joined the CCP in 1933, his fascination with anarchism is downplayed both by himself and his biographers.

¹⁰¹ Liu Xunyu, “Lida Zhongxuexiao,” p. 3.

¹⁰² Zhu Guanqian, “Huiyi Shanghai Lida xueyuan he Kaiming shudian,” p. 1.

¹⁰³ For discussions on anarchist theories on education and social change, see Arif Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, pp. 26-32, 90-91, 99-100, 182-87, 240-43, 288-90.

¹⁰⁴ See Liu Xunyu, “Lida Zhongxuexiao.” The academy started out as a middle school but soon added an undergraduate division. Here, I adopt Geremie Barme’s translation of the two lines in *Analects*. See Geremie R. Barme, *An Artistic Exile: A Life of Feng Zikai, 1898-1975* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), p. 99.

¹⁰⁵ See Liu Xunyu, “Lida Zhongxuexiao.”

¹⁰⁶ Liu Xunyu, “Lida Zhongxuexiao;” and Feng Yiyang, *Wo de fuqin Feng Zikai*, pp. 91-97.

¹⁰⁷ See Kuang’s report on Lida’s farm, “Lida xueyuan nongchang gaikuang,” *Middle School Student*, no. 1 (January 1930): 285-95.

¹⁰⁸ Arif Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, pp. 22, 266fn33; and Ming K. Chan and Arif Dirlik, *Schools into Fields and Factories: Anarchism, the Guomindang, and the National Labor University in Shanghai, 1927-1932* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1991), Chapter 2. Kuang Husheng assisted his comrade Li Shecen in forming Labor University. See Kuang’s biography in *Mingguo renwu dacidian*, p. 180

¹⁰⁹ See Feng Yiyang, *Wo de fuqin Feng Zikai*, p. 94.

¹¹⁰ See Kuang’s report on Lida’s farm, “Lida xueyuan nongchang gaikuang,” *Middle School Student*, no. 1 (January 1930): 285-95.

¹¹¹ Qian Gechuan, “Huimeng Liushi Nian,” in *Zhang Xichen xiansheng dancheng yibai zhounian*, pp. 26-28. Also see Qian’s letter cited in Chen Mengxiong, “Qun xian bi ji, feng cai ke du,” *Wo yu Kaiming*, p. 190.

¹¹² Qian Gechuan.

¹¹³ See Zhu Guangqian, “Huiyi Shanghai Lida xueyuan he Kaiming shudian,” *Chuban shiliao* (1985): 1-2.

¹¹⁴ One of the earliest and longest serving editor Suo Fei was a devout anarchist who in turn brought the manuscripts of his anarchist comrade Ba Jin to Kaiming.

¹¹⁵ Ling Shiao, “Culture, Commerce, and Connections.”

¹¹⁶ Chen Duxiu started his first magazine, *Anhui suhua bao (Anhui Vernacular Biweekly)* in Anqing, Anhui Province in 1904 with the help of his friend Wang Mengzou who owned a small press-bookstore. After the 1911 Revolution, Chen pushed Wang to come to Shanghai to found Yadong. Four years later, it was Wang who found Chen a publisher for his *New Youth* monthly. After becoming the dean of Arts and Letters at Beijing University in 1917, Chen commissioned Yadong with the distribution of all the university press publications and brought his new friends at *New Youth* into the Yadong orbit which, according to Wang, “turned Yadong into a successful business.” In support of the New Culture Movement, Yadong in turn became the most important publisher of new poetry in the 1920s. Wang Yuanfang, “Yadong tushuguan jianshi,” 289-90, 291.

¹¹⁷ Beixin evolved from the *New Tide* Society of the student followers of the *New Youth* group. The society’s publication activities came under the *ad hoc* directorship of Lu Xun in the early twenties. Though soon to be a towering presence, Lu Xun was still a relatively obscure name before his publication through

the society his first collection of short stories *Nahan (A Call to Arms)* in 1923. Prior to this, he had only one publication on mining in 1906 which predated his literary career. As for Beixin, it founded its independent identity only in 1925 when Lu Xun commissioned it to release *Yusi*, a *tongren* weekly founded by Lu Xun and his friends, to engage in a bitter debate with another intellectual group at *Modern Critique*. See Li Xiaofeng, "Xinchao she de shimo" [The history of the New Tide Society], *Wenshi ziliao xuanji* 61 (1979): 128; and Li Xiaofeng, "Lu Xun xiansheng yu Beixin shuju," pp. 336-37.

¹¹⁸ For a detailed discussion, see Ling Shiao, "Culture, Commerce, and Connections."

¹¹⁹ See "Paiwan yihou" (Postscripts), *New Women*, no. 1 (January 1926).

¹²⁰ Zhang's immediate successor was Du Jiutian, a cousin of Zhang's former patron Du Yaquan. Zhang Xichen's Shangxing classmate Sun Fuyuan claimed that after Zhang's departure, the magazine "returned to the old practice of showing its readers how to make cakes and curtains types of things." For claims of its downspiral in circulation, see Mo Zhiheng, "Shuoshuo Kaiming Shudian jiqi chubanwu de zhuanghuang yishu" (Comments on the Kaiming Press and the design of its publications," in *Wo yu Kaiming*, pp. 235-36.

¹²¹ See Du Jiutian's "Bianji shi de baogao" (From the editor's office), in *Ladies' Journal* 12, no. 7 (July 1926).

¹²² See Zhang Mingyang, "Jin Zhonghua de bianji shengya (The career of Jin Zhonghua)," *Chuban shiliao zong no.* 13-14 (1988): 23-24.

¹²³ For further discussion on *tongren* magazine, see Ling Shiao, "Culture, Commerce, and Connections."

¹²⁴ "Paiwan yihou," (Editorial postscript), *New Women*, no. 13 (January 1927).

¹²⁵ These anarchists included Suo Fei, Li Fugan (pen-named Ba Jin after 1928), Qian Di, Yan Shi, Lu Jianbun, Deng Tianyu, and Mao Yibo.

¹²⁶ These differences probably explain the absence of *New Women* in Communist historiography, since anarchists were regarded by the CCP as the most deadly ideological foe.

¹²⁷ See Zhou Jianren, "Xing de bili he liangxing guanxi," *New Women*, no. 3 (March 1926): 151-52. Some veiled attacks would only refer their enemy as some "famous professor." See for example, Yusheng, "Weichi fenghua de zhiyan," *New Women*, no. 5 (May 1926): 325.

¹²⁸ *Critical Review* (1922-1933) was founded by a group of intellectuals affiliated with Southeastern University (*Dongnan daxue*) in Nanjing. Wu Mi, the editor, and Hu Xianxiao and Mei Guangdi, the frequent contributors, were Harvard-trained intellectuals under the spell of Neo-humanism of Irving Babbitt and objected to the destruction of Chinese cultural tradition by the advancement of New Culture. See Jerome Grieder, *Intellectuals and the State in Modern China*, pp. 236-38. Recent revisionist interpretations dispute the notion of the journal's conservatism. See for example Luo Gang, "Lishi zhong de Xueheng" in *Ershiyi shiji*, no. 28 (April 1995): 40-47.

¹²⁹ *Tiger Magazine* (Tokyo, 1914-1915, Beijing 1917 and 1925-1927) was founded and edited by Zhang Zhizao. Zhang, a revolutionary and colleague of Cai Yuanpei, Chen Duxiu, Hu Hanming in the struggles against the Qing in his early career and later educated in Edinburgh University in England, became a stringent critic of New Culture in the 1920s. He was the minister of both justice and education of the warlord government under Duan Qiri in 1924. His policy against the student protesters at Beijing Women's Normal College in 1925 and his revival of *Tiger Magazine* to promote Chinese classical literary tradition won him easy enemies in the New Culture circles.

¹³⁰ While Hu Shi did not directly involve in the battle with Lu Xun, his position and remarks about students protesters in the Beijing Women's Normal College Incident and the May Thirtieth Incident invited open hostility from the latter.

¹³¹ Lu Xun, "Jianbi qingye zhuyi," *New Women*, no. 1 (January 1926): 13-16. Other attacks on *Modern Review* include Xuanzi's "Funu yudong de shibai he xin nuxing de zeren," *New Women*, no. 2 (February 1926): 106.

¹³² Zhang Xichen, "Lijiao yu biao zhun," *New Women*, no. 1 (January 1926): 17-18.

¹³³ The notion of Confucian cannibalism was derived from Lu Xun's early short story, "Kuangren riji" ("Madman's Diary"). For the rebuttals from *New Women*, see for example the following lengthy articles: Zhang Xichen, "Lijiao yu siyu," Changqing, "Shui shi xiazi?" and Ximing, "Lijiao chiren le," *New Women*, no. 5 (February 1926): 309-322, 327.

¹³⁴ Zhang Xichen, "Cong shangren dao shangren," pp. 99-112.

¹³⁵ Zhu Lianbao, *Jin xian dai Shanghai chubanye yinxiangji*, p. 72.

¹³⁶ On the founding of Kaiming, see Zhang Xichen, "Cong shangren dao shangren," pp. 62-63; Song Yunbin, "Kaiming jiushi (Past events of Kaiming)," *Wen shi ziliao xuan ji (Selected materials on cultural*

history) zong no. 31 (1962): 1-29; Wang Zhiyi, "Kaiming shudian jishi," pp. 4-5; Tang Xiguang, "Kaiming de licheng," in *Wo yu Kaiming*, pp. 289-314.

¹³⁷ Shi Zecung in *Wo yu Kaiming*, p. 64.

¹³⁸ Xiti (Zheng Zhenduo), "Benkan gaike xuanyan," in *Wenxue*, no. 81 (July 30, 1923), reprinted in Jia Zhifang, et al, ed., pp. 545-46.

¹³⁹ In response to the appearance of *Short Story World*, Mao Dun and his LRA colleagues offered the most scathing attacks in *Shishi xinbao* as well as the Shangwu management, accusing its editor-in-chief of "feeling uncomfortable for being decent human beings for just a few days." By "being decent humans," he meant that Shangwu editor-in-chief offered the control of *Short Story Monthly* to the May Fourth writers. See Mao Dun, *Mao Dun zizhuan*, pp. 114-15. See also Chen Fukang, *Zheng Zhenduo zhuan*, pp. 88-89.

¹⁴⁰ On Shangwu's purpose of changing the editor of *Short Story Monthly*, see Mao Dun, *Mao Dun zizhuan*, pp. 112-14.

¹⁴¹ Chen Fukang, *Zheng Zhenduo zhuan*, p. 119. For a detailed discussion of the symbiotic relationship between the Creation Society and Taidong whereby each party gained their avant-garde New Culture identity, see Ling Shiao, "Culture, Commerce, and Connections."

¹⁴² Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao lun*, pp. 245-46, 263.

¹⁴³ Shang Jinlin, "Wenxue yanjiu hui chuangan de shudian Shanghai Pushe shimo" (An account on Shanghai Pu Press founded by the LRA," *Zhongguo xiandai wenxue yanjiu congkan (Journal of research on Chinese modern literature)*, no. 4 (2004).

¹⁴⁴ Members included, among others, Zheng Zhenduo, Gu Jiegang, Hu Yuzhi, Wang Boxiang, Ye Shengtao, Zhou Yutong, Mao Dun, Xie Liuyi, Guo Shaoyu, Zhu Ziqing, and Yu Pingbo. See Chen Fukang's account of Pu She and Zheng Zhenduo's role in his *Zheng Zhenduo zhuan*, pp. 90-91.

¹⁴⁵ Chen Fukang stated that Pushe closed in 1925 before releasing a single book. Shang Jinlin, Ye Shengtao's biographer, noted, however, that Pu She opened two distribution outlets in 1923 and 1924 respectively and that the group disbanded in 1924. See Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao Nianpu*, p. 93. Later, some members tried to revive Pushe in Beijing and eventually managed to publish a few new titles through it. But it never grew into a stable publishing house.

¹⁴⁶ Zhang Xichen, "Cong shangren dao shangren," pp. 99-112.

¹⁴⁷ Zhu Lianbao, *Jin xian dai Shanghai chubanye yinxiangji*, pp. 71-72. See also Liu Hongquan, "Gu Jiegang yu Pushe," *Chuban shiliao*, no. 2 (2001): 97-99.

¹⁴⁸ Zhu Guanqian, "Huiyi Shanghai Lida xueyuan he Kaiming shudian."

¹⁴⁹ Mo Zhiheng, "Shuoshuo Kaiming shudian jiqi chubanzhu de zhuanghuang yishu," in *Wo yu Kaiming*, p. 241.

¹⁵⁰ Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei dangshi ziliao zhengji weiyuanhui, ed. *Shanghai geming wenhua dashi ji (Chronicles of Shanghai revolutionary Culture)* (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 1995), p. 159.

¹⁵¹ See "Hu Yuzhi's Talk at the First Conference of Kaiming Cardre" in Wang Zhiyi, *Kaiming shudian Jishi*, p. 194.

¹⁵² Cited in Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao zhuanlun*, p. 265.

¹⁵³ Song Yunbing, "Kaiming Jiushi," p. 7

¹⁵⁴ I interpret Sui Fei cooking as an anarchist statement because there were several young women on the Kaiming staff at the time who would have been assigned to kitchen tasks according to the traditional division of labor. This is based on recollection of several people in *Zhang Xichen xiansheng dancheng yibai zhounian*, pp. 47, 91, 107; and Song Yunbing, "Kaiming jiushi," p. 5. Most publishing companies provided its unmarried staff room and board during the early Republican era.

¹⁵⁵ See Zhang Xichen, "Cong shangren dao shangren," p. 259.

¹⁵⁶ Almost all the network friends were male, which is an interesting topic to look at from the perspective of gender studies.

¹⁵⁷ For Ba Jin's recollection of his life in France and the beginning of his career as a novelist, see Ba Jin, *Ba Jin xiezuozhengya*, pp. 74-102. See also Cheng Dan, *Ba Jin Pingzhuan*, pp. 48-9.

¹⁵⁸ *Kaiming Shudian Tushu Mulu*, pp. 30-35.

¹⁵⁹ For a list of formally registered LRA members, see Jia Zhifang, et al, ed., vol. 1, pp. 14-48.

¹⁶⁰ The catalogue is compiled from the advertisements in *New Women* (1926-29) and *Middle School Students* (1930-53). Many of the dates of publication are later than the actual publishing dates because the compilers of the catalogue seem to have only looked at later issues of the magazines that carried the

advertisements of books published a couple of years ago. I date the early publications according to the advertisements I found in *New Women* between 1926 and 28 and *Kaiming* in 1928.

¹⁶¹ Due to the Nanjing government's law that allowed only one guild for one trade, the New Association for Book Publishing failed to gain the government sanction. See Zhu Lianbao, *Jin xian dai Shanghai chubanye yinxiang*, p. 13.

CHAPTER 3. BETWEEN PROFITS AND POLITICS OF CULTURE

In early 1927, only a year after the first release of *New Women* and half a year after the founding of the Kaiming Press, Zhang Xichen recorded a troubling incident,

One day, a young reader came in [Kaiming retail store] and requested a copy of *Sexual Experience* [*Xing shi*]. When our staff told him that we never handled such books, he thought he was getting bad service and insisted that our staff find the book. Our staff continued to say no, whereupon he went into an outburst of anger: “But this is [the retail outlet of] the Society for *New Women*...*New Women* is edited by Zhang Xichen. You don’t carry *Sexual Experience*? This is outrageous! Outrageous!” I was right there when this was happening. But before I could offer an explanation, this youth stumped out of the door, muttering, “Outrageous! Outrageous!”...¹

The book in question was a collection of personal accounts of sex lives that reportedly sold several hundred thousand copies soon after its release in 1926. Despite its proclaimed goal of sexual enlightenment, it scandalized cultural and education communities. Its editor, a Beijing University professor, quickly earned himself the reputation of a modern pornographer. His effort was regarded by many as the debasement of the New Culture agenda. No wonder Zhang continued in dismay, “Young readers such as this man regard themselves as the ‘new youth’ with new thoughts. Yet they would put *New Women* into the same category as *Sexual Experience*!”²

The reading public’s identification of *New Women* with the controversial book alarmed Zhang and his colleagues at Kaiming. The magazine was the signature periodical that defined the Kaiming Press in its early years.³ It quickly became a best-seller, increasing its initial circulation of 3,000 copies per issue to over 10,000 copies by the end of 1926. Instead of rejoicing in its success, the Kaiming group now had reason to suspect that they and their magazine might suffer the same fate. It appeared that the magazine’s popularity with the reading public rested not so much on its persuasive power

in promoting gender equality and sex education as on the sensational appeal of the topics of sexuality it frequently addressed. Kaiming's difficult position brought into sharp relief the issue of perceived distinction between high culture and mass culture, or between culture and commerce.

This chapter will tell the story of the press's first foray into the market in the context of the changing economic position of Chinese intellectuals in the early twentieth century. It will explore the tension between intellectual legitimacy and financial success as poignantly experienced by the Kaiming group during 1926-1928. In the process, it will also highlight the dual nature of the book—it is the manifestation of ideas, knowledge, and creativity of the mind as well as a commodity bought and sold in the marketplace. Likewise, writing, editing, publishing, circulating, and reading of the book are not only cultural activities but also part and parcel of the commercial activity of book production and consumption. Immediately after launching the press, economic imperatives pressured Kaiming founders and supporters to turn their publications into lucrative cultural commodities. Their early experience with the marketplace was marked with profound ambiguity and ambivalence. On the one hand, they succeeded in making an avant-garde press widely popular and profitable. The magazine's success launched the Kaiming Press and Zhang's new career as an independent publisher. On the other hand, the sensationalism they used as a strategy to increase the press' popularity threatened its cultural acceptance.

The Search for a New Rice Bowl

Zhang had described his dismissal from Shangwu as the “breaking of my rice bowl of the last 15 years.”⁴ The rice bowl, in other words, the question of economic survival, is an essential but understudied issue in the making of the modern Chinese intelligentsia. The end of the civil service examination system in 1905 and the fall of the imperial order in 1911 effectively terminated the already decreasing role of the state as the largest employer of the educated elite. Divorced from the state and its resources, where would intellectuals find their new rice bowl? In a post-imperial modernizing society where their socio-economic position had been undergone accelerated change, how would they accomplish their dual goal of influence and income?

The answer was found in the rapidly expanding modern publishing industry and the growing reading (and buying) public. As discussed in the Introduction, the spread of mechanized printing, a surge of interest in new manuscripts, and the establishment of copyright laws during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had brought Chinese publishing into a new era. Disillusioned and displaced *shidafu*, or scholar-officials, started to take advantage of this new development to influence the society and to create for themselves a source of financial support independent of state sponsorship.⁵ Indeed, since the failed Hundred Days Reform of 1898, large numbers of reformers had sought alternative means of livelihood in modern publishing. While these members of the upper elite now had to rub shoulders and compete with the lower elite of printers and those they regarded as hack writers in the book market, the prestige that they enjoyed, nonetheless, gave elite writers a great advantage. In order to gain cultural status, many commercial publishers fought to lure these scholar-officials with handsome pay for their manuscripts

and their involvement.⁶ In 1901, for example, Shangwu, at the time a fledgling commercial publisher, successfully won the interest and investment of Zhang Yuanji, a Hanlin⁷ scholar banished by the court after 1898.⁸ Two years later, Zhang joined Shangwu to be in charge of forming and heading an editorial department. His starting monthly salary was 350 yuan, 250 yuan more than at his previous job at the official-sponsored Nanyang Academy.⁹ Many leading reformers, including Cai Yuanpei, Liang Qichao, and Yan Fu, formed close ties with Shangwu, which offered them handsome payments, often including advances, for their manuscripts and editorial work.¹⁰ Yan Fu, in particular, became a Shangwu shareholder and was a house author after 1903, publishing all eight of his important translated works through the press while accumulating an impressive 30,600 yuan in Shangwu shares.¹¹

The most lucrative commodities in the publishing industry at this time were entertainment news carried in tabloid newspapers and popular novels serialized in magazines. Statistics show that approximately 700 tabloids emerged within just five years after the Hundred Days Reform of 1898 and over a thousand novels appeared on the market in the first decade of the 1900s.¹² “Treaty-port littérateurs,” to borrow Leo Ou-fan Lee’s terminology, were the primary force behind this periodical publishing boom. However, those who led the change were often established reformers and writers of exposé literature. For example, Li Boyuan, lauded in all literary histories for his critical insights into the decay of Qing politics in his famous novel *Exposé of the World of Officials* (*Guanchang xianxing ji*), was also the father of Chinese tabloid journalism.¹³ Wu Yanren, who authored *Strange Phenomena Witnessed in the Last Twenty Years* (*Ershi nian mudu zhi guai xianxiang*), was also a mass producer of sentimental fiction,

turning out more than a dozen novels in seven years.¹⁴ Liang Qichao, attempting to use fiction to promote his political ideals in his innovative magazine, *New Fiction* (*Xin xiaoshuo*, 1902-1906), did not hesitate to print the first translated Western detective stories to entertain his audience.¹⁵ In short, reformist elite and treaty-port littérateurs at the turn of the century were not mutually exclusive cultural groups. Reformers managed to build a flexible and dynamic relationship with the marketplace. In the process, they transformed themselves from traditional *shidafu* into modern intellectuals.

In contrast, May Fourth cultural radicals had the propensity to play up the tension between culture and commerce. As the first generation of Chinese intellectuals who from the start stood outside the state power structure and rebel against what they perceived as Confucian tradition, they paradoxically perpetuated the Confucian value upholding the supremacy of culture and displayed exaggerated disdain for financial interests in cultural activities.¹⁶ As the New Culture Movement gained momentum after 1919, May Fourth intellectuals started to react fiercely against commercial encroachment into culture. They gave treaty-port littérateurs disparaging labels such as “cultural beggars” (*wengai*), “cultural prostitutes” (*wenchang*), and “gold-worshippers” (*baijinzhe*). The concerted attack on the so-called “mandarin duck and butterfly literature” during 1920-1922 was the highlight of the May Fourth attempt to safeguard culture from its commodification and to redefine the parameters of legitimate cultural practice.¹⁷

By the early 1920s, May Fourth intellectuals had not only become the dominant force in the culture sphere but also constructed a solid image of themselves as champions transcending commercial interests and the mundane financial concerns, an image that paradoxically fit very well the profile of uncompromising Confucian *shidafu*. Indeed,

they were the modern equivalent of the upper crust within the *shidafu* in terms of cultural status and social prestige. Compared to popular writers and publishers, they were better educated in Western-style curricula and equipped with foreign languages, up-to-date information, and innovative ideas. Likewise, while the popular writers and publishers made no claims to high art and scholarship, May Fourth intellectuals perceived themselves as the critical guardians of the Chinese cultural tradition and the creators of modern Chinese culture.

This anti-commercial posture has obscured the fact that by the early twentieth century, the book market had replaced the imperial state in financing the cultural and intellectual life of the nation. The marketability of one's manuscripts now had a direct bearing on his or her financial well-being as well as the scope of his or her public influence. Despite their self-identification as latter-day *shidafu*, May Fourth cultural radicals drew their resources from publishing and selling their work the same way that their reformist counterparts and popular writers had done two decades earlier. Indeed, modern commercialism presented the intellectual elite with at once a curse and a blessing. It threatened what was regarded as the integrity of culture while at the same time providing much-needed opportunities for its financial independence. The challenge for the elite was to successfully navigate the turbulent waters that ran between the banks of economic necessity and those of cultural authority.

As discussed earlier, the May Fourth intelligentsia consisted of two generations. The first generation of intellectual leaders used *New Youth* as a forum to launch the New Culture Movement while the subsequent generation of followers from around the country responded to their call. The generation gap involved not only a difference in cultural

status, as discussed in the previous chapter, but also a marked disparity in financial positions and the resultant difference in their approaches to publishing. The *New Youth* group, which included luminaries such as Chen Duxiu, Li Dazhao, Hu Shi, Shen Yimo, Qian Xuantong, Zhou Zuoren, Lu Xun, and Liu Bannong, treated their magazine strictly as an intellectual project with little concern for financial reward. For their substantial 100-page monthly, the eight editors received a total sum of 200 yuan to cover both the editors' and contributors' fees.¹⁸ It is worth noting that during its initial three years *New Youth's* meager circulation of 1,000 forced its publisher, the Qunyi Press (Qunyi shushe), to suffer a loss.¹⁹ Despite being a commercial publisher, the owner of Qunyi willingly undertook this commercially unviable project due to a complex set of personal obligations.²⁰ The *New Youth* editors were all relatively young professors at Beijing University, the early twentieth-century equivalent of the former Imperial Academy in prestige and payroll.²¹ At Beijing University, these founders of *New Youth* earned generous government salaries of between 200 and 450 yuan per month, which placed them amongst the highest paid salaried professionals at that time.²² Small wonder that they could afford to disparage profit and run *New Youth* solely for the purpose of effecting a paradigmatic change in the cultural field.

As fortune often follows fame, the newfound national influence of the *New Youth* editors attracted publishers who eagerly bid for their manuscripts, offering high payments both for their prestigious names and the marketability of their work.²³ For example, in 1921, Shangwu offered Chen Duxiu a monthly stipend of 300 yuan in exchange for one modest-length book manuscript per year on a topic of his choice.²⁴ Hu Shi became one of a few whom Shangwu paid the highest rate of six yuan per thousand words for his

manuscripts.²⁵ Among all the *New Youth* editors, Lu Xun was the most actively involved in publishing in terms of his writing career as well as his financial resources. By the mid-1920s, his royalties had probably exceeded his salary as a university professor.²⁶ After an unhappy year of teaching in Xiamen and Guangzhou, he settled in Shanghai in 1927 as a freelance writer. Being regarded by his contemporaries during the twenties as the “authority figure of the intellectual world” (*sixiang jie de quanwei*), he commanded the highest royalty rate of 25% from his publisher, the Beixing Press.²⁷ When he died ten years later, he left not only his spiritual inheritance of a total of thirty-eight titles of original writings and thirty-two translations to his nation, but also the continuous flow of his royalties to his wife Xu Guangpin.²⁸ In short, money from publishing played an important, though downplayed, role in sustaining the lifestyle and cultural activities of the *New Youth* editors.

In contrast, most of those in the younger May Fourth generation had to battle their way to financial security. The gap in the lifestyles between the mentors and disciples was vividly illustrated in an account by Wang Jingzhi, a young poet and future Kaiming author and shareholder.²⁹

The summer of 1923 marked the depth of my poverty. Once I endured hunger for two days, having only a small piece of bread for a day’s meal. By the second evening, [my stomach] really bothered me. So I decided to call on Hu Shi [who was vacationing in Hangzhou]. [In his hotel room,] I saw two plates of delicious Western-style cakes showing off their extreme charm. I thought to myself, “If he offers [the cakes] to me, I will gulp all of them down, leaving not a single crumb.” Unexpectedly, he failed to make the offer. I eventually walked out of his place with my stomach still empty.³⁰

By the mid-1920s, most future Kaiming editors and authors, including the young poet, had left their penury behind. But the disadvantage of their lack of pedigree greatly affected their access to well-paid jobs and publishing opportunities. It is not surprising,

therefore, that the mid-1920s found most people in the Kaiming network approaching or already in the prime of their thirties still making a modest living. Before they received national recognition, they could only sell their writings and translated work for a fraction of the rates that the May Fourth leaders enjoyed. For a stable income, the majority of the group had to rely on working as school teachers or low- to mid-level editors, neither of which were lucrative jobs. Teaching salaries varied greatly depending on geographical location, school, subject, and the teacher's educational background and experience, making them difficult to estimate. Based on the available biographical information of the Kaiming intellectuals, their full-time teaching salaries seem to have been under 100 yuan a month.³¹ The salaries for elementary schoolteachers were generally much lower. At the extreme end of a school teacher's destitution, Qian Juntao (who later became one of Kaiming's first editors) had to accept a position which paid a mere three yuan per month after he graduated from an art academy in 1926.³² In addition, a full-time teaching load at middle and elementary schools was 20 hours per week as compared to six hours for college professors.³³ Such a rigorous teaching schedule left very little time for writing and publishing.

A low or middle ranking editor did not fair much better. A large number of people in the Kaiming group initially worked at Shangwu, which, for its size and prestige, paid its editors higher than average salaries in the publishing professions. Even so, in 1921 only 19% of all its editors, i.e. those in senior positions, enjoyed monthly salaries of over 120 while 64% received less than 50 yuan.³⁴ It took Mao Dun four years, for example, to climb Shangwu's pay scale from the starting salary of 24 yuan in 1916 to 60 yuan in 1920, with the last raise due to his promotion to the editorship of *Short Story Monthly*.³⁵

Zheng Zhenduo joined Shangwu the following year on an unprecedented starting salary of 60 yuan.³⁶ Hu Yuzhi, with half a dozen years of working experience at Shangwu and growing fame, earned an enviable 120 yuan a month in the early 1920s.³⁷ On the lower end of the financial spectrum, Zhao Jingsheng, Kaiming's first chief editor, earned 20.5 yuan a month in 1922 when he first started his career as a full-time editor.³⁸ In other words, by the mid-1920s the future Kaiming editors and authors earned incomes that promised at most middle-class comfort.³⁹ Under the circumstance, their cultural idealism had to be solidly grounded in cultural market. The two were not necessarily mutually exclusive entities. But to harmonize the two required vision, skills, and perhaps even some practice.

Selling Sexual Radicalism in the Marketplace

After losing his rice bowl at Shangwu, Zhang Xichen's immediate task was to find a replacement that could feed his family, which included his parents, wife, three sons, and a brand new daughter.⁴⁰ At the age of 37, having always been a salaried man without independent means, Zhang's family responsibilities must have weighed heavily on his mind. After thirteen long years at Shangwu, his salary at the press was probably between 100 yuan to 150 yuan a month.⁴¹ His position at Shenzhou Women's School was only part-time and paid by the hour, offering a poor substitute to his Shangwu income. While he was also involved in the newly established Lida Academy, the school reimbursed its part-time idealistic teachers for transportation and food costs only.

Bearing a heavy workload in independent publishing presented Zhang with another problem. While friends and colleagues from the Women's Question Research

Association raised funds and contributed writings, the onerous operation of *New Women* fell entirely on Zhang's shoulders. This included tasks ranging from editing and proof-reading to delivering manuscripts to the commissioned printer and then stuffing envelopes and packages to be mailed to subscribers and book retailers.⁴² In addition, he continued to write for every issue of the magazine.⁴³ The demand of these multiple tasks drained him mentally and physically. It soon became clear that juggling teaching for income with publishing for influence was a difficult practice to sustain. In the summer of 1926, he was forced to quit teaching. This meant that he had to make the magazine produce an income. Publishing, editing, and writing now became as much business venture as an intellectual mission.

Perhaps on a more fundamental level, the question remained for both Zhang and his Kaiming colleagues and supporters: how to financially sustain their independent publishing and even promote its growth? *New Women* had been initiated as a member-sponsored publication of the Women's Question Research Association. The members received no pay for their contributions to the magazine. Even so, the membership donations could only finance the printing of the first few issues. Typically, avant-garde periodicals run by high-minded intellectuals and students who were unconcerned with financial returns folded once they exhausted the money they started out with unless they were funded or subsidized by political organizations.⁴⁴ Thus, it soon became painfully apparent that in order to resolve the pressing financial issues, the Kaiming group needed to shelf their habitual aloofness and to test the water of the commercial sea.

Fortunately, the single most important feature of the early issues of *New Women*, its concerted effort to promote sex education, could be easily translated into a strong selling

point. Since his promotion of a new sexual morality was the cause of the controversy that propelled the founding of *New Women*, the issue of sexuality remained a primary focus. The editor stated,

We believe that gender inequality is partially rooted in the lack of sexual knowledge and superstitious ideas about the sordidness of the female body.... To eradicate these prejudices and superstitions against women, we need to educate the public about sexual biology.⁴⁵

In the January 1926 inaugural issue of the magazine, Lu Xun also wrote, “Good ethics depend on the emancipation of the individual through the spread of education, especially sex education.” By tying its advocacy of avant-garde notions of sexuality closely to scientism and the construction of the modern free individual, *New Women* intended to be part of the May Fourth enlightenment project.

It is important to note that, unlike other avant-garde periodicals, *New Women* embodied a duality—It combined the intellectual appeal of sexual enlightenment as part of Chinese modernity construction and the popular appeal of sex as conventional entertainment. The line between the modernizing discourse and commercial exploitation was ill-defined. This ambiguity could be creatively exploited for the purposes of both modernity and money.

This was exactly what Zhang and his colleagues did six months after the launching of *New Women*. The timing coincided with the founding of Kaiming. During the second half of 1926, sexuality became the singular focus of the magazine. Sexuality in the forms of sex education, sexual reform, and human biology stood out to be discussed with great frequency and rigor. In addition, the topic was drastically sensationalized. This is especially true with regards to the table of contents of each issue. For example, the “Features” section showcased essays with the following titles:

1. “The Nature of Sex” (*Xing de ziran*), no. 7 (July);
2. “A Study on Celibacy” (*Jinyu de yanjiu*), no. 7 (July);
3. “Love and Sexual Intercourse” (*Lianai yu xingjiao*), no. 8 (August);
4. “The Playful Function of Sex” (*Xing de youxi jineng*), no. 8 (August);
5. “Breaking through the Mystery of Carnal Desire” (*Dapo rou de shenmi guannian*), no. 9 (September);
6. “The Perversion of Sexual Life” (*Xing shenghuo de biantai*), no. 9 (September);
7. “Art and Sexual Love” (*Yishu yu xing'ai*), no. 10 (October);
8. “The Second Function of Sex” (*Xing de dier guannen*), no. 12 (December).

The contents of these articles were far less sensational than their titles suggested.

However, the unprecedented explicitness of the language used in the titles would surely shock the contemporary public. In the context of early twentieth-century Chinese popular culture where the topic of sexuality usually appeared in the public domain as pornography, these titles tantalized the readers with a sense of eroticism. The magazine frequently ran in other periodicals its advertisements which typically included the table of contents. In addition to these eye-catching titles, two serialized translations would surely draw the attention of contemporary readers. One was “Three Stages of Development of Women’s Body,” which contained not only detailed textual description of female physiology but also illustrations of the female reproductive system.⁴⁶ The other was a translation of the sexually charged tales from Boccaccio’s *Decameron*.⁴⁷ All these made the magazine the hottest forum on sexuality of its time.

From the perspective of the marketplace, this singular focus seemed to be a safe bet. By 1926 when *New Women* was launched, there was no shortage of women’s magazines on the market, as gender was one of the most discussed and debated issues of the day. A typical self-styled progressive women’s magazine tended to cover a wide range of the topics that held sway among the liberal and radical intellectuals and students. These included marriage reform, the abolition of the traditional family, women’s

education, suffrage, female labor, and sexuality. Consciously or subconsciously, the existing women's magazines tried to appeal to the broadest audience. The focus of *New Women* on sex education was a departure from the usual practice of the time, giving the magazine a niche in the marketplace.

As *New Women's* companion series, the "Women's Question Research Association Book Series" followed the same direction. It totaled twenty-three titles. The majority in the series were on the subject of human sexuality.⁴⁸ The first nine releases in 1926-1927 included the following titles:

1. *Collected Debates on New Sexual Morality (Xin xing daode taolun ji)*, edited by Zhang Xichen, 1926;
2. *On the Question of Women (Funu wenti shijian)*, translated by Zhang Xichen, 1926;
3. *Sexuality and Life (Xing yu rensheng)*, translated by Zhou Jienren, 1926;
4. *Sexual Knowledge (Xing de zhishi)*, translated by Zhang Xichen under the penname of Fang Ke, 1926;
5. *Married Love (Jiehun de ai)*, by Marie Stope and translated by Hu Zhongchi, 1926;
6. *The Story of the Woman (Furen de gushi)*, translated by Hu Buoken, 1926;
7. *The Story of Sex (Xing de gushi)*, translated by Song Tao, 1927;
8. *Literature and Sexual Love (Wenyi yu xingai)*, translated by Xie Liuyi, 1927;
9. *Free Women (Ziyou de nuxing)*, by Emma Goldman and translated by Lu Jianbuo, 1927.⁴⁹

As immediately jumps to the eye, five out of nine titles have the word "sex" in them.

Seven of the books dealt to a great extent with the issue of sexuality.

The series scored marked sales success. All but one title enjoyed a second and third printing by early 1928.⁵⁰ The translation of Stopes' book proved to be a sustainable bestseller, going through six printings in the first two years after its release. During the decade that followed, Kaiming had to fight hard against its repeated piracy.⁵¹ The commercial success of the series provided once again concrete evidence of the popularity and profitability of publications addressing the issue of sexuality.

Curiously, a significant disparity existed between the shockingly avant-garde sexual attitudes in *New Women* and the personal lives of the members of the Women's Question Research Association. Zhang's controversial 1925 proposal of a "new sexual morality" aside, he was ultimately a follower of the moderate feminist Ellen Key, who upheld love as the corner stone of marriage and the elevation of motherhood as the means to gender equality.⁵² Even this modest view he held only in theory. In his personal life, he let his cautious conservatism and humanity prevail. He married the illiterate woman to whom he was betrothed when he was four years old. "The mindset of my wife could not be further apart from mine," he wrote.⁵³ During the 1920s, as the editor of women's magazines promoting freedom to love and divorce, Zhang had acquired some public recognition. Quite a few new-style women were attracted to him.⁵⁴ At the time, many modernized intellectuals left their wives by arranged-marriage to seek true love. A famous example was Chen Duxiu, who forged a common-law marriage with his young, educated half-sister-in-law in 1911. Another was Lu Xun, who did the same with his young student Xu Guangping in 1927. But Zhang did not choose to follow suit and kept his marriage intact. He explained that a modernized man already in an arranged marriage to an old-style woman should take into consideration the dire position of his wife were he to abandon her. Ironically, when asked his rationale for sustaining his marriage, Zhang cited Lu Xun as saying (right before Lu Xun's common-law marriage took place), "Since we are bound by a sense of morality... all we can do is to be fellow victims [with our old-style wives] and pay the last price of our four thousand year-old custom."⁵⁵

Zhang's approach to his own marriage was common among his friends and fellow members of the Women's Question Research Association. Hu Yuzhi was one such

example. In the mid-1920s, a beautiful, well-educated daughter of an established family from his hometown fell in love with him and broke her betrothal to pursue him to Shanghai. Between his attraction to his admirer and his wife of arranged marriage, Hu made the difficult choice in favor of the latter.⁵⁶ As for Kaiming's second chief editor Xia Mianzun, he not only kept his traditional marriage but, on the theoretical level, favored an elevation of motherhood as the ultimate solution to women's oppression.⁵⁷ All these examples strongly suggest that the male feminists at Kaiming shared the sexual radicalism expressed in *New Women* not as a personal conviction but as a combination of intellectual position and commercial strategy.

Polemics as Entertainment

In addition to eroticizing *New Women*, Zhang also played up another feature embedded in the magazine as a selling point—polemics. Precedents of polemics frequently appeared in periodical press of the teens and twenties where it was as a strategy to attract public attention in addition to winning peer recognition. The most telling example was the practice of the famous *New Youth* editors who launched the New Culture Movement. Despite its later glory, the monthly during its first couple of years had a very limited audience. The radical proposals for a “literary reform” by Hu Shi and a “literary revolution” by Chen Duxiu at the beginning of 1917 went unheeded. Even the attacks on Lin Shu, the celebrated classicist and translator of Western literature, made by co-editor Qian Xuantong, failed to arouse sufficient attention from either Lin or other leading reformists.⁵⁸ The following year, in order to spur heated debate so as to arouse public interest, Qian faked a reader's response written in archaic classical prose

defending Confucian notions of literature and making unsubstantiated attacks on the *New Youth* editors. He then wrote a much longer rebuttal ridiculing the established reformist writers. This otherwise comic act miraculously turned around the fate of the magazine and of the New Culture project it promoted. Enraged, Lin Shu famously walked into the trap by siding with the fictive opponent to *New Youth* and producing point-by-point counter-rebuttals. The ensuing polemics, this time for real, ironically turned the *New Youth* “lonely”⁵⁹ campaign, a self-generated “tempest in a teapot,” into a genuine literary revolution.⁶⁰ With their characteristic polemic combativeness, the May Fourth intellectuals proclaimed triumph over the “old forces.” The episode was subsequently celebrated in May Fourth historiography as early as the 1920s.⁶¹

Intellectuals outside of the May Fourth camp were not entirely innocent of polemics either. Some scholars now try to point to the May Fourth proclivity for polemics as unique and indicative of the hegemonic nature of their intellectual project.⁶² In reality, many opponents to May Fourth agendas were willing participants in polemics for the same purposes, failing to foresee the eventuality of falling on the losing side of history (i.e. the May Fourth historiography). Take, for example Wu Mi, the editor of the famous—or infamous—*Xueheng*, who, while critical of the penchant for polemics displayed by Mei Guandi and Hu Xianxiao, repeatedly gave their writings the most prominent place in his magazine, thus pitting his monthly in an intense battle against the New Culture promoters. He even wrote, (although seemingly disapprovingly), that intellectual debates, like circuses, attracted audiences whose only interest was to watch a good fight. In a very short time-span, the group at *Xueheng*, the obscure Nanjing-based publication, drew attention from the culture centers of Beijing and Shanghai and won the

title of “Restorationists” [*fugu pai*] and the leading opponents of the New Culture.⁶³ From a financial perspective, no publicity was bad publicity in this epoch of intense competition for ideological space.

Zhang Xichen fully understood the dual purposes of polemics, i.e. its legitimating power and circus effect. His attempt to explore the selling potential of polemics was most evidenced in Kaiming’s publication of *Collected Debates on the New Sexual Morality* in early 1926. This collection included all the exchanges between the editors of *Ladies’ Magazine* and Chen Daqi from the previous year. Earlier, Zhang had accused Chen Bainian of using his “cultural hegemony” to squash his opponents.⁶⁴ His bitterness is understandable since in the end Chen’s attack cost him his job. Now, Zhang was willing to put his personal feelings aside in order to put the debate on sale. In the interest of marketing the product, he presented Chen not as a villain but a worthy opponent. He wrote in the advertisement for the collection, “The three authors, Chen, Zhang, and Zhou, were all great spokespersons of the media.... In this book, [they] debate against each other back and forth. Ink flies and words dance—indeed, a *great spectacle for the eye*.”⁶⁵ (emphasis added) He also noted,

First, despite the heatedness of the debate, the public still failed to take much notice. [The printing of the collected volume is] intended to invite broad public attention [to the contested issue]. Second, now that the debate has cost me my job and thus put my family’s livelihood in jeopardy, I have to make a few dollars to put food on the dinner table.”⁶⁶

Such was his candid acknowledgement of the financial reason for compiling the book.

As for *New Women*, as demonstrated earlier, it was launched right into the crossfire of a number of high-profile ideological debates when it made its first appearance. In addition, the magazine was characterized by its polemics on the issues of love and sex.

The seriousness of its engagement with the issues should not be dismissed. The battle of pens, as published polemics were called by contemporaries, simply gave added entertainment value for the readers. After the liberal opponent Chen Bainian withdrew from the debate, the magazine managed to create another and protracted debate on the same issues. In the previous chapter, I have discussed the three different positions involved in the debate and the effect the debate had on setting the discursive boundary of the sexual issue. Here, I point to the manner with which Zhang initiated and sustained the debate to maximize its commercial effect.

One interesting feature of the debate was that it was neatly and conveniently contained in a single forum: *New Women*. May Fourth *tongren* periodicals often engaged in public debates *against one another*. When different opinions were presented in the same magazine, they juxtaposed rather than engaged in disputing each other. It was odd to see *New Women* carrying heated exchanges among its own authors since it was the voice of the Women's Question Research Association, whose membership was characterized by shared views, ostensibly what a *tongren* magazine was all about.⁶⁷ In explaining his intention, Zhang stated that his magazine should encompass dissenting viewpoints.⁶⁸ His ingenuousness unquestionable, one cannot help thinking, however, that there was also the attempt to showcase a "spectacle for the eye." And "ink flies and words dance" over sexuality, no less.

The argument for the presence of intellectual showmanship in Zhang's approach to *New Women* is further supported by the fact that he used the open forum section in the magazine to solicit outside submissions that offered views, opposed to him and the other members of the Women's Questions Research Association. Being a *tongren* magazine,

New Women generally carried submissions only from the members of the association. But Zhang invited on board in late 1926 the anarchists Qiandi and Lu Jianbo to become two primary participants of the debate.⁶⁹ Following anarchist opposition to institutions and authority, Lu Jianbo attacked family and marriage. While upholding love based on equality and free will, he proposed, “we should allow maximum freedom with regard to sex.”⁷⁰ Qiandi went a step further and wanted to do away with love, which he referred to as “a tool for maintaining bourgeois nuclear family under capitalism.”⁷¹ These positions were far more radical than Zhang and his colleagues could accept. But Zhang not only printed the anarchists’ submissions to the open forum but also awarded them the first and third places respectively.⁷² What else could the editor’s motivation be other than to create tensions in the magazine? Next, when the editor received an essay from Qiandi criticizing Lu for his willingness to give recognition to love and commitments, he showed it to Lu who immediately wrote a counter-rebuttal. Zhang then printed the two essays along with one of his own which confirmed the notion of the unity of body and soul while opposing free sex. This effectively set the stage for what the editor called the “battle of anti-love and anti-anti-love [theories],”⁷³ or more vividly, the “melee” (*hunzhan*) as one later participant called it.⁷⁴

But this debate remained a rather isolated three-man show with only two other participants playing supporting roles during the first year and a half.⁷⁵ To rekindle the dwindling enthusiasm of both the participants and the spectators of the polemics, Zhang printed the translation of “The Loves of Three Generations” by the controversial Russian feminist Aleksandra Kollontai, followed by a positive and a negative review of the short story, which again set a ready platform for debate. At the same time, the editor issued a

call for essays on the questions of love and sexual practices, promising that the accepted ones would be published in a special issue. He continued, “It would be best if your discussion relates to the on-going [anti-love and anti-anti-love] debate.”⁷⁶ These exchanges sustained the periodical for another two issues before finally dying down.

In fierce competition against its Shangwu rival periodical, *Ladies' Journal*, Kaiming also used pricing as a key part of its promotional strategy. *New Women* started out as a substantial periodical by the standard of its time, numbering about 80 pages per issue, yet it cost a mere 15 cents a copy. In contrast, its competitor, with approximately 120 pages per issue, was sold at 30 cents a copy. This gap was even more apparent as *New Women* expanded to about 100 pages an issue while maintaining its original price, essentially offering a comparable product at half the price of its competitor.⁷⁷

These three strategies of eroticization, polemics, and pricing brought the magazine remarkable success in circulation. Its initial circulation was between 3,000 to 5,000 copies per issue.⁷⁸ By the end of the first year of 1926, each issue went through five to six reprints and sold over 10,000 copies, an impressive record for an intellectual “start-up.” In light of the distinct disadvantages that *New Women* experienced in terms of distribution, this success is particularly remarkable. *Ladies' Journal* enjoyed the benefit of Shangwu's massive distribution network, which included nearly 30 branches across the country. On the other hand, *New Women* initially had to rely on the Guanghai Press (*Guanghai shuju*), a new and small avant-garde publisher, and then on the fledgling Kaiming for its distribution. Neither Guanghai nor Kaiming had any branch offices outside of Shanghai at the time.⁷⁹ By the beginning of its second year, the rapid success of *New Women* gave the editor enough confidence to increase each print run from the

customary 2,000-3,000 to 10,000.⁸⁰ During the second year, the magazine managed to sustain its popularity with the reading public and its market share.⁸¹ Its sales record placed it among the most widely read periodicals of the time.⁸²

The magazine's initial success was significant for both Zhang Xichen and Kaiming. It allowed Zhang to cut his teeth on independent publishing. As mentioned earlier, during the first half year of 1926, he struggled to run the magazine while trying to earn a living by his old schoolteacher trade. The magazine's popularity was the encouragement he desperately needed to make a full-time commitment to publishing. Furthermore, it laid the groundwork for Kaiming Press in terms of both material preparation and the creation of a readership.⁸³

The Difficulty of Selling Without Selling Out

Paradoxically, however, Zhang and his Kaiming colleagues were in no mood to trumpet their new-found popularity with the general reading public. For them, the purpose for publishing *New Women* and the book series was, first and foremost, to promote their views on the issues of gender and sexuality. While adding a little sensationalism to spice up their publications, they failed to anticipate that, upon leaving the printing shop, these publications were subject to the varied appropriation by the readership. As it turned out, for all too many it was the spice, the discussion on sex and the sensual pleasure it might bring that became the main reason for purchase. The serious and oftentimes scientific textual representations of human sexuality notwithstanding, the readers likely consumed the magazine and book series for their erotic entertainment

values. Since the two constituted the bulk of Kaiming's publications, the press quickly acquired a reputation in some quarters as specializing in erotica.

This problem was evidenced in the frequent requests for pornographic literature made by readers and book retailers. Apparently, the situation had become serious enough by the beginning of 1927 that Zhang Xichen felt compelled to make a public statement:

Kaiming Press has assumed the task of providing guidance in cultural matters as a means to serve the society. We have always refused to retail obscene literature disguised as sex education material that would lead the young astray. Even less would we print materials of such nature ourselves... We deeply regret that we often receive requests from bookstores and individual readers who erroneously insist on associating our press with pornography. This is all because they harbor deep misunderstanding of the purpose of our press. Recently, such requests have become a daily burden [on our staff] so that we are obliged to make a public announcement: *Married Love* and *Sexual Knowledge* [a Kaiming issue] discuss sexual issues with a serious and scientific attitude. This press has never printed or distributed any pornographic literature for profit. For those of our readers who love [pornographic] materials, please do not trouble yourself to send requests to us—we do not feel obligated to respond.⁸⁴

This protestation was quickly followed by an editorial, “*New Women and the Study of Sexuality*,” printed at the beginning of the March 1927 issue. In it, Zhang expressed his shocked disbelief that there were “many who misunderstand [the magazine]” or even confused Kaiming publications with the controversial *Sexual Experience*.⁸⁵

Sexual Experience was published under the name of Zhang Jingsheng. It deserves our special attention here because it posed an interesting challenge to Kaiming as well as the new intelligentsia at large: What should be the criteria by which to draw the line between the modernizing discourse of sexuality and pornography, and by extension between culture and commerce in culture? Pornography was an age-old practice in China as elsewhere. It occupied the lowest realm of the cultural sphere and was never granted respectability. Its authors were mostly anonymous. Since the turn of the century,

however, open talk of sex and sexuality among the educated elite rapidly became a sign of liberation from the tyranny of Confucian morality. The intense interest in sexuality and the human body was embedded in the May Fourth promotion of the concept of the independent, modern “self.” This new development blurred the traditional distinction between legitimate and illegitimate cultural practices. Since cultural products on sex and sexuality were always profitable commodities, as can be seen in both the Zhang Jingsheng and Kaiming cases, it should not be surprising that some May Fourth intellectuals became overzealous for commercial gain at the risk of their cultural legitimacy.

Zhang Jingsheng (1888-1970) was one such person. He was endowed with abundance of symbolic capital that included personal ties to many prominent political figures such as Sun Zhongshang and Wang Jingwei, a Ph.D. degree in philosophy from France, and a professorship at Beijing University. While teaching philosophy, he devoted most of his energy to promoting sexual reform and contraception, gaining a widespread reputation as China’s first sexologist. In 1926, he edited the controversial *Sexual Experience*, a collection of essays by a group of authors including his bohemian feminist wife, Chu Sunxue. This was a watershed for his career as a new intellectual. The book allegedly offered explicit details of the authors’ sex lives.⁸⁶ The professor justified the collection by claiming his inspiration from the English sexologist Havelock Ellis, who provided the description and analysis of sexual behaviors with a scientific foundation.⁸⁷ The book became an instant sensation and the hottest book in middle school and college dorms.⁸⁸

Not surprisingly, profit-seeking book merchants rushed to print pirate copies and pornographers faked sequels. On the heels of joining the exodus of Beijing University faculty to Shanghai in 1927, Zhang started a publishing house of his own, the Beauty Press (Meide shudian). It published, among other things, a monthly, *New Culture (Xin wenhua)*, as he contentiously named it, and claimed it to be “China’s newest new thought monthly (*Zhongguo zuiyou xin sixiang de yuekan*).” It was devoted exclusively to sexual education and sexual reform in the same provocative manner. The monthly turned out to be a run-away success, at least commercially, enjoying a circulation of 20,000 copies per issue. This avant-garde adventure brought the sexologist and his wife enormous monetary gain, with which they reportedly purchased a fancy house in downtown Shanghai and led an extravagant life.

Sexual Experience sent a shockwave through cultural communities and scandalized many of their members.⁸⁹ It is hard to measure the obscenity of the book, since it is still banned and not accessible for research. Additionally, the notion of obscenity is relative and subject to historical change. Suffice it to say that *Sexual Experience* went against the conventional grain of its time. When the book first came out, nonetheless, the responses were not uniformly critical. For example, *Yusi* monthly carried several articles ridiculing the professor. But one of its editors, Zhou Zuoren, who himself was very involved in promoting sex education, called for tolerance of such experimentation. However, as Zhang’s controversial graphic and personal approach to sex education continued in his *New Culture*, and, perhaps, as his wealth rapidly grew from the publications on sexuality, the tide turned against him. In February 1927, Zhou Zuoren withdrew his support and published a tirade accusing Zhang of losing intellectual integrity. The indictment from

such a prominent figure quickly led to Zhang's dethronement as the leading Chinese sexologist.⁹⁰ The public reception of the book did not help the professor's case either. Educators denounced his publications. Local Guomindang (GMD) authorities soon moved to put a ban on *Sexual Experience* and gave him a fine on the charge of "immoral conduct."⁹¹ In 1929, forced by public opinion and the new conservative political climate, Zhang closed his publishing house. He remained an intellectual outcast for the rest of his life.⁹²

Zhang Jingsheng's downfall seemed to be a case of mismanaged avant-garde transgression. In all fairness, the Kaiming group did not share the sexologist's provocative flamboyance. Neither did they share his approach to sex education. Specifically, the sexologist maintained that the understanding of sexuality should be scientifically grounded, but conceded that there was a great deal of artistry involved. The publication of *Sexual Experience* was thus justified on the ground that the readers could learn about the "art of love" from reading specific examples of love-making. Kaiming's position, as voiced by Zhou Jianren, insisted upon safeguarding the scientific aspect of biological treatises by focusing on general rather than individual characteristics and by couching materials in serious, scientific language rather than literary flourish.⁹³

However, there were noticeable parallels between Zhang Jingsheng's activities and those of Kaiming. Both insisted on the scientific nature of their approaches and cited vast numbers of Western authors and concepts to lend authority to their writings on sexuality. More importantly, both profited from publishing on sexuality by pushing the boundary of socially acceptable intellectual practice. In addition, there was an overlap in the circles of authors who wrote for both *New Women* and *New Culture*.⁹⁴ Finally, *New Women* was

generally supportive of Zhang Jingsheng and his wife Chu Songxue in their effort to promote sexual enlightenment. Even after Zhang's release of *Sexual Experience*, it still printed in June 1926 a call-for-contributions by Chu urging married women to "lay bare" the problems in their sex life.⁹⁵

Small wonder that Zhang Xichen painfully acknowledged that while he had no fear about readers mis-identifying *New Women* as old-style pornography, he was deeply troubled by indications that the readers placed the magazine in the same category as the sexologist's work. While initially the Kaiming group believed in their intellectual capacity to utilize modern signs and concepts to safely ground their treatment of the issue of sexuality in the May Fourth cultural terrain, by 1927 they were not so confident. The increasing controversy over Zhang Jingsheng and his eventual exclusion from the May Fourth community sent a clear message that multiple intellectual credentials and statements of high purposes would not always safeguard one's reputation and May Fourth membership. Sexual radicalism was a risky business.

Cultural Politics Carries the Day

As the Kaiming group became aware of its problematic public image in early 1927, it took decisive steps to put an end to it by attacking Zhang Jingsheng and other publishers suspected of trying to package pornographic literature as part of the print forum on sexuality. In the same month that Zhou Zuoren made his denunciation of the sexologist, Zhou Jianren published in *New Women* an article, "The Crisis of the Sex Education Movement", joining forces with his brother to warn aspiring new youth of the danger of being misled by pornographers.⁹⁶ In the following month, Zhang Xichen

simply announced, “Despite the fact that Dr. Zhang Jinsheng dresses himself in the robe of a university professor and has aptly garnished his book with the vocabularies from [modern] philosophy, art, and science, *Sexual Experience* serves no purpose other than instructing its readers in the ways of carnal pleasure.”⁹⁷ He also appealed to the GMD authorities to make the wise distinction between genuine sex education and profit-making pornography and would not accept the proposal of ultra-conservatives who wanted to banish discussions of sexuality all together.⁹⁸

Sexual enlightenment in the early twentieth century frequently intersected with the production of modernizing discourses and commercial culture, both vastly expanded and available to literate society due to the expansion of publishing. As a matter of fact, it can even be argued that the very notion of a clear distinction between these two categories was a May Fourth predisposition. The temporary instability and ambiguity of the boundaries allowed Zhang Xichen and his colleagues to capitalize on their sex education program by meeting the needs of the general public for entertaining reading materials. Ultimately, however, like their May Fourth peers, they were deeply wedded to the notion of the dichotomy between high culture and low-brow entertainment, between culture and commerce, and they regarded themselves as the producers and guardians of the former. In the eyes of their peers as well as their own perception, the propensity of common readers to appropriate all writings on sexuality as eroticism posed a threat to their legitimacy.

Confronting their inability to dictate readers’ appropriation of its publications, Zhang Xichen and his colleagues quickly recoiled from the popular book market. The denunciation of Zhang Jinsheng was only the first step. Other changes quickly followed.

In the area of book publishing, the press rapidly diversified the subject matter of their new titles. The press published six titles on gender and sexuality in 1926, more than one third of the year's total output. In 1927, Kaiming's second year, only three titles in this category were released, constituting less than one-fifth of the total output. While the number of the titles on gender and sexuality went up to four during the third year, as the press expanded and diversified, the percentage was further reduced to less than 10%. In so doing, Kaiming gradually shed its trademark of sexual education. By the end of the 1920s, new titles on sexuality only appeared once every few years.

New Women, the periodical that defined Kaiming's public image, also went through several noticeable evolutions after 1927. The editor now seemed to agree with one reader who pointed out that, the importance of the issue of sexuality notwithstanding, it was only one of the many facets of women's lives and that the magazine should give appropriate space to other social aspects of the gender question.⁹⁹ At the beginning of 1927, the editor he announced that the magazine would present a "freshness" involving "a new emphasis on practical issues" that bore relevance to the lives of women.¹⁰⁰ The editor's promise of future attention to practical issues, in fact, failed to fully materialize. However, to a moderate extent, the magazine did broaden its coverage to include more mainstream topics such as love, marriage, and women's work and political participation. There were also two unique additions: cartoons by Feng Zikai and love songs by Qian Juntao and his friends at the Spring Bee Music Club. Both were designed to popularize the magazine without eroticizing it.

This is not to say *New Women* ceased to be an important site for the discourse of sexuality. But the kind of explicit writings on the issue that had subjected the magazine

to (mis)reading as pornography during the previous year could be found now only in the three-way polemic debates discussed earlier. While the debate allowed the expressions of the most provocative sexual radicalism, including sexual communalism (*tuanti hua de xingjiao*), these expressions represented neither the magazine's position, nor that of the editor.¹⁰¹ As a matter of fact, among the three debaters, the editor's voice on the issue was the most moderate. This measure forestalled the possibility of the sort of criticism that derailed the sexologist Zhang Jinsheng.

Outside of the debates, *New Women* backed away from its provocative presentation of sexual radicalism. This was reflected in the greatly decreased number of feature articles on sexuality. Whereas the six issues from June through December 1926 featured eight essays on the topic, the entire year of 1927 saw only six. Also, the language used in the discussions in the later issues was less sensational. In addition, the magazine went through a process of intellectualization after 1927. First, it further underscored its scientific quality by featuring essays such as "Sexuality and Heredity (*Xing yu yichuan*)" and "From the Theory of Diminishing Role of Sex to Female-centrism" (*Cong xing de taotai shuo dao nuxing zhongxin shuo*) which were written in the style of modern science or social sciences treatises.¹⁰² Perhaps in an attempt to give the discussions a broader scientific footing, Zhou Jianren, the most scientifically-oriented member of the Women's Question Research Society, started to write about the biology of plant and animal reproductive systems.¹⁰³

Second, it moved toward esotericism. Feature articles such as "Understanding Incest from the Perspectives of Ethnography (*Jiantong zhi renzhongxue de kaocha*)" had the ring of an academic paper.¹⁰⁴ Also, following Zhou Jianren's approach, the feature

articles on sexuality began to address problems less on the practical, individual level and more on an abstract, theoretical level. Furthermore, the magazine's pages became increasingly filled with essays introducing new Western ideas about gender and sexuality or simply translations on the subjects. Foreign names and imported terms, some in their original languages and others transliterated, appeared with greater frequency. In so doing, the magazine seemed to make it clear that its stance on sexual education refused to lend itself to easy reading for entertainment, much less for sexual pleasure.

Finally, *New Women* opted for further political radicalization along the line of anarcho-feminism. Anarchist authors were featured prominently in the last two years of the magazine. Their contributions, mostly translations of Russian anarchists' work, came to take up a significant portion of the magazine. The deepening involvement of *New Women* in anarcho-feminism and its printing of an increasing amount of translations of anarchist literature should not be surprising in light of the Kaiming group's enthusiasm for the anarchist education experiment at the Lida Academy. In addition, the political climate, while harshly repressive to Communists, was temporarily tolerant of the presence of anarchism until 1929.¹⁰⁵ More importantly perhaps, unlike the Communists, who increasingly approached women's emancipation from a political angle, subjugating women's emancipation to class struggles, anarchists remained committed to a social-cultural approach to the gender issue. Sexual liberation was given a high priority in the anarcho-feminist agenda. By tying its sexual radicalism to a radical political ideology, *New Women* ultimately positioned itself in such a way that it would be easy to deflect criticism of its tendencies toward eroticism.

At the peak of its radicalism in 1929, however, the magazine ceased publication. In his “Announcement of the Magazine’s closing,” Zhang listed the following reasons:

It has become self-evident that the resolution of the women’s question hinges upon solving [larger] social problems. Reading empty talks about the remedies for gender problems will certainly bore our readers to death. Now, we who offer our opinions [to our readers] even feel embarrassed to do so. “Why not change the direction of the magazine?” many of our friends urged us. But what direction shall we turn ourselves to? If we lean to the Left, in this country where the [GMD] Party hold hegemony over everything, we run the risk of being branded as “red” and thus getting our heads chopped off. Though [being “red”] can be a heroic deed, we have yet to muster such courage. On the other hand, if we lean to the Right and only address ladies of wealthy households on the topics of how to make fashionable clothes and delicious cakes, we most likely would be able to rapidly expand the circulation of *New Women* to several tens of thousands. Regrettably, since we don’t have any tailoring and cooking experience, the nature of the advice we might offer would betray the fact that we were mere laymen in such areas ... [After all,] if what we wanted was only to make a profit, we might as well open a jewelry store to cheat big bucks out of rich ladies’ purses. Since neither turning toward the Left or the Right suits us, we finally decided to fold the magazine.¹⁰⁶

This farewell address alluded to the greatly changed political climate after the GMD’s massacre of the Communists and labor unionists in 1927 and the eventual purge of the anarchists in 1929.¹⁰⁷ Like many who had been devoted to the feminist cause, the editor now acknowledged that the issues of gender and sexuality were embedded in larger social-political problems that could not be resolved in isolation. He also expressed his frustration and even disillusionment with the ability of radical gender politics to transform society in the face of overwhelming political suppression. It would not be a stretch to argue that the harsh political reality had put an end to the heady period for those who dared to imagine outside of convention, or even to read about radical notions on gender and sexuality.

However, the folding of the magazine also involved internal causes. After all, as politically radical and culturally avant-garde as it was, the magazine was not censored by

the government. When leafing through tables of contents for the four-year run of the magazine, one notices that the names of the early frequent contributors—Zhou Jianren, Sun Fuxi, and Xia Mianzun—start to appear with less frequency during the second year, and that by the beginning of the third year, the magazine seemed to have acquired a new team of lesser known writers who did not belong to the Women's Question Research Association. It was also during its third year that it started to call for paid contributions, indicating the disappearance of its previous stable of voluntary authors.¹⁰⁸ It is, therefore, not unreasonable to surmise that the magazine experienced some difficulties in retaining its member contributors. The reason might lie in intellectual boredom from writing on a narrow range of topics as well as lack of financial compensation. Indeed, a socio-cultural cause often takes more than just idealism to sustain itself.

Aside from authorship, readership might also have presented a problem. An advertisement published at the end of the magazine's third year offered a hint in this regard. The advertisement promised that "the magazine will try its best to rid itself of dry texts and increase interesting but not tasteless writings so that *New Women* will be not just a stern teacher but also a good friend for young men and women."¹⁰⁹ Clearly, this could be understood as an acknowledgement of the problems with readership *New Women* experienced due to the intellectualization of the discussions on the issue of sexuality, i.e. the erudition of the subject matters, the opaqueness of the language, and the lack of relevance to the practical problems of the readership. During its last year, however, the magazine did not offer any visible change of course and presumably its problems with the readership remained. In a way, the magazine in its later years returned

to the realm of May Fourth practice in both content and style. It became no longer accessible, or of interest, to the general public.

The fate of *The Common* (*Yiban*, 1926-29), another periodical released by Kaiming, also supports this speculation. Unlike *New Women*, whose sponsor, the Women's Question Research Association, merged with Kaiming in the financial department after the press' founding, *The Common* was the financial responsibility of the Lida Society.¹¹⁰ That aside, the two magazines were both of *tongren* nature and run by essentially the same group of people.¹¹¹ The editors of *The Common*—Xia Mianzun, Liu Shuqing, and Liu Xunyu—all went on Kaiming's payroll. According to Gu Junzhen, when *The Common* was first started, the Lida members' fresh enthusiasm made it a dynamic media. A couple of years later, however, "members started to shun writing and editing responsibilities so much so that not only did the content of the magazine become stale but they often failed to release the magazine on time."¹¹² Therefore, Xia Mianzun sadly commented, "In the beginning, it was people who ran the magazine. But later, it was the magazine that ran people."¹¹³ Being "stale" and late to press were not qualities of a magazine that could hold a large and sustainable readership. *The Common* folded four months before *New Women*.

The end of *New Women* also marked the demise of sexual discourse at the Kaiming Press. The issue of sexuality had served as a springboard for the press to enter the competitive book market. But it took intellectualism and radicalism to preserve the reputation of the Press. The history of *New Women* demonstrates the dialectical relationship between the symbolic and economic forces in cultural production and consumption. Staying on the course of high-brow May Fourth cultural production,

however, was financial suicide. The failure of its first foray into the market meant that Kaiming faced the challenge of finding new ways to negotiate between culture and commerce.

¹ Zhang Xichen, "Xin nuxing yu xing de yanjiu," *New Women* 2, no. 3 (March 1927): 237-241.

² Ibid.

³ The other two periodicals that Kaiming issued, *Wenxue zhoukan* (*Literary Weekly*) and *Yiban* (*The Common*), were owned by the Literary Research Association and the Lida Society respectively.

⁴ Zhang Xichen, "Cong shangren dao shangren," p. 110.

⁵ Initially, especially prior to the failure of the Hundred Days Reform of 1898, the reformists' engagement with the publishing was decidedly non-commercial and relied upon a combination of government subsidies, private donations, and editor-publishers' own money to run their periodicals. These included the famous *Qiangxue bao* (1895), *Wanguo gongbao*, and *Shiwu bao* (1896-98). Even during this early time, the income of the editors had become an issue. See Introduction, fn 57.

⁶ See Ji Shaofu et. al. pp. 320-21.

⁷ Hanlin was a title for the highest imperial degree-holders who worked at the Imperial Academy.

⁸ In 1901, Shangwu had new investments of 23,750 yuan from Zhang Yuanji and a businessman. The exact amount from Zhang is unknown. See Chang Zhou, "Shangwu yinshuguan de zaoqi gudong [Early shareholders of the Commercial Press]," in *Shangwu Yinshuguan jiushiwu nian*, p. 646.

⁹ Zhang Xichen, "Mantan Shangwu yinshuguan," p. 108.

¹⁰ Wang Jiarong, "Cai Yuanpei he Shangwu yinshuguan (Cai Yuanpei and the Commercial Press);" Zi Ye, "Liang Qichao he Shangwu yinshuguan (Liang Qichao and the Commercial Press);" and Chen Yinnian, "Yan Fu yu Shangwu yinshuguan (Yan Fu and the Commercial Press)," in *Shangwu Yinshuguan Jiushi Nian*, pp. 478-526.

¹¹ Chen Yinnian, "Yan Fu yu Shangwu yinshuguan," pp. 512-26; and Chang Zhou, "Shangwu yinshuguan de zaoqi gudong [Early shareholders of the Commercial Press]" in *Shangwu yinshuguan jiushiwu nian*, pp. 651-53.

¹² For tabloids, see Ma Guangren, et al. pp. 146-47. For the output of fiction, see Yang Yi, *Zhongguo xiandai xiaoshuo shi [A history of Chinese modern fiction]* vol. 1 (Beijing: Renming wenxue chubanshe, 1986), p. 1.

¹³ Li pioneered tabloid journalism with *Youxi bao* (*Playful Daily*, 1897-1911). For a discussion on Li's journalistic innovations and entrepreneurship, see Ma Guangren, et al. pp. 148-54.

¹⁴ See Yang Yi, vol. 1, p. 27.

¹⁵ Yang Yi, vol. 1, p. 31.

¹⁶ Their very adoption of a cultural revolution to spearhead a fundamental change in China already implied a traditional view that gave centrality to culture. See Lin Yu-sheng's argument in *The Crisis of the Chinese Consciousness*.

¹⁷ Coined by May Fourth intellectuals, "mandarin duck and butterfly literature" refers to popular fiction for entertainment emerged in the early twentieth century. Recent studies find in this school of fiction literary innovativeness and budding modernity. See for example David Da-wei Wang's *Fin-De-Siecle Splendor*.

¹⁸ The fee was set when Chen Duxue first started the magazine in Shanghai in 1915. Chen was the sole editor until the beginning of 1917 when he left the city to accept a position at Beijing University and subsequently involved other like-minded faculty members in editing the magazine. Wang Yuanfang, *Huiyi Yadong tushuguan (Recollections of the Yadong Press)* (Shanghai: Xuelin chubanshe, 1983), p. 32.

¹⁹ For the magazine's early circulation, see *Jianming Zhongguo xinwen shi* (Concise Chinese publishing history) (Fuzhou: Fujian renming chubanshe, 1985), p. 144. During the first decades of the twentieth century, publishers needed to sell 2,000 to 3,000 copies for the initial printing of a publication to break even. See Perry Link, *Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies: Popular Fiction in Early Twentieth-Century Chinese Cities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), p. 149.

²⁰ Initially, Chen Duxiu approached the Yadong Press with his publishing plan. The owner of Yadong, Wang Mengzou, was a close friend and faithful admirer of Chen and had given Chen his much-needed

material support in the past. At that juncture in 1915, however, Yadong could not finance Chen's proposed project because its business was on a financial brink for having taken on the burden of publishing a similarly unprofitable project, *Tiger Magazine (Jiayin)*. Wang convinced his close friends who owned Qunyi to support Chen's project. Qunyi eventually reaped good profits from the magazine when its circulation increased to 15,000 in 1918. In 1920, Chen left Beijing University and moved back to Shanghai. Due to a dispute with Hu Shi over the editorial policy, he took the magazine with him and started to publish it independently. See Wang Yuanfang, p. 31-32.

²¹ The oldest of the group was Chen Duxiu who was 38 when the group first came together at the magazine in 1917 while the youngest were Hu Shi and Liu Bannong who were both 26.

²² When Cai Yuanpei was appointed to be the chancellor of Beijing University at the beginning of 1917, he brought into the faculty a large group of intellectuals of various political and cultural persuasions. Among them, Chen Duxiu became the Dean of Arts and Letters; Li Dazhao the head of the library, and Hu Shi, Shen Yimo, Qian Xuanton, and Zhou Zuoren professors. Lu Xun held a part-time teaching position at the university while retaining his job at the Education Ministry of the Beijing government. Chen Duxiu, in turn, invited Liu Bannong, the only one who had not yet studied abroad and was working as editor of the Zhonghua Press, to be a professor of the university's undergraduate program (*yuke*).

²³ During the 1910s and 1920s, Shangwu paid its authors between two and five yuan per thousand words. Breaking precedent, Shangwu offered Hu Shi, along with other old and new celebrities, the high rate of 6 yuan per thousand words. Zi Ye, "Liang Qichao He Shangwu Yinshuguan (Liang Qichao and the Commercial Press)" in *Shangwu Yinshuguan Jiushi Nian*, pp. 502, 542.

²⁴ Mao Dun, *Maodun zizhuan*, p. 108.

²⁵ Zi Ye, "Liang Qichao he Shangwu yinshuguan, pp. 502.

²⁶ Between 1922 and 1927, Lu Xun publishing a total of 13 books, authoring six and translating seven. The bestselling 1923 *Nahan (A Call to Arms)* enjoyed 14 print runs totaling 48,500 by 1930. See Wang Xirong, "Nahan geban guoyan lu [An account of all editions of *A Call to Arms*]" in *Lu Xun zhuzuo banben chongtan* [Studies on editions of Lu Xun's works], ed. Tang Tao (Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1983), pp. 49-60. See also the same book pp. 219-22, 226-27.

²⁷ The Beixing Press published most of Lu Xun's works. With the Lianyou Press, Lu Xun received 20% as his royalty. In the 1920s and 1930s, royalty rate was most likely set at 12%. See Li Zongfeng, "Baixing Shuju De Shengshua (The rise and decline of the Beixing Press)," *Jiangying weshi ziliao*, no. 6 (1985): 82; and his contract with Zhao Jiabi, *Bianji shengya yi Lu Xun* [An old editor's commemoration of Lu Xun] (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1981), p. 10.

²⁸ For the numbers of editions of all Lu Xun's published books prior to 1936, see Tang Tao, ed. *Lu Xun zhuzuo banben chutan*, pp. 219-32. For the high regard of Lu Xun during the 1920s, see Yuan Lianjun, *Lu Xun yanjiu shi (Historiography of Lu Xun studies)* (Xi'an: Shangxi renmin chubanshe, 1986), Chapters 2-3.

²⁹ Wang Jingzhi, "Wo zenyang cong yonghu nuquan dangshangle gudong (How did my support for gender equality led to my becoming a shareholder)," in *Wo yu Kaiming*, pp.88-89.

³⁰ Wang Jingzhi, "Chule zhongxuexiao," (After Middle School) *Middle School Students* 11 (January 1931): 74 Being from the same native place in Anhui as Hu Shi, Wang became Hu's young protégé. With Hu's help, Wang published his first poetry collection in 1922. It sold more than 20,000 copies, an impressive record for "new poetry." It was the royalties from this book and money from friends that allowed him to finish middle school.

³¹ In the Republican era, middle schools under the sponsorship of provincial governments (*shengli zhongxue*), which were usually located in provincial capitals and other major cities, enjoyed the highest prestige and most generous government funding. As a result, the faculty at these schools enjoyed the best pay. Take for example the Attached Middle School of Beijing Higher Normal School, one of the most prestigious middle schools in the country. Their highest monthly salary of 180 yuan was given to a vice principal-instructor who had a college degree from Japan and had worked at the school for 20 years. On the lower end, many who had college degrees received the hourly rate of 1.6 yuan, which meant 128 yuan per month if they could manage to get 20 hours per week of classroom instruction time. The hourly rate is derived from the faculty salary chart of the school in Zhu Youxian, et al. eds. *Zhongguo Jindai Xuezhishi* vol. 3 (shangce). (Shanghai: Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe, 1993), pp. 433-36.

³² Wu Guanghua, *Qian Juntao Zhuan* (Biography of Qian Juntao) (Beijing: Beijing meishu sheying chubanshe, 2001), p. 33.

- ³³ For middle school teaching loads, see Li Huaying, *Mingguo jiaoyu shi* (The History of education during the Republican era) (Shanghai: Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshe, 1997), p. 515. Zhou Zuoren taught six hours at Beida. See Qian Liqun, p. 194.
- ³⁴ “Excerpts from *Hu Shi riji*”, Shangwu *yinshuguan jiushi nian*, p. 582. As an additional point of reference, *Xiwen bao*, one of the two leading dailies in Republican China that enjoyed an annual profit from tens of thousands to over one hundred thousand yuan during the 1920s, paid its chief editor a monthly salary of only 200 yuan. See Ma Guangren, et al., pp. 553, 605, fn. no. 29.
- ³⁵ Maodun, *Maodun Zizhuan*, p. 105.
- ³⁶ The usual starting monthly salary for a junior editor at Shangwu at the time was 24 yuan. Chen Fukang, *Zheng Zhenduo Zhuan*, p. 78.
- ³⁷ Hu Yuzhi, *Wo de huiyi*, p. 8. Tao Xisheng who had a degree from Beijing University, earned 80 yuan a month when he first joined Shangwu in 1924. A raise in the following year put his salary at 100 yuan. Tao Xisheng, “Shangwu yishuguan bianyi suo jianwen ji (My recollections of the Editorial Department of the Shangwu Press), reprinted in *Shangwu jiushiwu nian*, p. 490.
- ³⁸ Zhao Jinsheng, “Chu le zhongxuexiao yihou (After leaving middle school),” *Middle School Students* 11 (January 1931): 75-84.
- ³⁹ During the mid-1920s, it cost fifteen to twenty yuan per month to rent a few rooms in a shared house in Shanghai. As late as 1937 after much inflation, the average monthly income of skilled workers in Shanghai was 45.82 yuan, unskilled workers 21.24 yuan, and women textile workers was a mere 9.28 yuan. See Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1990), p. 427. On the other end of the income trajectory, upper incomes reached many hundreds of yuan a month. By 1927, the monthly salaries of college professors had increased to between 400 and 600 yuan, the same salary range of Shanghai municipal high officials. See Li Huaxing, p. 517.
- ⁴⁰ Mi Xian, “Zhang Xichen xiansheng nianbiao,” pp. 237-39, passim.
- ⁴¹ This is deduced from the known salaries of other Shangwu editors as discussed earlier. At the time of his dismissal, Zhang had 13 years of experience at the press, longer than other young editors in his circle of friends. However, he did not possess a star status of some of the new comers.
- ⁴² Zhang Xichen, “Cong shangren dao shangren,” pp. 61-63.
- ⁴³ Zhang’s contributions to *New Women* visibly decreased since the summer of 1926 due to the founding of Kaiming and the subsequent increase of editorial and administrative work.
- ⁴⁴ For a discussion of periodical publishing of various financial backgrounds and their life spans, see Ma Guangren, et al., pp. 218-26.
- ⁴⁵ Zhang Xichen, “*Xin nuxing* he xing de yanjiu,” *New Women*, no. 15 (March 1927): 237-41. In what the editor called the magazine’s ad hoc “declaration of purpose,” Zhou Jianren made a similar statement. See Zhou, “Erchong daode,” *New Women*, no. 1 (January 1926): 1-13.
- ⁴⁶ *New Women*, nos. 2-6 (February-July, 1927).
- ⁴⁷ *Decameron* was translated by Hu Zhongzhi in *New Women*, nos. 3-7 (March-July 1926).
- ⁴⁸ *Kaiming shudian tushu mulu, 1926-1952* (internal circulation at Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe).
- ⁴⁹ I base the publication dates of these books on Kaiming’s advertisements in *New Women*, no. 7 (July, 1926) and “Kaiming shudian tiebie qishi” (Special announcement from the Kaiming Press) in *New Women*, no. 13 (January, 1927) and *Kaiming* 1, nos. 1-3 (January-March 1928). Many of the early Kaiming publications are dated a couple of years later in *Kaiming shudian tushu mulu*.
- ⁵⁰ The only exception was Song Tao’s translation, *Xing de gushi* (Story of Sexuality) released in 1927. *Kaiming* carried a review of it in its February 1928 issue (pp. 79-81). The book most likely went into more printings later.
- ⁵¹ For example, the Qunyu Press (Qunyu shangfang) was charged by the Shanghai Chamber of Books and Publishing for piracy in 1933. *Jiehun de ai* (Married Love) issued by Kaiming was among the titles pirated. This title appeared again in a 1936 Kaiming report to the Shanghai Chamber of Books and Publishing on piracy committed by the Longhu Press (Lunghu shudian) in Shanghai. S313, 2-14, Shanghai Archives.
- ⁵² For Zhang’s views on marriage and gender relations, see his opening essay in April 1926 issue of *New Women*, “Yige shiji wenti de taolun” (“Discussion of a practical question”), pp. 227-31, and his critical comment on the radical sexuality of his anarchist authors in his “Wo de lianai zhencao guan” (My view on love and chastity), *New Women* 17 (May 1927): 53-55. The magazine followed closely Ellen Key’s

writings and activities. In his later recollection, Zhang also talked about himself being indebted to Key for his ideas.

⁵³ Zhang Xichen, "Yige zui pinfan de ren," p. 218.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Zhang Xichen, "Yige shiji wenti de taolun" (Discussion of a practical question), *New Women*, no. 4 (April 1926): 227-31.

⁵⁶ After the young woman, Wang Aishi, arrived in Shanghai in late 1926, Hu asked Zhang Xichen to shelter her. Zhang subsequently hired her as Kaiming's first proof-reader. Once there, she was courted by Qian Juntao, the art and music editor. But her love for Hu was unaltered. When Hu left for France in 1927, fleeing GMD, Wang tried to follow him. (Her departure was a blow to Qian who, rather melodramatically, asked his friend and the future novelist Ba Jin to write a memorial essay after his intended suicide.) For lack of funds, Wang first landed in Malaysia after leaving Kaiming and worked as a school principal. Two years later, she finally managed to arrive at College of Paris where Hu was studying only to find out that he had just left for Moscow. Wang remained single all her life. See Wu Guanghua, pp.116-24.

⁵⁷ See his "Wen ge you gan" (Thoughts after listening to a song) in *New Women*, no. 7 (July 1926), pp. 475-82. Chen Xuezhao, a young female member of the association bitterly responded, "Such [rhetoric] has awaked us to the fact that we cannot allow men to do [women's emancipation] for us.... Unless men have truly shed their traditional mentality and behaviors towards women, we [new women] can do nothing but get ready in our trench and open fire on them." See Chen Xuezhao, "Gei nanxing" ("To men"), *New Women*, no. 12, (December 1926): 898-901. Chen was the sister-in-law of Wu Juenong, one of the important early supporters of Kaiming.

⁵⁸ Lin Shu (1852-1924), a *jurem* degree holder, taught at Beijing University (at the time *Jinshi daxuetang*) from 1905-1913 and devoted his later life to translating hundreds of works of literature from the West into classical Chinese. He knew none of the foreign languages and was assisted by people who translated the original texts orally. His refined classical Chinese prose won him enormous popularity in the first decades of the twentieth century.

⁵⁹ find pg. in Lu Xun's preface to *Call for Arms* in a standard edition...

⁶⁰ For more details of the story, see Chow Tse-tung, *The May Fourth Movement*, pp. 66-67.

⁶¹ The circulation reached 16,000 in 1917. Wang Yuanfang, *Huiyi Yadong tushuguan*, p. 32.

⁶² See Introduction.

⁶³ The last section of Hu Shi's *Zuiji wushi nian lai de Zhongguo wenxue* (Chinese literature in the last fifty years) was devoted to critiquing the "Xueheng clique" who had started to publish their magazine less than three months before Hu released his book in 1922.

⁶⁴ Zhang Xichen, "Buo Chen Bainian jiaoshou 'yi fu duo qi de xin hufu,'" first appeared in *Mangyuan*, no. 4 (May 1925), reprinted in Zhang Xichen, ed. *Xin xing daode taolun ji* (Collected debates on the new sexual morality) (Shanghai: The Kaiming Press, 1926), p. 79.

⁶⁵ *New Women*, no. 15 (March 1927): 1.

⁶⁶ Zhang Xichen, ed. *Xin xing daode taolun ji*, pp. 9-10.

⁶⁷ *New Women* remained a *tongren* periodical until late 1928, the third year of its operation, presumably when the members of the society offered fewer free contributions. The magazine printed in the September 1928 issue its first "Call for Contributions" (*Ben kan zheng gao lue li*), offering payments, and thus changed its *tongren* nature.

⁶⁸ Zhang Xichen, "Wo de lian'ai zhengcao guan," in *New Women*, no. 17 (May 1927): 54.

⁶⁹ See November 1926 issue of *New Women*. This was the first time the two anarchists published in the magazine.

⁷⁰ Lu Jianbo, "Lun xinai yu qi jianlai de zhuanbian," *New Women*, no. 36 (December 1928): 1343.

⁷¹ Qiandi, "Fei lianai yu lianai," *New Women*, no. 29 (May 1928): 501-525.

⁷² The award announcement was printed in *New Women*, no. 11 (November 1926): 800. To encourage participation of the general readers in the open discussions, the magazine printed out the title of winning essays and rewarded their authors with cash or gift certificates to buy Kaiming publications.

⁷³ *New Women*, no. 35 (November 1928): 1237.

⁷⁴ Hong Jun, "Hunzhan zhizhong," [In the midst of the melee] *New Women* 35 (November 1928): 1262.

⁷⁵ Hong Jun commented that the debate, while going on for a long time, had attracted a few enthusiastic participants. Ibid.

⁷⁶ The editor, "Xin lianai wenti," in *New Women*, no. 33 (September 1928): 985.

⁷⁷ The increase of the size was first announced in *New Women*, no. 12 (December 1926). The promise materialized in the following issues.

⁷⁸ See Zhang's reminiscence, "Cong shangren dao shangren," p. 62.

⁷⁹ Guanghua was recently founded in Shanghai in 1925 by Zhang Jinglu, Lu Fang, and Shen Songquan. Due to Zhang's close relationship with the Creation Society during his tenure at the Taidong Press (Taidong tushuguan), Guanghua published many of the works by the Society members and remained an avant-garde publisher throughout its tenure. It folded in 1935 after suffering serious financial losses due to GMD censorship. For Kaiming's relationship with Guanghua, see Zhu Lianbao, *Jin xian dai Shanghai chubanye yinxiangji*, p. 72. For Shangwu's branch offices and their locations, see Zhuang Yu, "Sanshiwu nian lai zhi Shangwu yishuguan," in *Shangwu Yinshuguan Jiushiwu Nian*, pp. 748-49.

⁸⁰ "Qishi" ("Notice"), *New Women*, no. 12 (December 1926).

⁸¹ Zhang Xichen, "Bianhou ji" ("Editorial postscript") *New Women*, no. 24.

⁸² Among the most widely-read magazines were *Eastern Miscellany* with a circulation of 45,000 in 1931, *Liangyou huapao* (*The Youth Companion*) with its circulation peaked at 30,000 in 1929, and *Shengho* (Life) weekly whose circulation increased from 20,000 in 1927 to 80,000 in 1929 and then 150,000 in 1933. See Roswell S. Britton, *The Chinese Periodical Press, 1800-1912* (Shanghai: Kelly & Walsh, 1933, reprint Taipei: Zhengwen, 1966), p. 122; Ma Guoliang, "Liangyou yijiu lu (Recollection of the Liangyou Press)," *Chuban shiliao* (*historical materials on publishing*) vol. 6, p. 53; and Yu Yueting, "Taofeng de jinqian guan (Taofeng's views on money)" in *Taofeng Yanjiu* (*Taofeng Studies*) (Shanghai: Shanghai renming chubanshe, 1997), pp. 97-98.

⁸³ Zhang and his colleagues claimed that "the magazine was not a business that could bring in any profit." See Zhang, "Cong shangren dao shangren;" and Wu Juenong, "Wuo he Kaiming shudian de guanxi," in *Wo yu Kaiming*, p. 82. A possible explanation was that despite its large circulation, the magazine offered below-the-market-price and thus failed to generate a meaningful profit. However, it functioned as Kaiming's advertisement.

⁸⁴ *New Women*, no. 13 (January 1927).

⁸⁵ Zhang Xichen, "Xin nuxing yu xing de yanjiu," *New Women* no. 15 (March 1927): 237-241.

⁸⁶ Chu Sunxue, often pen-named Chu Wenjuan, was a cultural radical in her own right. After studying in the graduate program in Chinese, she became a writer of romance novels.

⁸⁷ Havelock Ellis is the founding father of sexology and is credited with having placed the study of sexuality on a scientific footing. His most influential study is the mammoth work, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* (1897-1910). For Zhang Jingsheng's claim, see Chen Shuyu, *Wusi wentan linzhua* (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 1998), p. 261.

⁸⁸ "Paiwan yihou," no. 29 *New Women*.

⁸⁹ Guo Moruo's response, for example, was that the book should be banned because it would poison the mind of youth. Shen Songquan, "Guangyu Guanghua shuju de huiyi (My recollections of the Guanghua Press)," *Chuban shiliao*, no. 2 (1991): 33.

⁹⁰ Zhou Zuoren, *Shijie shibao* (*World Daily*), February 23, 1927.

⁹¹ Shen Songquan, p. 33. In 1929, Zhang was arrested by police for spreading pornography.

⁹² Following the devastating attacks by his May Fourth colleagues, Zhang turned to translating and writing on Rousseau and Western literary Romanticism and Realism. After the humiliating arrest in 1929, he left for France. When he came back six years later, he was very much an obscure figure on the Chinese cultural scene.

⁹³ *Yiban*, 1, no. 3 (November 1926): 435-38.

⁹⁴ The anarchist Qiandi, for example, wrote for both the magazines.

⁹⁵ "Zhengwe qishi" *New Women*, no. 6 (June 1926).

⁹⁶ Zhou Jianren, "Xing jiaoyu yundong de weiiji," *New Women*, no. 14 (February 1927): 135-158.

⁹⁷ *New Women*, no. 27 (March 1928).

⁹⁸ "Paiwan yihou," *New Women*, no. 29 (May 1928).

⁹⁹ Fei Yuhe's contribution to the discussion forum, "Problems troubling modern women," *New Women*, no. 13 (January 1927): 22.

¹⁰⁰ Zhang Xichen, "Preface" to the discussion forum, "Problems troubling modern women," p. 21; and Zhang Xichen, "Editorial Notes," *New Women*, no. 13 (January 1927).

¹⁰¹ On the advocacy for complete free sex, see for example Jianbo, "Lun xingai yu qi jianlai de zhuanbian;" Jin Yuan, "Lianai zhishang gan de mosha;" Mao Yiruo, "Du 'xin lianai dao' hou;" Yi Ling, "Xin lianai

wenti;” Bodi, “Du ‘San dai de lianai’ hou;” and Pucha, “Duiyu xin lianai wenti de jieda;” in the special issue on “new love,” *New Women*, no. 36 (December 1928): 1347-62, 1383-90, 1413-22, 1425-26.

¹⁰² In *New Women*, no. 18 (June 1927): 591-603; and no. 37 (November 1929): 1395-1410 respectively.

¹⁰³ Zhou Jianren, “Zhiwu li xing de qi yuan,” “Zhiwu yin dewei guding shi xingbie shang suo fasheng de xiaoguo,” and “Dongwu de shengzhi guocheng” in *New Women*, nos. 20, 21, 22 (August-October 1927): 809-34, 975-77, 1121-50.

¹⁰⁴ *New Women*, no. 24 (December 1927): 1357-74.

¹⁰⁵ According to Arif Dirlik, anarchism gained ground in the immediate aftermath of the purge of Communists in 1927. See Arif Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, Chapter 7.

¹⁰⁶ “Fei kan ci,” (Announcement of closing of the magazine) *New Women* no. 48 (December 1929). At the beginning of the announcement, Zhang also cited the acceptance of the notion of women’s emancipation by the general public as a further reason for the magazine’s closing. In other words, he claimed that the magazine had served its purpose and had no more need to continue.

¹⁰⁷ For the purge of anarchists, see Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, Chapter 7.

¹⁰⁸ “Zhen gao,” *New Women*, no. 33 (September 1928).

¹⁰⁹ *New Women* advertisement in *The Common* 7, no. 4 (December 1928).

¹¹⁰ *Middle School Students*, no. 200 (June 1948): 7.

¹¹¹ According to “Yiban zazhi bianyibu tongren qishi” (Announcement from *The Common* editorial board), which appeared in the inaugural issue of the monthly, the members of the Lida Society ran the magazine on a voluntary basis. Only outside contributors were paid. *The Common* no. 1 (September 1926).

¹¹² Gu Junzhen, “Zhongxue she shi zenyang chuankan de,” (How was *Middle School Students* launched) *Middle School Students* no. 200 (June 1948): 7.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 4 ENLIGHTENMENT AS A MIDDLE SCHOOL EDUCATION PROJECT

The second half of the 1920s witnessed the mushrooming of small publishers specializing in New Culture publications, or the so-called “new publishers” (*xin shuye*), as mentioned in the previous chapter. Zhu Lianbao who worked in publishing in Shanghai for half a century recorded as many as forty such publishers that appeared in the metropolis alone during this short five-year span, nine of them, including Kaiming, were founded and run by the May Fourth intellectuals themselves.¹ The emergence of these publishers was a response to the growth of a sizable audience who were avidly consuming a large quantity of Western and Western-influenced literature.² It also indicated that, being unsatisfied with the profits the commercial presses made out of publishing their work, many intellectuals were ready to act as their own agents in hope of reaping the full financial rewards.³ Among the most celebrated ones established in Shanghai were Beixing Press (1925), founded by the Beijing University graduates, brothers Li Xiaofeng and Li Zhiyun who specialized in the works of Lu Xun and his disciples; the Guanghai Press (1925) by Zhang Jinglu, Lu Fang, and Shen Songquan which served as the chief publishing outlet of the Creation Society until the its young writers decided to handle their own publishing by launching Creation Society Publishing Office (*Chuangzhao she chuban pu*, 1926);⁴ the Xinyue Press by the Romantic poet Xu Zhimo, Hu Shi, and their friends who promoted liberalism and art for art’s sake literature; the Dajiang Press (1928) by the Marxist theorist and educator Chen Wangdao and his colleagues, and the Diyixian Press (1928) by the Modernist poets Dai Wangshu, Shi Zhecun, Du Heng, and Liu Naou.⁵ (See Appendix B)

While these intellectual-entrepreneurs-to-be rushed to cash in on the wider acceptance of the New Culture they had been promoting, they also met a variety of obstacles, mostly notably, the difficulty in raising capital and intense competition in the book market. The competition came from not only the newly formed small commercial publishers but also the established publishers, such as Shangwu and Zhonghua shuju (China Book Company), who had already been printing manuscripts by May Fourth intellectuals since the beginning of the 1920s, and who enjoyed tremendous advantage in terms of capital, organization of production, and their distribution system. Not surprisingly, most of the avant-garde publishers managed to operate only on the margins of big publishers, if they were lucky enough to survive at all; many disappeared as fast as they appeared.⁶

With *New Women* struggling to survive and the lucrative production of the Women's Question Research Association Series coming to a halt, the future of Kaiming looked less than promising. The stakes were extremely high for Zhang Xichen since he had put his career and his family's wellbeing on the line at the Press's inception. Years later, he spoke candidly about the often unspoken economic motivations behind the founding of the Kaiming Press. His account of the financial aspect was characteristic laconic and written in an understated manner,

The [independent] periodical was often a money-losing *business* (*shengyi*, emphasis added). Although *New Women* enjoyed a good circulation, the profit was far from enough to feed my family.⁷ Therefore, some friends proposed to print some books to sell [for a bigger profit]. Then [we decided that we] might as well turn the Society for *New Women* into a publisher. That would be Kaiming. Our initial plan was to raise capital [from our circle of friends]. Many people even agreed to purchase the shares. But everybody was of meager means. In the end, the plan was not backed up with cash.⁸

At the time, Zhang alone among the Kaiming founders had committed full time to the independent publishing project. Thus he found himself in a position from which there

was no easy retreat. At this critical juncture, he proved to be a decisive man. Confident in the prospect of making a living by creating New Culture, he invested 5,000 yuan into the newly formed Press, half of which was his severance pay from Shangwu and the other half his younger brother's entire savings.⁹ This constituted the lion's share of the small initial operation capital of the new Press.

As a matter of fact, the idea among the Kaiming intellectuals of starting their own independent press was not new. It can be traced back to 1923, in the heyday of the Literary Research Association when active members, now mostly Shangwu editors, met after work almost everyday. At one of these gatherings, Zheng Zhenduo complained that while Shangwu made tens of thousands of yuan out of the textbooks and periodicals, the editors of these products gained neither riches nor sufficient respect from Shangwu. It was particularly irksome that while these editors created all the value that became Shangwu's profit, the publishing house refused to grant them autonomy in their work. "We have made too much money for the capitalists," Zheng exclaimed. He proposed that they raise money for their own publishing house by each putting 10 yuan per month into a common bank account. Ten writers endorsed the plan and name their press "Pu She" (the Original Society).¹⁰ During the May Thirtieth Incident in 1925, the Japanese troops moved to the Zhabei District of Shanghai where the Pu She members resided, forcing them to flee. Their account was emptied out to help with relocation costs. Thus their independent press ended even before it got off the ground.¹¹

Putting all his eggs into one basket, Zhang Xichen became the essential owner of this new press. As Kaiming expanded beyond the production of *New Women* and Women's Question Research Association book series, Zhang started to create salaried

positions. He gave himself the role of manager while continuing to be the editor of *New Women*. His brother Xishang, previously an accountant at a Shangwu branch store, joined force by taking up the responsibility of the company's finances. By the summer of 1927, half a dozen new employees entered Kaiming to form its first work team.

Soon, Zhang started to hear friends and colleagues calling him “Zhang Laoban” (Proprietor Zhang). Being a “proprietor” could not be any further from his life's goal. In his childhood, his family, being a rural market town shopkeeper for generations, had expected him, the first son, to strike out a different path and earn a membership in the literati so as to bring some luster to the family name. For this reason, his father invested a considerable amount of the moderate family assets to give him a classical education which none of his four younger brothers had the luxury to attain. After middle school, while staying idle at home, he rejected the idea of taking over his family business and buried himself in books until he started his teaching career.¹² Now, after struggling to become a recognizable name in the cultural field for decades, how could he allow himself to sink downwards back into the old family trade of commerce? He often protested to people who addressed him as “laoban” by saying, “Laoban is someone who owns a shop (*ban*). But my *ban* is the printing plate.¹³ It is about promoting culture, not about making profits.”¹⁴

This bitter irony Zhang eventually swallowed with considerable ambivalence. The experience of running an independent publisher gradually changed his approach towards cultural production and his own role in it. This was especially true after Kaiming's reorganization as a joint stock firm in 1929 when the board of directors put him in charge of publishing and distribution instead of editing. The role of a manager in

modern corporate publishing transformed him from an intellectual to a professional publisher, an entrepreneur, which he remained for the next twenty years. During this long period, he wrote two biographical essays, “From Merchant to Merchant” in 1931, which I cited earlier, and “A Most Ordinary Man” in 1947. From the titles, we can already detect a sense of withdrawal and self-parody in the disguise of excessive modesty. The resigned tone and down-to-earth business attitude the two essays displayed posed a striking contrast to his earlier high-minded seriousness in regard to culture. “It was not my ambition to engage in [the publishing business],” he pointed out. “It was the circumstance that forced me in to this career.”¹⁵ He now not only insisted that he was a mere merchant (*shangren*), relinquishing his identity as an intellectual, but also frequently referred to his work past and present as “business” (*shengyi*). This included his early teaching career, his *New Women* magazine, and of course, the Kaiming Press.¹⁶ In the latter essay written at the age of sixty, he summarized his life this way,

When I was young, my father did his best to find good teachers for me in a hope that I would become a learned man. All my relatives believed that my father went as far as not caring for the feasibility of his investment on me. However, too lazy to study hard, I eventually failed to acquire a decent education. Even though I shamelessly used my pen to fill my rice bowl for years, I can claim knowledge in neither classical learning nor new learning. Now I have ended up being thoroughly a merchant. How fortunate I am that many writers and scholars mistakenly give me their confidence, taking me as a friend rather than a petty person of commerce.¹⁷

He further commented on his role in Kaiming, “Everybody regards me the founder, as if I have made significant contributions. The truth is, I have only relied on the press for a living.”¹⁸ Such was his overwhelming humility which can only be interpreted as a profound sense of loss of his cultural status. It was not until the twilight of his life, after being forced to leave the press he founded in 1949 by other key figures of the

management due to his divergent vision for Kaiming under the new government, Zhang was able to securely resume his identity as an intellectual. In 1954, he took up the position of the deputy editor-in-chief of the newly formed The Classics Press (Guji chubanshe). A year later, he ascended on the seat of the deputy editor-in-chief of China Book Co.

Zhang was not alone to be troubled with uncertainty of his public image as a professional publisher. In his commemorative essay, “Impressions”, Tang Tao, an active writer in the thirties and forties, pondered on how to reconcile what he saw as the two contradictory images of Zhang: one as a hot-blooded young cultural warrior leading a deadly assault on the Confucian tradition; the other as a short, almost hunch-backed old “proprietor” with thick glasses whom people commented as “shrewd in business dealings.”¹⁹ Other former friends and colleagues might be less uncertain. But their divided views only contribute to the same ambiguity of his social status. Wu Sihong, an early proof-reader at the Press recalled the inspiration she drew from Zhang’s feminist advocacy when she was a teenager and the generous support he gave her for her continuing education. She concluded her essay about her mentor this way: “Of course, Zhang Xichen was not without fault. They say even a sage has some shortcomings. Let alone a merchant, which he was.”²⁰ Ma Yinliang, a Kaiming director, insisted, “Xuecun (Zhang’s courtesy name) was a literary man (*dushuren*), a poor scholar (*pin shi*), not a merchant. He understood little of those business tricks. It was only for publishing progressive periodicals and books that he founded the Kaiming press.”²¹ In his insistence on Zhang’s innocence of commercial intentions, he undoubtedly shared the same perception of a dichotomy between the scholar and merchant.

The social status of professional publishers had been fraught with ambiguity and ambivalence. During the Ming-Qing times, facing with diminishing hope of ever gaining office, large numbers of imperial degree-holders turned to book-collecting and publishing as a way to define their elite life-style. But once their publishing venture came to involve profit-making, there was ever-present danger of being perceived as book merchants and the need to defend their social status and self-image by their cultural achievements. A “*shusheng*” (scholar-student) who occupied both ends of the cultural trajectory by writing manuscripts and consuming books, commanded a special respect granted by the social order prescribed by Confucianism. A “*shushang*” (book merchant), or a cultural agent who occupied the overlapping space of culture and commerce, was another story.

As the country started to embrace modernity in the early twentieth century, commerce enjoyed a new elevated status. This was especially true with regard to the modern sector of the economy in which publishing was a part. As mentioned earlier, May Fourth intellectuals themselves started to enter the publishing field from the early 1920s. However, their exaggerated distain toward cultural commodification inclined them towards what Joseph Levenson called the “amateur-ideal” of the *shidafu* in their involvement in publishing.²² Notable May Fourth intellectuals such as Yu Dafu and his colleagues, Xu Zhimo, and Chen Wangdao managed their own publishing houses.²³ But for them, publishing remained a side-line occupation even though it might have brought them greater profits than their writings. This allowed them to freely use traditional social labels to put down professional publishers. For instance, after the souring of the relationship between Lu Xun and Li Xiaofeng, a Beijing University graduate who founded the Beixing Press (Beixing shuju), the literary giant referred to his publisher as

the “petty merchant.”²⁴ Other scholars-turned-entrepreneurs, including Lufei Kui (Buohong) of the China Book Co. and Wang Yunwu of Shangwu did not fare any better than their May Fourth intellectual counter-parts in projecting their identity as scholars during this period. The problematic position of the professional publisher continued until the late 1980s when the favorable term “*chuban jia*” was coined to reflect the new socio-economic climate in China that hails entrepreneurship even in the cultural circles.

Prosperous “Small Characters” Retailers

As publishing became increasingly professionalized in the early twentieth century, especially with the introduction of a modern corporate structure, which I will discuss below, so did editing and writing. As a matter of fact, editorial offices provided some of the best employment to intellectuals who were broadly trained as humanists. Free-lancing writers, while without paid positions in corporate organizations, were very much supported (as well as constrained) in their work by the corporate process in publishing. In both cases, editors and writers steadily moved away from the traditional “amateur ideal” and became more in line with the “new breed” modern professionals.

Conscious of their new position in the rapidly changed socio-economic landscape, writers formed various organizations for professional support. In the spring of 1927, May Fourth intellectuals in Shanghai, mostly activists in the Literary Research Association such as Zheng Zhenduo, Hu Yuzhi, Ye Shengtao, and Feng Zikai, initiated the Shanghai Authors Association (Shanghai zhuzuoren xiehui).²⁵ A year later, Zheng Zhenduo worked with Zhang Shengfu and members of the Creation Society to form the

China Authors Association (Zhongguo zhuzuoze xiehui).²⁶ The announcement of the founding of the Shanghai Authors Association reads,

With the emergence and growth of capitalism...the spiritual products of the author have become commercialized; the author has been turned into a (cultural) retailer or employee; he/she now shares the same fate as manual laborers due to his exploitation by capitalists.²⁷

In addition to conveying the similar messages about intellectuals becoming “retailers and employees”, the manifesto issued by China Authors Association also clarified the writers’ dual role,

We make a living by selling our labor. In the interest of our own livelihood, we have the need to improve our economic condition and legal protection. At the same time, we are also workers of culture and thus shoulder the responsibilities of constructing and promoting Chinese culture.²⁸

In the above, the impact of radicalism of the time is readily apparent. Radicalism and reaction against it put a quick end to both the organizations; the Nationalist backlash, which sent Zheng Zhenduo and Hu Yuzhi, who had protested the massacre, fleeing to France, dissolving the Shanghai Authors Association; and an internal dispute over cultural issues paralyzing the China Authors Association. But it is clear that by the 1920s, May Fourth intellectuals had made conscious attempts to combine their new vocation as modern professionals with their traditional mission of providing spiritual guidance to the nation.

It was this sense of mission, and more importantly, the fact that they worked with the pen that shielded the other Kaiming intellectuals from any self-doubt that tormented Zhang Xichen, even though as editors and authors they too relied on the Press to make a living. Indeed, some made a fabulous living at that. Zhao Jingsheng (1902-1985), Kaiming’s first chief editor, felt self-assured enough about his intellectual status that he

went to great lengths detailing his constant hard struggle to make money during his early career in an autobiographical essay.²⁹ “I am a proletarian,” he declared at the beginning of his account, explaining that his family possessed neither land or bank savings. His family saw some carefree times when his great grandfather was a county magistrate. But by his parents’ generation, the family had sunk to a state of genteel poverty. Thanks to his uncle’s support, he was able to spend two years in middle school before going on to a textile vocational school that offered free tuition. His ambition to become a modern entrepreneur evaporated upon graduation in 1922 when he discovered that the starting salary of his assigned job in a textile factory was only eight yuan a month and that the job required 10-hour work days and night shifts of physically demanding work. “I thought, ‘somebody with a weak constitution like myself could not possibly endure [such hard work conditions],’” he wrote. “I might even die early for breathing in all these cotton fibers...Eight yuan? Am I already making twenty yuan [as a student by compiling and editing a column in a newspaper]?” This revelation combined with his interest in literature decided his future career as a professional editor and writer.

But such jobs seemed to be hard to come by even in Shanghai, the capital of China’s publishing industry. His first editorial job lasted for only a year. Out of work, he fell back on the typical alternative employment as a school teacher. In the next four years, he taught at middle schools in different parts of the country. Money had always been a concern. He often had to resort to teaching a few extra hours here and there to subsidize his income. When he was married, the added financial burden sent him to a small town of Guangdong Province where he found himself struggling to communicate with the “unintelligible” Cantonese-speaking locals during the day and sleeping at night

in a teachers' dorm room that had dirt floor, glassless windows, and was lit with oil lamps. This stressful condition was immeasurably worsened by the physical separation from his pregnant wife who remained in Shanghai and the political instability of Guangdong. He "fled" these dreadful conditions and went back to Shanghai just in time to fill the chief editor's position at *Kaiming*.³⁰ The press offered him a monthly salary of 50 yuan.

Zhao was no stranger to the *Kaiming* intellectual circle by the time he arrived at the press. He had become acquainted with Zhang Xichen a few years earlier when he started to translate Western children's literature and sent his manuscripts to *Ladies' Journal*. In the same way, he also introduced himself to Zheng Zhenduo who was the editor of Shangwu's *World of Children's Stories*. His quick friendship with the gregarious Zheng gave him easy access to the literary circles. In 1923, he became a member of the Literary Research Association. Two years later, he took his turn to edit the Association's *Literary Weekly*. He was also involved in the Lida experimental project in its early years.³¹ These activities would eventually open many doors for him in terms of his literary career. For the moment, however, they brought him little financial compensation. For him, the *Kaiming* job was heaven-sent.

The need for a bigger income continued to play a significant role in shaping Zhao's career. "I now had a new-born child, my parents and wife to support and a maid to pay for," he continued in his autobiographic essay. "The rent of our shared alleyway-house alone was 15 yuan. [My existing income] just wouldn't do." At the end of 1927, he negotiated with Zhang Xichen to switch his position to an in-house writer, committing his full time to the translation of Anton Chekhov's fiction for *Kaiming* at the rate of three

yuan per 1000 words. With his speedy translation, he could now earn 12 yuan in a single day. The switch ended his short half year tenure as Kaiming's first chief editor. The Chekhov project took him two years after which his second marriage to Li Xiaofeng's younger sister brought him into Li's Beixing Press (Beixing shuju) as its chief editor.³²

Qian Juntao (1905-198?), the music and design editor of Kaiming, started even lower financially but ended with greater success. A son of an owner-chef of a restaurant in a small town in north Zhejiang province, Qian had all the disadvantages shared by his senior Kaiming colleagues. His formal education included only six years of elementary school and two years at the middle-school level Shanghai Art Academy (Shanghai yishu zhuanke shifan) where he was briefly instructed by Feng Zikai. Unemployment came on the heels of his graduation from the art academy in 1925. After staying with his financially strained and disappointed parents for half a year, his life must have been choked with frustration. When he was presented with a substitute teaching job that offered a monthly salary as little as three yuan, he jumped at it. The following year, with the help of Feng Zikai, he found a better-paid teaching position, only to quickly lose it due to campus politics. In his dire financial state, he accepted invitation from his old classmates to join the Zhejiang Art Academy (Zhejiang yishu zhuanke xuexiao) in Hanzhou that they recently formed. Teaching at this academy offered him a rich network of art and literary friends. But the drawback was the many failures of the school in keeping up its payroll.³³

At the academy, prompted by their unrequited love for their female students, he and a couple of his young colleagues formed a "Spring Bee Music Club" (Chunfeng yuehui) for the purpose of using music to spread the idea of freedom to love (zhiyou

lianai) against traditional arranged marriage. The first product of the club, a love song about unrequited love no less, was sent to Zhang Xichen who duly printed in the newly-formed *New Women* monthly. From then on, the club offered the women's magazine one love song every issue for the next three years. This important contact brought Qian into Kaiming in the spring of 1927. His entry-level monthly salary was 23 yuan.³⁴

Kaiming proved to be a springboard for Qian's lucrative career as a leading book cover designer and artist. His first assignment was to give *New Women* a face-lift that would provide the magazine a decided modernistic image. At the time, graphic design as an art form was still very much a novelty in China.³⁵ Drawing inspiration from the Art Deco style that was in vogue in the West, Qian made a set of designs for the four seasons of the year. The motifs were nothing new. But the renditions of the images of each season in simplified, streamlined, geometric formats and blocks of vibrant colors signaled to the magazine's readers its excitingly avant-garde contents. These cover designs were an instant success. They not only helped to boost the sales of the magazine, but also announced to the publishing world a new talent who could package cultural products to give them wider circulation. Requests from various publishers and authors snowballed. All Shangwu's major periodicals started to bear the cover designs made by him.³⁶ Other publishers, including the Xiandai Press, the Guanghai Press, the Yadong Press, became his steady clients.³⁷ [Insert illustrations] He soon earned the nickname, "Book cover Qian" (Qian fengmian).³⁸

In the decade that followed, Qian was able to complete the commissions, mostly from outside of Kaiming, to package over a thousand publications.³⁹ Not only was he amazingly prolific, he also became good at negotiating the terms of payment. As a result,

his friend jokingly called him a “one-man trust” who single-handedly dominated the book cover design market.⁴⁰ Fame and fortune now smiled on him. With his fees being set at 15 yuan for a cover, 8 yuan for a title page, 3 yuan for a vignette, his income jumped to many hundreds of yuan per month, making his Kaiming base salary almost negligible.⁴¹ The money that poured in allowed him to become an art collector. In the early 1930s, he started to court an educated but down-to-earth (or level-headed) young woman whose conditions for marriage included sizable wealth for her perspective suitor. Qian spent 1,000 yuan on a house and 12 mu (roughly 1.8 acre) of land in his hometown to be their first homestead, offering her a satisfactory proof of his ability to support her expected lifestyle. The couple was married in 1933.⁴²

Zhao Jingsheng and Qian Juntao were among the earliest Kaiming staff formed in 1927. At the time of their joining Kaiming, they had three things in common: they were young, lacking in educational pedigree, and were desperately in need of a job. The beginning of the year of 1928 bought two new additions to the press, Xia Mianzhun (1886-1946) who took office as chief editor after Zhao Jingsheng’s departure and Gu Junzhen who became one of Kaiming’s most devoted senior editor. Both men had long been friends of Zhang Xichen and enthusiastic supporters of Kaiming since its inception. Since 1926, Xia had assisted by covering some editorial duties at *New Women*, perhaps on a voluntary basis since he was a founding member of the Women’s Question Research Association.⁴³ He was also the editor of *Yiban*, the voice of the Lida Society, which was published through Kaiming. In addition, he not only made an investment in Kaiming but also pulled resources from his widowed sister and friends for the press.⁴⁴ In other words, Xia and Gu joined the press more as Zhang’s colleagues than as employees.⁴⁵

Quite unlike his Kaiming intellectual peers, Xia was armed with educational credentials and fame, having earned his *xiucai* degree at the age of 15 and studied at two Japanese universities between 1904 and 1907. He had joined the famed South Society (*Nanshe*) soon after returning to China, and gained wide publicity as one of the “Big Four” (*si da jingang*) of the Zhejiang First Normal during the turbulent days of the May Fourth agitations. At the time he joined Kaiming, he was professor and chair of the Chinese Department of Jinan University in Shanghai.⁴⁶ Throwing his full weight behind Kaiming upgraded the press’ intellectual profile.

But all these glories were only what met the eye. Beneath was a deep career crisis besieging Xia. For ten years at the Zhejiang First Normal during the teens, his primary responsibility was that of the less than important dormitory supervisor even though he also taught Chinese. His support of his radical students in 1919 led to his dismissal from the school in the following year. Between 1920 and 1927, he essentially led a life of a itinerant teacher, spending two years at Hunan First Normal in Changsha, Hunan Province, three years at Chunhui Middle School in his hometown Shangyu, Zhejiang Province, and two years at Lida Academy in Shanghai while taking up additional teaching at Jinan University. As for the last concurrent positions, Lida was not a job but rather an idealistic endeavor to which he even donated much of his savings; Jinan was, as his former student and college observed, “a muddy spot where one had a hard time to establish himself”, referring to the politics of the university. In other words, at the age of 42, Xia still had no stable employment. While his situation was not as desperate as his young future colleagues, Kaiming did provide him an opportunity to leave his quiet predicament behind. He stayed on at the chief editorship until his death in 1946.

In many ways, Xia's relationship with Kaiming paralleled Zhang Yuanji's with Shangwu albeit that his starting point dated two and half decades later.⁴⁷ Both men faced an impasse in their careers in their middle ages despite their earlier fame. Both entered the publishing field as a career move. Both bought a piece of their fledgling publishing companies by investing when they took over the chief editorship. Both their names became closely associated to the enterprises to which they devoted the rest of their lives.

Kaiming not only gave Xia permanent employment and a new vocation as editor, but also brought him financial success as author and translator. The most notable of Xia's work was his translation of the best-selling Italian novel, *Cuore (Heart)*, by Edmondo de Amicis (1864-1906). Xia initially gave his manuscript to Shangwu in 1925. It was said that when the book was first released, he rushed with great excitement to Shangwu's retail store only to be told by an impudent clerk that he could not locate this little book among the rich collection of Shangwu new titles. Indignant, Xia terminated the book contract with Shangwu and transferred its publishing rights to Kaiming instead. At any rate, when released by Shangwu the book did not attract much public attention. Through its energetic promotion, Kaiming managed to quickly turn it to a bestseller for the years to come. The book went through close to 100 print runs, eventually earning Xia an unexpected fortune of over 20,000 yuan.⁴⁸ Lu Xun was said to tease him by calling him "god of wealth (*caishengye*)."⁴⁹

For Gu Junzheng (1902-?), a former colleague of Zhang Xichen at Shangwu, joining Kaiming seemed to also be a strategic move. Never becoming as recognized as the early Kaiming editors discussed above, he nonetheless quietly build up an amazingly prolific career with Kaiming as his publishing outlet. He started out by translating

Western literature for children. Earlier when he was at Shangwu, he translated children's stories by Hans Christian Anderson and published them in Shangwu-owned magazines. Now, he compiled these and many others in book form. In the first three years he was with Kaiming, he managed to publish as many as 9 children's books. He then turned to writing on popular science. His career at Kaiming spanned over two decades, his output totaling 25 books.⁵⁰

Most of Kaiming's early supporters who were later on its payroll or became its house authors invariably enjoyed a mutually beneficial relationship with the press. The press offered them jobs and publishing opportunities which brought them influence and income while their illustrious names furthered the prestige of the press. Feng Zikai (1898-1975) was a case in point. Son of a *juren* degree-holder who died young and left his family to live on the money brought in by the family-owned dyeing mill, Feng grew up in a privileged environment where both scholarly erudition and business savvy were emphasized.⁵¹ Mindful of his family budget, he went to the Zhejiang First Normal in 1914 which offered subsidized room and board in addition to a free education.⁵² After graduation, he and a few friends went to Shanghai to found an art academy, giving up an offer of a teaching position at an elementary school in his hometown which paid a generous salary of 30 yuan a month.⁵³ In 1922, invited by his mentor Xia Mianzun, he joined the faculty of Chuhui Middle School.

It was at Chuhui that Feng developed his unique style sketches. According to his daughter and biographer, Feng Yiying, the sketches grew out of his need to amuse himself during some long, boring faculty meetings. When Xia Mianzun and his friend Zhu Ziqing discovered these sketches, they were impressed by their originality and

printed some in the magazines under their editorships. In a few years time, when Feng had a pile of the sketches, now called *manhua*, the newly formed Kaiming released them in book form in 1926.⁵⁴ This greatly facilitated the opening of the floodgate of Feng's artistic creativity. In the next three years, he published his sketches at the rate of one collection a year, quickly earning himself the name, the "father of Chinese cartoons." In the same period, Kaiming also brought out six books on art and music authored or translated by him.⁵⁵ In 1929, he too officially joined Kaiming. But he came down with typhoid the following year which ended his editorship, together with his part-time teaching at Lida. After his recovery, he decided to stay away from regular jobs and freelance instead. His career and name continued to be intimately connected with Kaiming. By 1949, his publications through the press reached a grand total of 47 books.⁵⁶

Feng's life and lifestyle in the 1930s and beyond was in no less significant ways tied to Kaiming. The press paid him large royalties, part of which he invested back into the press and which subsequently produced handsome dividends each year.⁵⁷ By 1932, he had saved as much as 6,000 yuan to put into building a new housing compound in his hometown of Shimeng, Zhijiang Province. "Yuanyuan Tang" (Yuanyuan Hall), the house he so famously named and wrote about, was the grandest (and most conspicuous) building in the town.⁵⁸ Attracted by the beautiful scenery of Hangzhou, he also rented a house for the family's use during the pleasant spring and autumn seasons, a house he jokingly referring to as the "abode for his imperial tour" which included a large traditional garden with a pond and fancy rocks. He spent his days painting, writing, playing music, and entertaining literary and artistic friends.⁵⁹ For these happy years until

the outbreak of the Resistance War, his life as a freelancing artist and writer rather resembled that of a *bon vivant* of the scholar-gentry class in the imperial times. It was the money from publishing his work, mostly through Kaiming, and his the returns from his investment in the same press rather than from the traditional sources of land and office holding that made all these possible.

In his unsentimental phraseology, Xia Mianzun referred to freelancing as a “hard life of selling small characters” (*mai xiaozi*), a parallel to selling big scripts, or calligraphy, by an educated person in the old days who was down on his luck.⁶⁰ But as we can see, such a career, if successful, could be as socially influential and financially lucrative as traditional office-holding or land-holding. Indeed, a merchant cousin of Lou Shiyi (1905-?after 1994) enviously commented on his royalties from Kaiming, “It is as if you’ve bought a few *mu* of land and have the land rent to collect every year!” Lou, previously a member of the radical Sun Society (*Taiyang she*) and later an active member of the League of the Left Wing Writers, was at the time serving his life sentence in a GMD prison. But he was able to continue to support his family by writing and translating.⁶¹

There are many other examples of the important financial role the press played in the careers and lives of its early supporters. Hu Yuzhi, one of the most important supporters of Kaiming, did not join the press nor published through it. But he did introduce his younger brother, Hu Zhongchi, to the Kaiming circle. Zhongchi’s translation of *Married Love* became one of the earliest bestsellers of Kaiming in 1926, enjoying six print runs in a short two years time period. He later became involved in the operation of Kaiming at the time when the paper he was working for, the Commercial

Daily (*Shangbao*), folded.⁶² Qian Gechuan, the first person other than Zhang Xichen to make an investment in Kaiming in 1926, recalled that his investment and the connection he thus managed to build with the press pulled him out of the life of a school teacher two years later. That year, he made the bold move of leaving his hometown in Hunan Province and plunged himself into bustling Shanghai to battle his way onto the literary scene. It was the advances on his books from Kaiming that allowed him to weather through his first year in the metropolis he sojourned.⁶³

In the context of the experience of the Kaiming intellectuals in creating new professions out of editing and writing (or making art), it is not surprising to read in the September 1928 issue of *New Women* perhaps the first public advertisement for artistic creativity by the Kaiming intellectuals, “Things You Need to Know about Qian Juntao’s Book Design.” Qian’s generous boss Zhang Xichen was the mastermind behind the move. Feng Zikai penned the announcement. Other co-signers included Hu Yuzhi, Xia Mianzun, and Ye Shengtao. After a laudatory passage about the importance of book design and Qian’s expertise in this regard, the advertisement announced three terms of engagement: 1) all requests had to be for publications on culture; 2) the artist must have complete freedom in his work; 3) payments needed to be made before the rendition of service.⁶⁴

While writers and artists of the May Fourth generations had been paid for their work, it is noteworthy that openly advertising their work for clearly commercial purpose was unprecedented. The way this advertisement was made to look is also interesting. Acting collectively as protectors and promoters on Qian’s behalf and wrapping the

sensitive issue of payments for artistic service with the usual rhetoric of advancing culture, the Kaiming intellectuals both allowed their young colleague to maintain the posture of detachment from financial issues while not tainting themselves by selling art for profit. More importantly, this collective endeavor demonstrated in unmistakable terms the Kaiming intellectuals' readiness to seek the market value of their ideas and knowledge. Their vision for future cultural production, essentially spelled out in the three rules illustrated above, was rather idealized: they could securely anchor their work in the realm of culture (read: not commerce or commercial culture), enjoy complete artistic and intellectual autonomy, and receive (handsome) monetary rewards to meet their needs in practical life. In other words, they would spread the influence of New Culture through the market while making a living, without becoming subservient to that same market.

From a “Family Artisan Workshop” to a Competitive Modern Corporation

Wu Sihong, a young woman from Zhang Xichen's home town of Shaoxing, who worked briefly at Kaiming, wrote about her first day after arriving in Shanghai in the summer of 1928, a small piece of luggage in a basket, 60 yuan and a letter of introduction from Zhang's old mentor Du Haisheng in her pocket.

He received me in the conference room/living room and said, “[Your friend] Manzhi has gone home for a visit and hasn't returned. You may stay in her pavilion room.” He took me to a little pavilion room next to the editorial office and then sent word to the kitchen that there was a new boarder.⁶⁵

Wang Manzhi, a radical young woman who ran away from her “feudal” home in Shaoxing, had been taken in by Zhang in the previous year to work as proof-reader. During its first years, the Press was located right in Zhang's rented alleyway-house. It

provided its needy young staff room and board.⁶⁶ The “pavilion room” and garret were used as living quarters. Before the Press expanded into the alleyway house next door and hired a chef, Suo Fei, a young editor and committed anarchist, much in accordance to his belief, helped out in the kitchen where his boss’s wife was in charge.⁶⁷ Wang Yantang, a proofreader, described the physical layout of the Press in 1927: “[The proofreaders] and Accountant Zhang Xuezhou (courtesy name of Zhang Xishang) shared the front side room. The living room served as the office of distribution where Sun Yisheng and two apprentices busied with packing books. In the fall, the upstairs living room was vacant to be editorial office...Mr. Zhang occupied a side room (li jian qian shanglou) in the back all by himself.”⁶⁸ These arrangements and the somewhat informal relationships between the employer and his staff, almost all of whom were hired through personal connections of some sort and treated paternalistically, resembled a pre-capitalist “family artisan workshop” (*jiating shougong zuofang*) as some Kaiming editors jokingly called the place.⁶⁹

In terms of working environment, Song Yubin, a long-time Kaiming editor, wrote about the good old days in the 1960s,

... there were only a few people working there, all friends who shared common interests. There were no real rules and regulations, no clear division of labor. [The company operated] completely in the style of an artisan workshop [and thus] was full of [collegial] warmth. [This] naturally encouraged everybody’s interest in and commitment to work without concerning themselves about working hours and pay.”⁷⁰

This rosy picture, with a touch of nostalgia, illustrates the rudimentary organization of work at Kaiming during its first two years. The collegial warmth, however, could not thaw the icy reality of the Press’s multiple, inter-related problems—the shortage of capital, the absence of distribution network, the dwindling of the readership—that

reached a crisis level in the beginning of 1928. Would the Press stay on the same course of avant-garde publishing for an exclusive audience and face the prospect of languishing like many of its peers? Or would it strike out a new path to both cultural prominence and commercial success?

Kaiming suffered from capital shortage from day one. To the dismay of the inexperienced intellectual entrepreneur Zhang Xichen and his supporters, this problem grew faster than the Press. In a matter-of-fact tone, Hu Yuzhi recalled the predicament,

...[Kaiming's] books were of good quality, but they were hard to sell. Few people would come to Baoshan Road to buy books. Therefore, there was a need to open a retail store on Sima lu.⁷¹ To have a retail store and distribution office, it had to rent store and office space and hire more people, which meant a greatly increased expenditure. To sustain this expenditure, it had to publish a large number of new titles [so as to make more profit]. [In order to accomplish this,] it needed large capital investment.⁷²

Hu failed to mention the Press's need for a printing plant also. Traditionally, there was no division of labor among the publisher, the printer, and the distributor in China, i.e. a publisher usually handled its own printing and distribution.⁷³ This practice was reinforced by the leading modern publishers, such as Shagnwu and Zhonghua, that set up their own printing plants and developed large distribution networks throughout the country during the first decades of the twentieth century. Kaiming, like other new, small publishers, had to contract printers and book retailers and thus suffered the disadvantage of high printing and distribution costs. In order to avoid fighting this kind of uphill battle, it was imperative for Kaiming to follow the Shangwu model. In short, the Press was in dire need of capital.

Access to capital was one of the most critical ingredients for business success. As a 1930s observer of the Shanghai publishing industry pointed out, the single greatest

challenge to the expansion, and sometimes the very survival in a competitive market, was to raise large sum of capital and the most secured way to achieve this was through incorporate the business into a joint-stock limited liability firm.⁷⁴ In terms of business organization, Shanghai publishing firms mostly fell into three categories—The most private and frequently small and shortest-lived were sole proprietorships (*duzi jingying*) due to the capital constraints placed on their ability to support themselves over slow periods. Slightly more stable were partnerships (*hezi jingying*) thanks to better availability of capital. The most sophisticated and robust were joint-stock limited liability corporations (*gufen youxian gongsi*). The last organizational form allowed rapid and sustainable growth because of its broader access to investment without direct involvement of investors who could freely trade their shares, its separate legal identity making it responsible for its own liability, and its managerial flexibility.⁷⁵ In the Republican era, corporations constituted roughly only ten percent of the publishers.⁷⁶ But successful publishers were all corporations.

Kaiming was organized as a sole-proprietorship of Zhang Xichen by default.⁷⁷ But by no means was he flying solo. In 1926, the Kaiming intellectual community was not resourceful enough to make the Press a corporation as planned. Now, it was ready to launch another campaign to raise the necessary funds. In the summer of 1928, Zhang opened up his private company to incorporation and reform at the expense of his own leadership role. This first step he took would eventually lead Kaiming to the top five list of the publishing world.

The effort to incorporate the press and found a printing plant started in earnest in the second half of 1928.⁷⁸ In February of the following year, Kaiming was officially

registered as a joint-stock limited liability company with a capital investment of 50,000 yuan, ten times as much as Kaiming's initial operating capital.⁷⁹ As a corporation, Kaiming was able to further generate investments, adding 50,000 yuan in 1930, 100,000 yuan in 1931, 50,000 in 1933, and 50,000 yuan in 1936. Before the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, Kaiming had become a sizable company with a total capital investment of 300,000 yuan, its actual assets had grown to over one million yuan by 1937.⁸⁰ The Meicheng Printing Plant, as it was named, raised 20,000 yuan in 1929 and registered as a separate company.⁸¹

It is interesting to note the relationship between Kaiming and Meicheng. Its biggest shareholder was Zhang's brother-in-law who was also its manager. This printing plant was set up to serve the Press's printing needs exclusively.⁸² Why then Kaiming did not make it part of its business like all other big publisher did? According to Wang Zhiyi, the intellectual owners of the Press wanted to avoid managing a business that they were not familiar with. More importantly, perhaps, during the late 1920s, printers often went on strike and threatened the whole operation of a publisher house if it owed its own printing plant.⁸³ Separate legal identity and ownership gave the Press the benefit of service while not risking interference in the case of labor unrest at Meicheng. After Meicheng was completely wiped out by the Japanese bombs at the outbreak of the Resisting Japan War in 1937, the competition in the printing industry had become intense. Kaiming's large printing contracts could easily command the lowest prices and the best service.⁸⁴

After its incorporation, Kaiming remained a publishing enterprise by intellectuals who had had firm control of not just of its Editorial Department but its board of directors and the general management as well. As Xu Diaofu, an early Kaiming editor, investor,

and manager, pointed out, “the Press was founded by us intellectuals who put our money in to print our own books. Therefore, the shareholders, editors, and authors were all rolled into one. This became the foundation of Kaiming.”⁸⁵ No archives are available on the composition of the shareholders over the years. But, by agreeing to take company shares rather than cash payments for their manuscripts or royalties, intellectuals contributed significantly to the first rounds of financing. Of the five hundred new shares added in 1930, Kaiming editors and authors held a significant 35%.⁸⁶ On the first nine-person board of directors sat Xia Mianzun; Shu Xincheng, the soon-to-be chief editor of *Zhonghua shuju*; Zhang Xichen; Qian Jinyu, Zhang Xichen’s mentor at Shangwu; Du Haisheng, Zhang Xichen’s mentor at the normal school.⁸⁷ The shareholders elected Zheng Zhenduo, Hu Zhuchi, and a banker as supervisors (*jiancharen*).⁸⁸ The second ten-person board elected in 1942 included only two businessmen, the rest was the leading GMD intellectual Shao Lizi, Zhang Xichen and six Kaiming editors and authors.⁸⁹

The first board of directors elected Du Haisheng to be the manager, Xia Mianzun the editor-in-chief (later called director of the Editorial Department), and Zhang Xichen the assistant manager and director of Publishing Department, and Zhang Xishang the director of Distribution Department.⁹⁰ When Zhang Xichen resumed the manager’s position in 1934,⁹¹ the board decided that the Publishing Department should continue to be under the direction of one of their own. As a result, Xu Diaofu, a senior editor, literary translator, and a member of the Literary Research Association, was tapped for the managerial role. He was later succeeded by Tang Xiguang, another senior editor in the 1940s.⁹²

Many in Kaiming would see the ownership and management by the intellectuals as having its own limitations. For example, Wang Zhiyi, a Kaiming editor in the 1940s who

wrote one of the few accounts on the history of Kaiming, believed that the steady pace of the company's growth reflected the difficulties in raising money from the intellectual community in which Kaiming was grounded and the cautiousness of the intellectual entrepreneurs as they tread on unfamiliar ground.⁹³ The intellectuals' self-consciousness in regard to their own entrepreneurial abilities seemed to be reflected in the personnel decisions by the board. It favored Du Haisheng over Zhang Xichen to lead the company for the former's ability to raise money. When Zhang Xichen resumed the manager's post, the board appointed Fan Xiren, a salt merchant from Shangyu, Zhejiang who had contacts in the Shanghai banking industry, to be the assistant manager, focusing on raising money and handling loans for the company. As the company grew, Zhang would eventually be replaced by Fan after the Resistance War, his budgetary conservatism and his loud opposition to the expansionary approach adopted by Fan as the specter of the Civil War loomed on the horizon soured Zhang's relationship with many in the management of the company. This new managerial team would eventually demand his resignation in 1949, thereafter he moved his family to Beijing, to the welcoming arms of his old intellectual friends with whom he founded Kaiming more than two decades earlier.⁹⁴

The increased capital allowed Kaiming to grow rapidly. In 1929, the head office, including the editorial, publishing, and general managing offices, was moved to a big office space on Zhaofeng lu.⁹⁵ In 1936, a bankrupted silk factory building on Wuzhou lu was rented and renovated to accommodate the much increased staff, now well over 100 strong.⁹⁶ The pace of production also quickened. It went from turning out a dozen books per year at the beginning to the same number per month in the mid-1930s.⁹⁷

Retailing and distribution was the revenue-generating department and thus experienced the biggest expansion. Prior to the big influx of capital, it was moved from Baoshang lu next to Zhang's house to Wangping lu (now named Shangdong lu), on the north fringe of the busy commercial district where old lithographic print shops and bookstores clustered.⁹⁸ In 1932, to appropriately reflect its modern image and growing status, the Press moved its retailing and distribution into a building with a large five-room-size store front on Fuzhou Road, right across the street from Zhonghua and close to Shangwu.⁹⁹ Thus physically and symbolically, Kaiming joined the ranks of large publishing firms.

Over the years, Kaiming developed a three-tier network for distribution. In addition to the central office in Shanghai, it set up eight branch stores at the peak of its expansion during the pre-War years, each had a staff of usually between 10 to 20 people.¹⁰⁰ Branch stores were located in the cities where the volume of business would allow the store to fulfill the profit quota distributed by the head office. For the places not ready for a branch store, the Press negotiated special sales agreements with local book retailers. This invention was effective in practice, expanding business while at the same time minimizing costs.¹⁰¹

Beginning in 1933, with the board's backing, the management proceeded to introduce Shangwu's organization model. It set up under the Editorial, Publishing, and Distribution Departments one office (*shi*), eighteen divisions (*bu*), thirty-three sections (*ke*), and four committees. It also adopted a modern managerial style and lay down clear rules and regulations for its employees. This included a requirement that all employees punch in time cards when they arrived at work.¹⁰² Not everybody at the Press welcomed

these changes.¹⁰³ These measures, nonetheless, brought the company the same level of efficiency as its model of success. For example, when Shangwu had over 2,000 employees in 1930, it had 12,000,000 yuan in revenue.¹⁰⁴ In the early 1930s, Kaiming's total employees were around 200 with over 1,000,000 yuan in revenue.¹⁰⁵ In terms of its structure and management, Kaiming came to resemble Shangwu even though it was started as a rebellion against the publishing giant.

“Dependence on Children to Have Rice to Eat”

The transformation of Kaiming also started to include its approach to what it published. As Kaiming embracing modern corporate structure and management, it simultaneously redirected its targeted audience from high-profiled, mostly college-educated "new youth" to a more mundane and larger audience of middle school students and youth of equivalent education. What the intellectuals learnt from the *New Women* debacle was the need to treat their readers as their clientele. This necessitated a better understanding of the demographics of the reading public and an adjustment of the Press's relationship with it. During the first two decades of the Republican period, it was the middle school student body that experienced rapid expansion to become a sizable social group. In the this period, college enrollment fluctuated roughly between 29,000 to 50,000 without significant growth while the middle school student population increased almost 7-fold from a little over 100,000 to close to 700,000.¹⁰⁶¹⁰⁷ In other words, the middle school student population was 14 times bigger than its college counterpart during the republican period, or they constituted over 90% of the entire population of educated youth.

The main component of this change was middle school textbooks. It was no secret that among all publications textbooks were the most lucrative business because, once adopted by a large number of schools, they enjoyed a circulation tremendously larger than general books. For example, Shangwu's first set of textbooks issued in 1904 sold one hundred thousand copies in a matter of months, establishing the supremacy of its publisher financially and otherwise.¹⁰⁸ Textbook publishing was also the approach adopted by Lufei Gui to effectively launch Zhonghua in 1912 and turn it into China's second publishing giant in just a few years.¹⁰⁹ In the blueprint of Kaiming, however, the intellectuals had consciously included no textbooks, considering them to be of sheer business venture.¹¹⁰ But quickly, as Hu Yuzhi put it, "Kaiming was left with no choice but to follow the footsteps of big publishers—publishing textbooks and relying on little children to have rice to eat."¹¹¹

However, textbook publishing required a large amount of capital that small publishers could not afford. This was because, a print run for a title in the general book category was usually a short run, 3,000 copies or less, requiring modest use of capital. Subsequent printings were funded from the revenues provided by selling the previous one. While less profitable and often harder to market, this strategy minimized the strain on cash flow and greatly reduced the risk. Textbooks, however, usually came in a series consisting a dozen or more books. Frequently tens of thousands of copies of each textbook in the series had to be ready for purchase since schools would need them in large quantities at roughly the same time before a semester started. More over, the textbook market was dominated by the three largest publishers: Shangwu, Zhonghua, and Shijie (the World Book Company) who were in cutthroat competition against one another

at the time.¹¹² Their intense promotional campaigns and price-cutting, in addition to their powerful distribution networks, had made it extremely difficult for a new player to break into the textbook market.

Without the required capital, Zhang Xichen, nonetheless, had impressive innovativeness. In 1927, he started to issue what might be called “sheet texts,” individual essays or poems in the classical literary cannon printed on separate sheets of paper. Each sheet sold only for one penny or 1/10 of a copper penny. Many school instructors of Chinese language at the time, unsatisfied with the available textbooks, often made mimeographed course packets which included texts of their choice for their students. But it was a very labor intensive and time consuming job and quality of the products was usually poor. It is said that one day when Xia Mianzun visited the Press, he complained about the difficulty in reading his mimeographed course packets on his taxi ride there. This gave Zhang the idea.¹¹³ Since he had been a schoolteacher himself, he quickly made his selection and put his first sheet texts into print. Kaiming’s machine-printed texts offered an inexpensive and convenient alternative. Teachers and students could select the sheet texts they need to purchase even with an option for free binding offered by the press. This new and unique product was a runaway success. It allowed Kaiming to break into the textbook market with limited capital. Quickly, the Press found the Beixing Press, at the time the bigger and more prestigious than itself, trying to compete with a similar product.¹¹⁴ Subsequently, Kaiming offered annotated sheet texts and thus outsmarted its copycat. By 1937, Kaiming had developed a collection of over 2,000 sheet texts with a special staff to manage it.¹¹⁵

Zhang also enjoyed a reputation for risk-taking with which he started his second textbook project. In 1927, he accepted a proposal by Lin Yutang to compile a three-volume set of English textbooks for Kaiming for 300 yuan per month as his advance. Lin had previously made the offer to Beixing who instantly rejected it, considering the advance as ridiculously high.¹¹⁶ It looked simply staggering in the context of Kaiming's mere 5,000 yuan of operating capital and forty to fifty thousand yuan of monthly revenue at the time. But Zhang once again proved to have foresight. He overruled the objection of his brother who just joined the company to manage its finances, stating that he alone would be responsible for any negative consequences.¹¹⁷

What Zhang banked on was Lin's reputation as an expert of English language and a leading writer in Chinese. And Lin lived up to the expectation. With the book contract in hand, he proceeded to publish in the famous English-language *Zilin Xibao* reviews of the English textbooks on the market, using his authoritative voice to rip them all thoroughly apart.¹¹⁸ At Lin's request, Feng Zikai, recently enjoyed the success of his first *manhua* collection, put in Lin's textbook entertaining illustrations.¹¹⁹ This innovation added greatly to its attractiveness. When *Kaiming English Reader (Kaiming Yingwen duben)*, the first in the set, came out, it became a phenomenon and quickly replaced most existing English textbooks of the same kind, including Shangwu's *Model English Reader (Mofan Yingwen duben)* that had dominated the market for years. *Kaiming English* set became the first choice for schools over the next twenty years. Lin eventually earned around 30,000 yuan in royalties, a rather large fortune.¹²⁰ The large profit this project was critical for Kaiming's early growth. It also gave the Press a strong foothold in the textbook market.

The business aspect of the Kaiming project and its dependence on textbook publishing can be vividly illustrated by its conflict against the World Books in 1929?. Just when this new textbook had become the Press's lifeblood, threatening news arrived—the powerful World Book Co. was ready to launch its new English textbook, *Standard English Reader (Biaozhun Yingyu duben)*. Fortunately for Kaiming, the young and rather naïve compiler of the World Book textbook, Lin Handa, sent Lin Yutang his manuscript, asking for the known expert's comments. Lin Yutang broke the news to Zhang Xichen who subsequently demanded the World Book to halt the releasing of its textbook, claiming that the many parallels in the two textbooks pointed to the young author plagiarism. Instead of taking the matter seriously, Sheng Zhifang, the general manager of the World Book handed the letter from Kaiming's lawyer to its hapless young author, requesting him to negotiate with Kaiming himself. Lin Handa thus carried a letter of introduction from World Book's chief editor Fan Liuyun to see Zhang Xichen. The tactless chief editor put in his letter such words as “overlaps” between the two textbooks. Lin also tried to knock on Lin Yutang's door. Since the leading writer refused to see him, he left his name card and letter humbly requesting advice. Seizing these as evidence of Lin Handa's acknowledgement to his guilt, Zhang printed an announcement with copies of the letter and card in all the leading papers in Shanghai. In response, the World Book brought a lawsuit against Kaiming for libel. The rumor had it that since the woman lawyer the World Book retained with a jaw-dropping 3,000 yuan for this case enjoyed a “special relationship” with the minister of justice, she could only win or else the judge would be in trouble. As if to confirm the rumor, the judge was clearly in favor of the plaintiff. It seemed that Kaiming's loss would be just a matter of time.¹²¹

Kaiming countered the World Book's money with connections. As it turned out, the minister of Education Jiang Mengling was a close friend of Lin Yutang. At the time, *Standard English Reader* was in the process of being reviewed by the ministry. At Jiang's intervention, the ministry issued the order to ban the World Book's English textbook from publication. On the day before the court was scheduled to issue its final ruling, Kaiming received the ministry's order and managed to print it in all big papers in Shanghai. The court had no choice but made Kaiming to pay only a small fine of 30 yuan for some unjustified personal insult in the wordings of Kaiming's earlier announcement to Lin Handa. This development was a big blow to the World Book. Many schools who pre-ordered its textbook all canceled their orders. At the publishing giant's request, the vice minister of education Liu Dabai, who incidentally was also a close Kaiming associate, became the mediator. In the end, the World Books agreed to submit to Kaiming the printing paper shells of its textbook for destruction in exchange of the latter's agreement to stop its negative campaign in the media. This dramatic incident greatly assisted the publicity of *Kaiming English Reader* and consolidated its domination in the textbook market.¹²²

The large revenue brought in by Lin Yutang's English textbook set and the new influx of investment after its incorporation gave Kaiming the capital it needed to launch a full scale textbook production. Between 1928 and 1932, they published textbooks on half a dozen subjects. Compared to the largest publishing houses, Kaiming remained at a grave disadvantage in terms of available capital and access to distribution. However, it had its own unique strength. Most of its editors and authors, such as Ye Shengtao, Xia Mianzun, Feng Zikai, Zhu Ziqing, and Zhang Xichen himself, had been middle-school

teachers in their early careers. They not only understood the requirements of the curriculum and the needs of the students but also enjoyed nation-wide reputation as writers and educators. Subsequently, the textbooks they compiled were able to compete successfully on the market. In particular, *Kaiming Mathematics* and *Kaiming Chinese* scored major victories over their competitors.

In 1933, Kaiming was invited by Shangwu, Zhonghua, and the World Book to participate in negotiating an agreement in regard to the market share of textbooks among the big publishers. Earlier, the three publishing giants had decided to halt their textbook war against one another in order to deal with a common threat, the newly formed the Zhengzhong Press (Zhengzhong shuju). Since Zhengzhong was owned by the GMD government, it could easily use its political leverage, i.e. the Ministry of Education and the public school system under its control, to dominant the market. Their strategy was to include Zhengzhong and a couple of other major textbook publishers in forming an ad hoc trust.¹²³ Through negotiation, Kaiming secured between a 6%-10% market share in the textbook industry in the 1930s and 1940s.¹²⁴ While textbooks only constituted 9% of all the titles Kaiming published over the years, they made up 62% of the annual revenue.¹²⁵ Ultimately, it was textbooks that gave Kaiming a place in the rank of big publishers.

Enlightenment as a Middle School Education Project

Kaiming's turn to middle school textbook publishing pointed to a new possibility to combine the business need to maximize the market of its publications and the May Fourth intellectual project to enlighten rising generations of youth. In the May Fourth

imagination, the youth occupied a special and glorified place as they were perceived as not yet corrupted by “the old and decayed in the society,” and as symbol of hope and dynamic force to bring out a new China. As mentioned earlier, middle school students and youth with middle-level education constituted the predominant majority of the educated youth. Culturally, middle-school students and middle-school graduates occupied a place between college students and college graduates on the top and those with only elementary education and functional literacy at the bottom of the literate society. When they were in school, this social group often presented themselves as a fresh, vibrant force. After they entered the workforce, typically taking up clerical jobs or skilled positions in traditional business or modern industries, and settled into the routines of life, they would most likely slip into the “class” known as petty urbanites (*xiao shiming*), biggest consumers of popular, entertainment literature.¹²⁶

By the late 1920s, Kaiming had consciously made the policy of moving away from a focus of new literature and art (*xin wenyi*) to extra-curricular reading materials for middle school students.¹²⁷ By serving this middle tier, the Press intended to create a much broader readership than it previously enjoyed with avant-garde youth while avoiding a direct competition with commercial publishers who catered to the taste of petty urbanites. In other words, it opted for a populist approach for larger profits. Yet at the same time, it managed to create for itself a profile of an educational institution, taking no risk of being in the rank of commercial publishers.

One of the resultant new products, *Middle School Students* (*Zhong xuesheng*) first released in 1930, was design to replace *New Women* and *The Common*. During most of its long career which was briefly interrupted by the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War,

the monthly enjoyed a circulation of over 20,000 in the years preceding the war and close to 20,000 during most of the war years, making it one of them most widely read periodicals of the republican period.¹²⁸

These new Kaiming publications entered the book market with a purpose and style very different from their predecessors. Immediately, we can discern four differences. First, in the new periodicals, exhortation gave way to education. That is, Kaiming authors and editors turned away from the characteristic May Fourth passionate attacks on the evils of Chinese society and the call for social reform and revolution. Rather, they started to give priority to long-range plans to teach the young generation basic knowledge in the arts and sciences so that they would have the ability to both envision and construct a new society. Second, the issues addressed now were either from the perspective of the middle-level educated youth or addressed specifically their concerns. Third, the language style was visibly less hyperbolic, much simpler and thus more intelligible to middle school students. Finally, the editors and authors purposely shifted away from a manner of writing that implied themselves as eminent authority figures. They now insisted on becoming "friends" to their young readers to assist the young generation in their struggles and pursuits. At the same time, they no longer treated their readers as passive and intellectually inferior. Instead, they encouraged active reader responses and regularly print out a large number of student submissions. [Ling: make reference to Shenghuo and Zhou Daofeng] This last measure of involving student readers in Kaiming's journalistic discourses also served to reduce the production cost since the student contributors were only paid with gift certificates for Kaiming publications. A comparison between *Middle*

School Student with its predecessor *New Women* clearly reveals the difference in the editorial approaches.

TABLE II

Comparison between *Middle School Student* and *New Women*

	<i>New Women</i>	<i>Middle School Student</i>
FORMS	<i>New Youth</i> style	diverse and lively
TOPICS	homogeneous	heterogeneous
CONTENT	ideologically charged	no apparent ideological agendas
AUTHORSHIP	<i>tongren</i>	Inclusive of unsolicited contributions
READERSHIP	little participation	active participation

These new editorial approach in effect opened up the journalistic space of the *Kaiming* intellectuals to include their large readership. If *New Women* was a torch that the intellectuals attempted to use to light the revolutionary conflagration, then *Middle School Students* was a garden where the intellectuals tried to cultivate the ideas, values, and sensitivities of a generation_of middle-level educated youth.

Kaiming's effort to involve its readers in cultural processes led to its invention of a new genre in periodical publishing, *Kaiming*, a month devoted most of its space to the writings of common readers.¹²⁹ Suofei, the editor of the monthly, repeatedly stated that the opinions of common readers allowed authors and publishers to understand the genuine needs of the literate society and should be used as guidelines for their cultural

activities. Readers for their part should deem it their right as well as their responsibility to critique the publishing world and to join forces with authors and publishers in their common endeavor to construct a better culture and a better society.¹³⁰

In the issues of the *Kaiming* monthly, the agency of the audience was readily evident. A few concrete examples can suggest to the magazine's flair, which was quite unique in its time. There is one essay discussing the danger of losing one's individuality by accepting everything one reads.¹³¹ Another essay openly ridicules the mainstream literary Left and its advocacy of revolutionary literature with which the editor of *Kaiming* seemed to sympathize.¹³² One reader questions the purpose of a book published by *Kaiming* for which Ye Shengtao wrote the preface and Zhang Xichen the postscript.¹³³ There are also many discussions about the cover designs, physical quality, and pricing of *Kaiming's* publications.¹³⁴ While laudatory comments on *Kaiming's* publications are much more numerous, the presence of constructive criticism does indicate that the readership had become less deferential to authorship and more assertive of their own opinions.

In conclusion, I believe that the magazines, *Middle School Student* and *Kaiming*, as well as the other innovations at *Kaiming Press* in the late 1920s and early 1930s suggest a significant cultural reconfiguration, especially in the relationship between authors and audiences, or what we conventionally would call "cultural producers" and "cultural consumers." May Fourth intellectuals came from a position where they sought to exercise their self-appointed role as cultural custodian for the society, a society whose interests they refused to heed.¹³⁵ As they embraced the "business of cultural production" in the context of print capitalism, not only did their publishing activities enlarge the scope

of the May Fourth enlightenment, but their communication with their buying public became increasingly interactive and dynamic. A decade after the May Fourth Movement, this process created, for the first time, a genuine opportunity for the emergence of an enlightened community of critically-minded readers in Republican China.

¹ The figures are derived from Zhu Lianbao, *Jin Xian Dai Shanghai Chubanye Yinxiangji*.

² This is not to suggest that May Fourth influenced publications became the mainstream. Literature by the more conventional style *littérateurs* continued to dominate the book market throughout the Republican era.

³ There existed a lot of tension between Shangwu's management and its editors which culminated in latter's joining Shangwu's printers in a bitter strike during the height of labor movement of 1925. Kaiming Press seemed to always enjoy relatively harmonious relationship between its management and editorial team.

⁴ The members of the Creation Society initially published exclusively through the Taidong Press until 1926 when they started to release much of its work through Guanghai.

⁵ The press was closed down by the Nationalist government for the radical rhetoric in its periodical *Rail-less Trolley* only three months after its founding. Dai and his colleagues swiftly adopted a new name, the "Suimo Press," to continue the same operation.

⁶ Zhu Lianbao who offered a survey of Shanghai publishing world commented that small publishers that had a handful of employees and released a few books before closing down were too numerous to document. See Zhu Lianbao, *Jin xian dai Shanghai chubanye yinxiangji*, p. 9. A good example can be found in Honghe chubanshe (the Red and Black Press), founded by Hu Yeping, his wife Ding Ling, and their friend Shen Congwen in Shanghai in 1929 with 1,000 yuan of a loan at 3% of monthly interest rate. Previously, the couple lived on a small stipend provided by Ding Ling's mother and small incomes from selling their writings. When Ding Ling's mother lost her job and could not provide for them any longer, Hu decided to start what Ding Ling called a "small business" (*xiaoben shenyi*) of publishing. It only lasted for 8 months before closing down, leaving the young couple a huge debt. Ding Ling, *Ding Ling zizhuan*, pp. 71-72.

⁷ According to Zhang, the magazine's circulation in its early months was 3,000 to 5,000. Zhang Xicheng, "Cong shangren dao shangren." The first issue eventually enjoyed a third print run in five months. During the republican period, a print run was typically 2,000 to 3,000 copies. See "Paiwan yihou" (postscript), *New Women* vol. 1, no. 2 (, p. 72, and no. 6, p. 392.

⁸ Zhang, Xicheng. "Cong shangren dao shangren."

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ See Chen Fukang's account of Pu She and Zheng Zhenduo's role in his *Zheng Zhenduo Zhan*, pp. 90-91. The word "pu" was from "pu xue" or textual study of the Chinese classics advocated by scholars during the Han and then the Qing dynasties. Other members included Zhou Yutong, Wang Boxiang, Gu Jigang, Yu Pinbo, Xie Liuyi.

¹¹ See Chapter 2, fn. 146.

¹² See Zhang Xicheng, "Cong shangren dao shangren."

¹³ Two different Chinese characters but the same pronunciation.

¹⁴ See Wang Manzhi, "Lizhi chuanye, mianwei wangren," pp. 104-109. The author who was one of the earliest employees of Kaiming further recalled that many of Zhang's friends and acquaintances deliberately addressed him as Proprietor before they had requested funds or planned to request funds from him. Even the chief editor Xia Mianzun sometimes played this trick, as Wang recalled. In the Chinese context, a proprietor is a rich person who could afford or even expected to be generous with money.

¹⁵ Zhang Xicheng, "Cong shangren dao shangren."

¹⁶ In his biographical essay written in 1931, he essentially referred to every thing he did, including his early teaching, his editing and publishing of *New Women*, as "business activities". Ibid.

¹⁷ Zhang, Xicheng. "Yige zui pinfan de ren," p. 219.

¹⁸ Ibid.

- ¹⁹ Tang Tao, "Yingxiang (Impressions)," in *Zhang Xichen xiansheng dancheng yibai zhounian*, pp. 18-21.
- ²⁰ Wu married the ultra-leftist writer Jiang Guangci who shortly died of illness in the early 1930s. See Wu, "Qinqie tixie, zhiqin nanwang," p. 103.
- ²¹ Ma Yinliang, "Huanian Xuecun tongzhi (Commemorating Comrade Xuecun)," in *Zhang Xichen xiansheng dancheng yibai zhounian*, pp. 48-51.
- ²² Joseph R. Levenson, *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), p. 17.
- ²³ Chen Wangdao was the manager of Dajian shupu whose chief editor was Shi Cuntong.
- ²⁴ *Lu Xun nianpu*, vol. 2, p. 159
- ²⁵ Chen Fukang, *Zheng Zhenduo Zhuan*, pp. 168-69.
- ²⁶ The Association elected a nine-person acting committee which included Zheng Zhenduo, Zheng Buoqi, Shen Duanxian (Xia Yan), Li Culi, Peng Kang, Zhou Yutong, Pan Zhongyun, Pan Zinian, and Zhang Xichen who had already being given the title, "proprietor Zhang". Chen Fukang, *Zheng Zhenduo Zhuan*, pp. 209-12.
- ²⁷ "Shanghai zhuzuoren gonghui yuanqi," cited in Chen Fukang, pp. 168-69.
- ²⁸ Cited in Chen Fukang, pp. 211.
- ²⁹ The following is based on Zhao's autobiographical essay unless otherwise noted. Zhao Jingsheng, "Chu le zhongxue xiao yihou (After leaving middle school)," *Middle School Students* 11 (January 1931): 75-84.
- ³⁰ He came to Kaiming on the recommendation of Xu Diaofu, an old college of Zhang Xichen at Shangwu who would later join the press himself.
- ³¹ Jia Zhifang, et al. ed. *Wenxue yanjiu hui ziliao*.
- ³² He remarried in early 1930 soon after the death of his first wife. Shen Songquan, p. 35.
- ³³ Wu Guanghua, *Qian Juntao zhuan*, pp. 3, 10-13, 28-43.
- ³⁴ Wu Guanghua, *Qian Juntao zhuan*, p. 99.
- ³⁵ Book cover design did not appear in China until the beginning of the twentieth century when some publishers started to use Chinese paintings and pictorial portraits to decorate their book covers. Lu Xun, while better known for his short stories and essays, was instrumental in promoting modern graphic design. With his help and encouragement, Tao Yuanqing became the first professional graphic artist, debuting his cover design for Lu Xun's books in 1925.
- ³⁶ Qian Juntao, "Wo zai Kaiming de qi nian," ("My seven years in Kaiming," in *Wo yu Kaiming*, p. 62.
- ³⁷ Guanghua, for example, once offered Qian 50 yuan for ten cover designs on a monthly basis. See Shen Songquan, "Guangyu Guanghua shuju de huiyi (My recollections of Guanghua Press)" *Chuban shiliao*, no. 2 (1991): 38. Shi Zhecun, who co-managed the avant-garde Suimo shudian (1929-31), recalled that their books designed by Qian were very "eye-catching." See Shi Zhecun, "Women jinyin guo sange shudian (Our three Publishing Houses)," *Xin wenxue shiliao*, no. 1 (1985): 188.
- ³⁸ Qian Juntao, "Wo zai Kaiming de qi nian," p. 62.
- ³⁹ Wu Guanghua, *Qian Juntao zhuan*, p. 76.
- ⁴⁰ Qian Juntao, "Wo zai Kaiming de qi nian," p. 62. His biographer Wu Guanghua notes that that Qian was known for his sharpness in dealing with financial matters.
- ⁴¹ *Qian Juntao zhuangzhen huali Kaiming*, vol. 1, no. 4 (October 1928).
- ⁴² Wu Guanghua, *Qian Juntao zhuan*, 2001, pp. 126-28, 427.
- ⁴³ Lou's first essay appeared in the July 1926 issue of *New Women*. See Lou Shiyi, "Nanwang de guli he bangzu," p. 51-52.
- ⁴⁴ Wen-hsin Yeh, *Provincial Passages: Culture, Space, and Origins of Chinese Communism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), p. 194.
- ⁴⁵ Xia joined Zhang Xichen to form the Women's Question Research Association in 1921. All the three joined the Literary Research Association in 1922. But ultimately, it was personal friendships that tied them together for the decades to come.
- ⁴⁶ *Mingguo renwu da cidian*, p. 658.
- ⁴⁷ Fn on Zhang and Shangwu.
- ⁴⁸ Fearing that Shangwu would not easily let go of the book contract, Xia deliberately overpriced his manuscript's copyright for 2,000 yuan and insisted on selling it to the publisher. As expected, Shangwu rejected the book since that figure meant that it pay the translator at the high rate of 20 yuan per thousand words. See Song Yunbing, "Kaiming jiushi (Reminisces of Kaiming)." Song believed that the total royalty Xia received from Kaiming for his translated book should be more than 10 times as much as the

amount he requested of Shangwu. The highest rate for translated materials Shangwu paid was six yuan per thousand words and that privilege was reserved for Lin Shu.

⁴⁹ *Wo yu Kaiming*.

⁵⁰ These included 8 books he authored, 16 translated, and 1 textbook he compiled. *Kaiming tushu chuban mulu*.

⁵¹ Feng Yiying, *Wo de fuqing Feng Zikai*.

⁵² For the cost of education at the First Normal in comparison to other schools and the financial background of its student body, see Wen-Hsin Yeh, *Provincial Passages*, pp. 96-97.

⁵³ For the standard of the time, 30 yuan was a lot for an elementary school teaching position. According to his daughter, Feng's mother had very much wanted her son to take the job. Feng Yiying, *Wo de fuqing Feng Zikai*, p. 67.

⁵⁴ For more biographical information on Feng Yiying, *Wo de fuqing Feng Zikai*, pp. 84-88, 139-43.

⁵⁵ He also translated two books on art (1927 and 1929), one on music (1928), and wrote a book on music (1926), a history on Western art (1927) and a book on how to play yangqing (1929). See *Kaiming chuban tushu mulu*, pp. 43-47.

⁵⁶ These included 11 books through other publishers.

⁵⁷ Feng Yiying, *Wo de fuqing Feng Zikai*, p. 109.

⁵⁸ Feng Yiying, *Wo de fuqing Feng Zikai*, pp. 113-122, 162.

⁵⁹ Feng Yiying, *Wo de fuqing Feng Zikai*, pp. 102, 109-129.

⁶⁰ Lou Shiyi, Lou Shiyi, "Nanwang de guli he bangzu," p. 51-55.

⁶¹ Lou Shiyi, Lou Shiyi, "Nanwang de guli he bangzu," p. 53.

⁶² *Commercial Daily*, a private run paper in Shanghai between January 1921 and December 1927, was influential among intellectuals and students for its political editorials, which took the position of anti-warlordism and supporting the Nationalist revolution. In 1926, due to its change of editorship and political orientation, it lost its previous large readership and was forced to close down the following year. In 1928, its owner tried to bring it back to life, but the revival only lasted for a few months. Hu later found employment at *Shengbao*. See *Middle School Students*, no. 11, (January 1931), pp. 85-90.

⁶³ Qian Gechuan, "Huimeng liushi nian," in *Zhang Xichen xiansheng dancheng yibai zhounian*, pp. 26-28.

⁶⁴ Cited in Wu Guanghua, *Qian Juntao Zhuan*, pp. 78-79. The advertisement was reprinted in the October 1928 issue of *Kaiming* monthly.

⁶⁵ Wu married the ultra-leftist writer Jiang Guangci who shortly died of illness in the early 1930s. See Wu Sihong.

⁶⁶ This arrangement was prevalent among lithographic publishers as well as modern publishers until the early 1920s.

⁶⁷ This is based on recollection of several people in *Zhang Xichen xiansheng dancheng yibai zhounian*, pp. 47, 91, 107. See also Song Yunbing, "Kaiming jushi," p. 5.

⁶⁸ Wang Yantang "Wei chuban shiye yiwang wusi de Xicheng xiansheng," in *Zhang Xichen xiansheng dancheng yibai zhounian Jinian Wenji*, p. 111.

⁶⁹ Song Yunbin, "Kaiming jushi," p. 7.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ Sima lu (Today's Fuzhou lu) was where publishers' retail outlets and bookstores were concentrated during the Republican China.

⁷² Hu Yuzhi, "Hu Yuzhi shuzhang cai Kaiming shudian diyici ganbu huiyi shang de jianghua [Hu Yuzhi's speech at the first meeting of the Kaiming cardres]," enclosed in Wang Zhiyi, *Kaiming shudian jishi (Essays on the Kaiming Press)* (Taiyuan, Shangxi: Shangxi renming chubanshe, 1991), pp. 193-94.

⁷³ Fang Houshu, *Zhongguo chuban shihua*, p. 219.

⁷⁴ Lin He'e, "Ziben yu yinshua shiye," in *Zhongguo yinshuashi ziliao huibian*, ed. Yan Shuang, (Shanghai: Shanghai shi xinsijun lishi yanjiu hui, yinshu-yinchao zu n.d., 1937), I:120.

⁷⁵ Lin He'e.

⁷⁶ Lin He'e estimated that individual proprietorships and partnerships constituted 90% of all publishing firms in the 1930s. The Booksellers Guild's record show similar percentage of proprietorships and partnerships in 1917.

⁷⁷ It is not entirely clear whether Kaiming was a sole proprietorship of Zhang Xichen or a partnership of the two brothers. However, Zhang mentioned in one of his recollection that the initial fund for starting Kaiming was mostly from his severance from Shangwu. Later, he "borrowed" from his brother who

eventually put all his savings into the company. From the above, it seems that the company was first registered as a sole proprietorship and remained so when the brother joined in. See Zhang Xicheng, "Cong shangren dao shangren." In Kiming's report to Bureau of Publishing in 1950, it states, "This company was founded in 1926 as Zhang's own business (*duli jinyin*)." This can also be interpreted as "sole proprietorship" of Zhang. Wang Zhiyi, p. 177. Ultimately, unlike corporation, partnership is not fundamentally different from proprietorship in its structure and suffers similar limitations.

⁷⁸ There was very little detailed information available on the incorporation offered in the various accounts of Kaiming except that a reforming team was formed that included Xia Mianzun, Liu Shuqing from Lida, Du Haisheng (Zhang Xichen's old mentor), Feng Zikai, Hu Zhongzhi, Wu Jihou (on whom I fail to find any information), Xia Daijun from Jiangnan Bank, and Wu Zhongyan who was Zhang Xichen's brother-in-law. See Wang Zhiyi, "Kaiming shudian jishi," p. 5.

⁷⁹ "Kaiming shudian gufen youxian gongsi sheli zhuce wenjian" (The document of the registration of the Kaiming Press as a joint-stock limited liability company), Ministry of Economics Archives, Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taipei, 17-23-93.

⁸⁰ "Kaiming shudian qinqiu yu guojia heying chengwen (A request to turn the Kaiming Press into a business of state and private joint ownership)," 1950, reprinted in Wang Zhiyi, *Kaiming shudian jishi*, pp. 177-83.

⁸¹ *Zhang Xichen xianshen danchen yibai nian*, p. 240.

⁸² Song Yunbin, p. 6.

⁸³ Wang Zhiyi, pp. 16-17.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Cited in Wang Zhiyi, "Kaiming shudian jishi," p. 17.

⁸⁶ "Gudong mingce," (Rosters of shareholders). This was the only available roster of share-holders available of the five rounds of fund-raising.

⁸⁷ The other four were Shao Zhonghui, Zhang Xishang (Zhang Xichen's younger brother), and Feng Jicai. See "Kaiming shudian gufen youxian gongsi sheli zhuce wenjian."

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ They were Ye Shengtao, Feng Zikai, Fu Bingran, Song Yubing, Hu Zhongchi, and Fan Shoukang. Tang Xiguang, p. 307.

⁹⁰ Zhang Xicheng, "Cong shangren dao shangren," p. 259.

⁹¹ Zhu Lianbao, *Jin xian dai Shanghai chubanye yinxiangji*, p. 72.

⁹² Wang Zhiyi, p. 17.

⁹³ Wang Zhiyi, p. 5.

⁹⁴ Zhang Shiyang, et al. "Zhang Xichen xiansheng xiaozuan," pp. 226-30. See also Wu Guanghua, *Qian Juntao zhuan*, pp. 2001, 211-12.

⁹⁵ It was first moved out of Zhang's home in 1927 to a rented office space on Renxing li, Bailaohui lu (now named Dong daming lu). Mo Zhiheng, "Shuoshuo Kaiming shudian jiqi chubanwu de zhuanghuang yishu," in *Wo yu Kaiming*, p. 236.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* See also Zhang Siming, et al, pp. 219, 240.

⁹⁷ Wang Zhiyi, p. 11.

⁹⁸ Wang Zhiyi, p. 5.

⁹⁹ Mo Zhiheng, "Shuoshuo Kaiming;" p. 236 and Song Yunbin, p. 6.

¹⁰⁰ Prior to the outbreak of the Resistance War, Kaiming had branch stores in Beijing, Shenyang, Nanjing, Hankou, Wuchang, Changsha, Guangzhou, and Hangzhou. Wang Zhiyi, p. 178. The size of the branch store staff, Wang Zhiyi, "Kaiming shudian jishi," p. 16.

¹⁰¹ Wang Zhiyi, p. 9. Commercial Press' system was very similar. See Liu Dajun, "Zhongguo jindai tushu faxing tixi de jubian" (Dramatic change in China's modern book distributing system), *Bianji xuekan*, no. 5 (General no. 49) (1996): 75-6.

¹⁰² Song Yubin, p. 7.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ This figure does not include workers employed by Shangwu and its printing plants, which reached 3,500. See Zhuang Yu, pp. 751, 754-55.

¹⁰⁵ Wang Zhiyi, p. 179.

¹⁰⁶ Statistics show that there were 37,566 college students nationwide whereas the middle school enrollment reached 514,609 in 1930. In that same year, there were 4,583 graduated from colleges whereas

89,388 students graduated from middle schools. The Ministry of Education, ROC, *Diyici Zhongguo jiaoyu nianjian* [The first education yearbook], dingbian (vol. 5) (Taipei: Zongqing tushu gongsi, 1933, reprinted in 1982), vol. 2, pp. 194-95; v. 5, p. 97. Elsewhere in the yearbook, it gives 53,410 enrolled college students, including two year colleges. See vol. 5 dingbian, p. 102

¹⁰⁷ While higher education failed to expand in the period under study, it did during the war years of the 1940s. Between 1940 to 1947, college enrollment increased more than three-fold. For college and middle school enrollments, see The Ministry of Education, ROC, *Diyici Zhongguo jiaoyu nianjian*., pp. 29-30, 137-38; The Ministry of Education, ROC, *Dierci Zhongguo jiaoyu nianjian* [The second education yearbook] (Taipei: Zongqing tushu gongsi, 1948, reprinted in 1982)., pp. 1435-36. By 1945, the middle school population increased to 1,566,392, close to 19 times larger than its college counterpart which was 83,948. See also Li Huaying, et al. *Mingguo jiaoyu shi* [The education history of the Republican era]. (Shanghai: Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshi, 1997)., pp. 606, 613.

¹⁰⁸ Chris Reed, p. 304.

¹⁰⁹ For early history of textbook publishing, see Ji Shaopu, pp. 297-302.

¹¹⁰ Hu Yuzhi, in Wang Zhiyi, the book, p. 194.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² For a discussion of the textbook wars among Shangwu, Zhonghua, and Shijie, see Ji Shaopu, pp. 330-32.

¹¹³ Wang Yantang, "Wei chuban shiye yiwang wusi de Xisheng xiansheng," p. 111-12.

¹¹⁴ Beixing issued "Beixing huoye wenxuan." Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Zhang Xishang, "Kaiming huoye wenxuan," in Wang Zhiyi, *Kaiming shudian jishi*, pp. 207-10.

¹¹⁶ Lin asked Sun Fuyuan to sell his proposed book project to publishers in Shanghai. See Song Yunbin, p. 13.

¹¹⁷ Wang Yantang, "Wei chuban shiye yiwang wusi de Xisheng xiansheng."

¹¹⁸ Song Yunbin, p. 13.

¹¹⁹ Lin promised to pay Feng 2% of his royalty. Song Yunbin, p. 13.

¹²⁰ Song Yunbin, "Kaiming Jiushi."

¹²¹ Based on Song Yunbin, pp. 14-17.

¹²² Ibid. See also Jin Yunjiang, "Huanian Zhang Xichen xiansheng," in *Zhang Xichen xiansheng dancheng yibai nian*, pp. 129-30.

¹²³ Song Yunbin. The six-member trust included Shangwu, Zhonghua, Shijie, Dadong, Zhengzhong, and Kaiming.

¹²⁴ No specific information is available on the allocation of the market shares among the six publishers in this first agreement. The agreement was renegotiated twice, once during the war years and the other immediately after the war. The second agreement gave Zhengzhong 22%, Shangwu 22%, Zhonghua 22%, Shijie 12%, Dadong 10%, Kaiming 8%, and a new member Wentong 4%. See Zhu Lianbao, *Jin xian dai Shanghai chuban ye yinxiang ji*, pp. 13-15.

¹²⁵ Wang Zhiyi, pp. 14-15..

¹²⁶ For a thoughtful definition and discussion of petty urbanites, see Lu Hanchao, *Beyond the Neon Lights: Everyday Shanghai in the Early Twentieth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), pp. 61-64.

¹²⁷ Lu Yuankai, et al., "Kuaille de shushing, lianda de shiyejia Lu Zhifeng," in *Wo yu Kaiming*, p. 136.

¹²⁸ For the pre-war circulation, see Yang Shouqing, "Zhongguo Chuban Jianshi" (Concise History of Chinese Publishing), in *Qingnian Zhishi Wenku* (Compository of Knowledge for Youth), ed. Quan Fan (Shanghai: Yongxiang yinshuguan, 1946). For the circulation during the war years, see Fu Bingran, "Cong fu kan dao 'fu yuan' (The revival of *Middle School Students* and regrouping of its editorial board)," *Middle School Students*, no. 200 (1948): 8-9. The magazine enjoyed a sustained period of popularity from 1939 to 1944 despite the war. Its circulation declined after 1944, one year before the Japanese surrender. Its problems continued throughout the civil war years.

¹²⁹ Wang Zhiyi, pp. 14-15.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Qi Fan, "Jiang dushu," *Kaiming*, 1, 2, no. 1, pp. 5-7.

¹³² *Kaiming*, 2, no. 12, pp. 11-12.

¹³³ Zhou Botang, *Kaiming*, 2, no. 1, p. 39.

¹³⁴ *Kaiming*, 1, no. 11, pp. 653-657; 2, no. 1, pp. 37-38; 2, no. 2, p. 88; and 2, no. 4, p. 246-249, 251-253.

**CHAPTER 5 MIDDLE-SCHOOL STUDENTS AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF
"YOUTH ANXIETY"**

In the June 1934 issue of *Middle-School Students* (*Zhong xuesheng*) monthly, a commentator noted, "People characterize [the student population] as follows: 'returned students are counterrevolutionary, college students non revolutionary, and middle-school students decidedly revolutionary.'"¹ This contemporary observation turns accepted scholarly wisdom on its head, a wisdom best expressed by John Israel in his classic *Student Nationalism in China, 1927-1937*, that "during this era of turmoil, five years of education produced twelve-year-old iconoclasts; another five years, rebels of seventeen; five more, revolutionaries of twenty-two."²

How do we solve the puzzle of such opposite perceptions of the relative radicalism of each student group? Three official documents, also printed in *Middle-School Students*, offer us a clue. The first, "Preliminary Guidelines for Student Organizations," jointly issued in early 1930 by the GMD Education Ministry and two other special committees responsible for education, states that: "The CCP has been extremely active in middle schools. It can be said that there is no middle school that does not have a [secret] Communist cell or branch."³ The second was a decree issued by the government's Executive Branch to the Education Ministry on December 6, 1930 that commanded order and discipline be restored on school campuses.⁴ This was followed by Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek)'s open letter to the nation's college *and* middle-school students three days later. "Based on what I have observed in recent years," Jiang opened his four-page long letter, "I have come to the conclusion that a grave threat to our nation's future has been posed by severe lapse of discipline on school campuses, which

has resulted in waves of student unrest sweeping the country.”⁵ It is noteworthy that these official assessments were made before the outbreak of a massive student movement in 1931-1932 in the wake of the Japanese occupation of Manchuria and bombing of Shanghai, after which the government would look back on 1930 only with nostalgia.

Indeed, the rebel did not need another five years of higher education to become a revolutionary. Recent scholarship on the Communist movement has revealed that the presence of middle-school students in protest or Communist movements was no less significant than that of their college counterparts. For example, a patriotic outrage against the American administration of St. John’s University in the heat of the May Thirtieth Movement of 1925 resulted in a mass exodus of its students. According to Wen-hsin Yeh, 58 percent of its undergraduate students and 75 percent of its affiliated middle-school students chose to sever their ties with the university.⁶ Kathleen Hartford writes, “After the CCP-GMD split in 1927, the middle schools and normal schools that produced most of the rural teachers provided hotbeds of revolutionary organizing and continually produced new cadres for urban and rural movements...”⁷ In his study of the Communist movement in Henan, Odoric Y. K. Wou also noted the high level of involvement of middle-school students.⁸ Allison Rottman’s research on World War Two era Shanghai residents leaving the city for nearby CCP bases also reveals greater activism among middle-school students than their college counterparts.⁹ The view of extraordinary activism of middle-school students is further supported by a set of statistics I have extracted from a *Dictionary of Chinese Youth Movements*. The Communist movement during the two and half decades between the 1925 May Thirtieth Movement and the communist triumph in 1949 featured mostly prominent young Communist

leaders and martyrs who became politically active during their middle-school years. Of the 217 individuals listed as leading student activists who joined the CCP in the 1930s and 1940s, none were returned students; only fifty-five, or less than 25%, were college students; while the rest of 162, or more than 75%, were middle-school students who never went to college.¹⁰

Middle-school students constituted the overwhelming majority of educated youth. Statistics show that there were 514,609 students enrolled in middle schools and 37,566 in college in 1930.¹¹ In that same year, there were 89,388 students who graduated from middle schools, while only 4,583 who graduated from colleges. In other words, the middle school student population was 14 times larger than its college counterpart. As discussed in the previous chapter, it was exactly Kaiming's perceptive grasp of the demographic and social importance of this particular student group that prompted it to launch *Middle-School Students* (hereafter *MSS*) magazine.

All these facts call for our critical attention to middle-school students of this period. A substantial amount of literature is available on Republican-era student life, student movements, and the role of students in the larger revolutionary process. Scholarly interest, however, has been centered on the small but highly visible college students. Few researchers have paid attention to their middle school counterparts. Such oversight is due to both a theoretical approach that favors "elite" college students as well as the empirical difficulties of accessing the minds of middle-school students who left scanty written records behind. Moreover, all studies on student radicalism give priority to their public protests on campus and in the streets, or "going to the people" activities as their contributions to the revolutionary process.¹²

Middle-school students monthly offers a unique vantage point for our understanding of middle school student self-identities and world views. As mentioned earlier, the monthly enjoyed a nationwide circulation, its popularity and longevity rivaled by few Republican-era periodicals of its kind. This means that more than any other periodical, this magazine shaped the process whereby a generation of middle school educated youth came of age. Equally important, the magazine made itself an open and integrated public space by attending to the actual needs and concerns of its student readers and allowing them ample opportunities to publish. This new dynamic encouraged the re-articulation of identities, perceptions, and sentiments not only by intellectuals but also by their readers. Such re-articulation, I argue, was conducive to the middle school student radicalism of the 1930s.

On the issue of the sources of student radicalism, Israel based his observation on the yet-to-be-proven assumption of Republican-era education as a singular radicalizing force. On the other hand, the interpretation of the Kaiming commentator cited at the beginning of this chapter was entirely socio-economic. Returned students, he reasoned, being accustomed to a life of comfort and refinement due to their wealthy family background were only committed to advancing their self interests, which were best served by the existing social order. College students might have more modest aspirations in terms of their lifestyles. But given their upper-class background and their enviable social status they too were inclined to put their personal welfare before the welfare of society. Being mostly from rural and middling backgrounds and besieged by the prospect of joblessness, he asserted, anxiety-ridden middle-school students exhibited the most revolutionary potential.¹³

In this chapter, I move away from somewhat reductionist approaches and instead view student radicalism as a result of an interactive process between cultural and social-economic dynamics. More specifically, I explore student radicalism as a process where both culture and social-economic factors were being perceived, experienced, and articulated in public discourses; with none of the factors operating independently of the others. It is important to note that I do not argue for a causal relationship between the ideas expressed in the *Kaiming* magazine and student readers' revolutionary actions. Rather, I focus on the way in which this unique publishing space formed an active, integral, and continuous part of the social and cultural milieu of middle-school students, which in turn was conducive to their radicalization. In the first half of the chapter, I examine both the heterogeneous nature and meta-narratives of the magazine. The second half focuses on the inner-tension in the magazine's construction of youth identity, specifically, the way in which the theme of "youth anxiety" (*qingnian de kumeng*) was played out in the magazine and its profound implications in an age of rising revolutionary discourse and mobilization.

A Magazine for Middle-school students

Unlike its predecessor *New Women* (*Xin nuxing*) whose very title projected a clear avant-garde and nominative approach to the social issue of women's emancipation, or *Common* with its anarchist undertone, the title of *Middle-School Students* was plain, descriptive of its intended audience, and shunned any clear political agendas. This was indeed the case with regard to its editorial policy, which restrained the magazine from pushing any hot political buttons of the time and explains its survival under the

increasingly strict censorship laws of the GMD. The mission statement printed in the inaugural issue read:

[I]n the category of “middle-school students,” there are hundreds of thousands of young men and women. Apart from the school system, society has not shown [adequate] concern for your situation and future, leaving you wondering at life’s crossroads, thirsty for knowledge and guidance.... In light of this, this magazine strives to make a positive contribution to [your] life. Our mission is to supplement your school curriculums with fun and informative readings, answer your questions, solve your problems, and advise on your future. The magazine will also provide [you] with the convenience to publish [your work].¹⁴

At once ambitious and modest, the editorial staff took upon itself the responsibility of providing guidance for all middle-school students on all matters, while defining these matters in a tangible, concrete manner devoid of the abstraction and grand design that characterized the majority of the May Fourth-style *tongren* periodicals. With such a stated mission, no middle-school students seemed to stand outside of the magazine’s intended audience regardless of their interests and political orientations. Even recent middle school graduates remained avid readers, counting on it to be their “compass” in a complex and fast changing world.¹⁵ Given its record as the most widely circulated and longest running magazine of its kind, *MSS* can be said to be successful in accomplishing its original goals. The questions remain: How did its target audience read this magazine? How do we as historians approach this magazine as an historical agent that shaped the mind and sentiment of its readers?

To answer these questions, we need to first take a close look at the uniqueness of the periodical press as a publishing genre. As a time-extended cultural product of a combination of forces including the editor, contributors, and reader expectations, the periodical presents unique problems for interpretation. There are two commonly used approaches to periodical texts. In the first, the scholar treats periodicals as a repository of

discrete documents, lifting them out of their immediate milieu to serve his or her understanding of a particular author or a particular theme. In the second, the scholar looks for unifying editorial policy and connections between different entries by contributors to arrive at coherent and overarching themes of the magazine. The problem with the first is that its focus is not on the periodical per se. More importantly with a periodical such as *MSS*, students read each issue as a collection of writings rather than discrete entries. Thus, each entry is read relationally, i.e. within the context of the specific issue, the longer-run of that periodical up to that issue, and the context of the time of its issuance. As for the second common approach, it fails to address the divergent issues, themes, and the viewpoints to which the journal's actual historical readers were exposed and with which they interacted.

Time-stamped, collective authored, and characterized by multiple genres and topics, periodicals exhibit marked difference from their book counterparts.¹⁶ Whereas books offer stability and consistency in content, periodicals are characterized by their heterogeneity in form and content as well as fluidity and increased embeddedness in historical context. Whereas books invoke our sense of an authoritative text, periodicals engage us in a more democratic fashion. They do not expect to be read from front to back in order or to be read in their entirety. Most periodical readers will read selectively and construct their own reading order. Moreover, because periodicals are produced and read across time, they are able to account for reader response and interact with readership. Finally, because they are made up of writings of different genres and on different subjects and by different authors, the very concept of authorship becomes problematic. That being said, we cannot overstate the periodical's heterogeneity. Too

many competing concerns and voices and too much room for alternative reading threaten to fragment the periodical and drive away its readers. A successful magazine invariably adopts a certain degree of consistency in themes, ideas, and style to attract an intended audience. That is why Margaret Beetham concludes that while heterogeneity is predominant in periodicals, they ultimately exemplify traits of both open and closed forms of publications.

In close reading of a periodical, it is important that we account for the dialectic tension of its homogeneity and heterogeneity, or centripetal and centrifugal forces, to borrow Mikhail Bakhtin's concept and phraseology.¹⁷ With regard to the Kaiming magazines, if *New Women* exhibited a more pronounced homogeneous tendency, then *MSS* allowed more heterogeneity. In this chapter, it is exactly the dialectic tension between the two opposing forces exhibited in *MSS* that is analyzed. As quoted earlier, the magazine's non-specific, non-political mission statement about offering its readers knowledge and guidance, as well as publishing space, essentially defined it as a forum for a varying mix of themes, positions, and voices rather than for one dominant meta-narrative. As a publication reflecting both a cultural mission and commercial concerns, the monthly was all about inclusion, diversity, and practicality in addressing its readers' concerns.

The heterogeneity of *MSS* immediately meets the eye as one looks at its layout. The journal space was evenly divided into roughly four categories: first, feature writings on larger issues with regard to society, culture, education, and the educated youth that can be called general education of its audience; second, reader-friendly essays and study guides on all school subjects; third, student contributions in the forms of open forum

discussion on particular issues, writing contests, readers' sections, and letters to the editor; and finally, the literary section that included serialized novels, short stories, poetry, and prose writings.

In addition to a heterogeneous format, the multiple editors and large pool of frequent contributors from a relatively broad cultural and political spectrum increased the magazine's heterogeneity and inner tension in content. This was especially true in the magazine's first years before the urgency to defend Chinese sovereignty against Japan's aggression increasingly unified the concerns and opinions held by the public and those at the magazine. Throughout its run of pre-war years, rather than a solo editor, the monthly always had an editorial board of four or more people with different political inclinations working closely together. Of the first editorial team, Gu Junzhen recalled,

Once the plan of publishing *MSS* was set, we divided labor among us [designated editors]. Zhang Xichen was in charge of promotion, Xia Mianzun was responsible for drafting editorials and editorial postscripts, and I took over editing, layout, and all the rest. As for determining the themes and topics for each issue and soliciting contributions, we all put in our share of the effort. In general, Mianzun and Xicheng focused on securing contributions in humanities and social sciences, Feng Zikai in art and music, and I concentrated on science.¹⁸

Evident in this passage is a spirit of team work rather than tight control by an editor-in-chief. Team spirit, however, does not mean uniformity in opinions. The first editorial team was politically moderate in the context of a radicalized cultural landscape dominated by the League of Left-wing Writers (1930-1936). No one on the first editorial team was deemed "red" enough to earn an invitation into the League.¹⁹ Over the years, the magazine's editorial board experienced many changes. In 1931, Feng left due to poor health and was replaced by Ye Shengtao, who was also excluded by the League.²⁰ Two years later, Jin Zhonghua, a young radical journalist and recent Kaiming recruit,

filled the vacancy at the magazine left by Zhang Xichen, adding leftist weight to the editorial board. Between 1936 and the outbreak of the Resistance War in 1937, Xia Mianzun was named the editor-in-chief of the magazine. Known for his modest and accommodating temperament, he ran the magazine in a democratic fashion and thus this personnel change did not result in any detectable difference in the form and content of the magazine.

As for the editorials or opening remarks (*juantou yan*) that set the political tone of each issue, Gu's recollection, cited earlier, is incorrect with regard to their authorship. The magazine did not offer editorial writings until its third year, and they were penned by Xia Mianzun. From the fourth year to the end of the magazine's run, the opening remarks, typically three to four in each issue, were not the prerogative of the leading editor. Rather, the section was open to all the editors of the magazine and the press at large as well as frequent contributors. *MSS* editorials thus reflected a wide spectrum of concerns and voices. Take the year 1934 for example, as many as sixteen writers wrote for this section. The vast majority of the entries were not from the hands of any of the magazine's editors.²¹ Indeed, the frequent contributors seemed to exert as much influence as the editorial board did on the magazine.

The frequent contributors to *MSS* were a large and diverse group. We have encountered most of them in Chapter Two as part of the Kaiming networks of the mid-1920s. Gu Junzhen offered a long list of forty-three contributors who either had worked or still were working for Shangwu and Lida Academy, or had published through Kaiming and thus became part of the networks. As discussed earlier, the primary qualification for membership to the intellectual networks of the time was personal friendship rather than

shared convictions and agendas. Politically, the magazine's contributors included die-hard anarchists such as *Kaiming* monthly editor Su Fei, his friend and famous novelist Ba Jin, and historian Zhou Yutong; Marxists and CCP-fellow travelers such as Hu Yuzhi, Mao Dun, Song Yunbin and Fu Binran (before they become editors); a large number of writers critical of the GMD but unsympathetic to the Communists such as Zhu Ziqing, Yu Pingbo, and Li Yutang; and the leading left-wing GMD theorists Tao Xisheng and Fan Zhongyun. Tao and Lin were the top contributors to the magazine during its first year and Fan contributed on a regular basis until the outbreak of the Resistance War.²² Regretted by the *Kaiming* circle, both Tao and Fan went to work with Wang Jingwei who formed a collaborationist government after 1937 due partially to their political rift with Jiang Jieshi.

The New Year issue of 1932 further testified to the magazine's conscious inclusive policy during the early 1930s. It published a 55-page long special section titled "To Today's Youth—What [Prominent Intellectuals] Have to Say to Our Readers" in response to the overwhelming internal crisis and external threat.²³ This new round of crisis was caused by Japanese aggression in Manchuria in the previous year and the subsequent revival of the student movement and its confrontation with a government unwilling to confront the Japanese. Fifty-two of 102 cultural celebrities invited to submit responded. They were from across the political and cultural spectrum, from the towering and belligerent Lu Xun, who was heading the League of Left-wing Writers; to the quiet historian, Hu Shi's protégé Gu Jiangang whom Lu Xun had openly attacked; from the young flamboyant Marxist Shi Cuntong; to old scholar Du Yaquan, once the target of Chen Duxiu during the May Fourth Movement for his alleged conservatism.

Not surprisingly, these intellectuals had vastly different advice to offer. The first submission was from Marxist theorist Chen Wangdao, whose words mounted to a call for arms.²⁴ He wrote,

Young readers, fight against oppressors on the behalf of the oppressed and against aggressors on the behalf of the invaded. Youth are upright and conscientious. Your [protesting] voices will inspire an uproar of protests. Even in the aggressors' country, awakened youth are shouting anti-imperialist slogans. Please break your silence for the oppressed and invaded peoples!²⁵

In the very same page, He Binsong, a leading historian who was at the time the editor-in-chief at Shangwu, sounded a rather conservative note:

[N]ational salvation is the goal while study is the means. Due to a lack of understanding [of the relationship between the two], we have had in recent years many professional patriots who are unwilling to study. They spread their poorly crafted posters and shout empty slogans. The more they are into such activities, the less chance that China will be saved...Therefore, my advice to young students is: Study for the sake of national salvation.²⁶

He Binsong's position was supported by four others who insisted that students focus on their studies "to master true knowledge and expertise" in order to save and build the nation in the long run.²⁷ On the whole, outrage at the Japanese aggression and passionate call's for student participation in the resistance overwhelmed the cautionary voices. That did not mean, however, that all the hawks had uniform-colored feathers. Many, including Marxists and vocal critics of the GMD such as Lu Xun, pointed their accusing fingers at the GMD's authoritarian rule and called for an alliance of the world's proletariat against imperialism. Some such as Tao Xisheng did not go this far but chided the GMD for harboring misguided hope for intervention by the League of Nations on China's behalf. Still others such as Du Yaquan specifically urged students not to be confrontational with the government.²⁸

The magazine's offering of heavy doses of insights and solutions to larger or fundamental sociopolitical issues was balanced by writings and discussion forums aiming at assisting its readers in succeeding in their studies of various school subjects and in dealing with issues and problems specific to their lives. The "Discussion Forum" section perhaps best reflected the temper of the magazine during its first years.²⁹ Discussion topics of the 1931 issues included the following:

- "Is dating appropriate for middle-school students?"
- "What extra-curriculum reading materials do middle-school students need?"
- "How to deal with unqualified teachers?"
- "How to make our classroom studies relevant to practical life?"
- "How to utilize our summer recess?"
- "How to enrich our life?"
- "What do you find necessary to add and remove in middle school curriculums?"³⁰

As to be expected in the era of journalistic polemics and radicalization since the May Fourth Movement, *MSS*'s inclusive position did not go unchallenged by the more radically inclined, who chided the magazine for its failure to raise contemporary sociopolitical questions and its alleged focus on the betterment of the individual. In the spring of 1930, the magazine called for contributions from its readers to participate in a writing contest on the topic "The Way Out of the Crisis Faced by Chinese Middle-school students Today."³¹ Before the magazine announced the winners and printed their essays, *Mengya* (*Sprouts*), the organ of the League of the Left-Wing Writers, printed a mock list of winners:

- First Place: Student A, Solution: Subscription to one year of *MSS*
- Second Place: Student B, Solution: Subscription to half a year of the magazine
- Third Place: Student C, Solution: Let's study as long as education is available
(as advised by Mr. Xia Mianzun)
- Fourth Place: Student D, Solution: Seek a job in banking so as to become a
comprador capitalist in future
- Fifth Place: Student F (female), Solution: Study the special issue of *New
Women* on [Alexandra Kollontai's novella] *Three Generations*³²

Some young writers in the League uncharitably called Xia Mianzun “an old crow who misleads young people.”³³ The year of 1931 witnessed the more dramatic incident of a League letter to the magazine demanding that it use one-third of its space to carry writings on the Soviet Union and Soviet literature or the editors would be treated with hand grenades. The League later publicly disclaimed responsibility for such a letter.³⁴ Whether the letter was authored by some ultra-leftists or faked by GMD agents to put a wedge between the League and non-League groupings is not as important as the fact that such an incident testified to what was seen as the magazine’s moderate position. The fact of the matter is that the actual winning essays by student authors of the aforementioned writing contest uniformly focused on the fundamental socioeconomic problems of the existing system and urged student readers to engage in the anti-imperialist revolutionary movement and to join the ranks of the workers and peasants as a solution to youth’s problems.³⁵ It was the positions of four leading writers of the day on the topic that offered greater diversity. Lin Yutang talked about the need for modern students to rid themselves of the traditional mentality of the scholar-gentry class and to develop useful skills suitable for a modern era.³⁶ The dashing Yu Dafu, however, exhibited no such faith in useful skills. He wrote, “Either we the masses rise up to wipe out all [warlords and bureaucrats who deprived the Chinese of their inalienable rights] or every [conscionable] Chinese should simply commit suicide [rather than living in this filthy world.]”³⁷ In a final analysis, what marked the magazine was its heterogeneity rather than a political neutrality deemed offensive by the Left. The resulting tension between advising student readers to adapt to new social demands (*shiying shehui*) and urging them to change the social system (*gaizao shehui*) obviously cost Kaiming political capital in a cultural field

dominated by the Left. Yet it still worked to gain the magazine economic capital since such a periodical offered something to everyone.

The Sociopolitical Question Takes the Lead

As mentioned earlier, the most important quality of the periodical was its ability to interact with both its changing context as well as its readership. *MSS* prided itself on its attention to on-going events and its reader response.³⁸ In the late 1920s, the country saw some hopeful years of political stability and economic growth. Beginning in 1932, due to world-wide depression and Japanese aggression, especially Japan's taking over of resource rich Manchuria and the bombing of the financial center of Shanghai, the country started to slip into economic recession. By 1935, a quarter of manufacturers had closed shop, causing widespread hardship and despair.³⁹ Equally evident to the public was the increasing Japanese imperialist affront. Following the occupation of Manchuria and the battle of Shanghai, Japanese troops advanced into Rehe and Hebei Provinces in 1933, forcing the signing of a humiliating Tanggu Truce that made northern Hebei a demilitarized zone. After only one year of peace bought by the GMD's appeasement policy, the Japanese were on the move again, first forcing an agreement that required China to give up its sovereignty in Hebei and most of the Chahar Provinces, then threatening the use of force in the so-called "North China Autonomous Region" of five provinces, attempting to reproduce puppet regimes in the region. These developments were accompanied by the GMD's accelerated efforts to promote thought control through so-called "participation" (*danghua jiaoyu*) in school curriculums, curtailing its citizens'

freedom to organize and freedom of speech, and attacking the May Fourth iconoclasm and liberalism.

Watching these developments with grave alarm, many readers of the magazine clamored for closer attention to the crisis-ridden realities of the time. One student contributor wrote,

1930 was a modestly prosperous year when the country saw temporary unification and the economy experienced steady recovery and growth. Therefore, stability and routine carried the day in the life of students. 1932 has been a year of suffering and sorrow when the county, having just suffered from a devastating flood, was invaded by the Japanese imperialists. The country's economy is collapsing. In response, the minds and actions of the youth have become complex and radical. It does not work if you try to feed two people of different tastes the same food. The youth would abandon [a magazine] that fails to satisfy their changed needs.⁴⁰

Some readers specifically requested that the magazine reduce the space allotted to natural sciences to increase the weight of social sciences.⁴¹ For the first few years, entries dealing with mathematics and science constituted about a quarter of the entire space according to two careful readers.⁴² At the time, the GMD Education Ministry issued a new policy to reduce enrollment in humanities and law departments while expanding enrollment in departments specializing in sciences and technology (*li ke*) and other pragmatic subjects (*shi ke*) in the name of building up the nation's strength. This policy, which came out against the backdrop of intense interests and rapid development in the social sciences in the first half of the 1930s, was widely interpreted as a strategy to discourage interest in fundamental sociopolitical questions among young students.⁴³ "I do not imply that the editors [of MSS] are colluding with the authorities," one student reader wrote. "If the authorities insist on "promoting sciences" and "advancing practical studies," let them do so. I only request that the editors give us young students proper

guidance to study [what the government calls] the “irrelevant issues” of anti-imperialism and anti-feudalism.”⁴⁴ Another student simply offered what he thought was a more appropriate menu:

1. Short exciting and inspiring literary pieces;
2. Systematic social science treatises;
3. Feature articles on international politics and problems facing China;
4. Commentaries on international and domestic news.⁴⁵

Propelled by the deepening political and economic crises, the reader requests, the attacks from the Left, and no doubt a sense of urgency felt by its editors and contributors themselves, the magazine began a politicization that accelerated over the next few years. To a good degree, this trend also reflected the increasing fascination among intellectuals and the reading public with the new academic disciplines of social sciences recently introduced from the West. Beginning in 1932, the magazine experienced a steady increase of sections and columns for the purpose of exposing its readers to a broader range of sociopolitical issues. It added “Opening Remarks,” or “Editorial Remarks,” and “World News” (*shijie qingbao*) sections in 1932, “International and Domestic News” (*neiwai xiaoxi*) in 1933, “Impressions of Cities and Regions (in China)” section in 1934, which would concretize the readers’ understanding of China as a nation-state. The new columns between 1932 and 1937 include the following:

- 1932-33: “On Youth” by Jin Zhonghua
- 1934: “Talks on Social Sciences” by Moscow-trained scholar Zhu Baiyin
- 1934: “Talks on Agriculture Economy” by Wu Juenong
- 1934: “Talks on International Politics” by Zhang Mingyang
- 1935-36: “Cruising the Pacific” (Geopolitics in the Pacific region) by Jin Zhonghua
- 1937: “Modern Wars” by Gu Junzheng and others
- 1937: “How to Study Current Affairs” (1937) by Jin Zhonghua⁴⁶

There were also four special issues that offered systematic analysis of the impending crisis engulfing China: “Current Affairs of the World” (September 1933), “Current Affairs of China” (January 1934), “Education at a Time of National Emergency” (September 1936), and “Defending Northern China” (June 1937). These sections and columns used the space vacated by mathematics and sciences sections that now constituted less than half of what they previously did.⁴⁷ Finally, politicization was evidenced by the Discussion Forum of these later pre-war years. Among the usual topics directly relevant to student life and studies, we find such topics as “How should students engage anti-imperialist work?” (October 1932) and “The specific methods for students to work for the masses” (September 1933). During the years leading to the outbreak of the war in 1937, the magazine became also increasingly vocal in criticizing the government’s non-resistance policy and devoted greater and greater space to mobilizing for national salvation. This is not to say that the magazine encouraged student involvement in direct political action. Rather, it offered broader and systematic exposure of its readers to the major affairs of China and the world in addition to advice and insight for students’ individual survival and growth.

One can argue that in the few years leading to the outbreak of the Resistance War the *MSS* editors and contributors started to sound an anxious chorus calling for its readers’ greater political awareness and deeper social involvement. An important distinction should be made between this chorus and the one drumming out of a *tongren* magazine. The ideological cohesion and thematic stability of a *tongren* magazine was author-initiated, and designed to brand the magazine and its writers. The resulting rigidity and lack of concern for the readership invariably contributed to its short lifespan.

On the other hand, *MSS*'s politicization was a response to the demands of both the audience and the changing political milieu. The magazine's politicization in turn further galvanized student opinion against the GMD's policy and Japan. The years leading to the outbreak of the Resistance War was a time when Japanese imperialist aggression combined with domestic economic and political crisis created a reading public thirsty for journalism and other radical reading materials. These developments also fostered disillusionment with the GMD regime among even the most moderate intellectuals associated with Kaiming. It is a case where the agitated sentiments of the public and press constantly reinforced on each other.

It is important to note that the audience demand was also the market demand. Therefore, this politicization of the magazine was financially rewarding. While it is difficult to establish an increase of *MSS*'s sales due to a paucity of data, the experience of *Life Weekly* (*Shenghuo zhoukan*, 1925-1933) can provide a reference point. A previously politically modest publication edited by Zou Taofeng, the weekly started to vehemently attack the government and launched fund-raising campaigns for armed resistance against Japan in Manchuria in late 1931. Quickly, the already popular magazine added 35,000 copies in sales, pushing its circulation to 155,000, an unprecedented publishing phenomenon in the Republican era.⁴⁸ It is safe to say that by taking a more radical stand than before, *Middle School Student* stayed in the mainstream of cultural politics of its time. In short, the magazine exemplified periodical publishing at its interactive, fluid, and vibrant best. This explains its immense popularity among its target audience and its surprising longevity through times of war and peace.

Harmonizing Enlightenment and Patriotism

With all the centrifugal forces of multiple genres, multiple and changing editors and contributors, broad coverage, and changing concerns, did any centripetal forces hold the *MSS* together and give it an identifiable intellectual profile? The answer is affirmative. There were two persistent themes overlapping each other in time. Throughout the 1930s and well into the Resistant War years, we can discern a persistence of the enlightenment effort. Between the 1932 Japanese bombing of Shanghai and the 1949 Communist takeover, patriotism expressed as a passionate determination to save China from imperialist domination permeated the magazine. In her seminal study of the May Fourth Movement, Vera Schwarcz posits the irreducible tension between “the external imperatives of *jiuguo* (national salvation) and the internal prerequisites of *qimeng* (enlightenment).” These twin concerns dominated the period between the height of the May Fourth Movement of 1919 and the outbreak of the Resistant War in 1937. By 1937, Schwarcz insists, the clamor for national salvation finally drummed out the last trace of enlightenment concerns.⁴⁹ Yet, *MSS* and the Kaiming intellectuals reveal the continued presence of enlightenment concerns. Considering themselves as the true heirs of May Fourth enlightenment, the Kaiming intellectuals defined patriotism not as an opposition to May Fourth enlightenment but rather as its logical extension. It is fitting to refer to Kaiming’s particular brand of patriotism as enlightened patriotism.

As many scholars have pointed out, the intellectual ferment during the May Fourth era was full of complexity and inner tension.⁵⁰ Likewise, the May Fourth legacies espoused or interpreted in the *MSS* pages often exhibited the same qualities. Here, I characterize the May Fourth enlightenment project as an uncompromising iconoclasm

and commitment to awaking the people to their independent personhood. Asserting an ongoing “an enlightenment movement” [*qimeng yundong*] in China, Song Yunbin wrote,

From the start, [the New Culture Movement] took the most progressive, most courageous positions: open opposition to old morality to advocate science and democracy, and open repudiation of classic language and literature to promote vernacular language and literary realism. Since then, our youth have become emancipated from the shackles of tradition and gained a better understanding of our country.⁵¹

Throughout the pre-war 1930s, the magazine showcased numerous entries by both intellectuals and student contributors expressing their opposition to the notion of selectively blending Western and Chinese cultures (*zhongxi tiaohu*). It attacked the so-called national-essence school (*guocui pai*), insisting on vernacular language teaching and resisting any attempts to increase classic language teaching and the reading of classics in school curriculums.⁵² It is noteworthy that the magazine’s anti-traditionalism did not have a totalistic bend as in the early May Fourth years.⁵³ For example, the Kaiming intellectuals made it clear that their opposition was not to Confucius as a historical figure and his contributions in his own historical context but rather to what they saw as oppressive feudal autocratic rule which had turned the otherwise positive teachings of Confucius into its theoretical buttress.⁵⁴ Similarly, while the discussion of the modern West became more nuanced, and criticism of its capitalistic system was frequent and sharp, the general attitude toward Western modernity remained that of an enthusiastic embrace.

This position at *MSS* withstood waves of efforts in the 1930s to discredit the May Fourth iconoclasm. Beginning in 1934, the GMD government backed conservative efforts to revive Confucian values and ethics in the name of bolstering the national spirit in a time of Japanese threats as well as Communist rivalry. These included Jiang Jieshi’s

ineffective New Life movement launched in 1934 and corresponding “reading classics” movement (*dujing yundong*) promoted by the provincial governors of Guangdong and Hunan. MSS responded by printing a series of articles by the anarchist Zhou Yutong offering his systematic and critical study of Confucius and Confucian classics. Later, they were collected in two books, *Confucius (Kongzi)* and *An Introduction to the Classics (Qunjing gailun)* published by Kaiming in the mid-1930s. In his tirade against the promotion of the *Book of Filial Piety (Xiao jing)*, Zhou first established that the ethics of filiality served different functions during different historical times. He continued:

Today, we are neither the aristocracy of the Zhou (1122-256 BCE) [who used filiality and the family system to buttress a new feudal system], nor wandering *shi* of the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods (722-482 BCE) [who used their theories to promote peace and order in a chaotic time], nor obedient subjects of imperial rule between the Han and Qing dynasties (206 BCE-1911). We ought to embrace capitalist culture and then transcend it. We should become adherents of broadly-defined socialism [*guanyi de shehui zhuyi*] and individualism [*gerenzhuyi*]. We should never become filial children of suffocating familism [*jiazu zhuyi*]... Love for parents and for children is an innate virtue shared by all mankind. It is unforgivable that some promote a hypocritical and distorted filial piety [that favors parents over children and father over mother] to prevent the birth of a new society.... Is it acceptable to promote gender discrimination, blind faith, and ethical codes based on class division in today’s society that is fighting for women’s emancipation, science, and equality amongst all mankind?⁵⁵

Despite the mounting pressure to glorify the Chinese tradition in the face of Japanese invasion, the magazine’s basic anti-feudal and cosmopolitan posture remained unaltered. On the eve of the outbreak of the war, editor-in-chief Xia Mianzun invited Lu Xun’s old friend Xu Shoushang to write to their young readers. Xu offered the same advice that the recently deceased literary giant had offered a decade ago: “Read fewer Chinese books and more Western ones.”⁵⁶ In the midst of the seemingly unstoppable Japanese advance

of 1939, the magazine maintained its critical attitude towards Chinese tradition while printing a series of articles celebrating the 150th anniversary of the French Revolution.⁵⁷

In addition to the repudiation of the so-called Chinese feudal past, Kaiming's commitment to enlightenment was reflected in its continuous effort to reach out to the lower strata of the society. To this end, Kaiming intellectuals carried the May Fourth language reform to its next logical step: to transform the European-influenced May Fourth vernacular (*wusi baihua*), which had recently replaced classical Chinese, into a language truly accessible by the masses. In 1934, Xia Mianzun and Ye Shengtao joined many left-wing intellectuals in promoting a popular vernacular (*dazhong yu*) that would incorporate folk and everyday speech.⁵⁸ In early 1935, MSS, together with *Taibai* monthly published by the Marxist theorist Chen Wangdao, led the call for adoption in print of simplified scripts called "casual scripts" (*shoutou zi*) that were already widely used in handwriting. In the same year, MSS started to use the first set of 300 "casual scripts."⁵⁹ In addition to language reform, the notion of "awakening the people" (*huanxin minzhong*), popular with both intellectuals and students, frequently adorned magazine pages. Individual entries and discussion forums frequently addressed issues such as the role of educated students and strategies for promoting national awakening among the masses. I will return to this point later in this chapter.

The Kaiming intellectuals' view of the May Fourth legacies included not only the enlightenment project but also nationalism. As one MSS editorial put it, "[May Fourth] raised the two flags of national liberation and anti-feudalism."⁶⁰ Nationalistic sentiments in the magazine were clearly precipitated by the Japanese invasion of Manchuria on September 18, 1931 and the bombing of Shanghai on January 28, 1932. At first, reports

and articles in the magazine expressed alarm and outrage at the Japanese imperialist activities. As the crisis deepened, the patriotic fever was directed at both the Japanese and the GMD. By 1934-1935, most of the entries openly supported patriotic student activities and call for political action on the part of its readers. During the Japanese attack on Shanghai in the summer of 1937, the papier-mâché mold of the July issue was destroyed when the entire printing plant went up in flames. When the magazine was revived in May 1939 as *Middle School Student Wartime Biweekly* (Zhongxue sheng zhanshi banyue kan, thereafter MSSWB), it turned itself into a wartime mobilization machine.

The magazine's particular brand of nationalism was not a parochial nationalism but rather May Fourth patriotism in that it neither compromised its iconoclasm nor eclipsed its cosmopolitanism. Hu Yuzhi defined nation (*guojia*) and patriotism (*aiguo*) this way in a 1933 editorial,

Some say "nation" refers to the land on which we live. But our land is not necessarily so lovable. Sometimes we find foreign land and customs more attractive than our own. Additionally, if our nation is conquered by a foreign power, we can still live on the same land.... Some say "nation" means a people with the same ethnicity and culture. Well, we all know that there are scornful Chinese and admirable foreigners.... Some say "nation" is the same as the government. Then, should we still be patriotic when the government is bad? All the above do not define "nation".... Nation represents a social organization (*shehui guanxi*). Human beings are social animals. Thus we know to bond together for the purpose of resisting invasion from outside and *oppression from within* (the emphasis is mine). Nation is an advanced form of social organization. (When [civilization] advances further, nations naturally would become obsolete.⁶¹) As a social organization, the nation bears the responsibility of improving the general welfare of its people and defending its people from foreign threat....⁶²

Another unsigned editorial printed in 1937 is equally illuminating.

Before the ideal world, or the great harmony of mankind (*datong shijie*), comes into being, we cannot deny nation-states as meaningful entities.... How should we

show our patriotism? There are two fronts in today's world. One promotes democracy, freedom, and peace for the people while the other defends dictatorship, autocracy, and brutality of warlords, [evil] bureaucrats, and the landed elite. The former is patriotic while the latter is ready to sell its country. (We can see from Spain's example.) [As patriotic Chinese], we should strengthen the "people's front" not only within our own country but also internationally. At the same time, we recognize that national sovereignty and territorial integrity cannot be compromised as long as nations exist... We will use the power of the "people's front" to overwhelm our internal and external enemies.⁶³

Both editorials spelled out a vision of historical progress and utopian future that ultimately transcended the nation-state.

Remaining steadfast to its May Fourth commitment, the magazine refused to use Chinese tradition and its past accomplishments to bolster the nation's morale. In the late 1930s when the Japanese advance seemed to be unstoppable, even some May Fourth veterans had a change of heart and proposed "holding hands with feudal elements" in the interest of a united front against a foreign foe.⁶⁴ Such a proposition found no sympathetic ear from the magazine. One editorial compared China to a weak body that invited the invasion of germs and insisted that that weakness was precisely a manifestation of the decline of Chinese civilization.⁶⁵ "Perhaps because Chinese history is so long we are somehow poisoned by it," Song Yunbin pondered. At the time, for the purpose of rallying resistance many leading intellectuals cited China's past experience of surviving invasions or assimilating invading peoples and cultures after being conquered as evidence of China's invincibility. Song pronounced them as hopelessly misguided and dangerously misleading the public. In his Marxian reasoning, China was able to defeat nomadic invaders or assimilate them because China possessed a more advanced mode of production that also gave rise to a more sophisticated culture. Now, imperialist powers backed by a capitalist mode of production and sophisticated modern culture had nothing

in common with those nomadic peoples. Compared to its modern invaders, he asserted, both China's economy and its culture were backward and thus China was not in a position to assimilate its enemies as it did in the past.⁶⁶

This does not mean at all that the magazine sounded defeatist. Quite the contrary, it offered what seemed to be a fool-proof recipe for the ultimate victory, a victory not so much for China as a nation-state, as for *the people* of China and all other oppressed peoples, or in other words, for the world's working classes. Setting Japanese aggression in the larger context of imperialism, the magazine called for an international united front of the oppressed peoples and the working class to defeat capitalism and imperialism so as to gain equality (*pingdeng*), freedom (*ziyou*), and liberty (*jiefang*).⁶⁷ Thus the Chinese struggle would not stop at resisting external foes. It would also fight domestic oppressors, or the so-called "remnants of feudal forces" (*fengjian canyu shili*). This radical global vision once again allowed the Kaiming intellectuals to transcend the narrow confines of the nation. It is noteworthy that radical rhetoric of struggles against imperialist powers and "remnants of feudal forces" and even the advocacy of socialism did not necessarily represent a radical departure from the official GMD doctrine, or the Three People's Principle, which had been interpreted by many, including GMD theorists, as nationalism, republicanism, and socialism.⁶⁸

Indeed, the magazine positioned patriotism not in opposition to May Fourth iconoclasm but rather as its natural outcome. Song Yunbin wrote in the same article quote cited earlier that when the youth of the country "become emancipated from the shackles of tradition and gain better understanding of our country...patriotism will grow among them day by day."⁶⁹ In the pages of the magazine, nationalism became

intrinsically tied to modernity, anti-imperialism and anti-feudalism (*fan di fan fengjian*), which came to be articulated as the May Fourth legacy. Additionally, the May Fourth was always viewed from a historical perspective, i.e. as the first stage of a broader anti-feudal, anti-imperialist struggle. According to Marxist contributors to the magazine, it was the May Thirtieth Movement of 1925 and the Great Revolution of 1927 that successfully mobilized the working class masses to push the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggles to new heights.⁷⁰ This interpretation of the May Fourth Movement was soon adopted by the CCP.

Labor, Class, and the Collective

The two mass mobilizations of 1925 and 1927 had indeed successfully demonstrated to the Chinese public the power of the collective, especially the working class, in pushing for revolutionary change. This brings us to a set of interrelated themes or issues in *Middle School Student*: labor, class, and the collective. This set of themes permeated the magazine pages during its entire tenure and thus added to the centripetal forces that gave the magazine its inner coherence. The notions of labor, class, and the collective were popularized by anarchists during the May Fourth era.⁷¹ As discussed earlier, the Kaiming community enjoyed an especially close and enduring relationship with anarchists. Anarchism saw labor as “a moral imperative that was an expression of the natural goodness and beauty of human spirit.”⁷² Subsequently the phrase, “the sanctity of labor” (*laogong shensheng*) coined by Cai Yuanpei was on the lips of every self-identified progressive. Anarchists were in the vanguard of the calls for the abolition of class oppression and exploitation, for Kropotkin’s notion of “mutual aid” in opposition

to “the survival of the fittest,” and for individual freedom through social responsibility. From the start, *MSS* demonstrated its identity with many of the anarchist ideals.⁷³ The inaugural issue printed a report on the Lida farms by the academy’s founder and principal, Kuang Husheng, who stated that the purpose of the farms was three-fold: to cultivate among the students a compassion for the peasantry and working class, a scientific spirit, and a spirit of labor and self-sacrifice in the interest of the common good by requiring them to work in a vegetable farm, to scientifically maintain a chicken farm, and to observe the work ethic and habit of collaboration displayed within the farm’s bee hives.⁷⁴ Many student contributors were from Lida Academy and the anarchist Labor University in the early thirties when the schools were still in operation.

In the whole run of the magazine, intellectual and student contributors alike demonstrated frequently, liberally, and consistently their sympathy for the poor, their admiration for the virtues of labor, and their disdain of the leisured class and social inequality. This proclivity was illustrated by a student’s review of Guy de Maupassant’s “The Necklace,” which interpreted this popular story with a decided anarchist twist. In the story, a young wife of a government clerk borrowed a diamond necklace from a wealthy friend for the special occasion of a high-society ball only to lose it. Too embarrassed to tell her friend, she and her husband bought an identical necklace to replace the lost one. For the next ten years, the couple had to scratch and save and lead a life of the lower class in order to pay off the debt. From the story, the Chinese student reviewer derived a moral tale of the classes and of the joy of manual labor. Referring to the heroine’s ceaseless unhappiness prior to the necklace fiasco over her husband’s inability to satisfy her vanity, he asserted, “We often witness a remarkable contrast

between the mental profiles of different classes: Those who belong to the bourgeoisie or petty-bourgeoisie and lead easy lives tended to suffer from depression and alienation.”

When the wife finally revealed the true story of the necklace to her rich friend, she wore a proud smile on her face because they finally managed to pay off their ruinous debts. The reviewer observed that ten years of hard life performing manual labor only turned the wife into a happy, honest, and strong individual. He concluded, “Poverty and labor are not necessarily a source of one’s suffering. It can also become a source of true happiness.”⁷⁵

Jin Zhonghua, a fresh recruit joined the magazine’s editorial board in 1931, could not have agreed more. “Labor should not be characterized as ‘enduring hardship’ (*chiku*),” he posited. “Labor is essential for the welfare of society, country, and the collective. It should be performed with joy in a pleasant environment and receive adequate compensation.” In his systematic treatise on the topic as the first installment of his serialized book, *On Youth*, he followed anarchists in defining labor not merely as manual work but rather all the work that contributed to the production of the economic and cultural wealth of society. His central concern remained the maximizing potential of the individual for the good of the collective. He regarded working in pursuit of livelihood and happiness of the individual as careerism that would invariably subject the individual to ruthless competition and a position of either being exploited or exploiting others in a Darwinist world. He declared,

Every young man and woman exposed to modern thoughts should understand that individual happiness can only be safeguarded through [the promotion of] collective happiness. Likewise, the welfare of the collective rests on the shoulders of individuals who work together and contribute with great sincerity.⁷⁶

Ultimately, he proposed rational planning (*jihua*) by the society or the state in training its citizens for jobs that would both best suit their individual interests and potential and at the same time best serve the society as a whole.⁷⁷

While the ideas of strong-handed state intervention in labor training and market expressed by Jin Zhonghua were later put into practice under Mao Zedong, it does not necessarily mean that Jin was communist in his outlook at this particular juncture of his career, nor was his voice representative in the magazine, given the magazine's diversity. What I want to highlight here is the central and continuous attention given to the collective in the magazine and in May Fourth thought at large. This focus on the collective did not necessarily nullify the enlightenment project of freeing the individual from the shackles of Confucian tradition. In her rereading of May Fourth individualism, Lydia Liu has teased out the Chinese conceptualization of this imported European notion and argued that the individual in the May Fourth context was always tied up with external consideration of the collective, the society, and the nation.⁷⁸ Ultimately, May Fourth intellectuals, who often bore anarchist influence, refused to place the individual above or in polar opposition to the society.⁷⁹ Instead, most advocated the emancipation of the individual from coercive social institutions and ideologies and for individual fulfillment in the context of the welfare of the collective. The theme of the collective was also part of the larger revolutionary discourse that ran throughout the Republican era. At all times, such discourse was subject to a variety of ideological appropriations.⁸⁰ For example, anarchists, Marxists, GMD Marxists, Communists, as well as nationalists and GMD fascists of the 1930s could all agree with each other on the paramount importance of the collective and the need for the individual to serve the interests of the group, the society,

the country, and revolution. But they parted ways when it came to political strategies and ultimate goals.

Such is the case with the issue of class as well, a neologism that gained wide circulation among people with different political convictions, especially during and after the Great Revolution of 1926-1927 when radical intellectuals and the CCP rigorously promoted a social vision based on class and class warfare. In *Middle School Student*, a great many contributors shared the anarchist view that saw class divisions as between those who worked and those who did not, between rich and poor, and between exploiters and the exploited. Others were willing to draw class lines based on their positions in economic production, reflecting the strong influence of Marxism. In a 1932 article, for instance, the one-time Communist Fu Bingran carefully defined five classes in China—the landlord and comprador class, the national capitalist class, the petty bourgeoisie, peasantry, and the proletariat, and elaborated their respective positions in the Chinese revolution. He further insisted that the term the “masses” (*minzhong*) should be clarified as referring only to the masses of workers and peasants (*gongnong qunzhong*) rather than previous vague and inclusive notion of the general public or “the working people.” This distinction was important for Fu because, as he further argued, it was only the masses of workers and peasants, rather than the general population, who were capable of undertaking the task of anti-feudal and anti-imperialist struggle.⁸¹

Thematically, it was exactly the May Fourth commitment to awaken the masses versus the idealization of labor and the working classes, and, as I will demonstrate below, the May Fourth youth as a revolutionary vanguard versus youth as members of a discredited bourgeoisie that functioned as the most consistent centrifugal force in the

magazine. In the first set of themes, the May Fourth enlightenment project placed intellectuals in a privileged leadership position reaching down to the otherwise ignorant masses. Likewise, their student readers were inspired to be “new youth” representing China’s hope and future. Since the mid-1920s, the second set of themes focused on youth emerged in the public discourse, and at times threatened to eclipse the first set. Although the May Thirtieth Movement and the Great Revolution had demonstrated the power of the working classes, the subsequent political violence marginalized intellectuals and their students politically and socially. In this context, as they continued the discourse on class, intellectuals were unable to stay aloof and were obliged to face their class situation as members of the bourgeoisie, or petty-bourgeoisie.⁸² Likewise, students of this time experienced the same class categorization. In creating class labels, Chinese Marxists focused on economic standings of social groupings rather than their access to the means of production. In the rest of the chapter, I will demonstrate that the highly privileged symbolic identity of the era’s youth was in constant tension with definitions of class identity throughout the 1930s and 1940s. This unease over class was profoundly disturbing to a generation of restless educated youth.

Youth—A Symbolic and Social Elite

Ultimately, *MSS* devoted the most space to the discussion of one larger issue directly concerning its young readers. That was the question of youth identity. In the context of the first decades of the twentieth century, “youth” was not a reference to a young age group but rather an exclusive symbolic and social category made up of *educated* and *modern* young men and women who were idealistic, uncorrupted by

tradition, and who represented China's hope for rejuvenation. The awakened "youth," or "new youth" in Chen Duxue's terminology, subsequently aspired to be the vanguard of social change and revolution to save the nation.⁸³ Their passion and efforts culminated in the May Fourth Movement of 1919 and May Thirtieth Movement of 1925.⁸⁴ In a matter of a few short years, however, the youth who had recently enjoyed so much glory, became associated with the term "problem." The "youth problem" or *qingnian wenti*, as it was called, came to occupy a prominent place in journalistic discourses in the late 1920s and 1930s as the revolutionary tide subsided and GMD rule became entrenched. While still holding to the elevated May Fourth image of youth as the embodiment of the nation's future, intellectuals and their young readers tried to come to terms with the notion of youth as members of the petty-bourgeois and in need of fundamental awakening and self-salvation. Likewise, *MSS* doggedly sustained the youth cult throughout its tenure even though at the same time undermining it with a concerted discussion of the youth problem. One can hardly read any one of its over two hundred issues without encountering a piece of writing touching on one of the two themes of youth. Oftentimes, one finds a juxtaposition of the themes in the same issue. The discourse of youth proved to be the most consistent centrifugal force in the magazine.

Youth identity and gaining self-knowledge were a central focus of the magazine. In his *ad hoc* editorial for the 1930 inaugural issue entitled "Know Yourself," Xia Mianzun consciously invoked the famous Greek motto that exhorts people to acquire true self-knowledge and dispel a self-perception that places themselves higher than what they really are.⁸⁵ "Open your eyes so as to grasp reality," the chief editor admonished his young readers.⁸⁶ Indeed, much space was continually taken up by discussions of this

reality throughout the magazine's tenure. Reality, however, was always slippery and plural. Here in the pages of the magazine, editors, writers, and student contributors jointly constructed the reality that confronted their readers. They also jointly formulated a true knowledge about educated youth that shifted between the young as revolutionary vanguards and the engine of history, on the one hand, and as passive victims caught by the wheel of history on the other. Subsequently, young readers and contributors were torn between self-celebration and self-loathing. It is not hard to imagine that this intensely centrifugal discourse on youth identity in the most widely read magazine for youth had a profound impact on the visions of this important social group of their future and the future of their society.

Now, it is important to distinguish the readers of Kaiming's *Middle-School Students* from those of Zou Taofeng's *Shenghuo* weekly (1926-1934). Enjoying a much wider circulation of 155,000 in the 1930s before its shut-down by the GMD in 1934, *Shenghuo* weekly was also for young urban readers. However, the readership of *MSS* was aimed at middle-school students who identified themselves as "educated youth" while *Shenghuo* readers were so-called "vocational youth."⁸⁷ Vocational youth generally had only an elementary education and typically had already joined the workforce, thus were no longer a coherent social group bonded by campus life and influenced by campus politics. For the minority who had a middle-level vocational education, their school curricula focused on practical work skills resulting in more modest life ambitions than their middle school counterparts. On the other hand, Republican-era middle schools offered general education curricula designed to prepare students for higher education, which in turn would then constitute of the social elite. Likewise, *MSS* defined middle

school education as “a continuation of elementary education and preparation for higher education.”⁸⁸ Less than 10% of middle-school students ended up in college, and thus percentage decreased in the course of the 1930s and 1940s due to the rapid expansion of middle school education. Still, middle-school students had good reason to entertain better career prospects than vocational youth. Their broader exposure to literature and social sciences also gave them better language and conceptual tools to articulate a social vision. When it came to the issue of identity, vocational youth were oftentimes lumped into the category of so-called “petty urbanites” (*xiao shimin*), who were the primary consumers of middle-brow apolitical publications for entertainment. This is not to say that readers of *Shenghuo* were not strongly influenced by Zou Taofeng’s inflammatory magazine nor became thoroughly politicized in the wake of the Japanese occupation of Manchuria in 1931. I only argue here that vocational youth, dispersed in all walks of life and lacking institutional support from schools and collective campus life, were not typically a politicized social group capable of concerted action. The identity of middle-school students, on the other hand, was characterized by both group coherence and identity with the social elite. As I shall demonstrate below, they were the true “youth” in the Republican-era public discourse. Their aspirations and frustrations had different and perhaps greater implications than that of vocational youth in an era of revolution.

The discourse of youth started at the turn of the twentieth century when an old but infrequently used compound word “*qingnian*” (youth) was recycled into popular usage and caught the twentieth-century imagination. Traditionally, “youth” denoted the junior, male members of the elite.⁸⁹ Also, since the Chinese had a long history of associating

age with experience and wisdom, youth implied immaturity and unreliability. The dawn of the twentieth century was the beginning of the Chinese reinvention of youth.

The leading reformer and publicist Liang Qichao was probably the first to turn the Chinese conventional notion on its head by portraying youth as the vital force upon which the fate of the nation depended. The term he used for his new symbolic construct was “*shaonian*.” In his much-quoted essay, “On Young China” (*Shaonian Zhongguo shuo*), Liang established “youth” as diametrically opposed to “elders” (*laoren*). Elders, he announced, were nostalgic, past-oriented, and conservative while youth (*shaonian*) were forward-looking, future-oriented, and progressive. He challenged young people to be unconstrained by tradition and to become the future masters (*zhuren*) of the nation.⁹⁰

In forming the cult of the young, Liang found a successor in Chen Duxiu, the dean of the New Culture. He famously proclaimed in the opening essay of the inaugural issue of his *Youth Magazine* (*Qingnian zazhi*) in 1915:

Youth is like early spring, the morning sun, buds of flowers, the new blade of a sharp knife, the most precious time of life! Youth to society is new, active cells in the human body...[The hope of our society] rests upon fresh and vibrant youth who are self-aware and rigorous.... Being self-aware means understanding one's self worth and responsibility [to society] and never underestimating oneself. Being rigorous means rigorously fighting to replace the old and decayed in society.⁹¹

When requested to rename the magazine due to an existing periodical bearing the same name, Chen chose “*New Youth*.” The term quickly came to denote a new symbolic identification of youth with qualities including, as Chen put it, “self-awareness, progressiveness, social activism, cosmopolitanism, and pragmatic and scientific-mindedness.”⁹² In sum, educated young men and women aspired to be at the forefront of progressive social-political movements.

In subsequent decades, self-styled new youth took the words of the leading intellectuals to heart. In words and deeds, they helped to further the modern reinvention of youth. Kaiming's middle school student readers of the 1930s were no exception. The December 1930 issue of *MSS* carried an allegorical story by a second-year upper-middle-school student to illustrate the generational differences between the old and new and the vitality of the youth. It featured a young man who dared to explore a new path through thorny fields, a middle-aged man who relaxed on the path he had created and deemed the young man a trouble-maker, and an old man who eventually murdered the young explorer in the name of stability and harmony. The author described the appearances of his characters to highlight their symbolic representations. "The young man wore a smile on his face, his shirt was pure white. The middle-aged man had eyes beaming with confidence. But he was already rather bald. The colors of his clothes were very compatible with his surroundings." As for the old man, he wore a traditional style blue robe and a stern expression on his face. He was from "the ancient land" of the Chinese past.⁹³

This reinvention of the youth went hand in hand with the emergence of large modern student bodies at the beginning of the twentieth century. As mentioned earlier, middle school enrollments increased almost twelve times between 1909 and 1930, thus making the students a sizable social force.⁹⁴ During the first half of the century, "youth" and "students" (i.e. college and middle-school students) were synonymous terms and used interchangeably in print media. Just as the youth was more than an age categorization, modern students, or *xuesheng*, were more than an occupational description. The term came to signify a rapidly growing social and political force. In the

first half of the twentieth century students truly made the fate of the nation their responsibility. Waves of student unrest during the waning years of the Qing dynasty were the moderate precursors of massive student demonstrations during the Republican era.⁹⁵ The May Fourth Movement of 1919 and the May Thirtieth Movement of 1925 finally lent legitimacy to students' claim to be the vanguards of social revolution. No wonder the wife of John Dewey observed at the height of the May Fourth demonstrations, "It is unimaginable in our country that youngsters of a little over fourteen years old would lead a massive political reform movement and shame merchants and various social groups into joining their ranks. This [China] is truly an amazing country."⁹⁶ It is interesting to note that most students from Beijing University and Beijing Normal University who took to the street were almost all in their twenties.⁹⁷ The avid teenage demonstrators witnessed by Madam Dewey were middle-school students who, as indicated by a number of studies, made essential contributions to student militancy during the first decades of the twentieth century.⁹⁸ During the Northern Expedition of 1926-1927, middle-school students were equally active. One student contributor to MSS asserted that middle-school students in Hunan Province were "the vanguard of the mass movement."⁹⁹ In short, it was with clamor and glamour that middle-school students engaged in the formation of their distinctive modern identity.

This steady process of identity formation directly corresponded to the growth and nature of the modern school system. Previously, the school system and private academies (*shuyuan*) of the late imperial times only accommodated approximately ten percent of the total student population young and old (*tongsheng shizi*).¹⁰⁰ The rest engaged their studies at home with their private tutors or at a one-room private school

(*shu*) that had a small number of students, typically of different ages, in relatively insular rural towns and villages. Although only time they met their peers (without the benefit of interactions) were during examinations. Those who passed the examinations in the same years often belonged to different generations due to difference in age, they forged "*tongnian*" (literally "same year") ties with one another and teacher-disciple relationships with the chief examiners who passed them. These often served as the basis of personal networks in officialdom. Degree students often shared a vertical identity with the imperial state, which they served or aspired to serve. As the percentage of those who could actually enter officialdom shrank significantly in late imperial times, state service was less of a given and the educated elite increasingly identified with their local communities.

In contrast, the modern school system helped to build horizontal collective identity among students based on shared experience. Located in commercial towns and cities, middle schools and colleges uprooted students from their relatively isolated agrarian homelands and thrust them into new urban environments where they met classmates from different geographical localities. Life on campus was highly regulated and communal. Students slept in dormitory rooms, dined together with eight to ten assigned to a big round table to share dishes, and of course participated in the same curriculum activities. This brought students into intimate contact with one another. Student organizations, such as literary societies, self-governments, and intra-campus alliances further fostered this horizontal identity-building. In sum, modern students had quickly transformed themselves into urban-based, politically-conscious, and world-aware collective bodies, a vital social force to reckoned with.

Its symbolic power and social significance as the harbinger of a new era notwithstanding, the new youth in its defining qualifications and social status was not far removed from its traditional counterpart of degree candidates and degree-holders imperial times. As one Kaiming author pointed out, youth were those with middle-school or higher education who would have had the scholar-official “*shi*” status in the imperial times. Their education, he added, allowed them to think beyond their own immediate, material needs.¹⁰¹ Indeed, the modern school system had essentially replaced since civil service examination system as the central mechanism in the reproduction of the social and cultural elite. In the last years of Qing rule, the court went to considerable length to make a modern school system as the successor to the age-old examination system. It went as far as issuing a short-lived decree in 1909 that awarded *jinshi* degrees and matching official titles to those who finished graduate school (*fengke daxue*), *juren* degrees and official titles to those who finished college (*gaoden xuetang* or *da xuetang*), and *xiuca*i degrees and official titles to those who finished middle schools (*zhongdeng xuetang*).¹⁰² In fact, modern schools were so competitive that many of those enrolled in middle schools had already earned their *xiuca*i degrees.¹⁰³

The first two decades of the Republican period witnessed a growing tension in the elite identity of middle-school students. On the one hand, the middle school student population increased almost seven-fold from a little over 100,000 to close to 700,000. In the same period, college enrollment fluctuated roughly from 29,000 to 50,000.¹⁰⁴ This meant that middle-school students had an increasingly reduced opportunity to cross the college threshold, and their vast numbers also diluted their sense of belonging to the social elite. On the other hand, the exclusive nature of middle school education in China

remained unchanged. Statistically, as late as 1930, only 11 per 10,000 of the Chinese population received middle-level education.¹⁰⁵ Middle-school students were the cream of the crop of their generation. They had cause to be proud of themselves and to expect to play a significant role in society when they came of age.

In many ways, middle-school students stood out from the rest of their generation and the society at large. Their walled and guarded campuses provided a physical sense of exclusivity and distinction. Serving staff hired by the schools as well as servants in the employ of a small number of rich students testified to their elite status. The clothes of middle-school students also reflected their status. Male student attire usually featured either the long gowns of the traditional literati or western-style shirts, pants, and leather shoes. Female students generally bobbed their hair and wore modern style shirts and skirts or a modernized Chinese gown, both hemmed several inches above the ankle. Upper middle-school students frequently had a decent command of English and a basic exposure to Western literature and arts, which lent them a cosmopolitan flair. Small wonder that “students” became a social category all unto themselves.

The most significant distinction that marked middle students from the rest of the society remained their rather glowing self-identity which *MSS* encouraged. A good example can be found in the discussion forum of the March 1931 issue of *MSS* that featured the topic, “An Exemplary Middle School Student.” To preserve both the thoughts and the flair of this forum, I reproduce the following excerpts from six of the eight student contributions that the editors selected:

1

[Aiqing’s] love for art must be in his blood for it has become his life. [Whenever weather allows], he goes out to paint in nature....Not only that, he [is socially active and] is a member of all sorts of student organizations including the public

speaking and journalism.... [Today] people are starving. Our rural communities are disintegrating. The imperialist fist and warlords' guns are our highest authority. In such a country, he believes that there should be a thorough revolution.... It does not befit modern students to wait, endure, compromise, surrender, fear, or feel depression. So [Aiqing] believes in enthusiasm, determination, courage, forbearance, protestation, and struggle! He holds this thorough revolution as his highest goal. But since revolution needs knowledgeable people, he starts his contribution to the cause by studying and researching hard at school.

2

[My friend Li Xiangzhong's] most favorite school subjects are literature and music. He pours all his energy and time into them. I am not saying that he has accomplished much. After all he's only eighteen. The important thing is that he has already discovered his life's calling. A beautiful virgin ground unfolds, waiting for him to explore. How could he not be full of joy and enthusiasm and uses his hard work and determination to pursue his goals?

3

He has the following qualities: 1) a strong and active body... 2) a rational and inquisitive mind with which to not only pursue his studies of all the school subjects but also to analyze social and national issues; 3) full of insights; 4) never overbearing despite his family wealth. This is because he understands that he should only allow his family to take care of him during his school years and that he would put his natural endowment, his education, and his physical strength in the service of the society and mankind.

4

He despises those rich dandies and fashionable debutantes who love to talk about how great it is that Gandhi drives fear into the hearts of British colonialists but would never have the courage to weave a single piece of cloth; who sing the high tune of "labor is sacred" but turn around to give the chefs at their school cafeteria a hard time. A middle school student of China is also a middle school student of the world. When handed down this brilliant civilization [of the world], he feels the responsibility to continue and develop it. He is willing to start from small and concrete things, such as doing housework to help his parents, working in the field [like a peasant], and performing tedious work [like an artisan]. For his down-to-earth attitude, he has earned the nickname, "Camel" from his schoolmates. But he thinks it fits him since what today's China expects of him is the spirit of a camel which can bear great burden and travel great distance through the dessert.

5

We middle-school students are the core element of our country and thus have great social responsibilities. Therefore, to me an exemplary middle student is one with a noble spirit....and who aspires to make progress and is determined to make revolution.... To save China, we cannot merely shout slogans. We need a strong

body, collective spirit, and disciplined actions. Therefore, the exemplary student should also [have a correct attitude] in pursuing one's education. One would never forget the task of saving China. With the morality of mutual aid among all mankind, one studies hard for ones self and for society.... Literature is the highest manifestation of life. Therefore, the exemplary middle school student is someone who, with courage, acumen, and imagination, marches towards the great palace of literature and art.

6

People say, "Society forces everyone to adapt." From the perspective of an exemplary middle school student, this is not true. He believes that compromise (with the ills of the society) is dangerous. He would not surrender to the lure of materialism. Nor would he submit to the political intimidation of the government. He would live a simple life and give all he has for the struggle of the nation and the struggle of the oppressed peoples.¹⁰⁶

In short, the ideal middle school student was a person of integrity, strength, and artistic inclination who was ready to contribute to the salvation of China and the betterment of the world. This was no less than the early twentieth-century translation of the Confucian exhortation to the educated elite to "cultivate one's moral character, harmonize one's family, govern one's country wisely, and bring peace and order to the world."¹⁰⁷ Such exalted ideals confirmed the self perception among middle-school students that they were intellectuals or junior intellectuals and thus "the core of the nation (*guojia de zhongjian*)."

This a self-identity encouraged middle-school students to take a keen interest in national and international affairs. This was evidenced by a survey of 1,152 lower middle school and 143 upper middle-school students in six schools of Jiaxing County, Zhejiang Province in 1935.¹⁰⁸ In response to the question, "what category of media coverage do you watch the most?" close to 80% of them checked news on domestic and international politics. Some of these students took their political-mindedness a step further by becoming actively involved in social and political activities. The same study showed that over 10% of the students listed participation in student organizations, making public

speeches, and running commoners' literacy schools as their *most* favorite extra-curriculum activities. They chose these over hobbies such as fiction-reading, outings with friends, movie and theater-going, and sports.¹⁰⁹ It is worth noting that more than 88% of the students participating in the survey were junior middle-school students, or teenagers between the ages of 12-17. The percentages of those interested in larger national and international issues and social and political involvement were likely to be even higher among the older upper middle-school students. This degree of politicization among the young is confirmed by the reader demand discussed earlier that MSS monthly expand its social sciences section at the expense of the math and natural sciences section.

This widely shared elevated self-perception and social ambition alarmed the Kaiming intellectuals, who saw students as taking themselves too seriously. One complained, "While they are only receiving a basic education, they have the proclivity to say that they are 'engaging in research and scholarship' (*yanjiu xuewen*)...Before they are even set their feet on the ground and become independent of their family, they are determined to save the nation and the world." Zhang Xichen concurred: "In imperial China, the *shi* lived on the state in the name of 'governing the country and bringing peace and order to the world.' Nowadays, students expect to live on society in the name of reconstructing China."¹¹⁰ Xia Mianzun's specific advice to middle-school students in his editorial of the inaugural issue of the magazine was to rid themselves of the mentality of the *shi* elite. "The problems confronting China are too complex to discuss here," he wrote. "However, had we not had tens of thousands of those who possess diplomas but none with the useful skills [to engage in a profession], those who put themselves in the

role of *shi* to wave flags and shout slogans for the purpose of rallying society [for this and that cause], our country would not have come to such a deplorable state.”¹¹¹

At the same time, however, the magazine cultivated among its readers exactly this image of the revolutionary “new youth” by broadening their minds to larger issues and readying them for the responsibility of the nation’s future. It took its readers very seriously as its clientele and as the nation’s hope expressed by its actions to satisfy readers’ requests for politicization. In an April 1932 editorial, Xia Mianzun seemed to have thrown into the wind his earlier misgivings about student social involvement. After offering an observation that students in the West oriented towards right while students in the East oriented towards left, he asserted, “An exemplary youth our particular historical time [in China] needs a model of youth that is a left-leaning student with the ability to learn from concrete life experience, and the willingness to commit to the welfare of the working classes.”¹¹² With only a few exceptions, the fifty-two cultural celebrities contributing to the 1932 New Year issue called on their young readers to take on the task of saving China and even liberating the oppressed peoples of the world.¹¹³ Topics of the magazine’s writing contests often encouraged grandiose verbal gestures on the part of the student contributors. On the topic “Who should be role models for youth?” (September 1932), a student quoted at length Xia Mianzun’s editorial cited above and then concluded, “It is very clear that the role model for youth should be a path-breaker for our new epoch, a savior for mankind.”¹¹⁴ On the topic “How should students engage in anti-imperialist work?” (October 1932), the orchestrated response, which was shaped by the editors’ selection predictably sounded a high note: “Go to the people, to awaken and organize them for great anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggles!”¹¹⁵



23. Middle School Student demonstrators during the May Thirtieth Movement, Beijing, 1925. Note the English-language slogans and the prominent display of a school flag emblazoned with the name of a local middle school.¹¹⁶
 Source: Jeffery N. Wasserstrom, *Student Protests in Twentieth-Century China*, p. 125.



24. Shanghai girl middle-school students in a student fashion show, 1930
 Source: "Dongfang" website, "Lao zhaopian: Sashi niandai Shanghai nu xuesheng men,"
<http://campus.chinaren.com/20070129/n247910764.shtml>.

Youth Innocence Lost

As mentioned earlier, public discourses in general and *MSS* in particular juxtaposed the cult of youth with a conflicting notion of a youth problem. In the context of increasing GMD political control, the acute financial predicament in which many students and their families found themselves, and the prevailing class discourse in the print media, middle-school students were often re-conceived as part of China's declining bourgeoisie and thus ill-fitted to an era of revolution. The 1930s were sad years for the Chinese bourgeoisie, or those with middling incomes due to a volatile pre-war economy. The economic depression that began in 1932 in both the rural and urban sectors was worsened by Japanese imperialist actions in Manchuria, Shanghai, and Northern China.¹¹⁷ Besieged by social displacement, economic hardships, and the prospect of unemployment after leaving school, students started to express a profound anxiety and disillusionment about their own future. Youth depression (*qingnian kumen*), as it was called, became a frequent theme concerning the young and educated. In an early issue of the magazine, one reader requested, "I hope *Middle-School Students* will offer us a space to express our anxiety and bitterness."¹¹⁸ Indeed, throughout its run the magazine carried the voice of its anxious student readers. There are as many as 13 feature articles that bore "youth depression" as part of their title alone. "Melancholy," "despondency," "disillusionment," "anxiety," "depression," and "despair" were words frequently used to describe the mood of the young. By foregrounding the crisis mentality of youth, *MSS* both captured and influenced the minds of a generation of educated youth.

Socio-economically, middle-school students came from predominantly middling backgrounds. The Republican educational system was based more on wealth than on

merit. Data from sociologist Olga Lang shows that the typical student budget in a public upper middle school in Beijing in the 1930s including tuition, fees, food, and board reached a total of 116 yuan.¹¹⁹ Private middle schools charged higher tuitions. It was more costly to attend schools in southern China due to its higher standard of living. Tuition and living expenses typically ranged between 200-300 yuan in Shanghai during the same period of time.¹²⁰ These costs were prohibitively high for working-class families who lived on less than 240 yuan a year. A laborer's wages could be as little as 36 yuan annually.¹²¹ Consequently, as Lang observed, middle schools typically enrolled students whose annual family incomes were between 360 yuan and 1440 yuan."¹²² Students from wealthy backgrounds were understandably a small minority. One was certain that their family could afford to send them to college only if their income was 100 to 200 yuan higher than that of average middle schools.¹²³

The age-old notion that education was a ladder for social advancement continued to be deeply entrenched in Chinese society in the modern era. During a long history of the civil examinations, traditional students passed examinations and earned degrees to gain access to political office and elite status. Now, students were earning diplomas that would, or were supposed to, open doors for them to successful careers in emerging modern sectors. Middle-income families were from a diverse social strata. They included the declining old elite of the literati gentry *shi* class, merchant class, and modern professional groups. Sending their children to middle school was a huge but necessary investment for the purpose of reproducing of their class status and upward social mobility at a time of rapid social and economic transition.

This expectation of parents was confirmed by their children who, beneath the hyperbolic rhetoric of saving the country and serving society, saw themselves in concrete terms as being trained to become modern professionals. Their interests in school subjects and future career choices reflected traditional literati preferences. That is to say that they had an overwhelming desire to pursue the highest educational degree possible and afterwards a career in public service or in cultural apparatus. The 1935 survey of middle-school students in Jiaxing, Zhejiang Province cited earlier showed that 89% of lower middle-school students intended to go on to upper middle school and 96.6% of upper middle-school students planned to pursue higher education. Only 7% had decided not to continue their education after receiving their respective diplomas.¹²⁴ The literati tradition that held language proficiency and literary accomplishments in great esteem continued, as 21.7% and 21.62% of Jiaxing middle-school students chose Chinese and English as their most favorite school subjects respectively. By contrast, natural sciences inspired so little interest that less than 3% of the students put chemistry, physics, or biology at the top of their favorite lists. Other practical subjects such as bookkeeping, agriculture, and factory work skills fared worse.¹²⁵ So many middle-school students dreamed of pursuing a literary career that it alarmed Kaiming writers who, published open letters and discussion forums where they raised the issue of impracticality of such ambitions in their young readers.¹²⁶ Civil service jobs in government or government agencies that were well-respected and relatively well-paid were hotly sought after. For example, the Department of Construction of Zhejiang Provincial Government posted an advertisement in 1928 for six clerical positions. More than five hundred middle school and college graduates

responded. In 1930, the Department of Health of Shanghai municipal government received 156 applications for a single opening for a clerk.¹²⁷

This does not mean that middle-school students were not touched by China's modernization process. In fact, many eagerly prepared themselves for modern professions. The 1935 Zhejiang survey showed that 21.6 % of the students chose English as their most favorite subject. English was both the language of modernity and an essential tool of many modern professions. I use the data from the survey for the following chart.

TABLE III

Career Choices of Jiaxing Lower Middle-School Students

Profession	Junior & Senior	Girls Junior	Totals	% of Ttl
Banking	156	98	254	19.6%
Teaching	112	34	146	11.3%
Transportation	123	13	136	10.5%
Industry	117	6	123	9.5%
Communication	90	31	121	9.3%
Medicine (excl. nursing)	62	47	109	8.4%
Business, merchants	96	0	96	7.4%
Farming & forestry	60	12	72	5.6%
Customs	31	18	49	3.8%
Other Jobs	135	54	189	14.6%
Total	982	313	1,295	100.0%

From the above, we can see that teaching, the traditional work for the lower degree-holders during late imperial times, was still considered desirable by a good percentage of the students. Cultural work retained a ring of respectability even after schools had been transformed into modern establishments. Banking, transportation (railroads, modern shipping, airlines), industry, communications (postal and telegram services), (Western) medicine, and customs, all newly emerged modern entities, attracted 61.1% of the students in the survey. Many such jobs were found in state-run agencies and enterprises such as the two examples given above. Therefore, civil service jobs were not listed as a separate category. It is noteworthy that students of a lower middle school located in a county seat like Jiaxing most likely came from small land-holding families in rural towns and villages. Only 5.6% of them, however, wanted to return to their rural homes to become farmers. In a way, the vast majority of these lower middle-school students saw a middle school education as a stepping stone towards new urban professions.

The expectations of middle-school students for further education and for urban white-collar jobs were more than likely frustrated. The seemingly natural choice on the part of middle-school students to continue their education for an upper middle school diploma or college degree defied the reality of Republican-era education. In 1935, only 7% of Jiaxing middle-school students were prepared to end their student career after receiving diplomas. In the previous year, the nation-wide ratio between the three-year lower middle school enrollment and three-year upper middle school enrollment was approximately 5:1. The nation-wide ratio between upper middle school enrollment and college enrollment (including two-year colleges) was 3.2 : 1.¹²⁸ In general, less than 20% of middle school graduates went on to higher education.¹²⁹ These statistics, while disheartening or alarming on their own, hide a more dismal reality: Due to financial difficulties, many students were forced to drop out of school before receiving their diplomas. A complete middle school education cost a middle class family 10-30% of their annual income per child for six years. It was not uncommon for families in the lower rungs of the middle class with multiple children to find themselves unable to shoulder such a financial burden. Chief editor Xia Mianzun lamented that even though he had been a middle school teacher for 20 years before joining Kaiming, he was unable to afford a middle school education for all his three children. Subsequently, one had to become a shop apprentice after only elementary education, and the other picked up bee-keeping and gardening for a living before finishing lower middle school. At the time of his writing, only one child was enrolled in middle school.¹³⁰

Strong attachment to academic degrees had been a persistent theme both in imperial and modern times in China. Republican-era students, however, saw themselves

being placed in an unfair position by the new education system. While hopes were frequently dashed in both traditional and modern times, there were critical differences in the challenges they faced. In the millennium-long history of the civil service examination system, the formidable challenge centered on the dreaded examination itself. It was not uncommon for traditional students to devote decades of their lives trying to pass various levels of rigorous examinations to earn imperial degrees. In the Republican era, finances often stood between a student and his/her degrees. In imperial times, education was never for the multitudes of laboring poor. A boy from a poor family that enjoyed lineage support, however, could often go to his village clan school for free. The cost of traditional education was low compared to its modern counterpart. Focusing on the classics, poetry, and history, a teacher and a classroom with desks and chairs were all that was needed for a school. It was also easier to study on one's own and become successful as long after passing the examinations. Typically, a student lived with his family, which cut down the costs. Modern education from middle levels up, on the other hand, was a much larger and more complex and thus expensive enterprise. Not only were the physical campuses, including sports and lab facilities and living quarters more costly to build, but also its curricula required a faculty. The cost of education was shifted from clans to individual families and was institutionalized in the forms of tuition, food, and board outside of one's home, with various school fees charged. Additionally, no degree could be earned by anyone who studied on one's own since it was the schools who granted diplomas and degrees. Finally, public academies and the examination system in imperial times "embodied the notion that education of the elite was the responsibility of the state [who] handsomely rewarded the talented and diligent without exacting any

payment in the process.”¹³¹ It was expected that a republic would bring wider access to education than the dynastic rule. When it seemed to be just the other way round, the degree of bitterness was difficult to overestimate. A letter from a lower middle school graduate printed in *MSS* illustrated this profound disillusionment.

You may not think too much of a lower middle school diploma. But it is the reward of my hard struggle to pursue learning.... As the old saying goes, one will not give up until one reaches the Yellow River (reaches one's goal). I had hoped that under the republic, I could find an opportunity to enter a short training program through passing examinations. Little did I know that in our republic, these short programs only offered examinations to candidates already with senior middle school diplomas... What a disappointment!

He then summed up his feelings in a couplet:

Revolution, revolution, [had we known this would be the result] now, [we would not have bothered to have it] back then;

Graduation means unemployment, I am stuck in a position unable to go forward or retreat backward.¹³²

Indeed, upon graduating from lower or upper middle school, many found themselves in double jeopardy: They were neither able to continue their education nor able to find adequate employment. Unable to attend college, most middle-school students found themselves in a tight job market where competition for desirable positions was often brutal. The unemployment of middle school graduates became an issue only a few years after the establishment of a modern school system in 1912, when new government posts and new jobs created by a nascent industry and state apparatus were quickly filled. As we can see from the chart below, published in *MSS*, middle school graduates in prosperous Zhejiang Province already experienced a persistent unemployment rate of over 20% in the mid-1920s. Another study also printed in the magazine showed an unemployment rate among middle school across the board in China as approximately 14% in 1926.¹³³ In the late teens and twenties, the rapid expansion of

elementary school education created vast numbers of new teaching jobs. While not specifically trained in teaching, many middle school graduates competed with normal school graduates for these relatively poorly paid elementary school teaching positions.¹³⁴ In 1926 more than 40% of the graduates from a Xuzhou middle school ended up becoming teachers.¹³⁵ As this final source of employment quickly dried up in the thirties, it is not hard to imagine the dire state of middle school graduates. As one educator observed, “Students on the job market are now no different from any manufactured product. As their numbers increase and competition become more and more intense, their prices plummet.”¹³⁶ During the eight years of the Resistance War, the unemployment problem was temporarily relieved as the war industry opened up new jobs. But immediately after the Japanese surrender in 1945, the problem reemerged and quickly went back to the crisis level of pre-war years.

TABLE IV

Unemployment Rate of Graduates from Middle-Level Schools in Zhejiang Province, 1924 & 1926¹³⁷

Types of graduates:	Regular middle schools	Normal schools	Vocational schools
1924 Unemployment Rate	21.5%	17.0%	21.0%
1926 Unemployment Rate	21.5%	14.5%	15.3%

The notion of educated youth as analogous to manufactured products whose fate was dependent on market demands was received with bitter irony. Few were sit at ease with the notion that so many educated youth, the cream of the crop of their generation, the country’s young elite, and the nation’s hope, were unemployable. In the continuous discussions of youth anxiety in the pages of *MSS*, sources frequently addressed to what I

call the specter of double losses—the loss of educational opportunities (*shixue*) and the loss of employment (*shiye*). As I have discussed earlier, modern education and commitment to the welfare of the nation were defining components of modern youth identity. Without a proper education and job, how could one promote progress, modernity, and revolution? In other words, the experience or fear of double losses had a shattering effect on youth identity and idealism. Here, the choice of the word “*shi*” or “loss” in the two neologisms deserves attention. “Shixue” and “shiye” were much more emotive than their neutral English counterparts of “lack of educational opportunities” and “unemployment” respectively. This sense of deprivation was built on frustrated high expectations, the clash between youth’s elite identity and a dismal socio-economic reality. The words spelled trouble to the established order by implying the deprivation of entitlements and fault beyond the efforts of the deprived individual. Indeed, in the 1970s when the Communist government was faced with massive unemployment among middle school graduates, it found the term “shiye” unacceptable and replaced it with a new terminology, “*daiye*” (waiting for employment) in official media.

The fear of double losses was persistently present on in *MSS*, especially in student contributions. Concerning the first loss of educational opportunities, the culprits were identified as the commercialization of education and the crumbling of the Chinese economy. The sharp rise in costs of an education in modern schools, compared to its traditional counterparts, put lower middle class families in distress. The magazine often showed how struggling parents sacrificed and borrowed to keep their children at school.¹³⁸ Criticisms were leveled against profit-minded schools that tried to extract extra miscellaneous fees from their students.¹³⁹ Higher education, especially private

colleges, received similar criticisms. The bigger problem, however, was the sad shape of the Chinese economy. Scores of articles went into great detail to show rural decay and its sociopolitical sources. Indeed, between 1931 and 1935, the country was plunged into deeper agrarian depression, forcing many rural land-holding families into bankruptcy. Urban sectors also suffered. “Many tens of millions of young people became victims of the current economic crisis that forced them to quit midstream in their pursuit of education after middle school,” one author declared with the characteristic hyperbole of the time. Although the total middle school enrollment was around half a million, he continued to report, “All papers in Shanghai have carried stories about the decrease in college enrollment this recruiting season of 1934.... The enrollments of in-coming new students at Guanghui University, Fudan University, and Daxia University were all down by one to two hundred. Such decreases were strong proof of the worsening financial positions of the families of middle school graduates.”¹⁴⁰

Still, much greater attention was paid to the unemployment issue in the magazine. Although sources of the problem were complex and multifold, they mostly involved two intertwining problems. First, as mentioned earlier, the modern middle school student population increased seven fold during the first two decades of the Republican period, rapidly outstripping the number of white-collar professional jobs generated by China’s relatively slow and unstable development in modern sectors. Secondly, a serious disparity existed between the Republican education system modeled after the American system, and Chinese society, which was only in the initial stage of modernization or Westernization. Subsequently, students trained for a modern society found themselves ill fit for their own social environment. The traditional sector of the economy continued an

employment pattern geared toward apprenticeship and patronage. The relationship between the traditional sector and middle school graduates was a double rejection. Old-style artisans and shop owners had no particular need or interest in employing or paying higher wages to modern educated youth. For the latter, accepting these humble occupations was beneath their dignity. Youth unemployment was thus as much a problem of the economy and job market as the clash between expectations and realities.

In the magazine, student readers were particularly active in contributing their views on this issue. One vehemently refuted the notion of individual responsibility in one's joblessness and financial hardships. He wrote,

I know a college graduate who had trouble even finding a teaching position in elementary school. He finally found a proof reading job that paid a pittance of eight yuan a month. But he lost it in two months to someone [who had connections]. This had nothing to do with his lack of commitment or hard work.... I also know someone who got a teaching job in a middle school that pays only eight yuan for a food stipend and another two yuan for pocket money. And even for that lousy job he had to fend off several competitors!¹⁴¹

He concluded by pointing his accusing finger at capitalism. "When one studies and analyzes the problem, one can trace its cause to the unjust capitalist system."¹⁴² Another student elaborated eloquently about the problem of a skewed relationship between the education system and socio-economic system in the Republican era:

The fundamental characteristic of a capitalistic education is all about mass production. A society where industrial development keeps pace with the mass production of educated workforce, suffers few unemployment problems. Unfortunately, China under the yoke of foreign imperialism failed to develop its industry, commerce, transportation along the lines of the capitalist system. Not surprisingly [the nascent modern sector] has failed to absorb mass produced [middle school and college] graduates due to the tenacity of feudal ideas and habits. A young student cannot find a job without the help of an elaborate feudal social network.... In sum, the Chinese education system successfully followed the capitalistic model while the Chinese economy and society remain semi-feudal and semi-colonial. Subsequently, graduation equates to a status of unemployment.¹⁴³

MSS regularly presented the issue of middle school student unemployment as part of the larger issue of the unemployment among the intellectual class, or the educated class. The leftist *Jin Zhonghua* offered his critical analysis to readers. In China's "feudal past," the educated have always occupied a privileged social position, he wrote. In modern times, society treats those with western-influenced education as "people with magic power." In the initial phase of a country's modernization process, these people rushed to fill jobs in the newly-emerging institutes of an economic super structure such as the government, the education establishment, postal service, customs, and banking. With the overdevelopment of modern education and underdevelopment of economic infrastructure and production, the former "people with magic power" were now in surplus. They had changed from the "powerful" to the "useless." They faced the same unemployment threat as blue-collar workers. "Modern education is at a dead end," he concluded.¹⁴⁴ This prospect for the educated could not be any further away from the expectations of middle-school students both in practical terms and in lofty, idealistic terms. To them, the very notion of the "unemployment of intellectuals" was charged with poignancy since (young) "intellectuals" were supposed to be the soul of the country, and junior intellectuals of middle school status were the hope of China. On a social level, to give up their standards and take lesser jobs meant instant downward mobility. It was especially hard to accept after massive financial investments by family and after surviving years of studies under the enormous pressure of a heavy Republican-era curriculum. In light of this, many graduates who failed to find proper employment chose to stay idle with the continuing support from their families. They became what many

critics called “high-class loafers” (*gaoji youming*), a popular term referring to unemployed educated youth in the 1930s.

If modern education was seen as a dead end, some middle-school students saw their lives as dead-ended too. The anxiety over unemployment sometimes culminated in tragedies, as noted in Xia Mianzun’s 1930 editorial, “Know Yourself.” “Don’t you notice that suicides reported in newspapers have mostly involved young students?” he asked rhetorically. In a story picked up by the magazine, a Beijing middle school graduate took his own life because his family could neither afford to send him to college, nor could he find an acceptable job. Subsequently, his father tried to press him into taking the job-entrance examination to become a police officer. His suicide note to his father read:

Kind and benevolent Father:

You have always said that since you cannot afford to send me to college, I should get a job to support the family after middle school. Now that I am graduated from middle school...I couldn’t even find a humble clerical job.... Police work is indeed a job. In [Beijing], poor [and uneducated] men either become rickshaw-pullers or join the police force. But I would never allow myself to become a policeman.¹⁴⁵

The pain of facing downward social mobility is evident in this suicide note. No doubt, the frequent media coverage of such incidents further heightened anxiety among middle-school students. Suicides of educated youth also became a potent symbol of the angst of a nation.

“We are walking toward a dead end. The days of the whole intellectual class are numbered! Where is our way out?” cried a student contributor. “Where Is Our Way Out?” was also the title of his anxiety-laden essay.¹⁴⁶ The discussions of “a way out” for students, started in the late-1920s, gained especially wide circulation in the pre-war 1930s. The question loomed so large in the minds of *MSS* editors that when they first

started the magazine, they printed a call for contributions for a writing contest on this problem. They subsequently printed a special issue of the winning essays.¹⁴⁷ In the whole run of the magazine, youth unemployment remained the most discussed issue, soliciting numerous contributions from Kaiming authors and student readers alike. Again, the Chinese choice of the neologism “way out” (*chulu*) instead of “prospect” (*qiantu*) is noteworthy. The “way out” conveyed a special sense of entrapment in what was called the “dark society,” (*heian de shehui*) and an urgency to escape to something better.

For middle-school students with the dual-identity of revolutionary vanguards and unfortunate children of the declining bourgeoisie, the search for personal salvation was easily tied to the salvation of the nation. In other words, Kaiming intellectuals and student contributors always embedded their discourse on youth anxiety in the discourses of nation and revolution. As part of the fashioning “new youth,” the magazine regularly involved its readers in discussions on the larger issues of the time to expand their horizon. Earlier in this chapter, I laid out the persistent themes found in the magazine that were beyond the specific concerns of attending middle school. These included the promotion of May Fourth enlightenment, anti-imperialism, the glorification of labor, romanticizing of the working class, and collectivism. These themes, juxtaposed with the theme of double losses facing youth, ultimately shaped the vision of the future for the magazine’s readers. An emerging set of arguments seemed to point to solutions: The educated youth must transcend the outmoded *shi* mentality of the imperial times as well as the interests of the bankrupt middle class of the capitalist society to join the rising progressive working class. Consequently, “going to the people,” a May Fourth catchphrase, enjoyed

a visible revival in the magazine. Its 1930s usage, however, embodied a subtle transformation, since “the people” in this context held a Marxist connotation of class that did not exist in the May Fourth era.

A student contributor captured the shared sentiment and vision among the student readers, and their intellectual mentors at Kaiming for that matter, who were eager to solve their identity crisis. Responding to the call of contributions on “Where Is Our Way Out?” he stated:

The characteristics of the petty bourgeoisie involve a proclivity to struggle, or to be the vanguard of social movements. However, economic bankruptcy has pushed them into the dark abyss of misery from that they cannot find a way out. For the bankrupt petty bourgeois youth, the only way out is to transform themselves, to join the working class, and to fight for the interest of the working class. The only road available for them is to liberate themselves through liberating the working class.¹⁴⁸

The notion of liberating oneself through liberating the working class was a far cry from the Lida motto of the mid-1920s. That Confucian notion, “What he wishes to achieve for himself, he helps others achieve [*li*]; what he wishes to obtain for himself, he enables others to obtain [*da*],” applicable to the benevolent man, reflected the confidence of “new youth” as the enlightened ones and their centrality in China’s social revolution.¹⁴⁹ “Liberating oneself through liberating the working class,” on the other hand, demonstrated the loss of confidence they once enjoyed. The new motto was in fact the optimum solution to the tension between the dual youth identity. It was educated youth’s ultimate “way out.”

With unparalleled popularity and longevity among periodicals of its kind, *MSS* was instrumental in providing a generation of readers with a dynamic and open print forum to

articulate their identities, anxieties, and visions. In the process, it placed the identity crisis in a larger framework of crisis among the intellectual class and the Chinese nation. Reading and writing for the magazine allowed its readers to articulate collective sentiments and collective purposes that culminated in impulses to disengage from the “dark society,” which was seen as the source of both personal woes and social injustices. Combined with inherited ideas concerning the political responsibilities of the educated elite, the youthful impulse for idealism, social engagement, and radical action lent itself to the revolutionary impulses in the 1930s and 40s.

On one level, the revolutionary discourse in *MSS* did not necessarily pose a threat to the GMD rule. As recent scholarship reveals, the GMD continually saw itself as a revolutionary party capable of social mobilization.¹⁵⁰ Jeffrey Wasserstrom has observed with acumen, “One can argue that thinking of separate Nationalist and Communist revolutions obscures the organizational and symbolic links between parties that shared a common attachment to Leninist principles and *geming* (revolution) as a sacred crest.”¹⁵¹ Not surprisingly, *MSS* with seemingly communist notions such as anti-capitalism, anti-imperialism, socialism, collectivism, and revolutionary transformation in each and every issue, enjoyed its greatest popularity during a period when the GMD stepped up its effort to indoctrinate the student population.¹⁵² John Isreal has called the politically conscious students of the Nanjing decade “an impatient generation.”¹⁵³ Much happened during the decade, in particular Japanese aggression and economic depression, to weaken the GMD’s ability to inspire youth imagination and loyalty. Being exposed to or actively participating in the public discourse of ever intensifying youth anxiety and double losses, one would expect this student generation became increasingly impatient with the GMD as

a ruling party and with a revolution engineered by a top-down party-state. As the crisis continued, increasing numbers of young students started to look for a more viable revolutionary alternative.

¹ In Chinese, “*Liuxuesheng fan geming, daxuesheng bu geming, zhongxuesheng zuigeming.*” Ai Disheng, “Qingnianmen de dasuan,” *MSS*, no. 46 (June 1934): 30. During the Republican era, middle schools referred to educational institutions between primary schools and colleges that included regular lower and upper high schools, mid-level normal schools, and mid-level vocational schools. Middle-school students included both those who were actively enrolled in middle schools, recent graduates and dropouts who frequently identified themselves with middle-school students as a social group. Returned students are those who had studied abroad.

² John Isreal, *Student Nationalism in China, 1927-1937* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966), p. 185. According to a comprehensive survey of lower and upper middle-school students in Anhui province in 1929, the student body then was older than it is today. The youngest first year middle-school students (seventh graders) were twelve while oldest twenty. At graduation, the youngest was seventeen while the oldest had reached twentieth-six. See “Anhui Quanshen Zhongdeng Xuexiao Tongji Biao,” in *Jiaoyu zazhi* (Education journal) 21, no. 10 (March 1929).

³ Liu Dabai, “Xuesheng tuanti zuzhi dagang caoan he shuoming” (A preliminary guideline for student organization and its explanation), *SSM*, no. 1 (January 1930): 279.

⁴ “Guomin zhengfu xingzeng yuan chi jiaoyu bu zhenchi xuefeng ling” (A decree from the Executive Branch of the Nationalist Government to the Education Ministry concerning restoring order and discipline on school campus), *SSM*, no. 11 (January 1931): 307-08

⁵ “Jiang zhuxi gaojie xuesheng shu” (Chairman Jiang’s letter to [nation’s] students), *SSM*, no. 1 (January 1931): 308-12.

⁶ Wen-Hsin Yeh, *The Alienated Academy: Culture and Politics in Republican China, 1919-1937* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), p. 84. In this study, Yeh also noted other middle school student involvements in social movements during the teens and twenties. pp. 2, 133, 139, 148-49,

⁷ Kathleen Hartford, “Fits and Starts: The Chinese Communist Party in Rural Hebei, 1921-1936,” in *New Perspectives on the Chinese Communist Revolution*, ed. Tony Saich and Hans van de Ven (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharp, 1995), pp. 153.

⁸ Odoric Y. K. Wou, *Mobilizing the Masses: Building Revolution in Henan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), pp. 77, 155, 181, 201.

⁹ Allison Rottmann, *Resistance, Urban Style: The New Fourth Army and Shanghai, 1937-1945* (Ph.D. dissertation, U.C. Berkeley, 2007).

¹⁰ It seems that college students were overrepresented as leaders and martyrs in the Communist movement given that less than 10% of student population ever reach college level. However, due to the high regard accorded to college students both in the Communist movement and Chinese society at large, they typically had better access to important posts in the CCP hierarchy and attract greater attention from the society, including historians such as the compilers of *Dictionary of Chinese Youth Movements*. Furthermore, a good number of these college students became political active during their middle school years. See Zhang, Jingru, et. al, *Zhongguo Qingnian Yudong Cidian* [The dictionary of Chinese youth movements]. (Shijiazhuang: Hubei renming chubanshe, 1989).

¹¹ The nrollment of four-year and two-year colleges together was 53,410. *Zhongguo diyici jiaoyu nianjian* (1933), v.2, pp. 194-95; v. 5, pp. 97, 102.

¹² The two most notable studies are John Isreal’s *Student Nationalism in China, 1927-1937* and Jeffery N. Wasserstrom’s *Student Protests in Twentieth-Century: The View from Shanghai* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).

¹³ Ai Disheng.

¹⁴ “Fakan ci” (Mission statement), *SSM*, no. 1 (January 1930): 1.

¹⁵ Zhou Yangzhou’s letter to the editor in *MSS*, no. 3 (March 1930): 162-63.

¹⁶ The following discussion is based on Margaret Beetham’s paper, “Towards a Theory of the Periodical as A Publishing Genre,” in *Investigating Victorian Journalism*, eds. Laurel Brake, Aled Jones, and Lionel Madden (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1990).

¹⁷ Bakhtin maintains that there are two forces in operation whenever language is used: centripetal force and centrifugal force. On the one hand, the centripetal force tries to get rid of differences among languages or rhetorical modes (the journalistic, the religious, the political, the economic, the academic, the personal) in order to present one unified language. On the other hand, centrifugal force tends to move language toward multiplicity by including a wide variety of different ways of speaking, different rhetorical strategies and vocabularies. Mikhail Bakhtin, “Discourse of the Novel,” in *The Dialogic Imagination*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), pp. 259-422.

¹⁸ Gu Junzhen, “*Zhongxue sheng shi zengyang chuangkan de?*” (How was *Middle-School Students* founded?) *SSM*, no. 200 (June 1848): 6.

¹⁹ These intellectuals were caught in an uncomfortable position of being too “red” for the government and not “red” enough for the League. The League was initiated by Lu Xun and his disciples and the previous members of radical Creation Society and Sun Society. With a few exceptions, none of the previous members of the Literary Research Association were invited. It seems that even for a political organization such as the League, the personal network was an important criterion in its decisions regarding membership.

²⁰ Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao zhuanlun*, pp. 493-96.

²¹ This practice of having multiple contributors to this section continued throughout the rest of the run of the magazine but the entries were not always signed for issues after 1934.

²² Tao was one of the most controversial intellectuals of the Republican era. His writings on Chinese history and the nature of Chinese society printed as the prominent opening piece to many issues of *MSS* continued the “great debate on Chinese social history” (*Zhongguo shehui shi da lunzhan*) started in the late 1920s. All the participants entered the debate fully aware of the profound implications different interpretations of the nature and course of Chinese history would have on the definition of the nature and goals of the on-going Chinese revolution. Tao challenged both the competing theories held by the CCP and by Chinese Trotskyites who had newly split from the party. The Trotskyites emphasized the role of commerce in eroding the Chinese feudal system, which they believed declined during the Eastern Zhou dynasty (1066-771 BCE). However, due to some unique characteristics, they maintained that the Chinese society failed to enter the stage of capitalism and continued to be in a prolonged “transitional period.” The CCP official view at the time, which would change later, denied the transformative power of commerce and insisted that Chinese society since the Western Zhou dynasty (771-221 BCE) till their own time had been feudalistic. Moving a step beyond economic determinism, Tao Xisheng took into consideration the forces of politics and law. He maintained that Western Zhou dynasty witnessed a division between those who controlled the government and law and those who dominated the economy. According to him, the Chinese feudal (economic) system had collapsed while other feudal forces were intact until his day. In 1930, Guo Moruo joined the debate by applying the full set of Marxist stages of development in his periodization and analysis of Chinese history. He thus located a primitive communism in pre-Zhou China and a slave society during the Zhou. Lin Yutang was a controversial figure in his own right for his literary humorism. At this time in his career, he ceased to be Lu Xun’s comrade-in-arms and would soon be a target of both the leftists and pro-GMD rightists.

²³ “Gei jinri de qingnian,” *SSM*, no. 21 (January 1932): 15-70, 294. This special issue was in print before the Japanese bombing of Shanghai on January 28, 1932.

²⁴ All submissions appeared in the magazine in the order in which they were received.

²⁵ “Gei jinri de qingnian,” *SSM*, no. 21 (January 1932): 16.

²⁶ no. 21 (January 1932): 16-17. Conspicuously missing here were the names of Hu Shi and his friends and colleagues at *Modern Critique* and *Crescent Moon* monthlies. Hu Shi, a close friend of He Binsong, was voicing the same view that students should focus on their studies as a means to save the nation in the long run. This proves once again that one’s personal connections were at least as important as one’s political

position in his or her inclusion and exclusion in cultural organizations and activities during the Republican period.

²⁷ See contributions from Yu Ziyi, Liu Zhanen, Zheng Zhengwen, Zheng Zonghai, and Zhang Yinian, *SSM*, no. 21 (January 1932): 27, 50, 54-55, 69.

²⁸ See the contributions by Du, Tao, and Lu Xun in *SSM*, no. 21 (January 1932): 18, 19-27, 68-69. Du happened to have a full eight pages of words to spare while Lu Xun's advice was only three sentences, making Du's piece carry at least more paper weight than his fair share.

²⁹ The section called "Discussion Forum" (*Wenti taolun*) was featured in a three-year run in *MSS* from 1931-1933.

³⁰ The topics are listed in Xu Jili, "Zhongxue sheng he zhongxue sheng" (*Middle-School Students and middle-school students*) *MSS*, no. 21 (January 1932): 223-238.

³¹ *MSS*, no. 2 (February 1930).

³² See editor's preface to "Zhongguo xianzai zhongxu sheng de chulu," *MSS*, no 6 (September 1930): 2-3. Kollentai's novella advocates sexual liberation. This last "award" was meant to ridicule Kaiming's early focus on the issue of sexuality.

³³ Cited in Chen Fukang, *Zheng Zhenduo zhuan*, p. 219.

³⁴ For more information on the incident, see Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao zhuanlun*: 495.

³⁵ See the seven winning essays printed in *MSS*, no 6 (September 1930): 4-80.

³⁶ Lin Yutang, "Dushu jieji de chifan wenti," *SSM*, no 6 (September 1930): 81-86.

³⁷ Yu Dafu, "Zhongxuesheng xiang naili zou?" in *MSS*, *ibid*, 93-97.

³⁸ See Xu Diaofu, "Zhongxue sheng er bai qi huigu" (A review of *Middle-School Students* on the occasion of its 200th issue), *MSS*, no. 200 (June 1948): 14.

³⁹ Marie-Claire Bergere, "The Chinese Bourgeoisie, 1911-1937," in *Cambridge History of China*, ed. John King Fairbank (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983): 920 (Chinese edition).

⁴⁰ See contributions by Wenxin and Xu Jili to the discussion forum, "Ben zhi yin zengyang gaijing" (How to improve this magazine), *MSS*, no. 30 (December 1932): 55, 237-38.

⁴¹ See contributions by Zhi Sheng and Ye Zhongwu to the Discussion Forum, "Benzhi yin zengyang gaijing" (How to improve this magazine), *MSS*, no. 30 (December 1932), 56, 60-61; and contributions by Yu Zhou and Liu Yiqiu to discussion forum, "Pin 1933 nian de Zhongxue sheng zazhi" (Evaluating 1933 issues of *Middle-School Students*), *MSS*, no. 40 (December 1933): 45-47, 50.

⁴² Both Yu Zhou and Liu Yiqiu's contributions to the Discussion Forum offered a break down of entries in various categories and came to the conclusion that math and sciences constituted 24.4% of the 1933 issues. See "Pin 1933 nian de Zhongxue sheng zazhi" (Evaluating 1933 issues of *Middle-School Students*), *MSS*, no. 40 (December 1933): 46, 50.

⁴³ Wen-hsin Yeh discusses the ideological reasoning behind the GMD's policy in *The Alienated Academy*, pp. 192-93.

⁴⁴ Yu Zhou, pp. 46-47.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*.

⁴⁶ Both Jin Zhonghua and Zhang Ming soon joined the editorial board of *Shijie zhishi* (World Affairs) which was founded by Hu Yuzhi, already a CCP member, and by a few other Communists and fellow-travelers. The magazine was first published by Shenghuo Press in 1934 before it launched its own press.

⁴⁷ The portion of mathematics and sciences decreased from 24.4% of the 1933 run to only 9.77% of the 1934 run. See Liu Yiqiu, "1934 nian de ben zhi" (1934 run of *Middle-School Students*), *MSS*, no. 51 (January 1935): 345-48.

⁴⁸ After *Shenghuo Weekly* was closed down by the GMD, Zou started another weekly in 1935 entitled *Dazhong shenghuo* (Life of the masses) whose circulation went straight up to 200,000. See *Shudian Shigao* (Historical Materials on Shenghuo Press) (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1995), pp. 22, 61.

⁴⁹ Vera Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment*, p. 1.

⁵⁰ See for example Tse-tsung Chow, *The May Fourth Movement*, Chapter 14.

⁵¹ Song Yunbing, "Renshi nide zuguo" (Understand your motherland), *Middle School Student Wartime Biweekly* (Zhongxue sheng zhanshi banyue kan, thereafter *MSSWB*), no. 1 (May 1939): 12-13.

⁵² For opposition to the East-West blend, see for example Lin Yutang, "Jiqi yu jingshen" (Machines and spirituality), *MSS*, no. 2 (February 1930): 1-12.

⁵³ For the argument for the May Fourth totalistic anti-traditionalism, see Yu-sheng Lin, *The Crisis of Chinese Consciousness*.

- ⁵⁴ Tao Xisheng, for example, called Confucius “a revolutionary of his own time.” See his “Dui Zhongguo zuo rushi guan” (My view of China), *MSS*, no. 1 (January 1930): 9-16. Many others concurred. None of them, however, followed Kang Youwei in seeing Confucius’s ideas as providing unfailing inspiration for modern times. In another words, these intellectuals treated Confucius as a great historical figure whose teaching has become out of date.
- ⁵⁵ Zhou Yutong, “Xiao jing xin lun” (New analysis on the book of filial piety), *MSS*, no. 69 (November 1936), 20-21.
- ⁵⁶ Xu Shoushang, “Qingnian qi de dushu” (Reading materials for the youth), *MSS*, no. 76 (July 1937):11-15. For direct rebuttals, see for example the editorial of the September 1933 issue, “Reading the classics” (*Du jing*), *MSS*, no. 37, 5-6.
- ⁵⁷ See the three entries commemorating the French Revolution in *MSSWB*, no. 6 (July 1937).
- ⁵⁸ Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei dangshi ziliao zhengji weiyuanhui, *Shanghai geming wenhua dashiji* (a Chronical of Revolutionary Cultural Events in Shanghai) (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1995), p. 442.
- ⁵⁹ The first set of “casual scripts” was proposed by Ye Shengtao, Chen Wangdao, Hu Yuzhi, and other leading intellectuals and educators. For the magazine’s position on this issue, see “Tuixing shoutou zi yuanqi” (Reasons for promoting casual handwriting scripts), *MSS*, no. 53 (March 1935), reprinted in Zhang Jinglu, *Zhongguo Jing-Xian Dai Chuban Shijiao* [Historical Materials on Publishing of Modern China], vol. 4 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 2003), pp. 306-10; Ye Shengtao, “Guanyu shoutou zi” (On casual handwriting scripts), *MSS*, no. 54 (April 1935): 10. See also Yang Jianwen, “80 nian qian de yici wenzi jianhua changshi” (An attempt to simplify Chinese written script eighty years ago), in *Banyue tan*, http://news.xinhuanet.com/banyt/2005-01/25/content_2505666.htm, accessed on September 8, 2006.
- ⁶⁰ “Jinian diershiwu du de shuangshi jie” (Commemorating the twentieth-fifth anniversary of the 1911 Revolution), *MSS*, no. 68 (September 1936): 2.
- ⁶¹ Socialists of various schools as well as other utopian visionaries such as Kang Youwei in his *Datong shu* (*On great harmony*, written in 1901-02) shared a belief in the ultimate dissolution of the state and national boundaries.
- ⁶² Hu Yuzhi, “Guojia yu qingnian” (Nation and youth), *MSS*, no. 34 (April 1933): 1-3.
- ⁶³ “Guojia guannian he aiguo” (The Concept of nation and patriotism), *MSS*, no. 70 (December 1937): 4-5.
- ⁶⁴ “To hold hands with feudal elements” was a phrase coined by Ai Siqi, a Marxist philosopher. His proposal won wide approval among many May Fourth veterans. For a discussion of intellectuals willing to compromise their enlightenment agenda to maximize the forces that would prevent China from “national extinction,” see Vera Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment*, pp. 230-36.
- ⁶⁵ “Guanyu benqi de teji” (About this special issue), *MSS*, no. 66 (August 1936): 1-2.
- ⁶⁶ Song Yunbin, “Dongbei shibian zhi lishi de jieda” (A Study of the Manchuria crisis from a historical perspective), *MSS*, no. 21 (January 1932): 87-98. See also August 1936 editorial, “Lishi de jiaoxun” (Lessons from history), *MSS*, no. 66, 3-4.
- ⁶⁷ See for example Song Yunbin, “Dongbei shibian zhi lishi de jieda;” and Fu Binren (Fu Binran), “Qingnian duiyu shishi he zisheng de renshi” (The need for young people to understand current affairs and your own position), *MSS*, no. 21 (January 1932): 71-86. Mao Dun called for a united front with the Japanese proletariat (Ribei de wuchan dazhong) in a revolution to overthrow the Japanese capitalist and imperialist rule. See his “Dikang yu fangong” (“Resistance” and “Fighting Back,” an editorial), *MSS*, no. 32 (February 1933): 1-3.
- ⁶⁸ For example, in his contribution to January 1932 issue special section, “Words to Today’s Youth,” Du Yaquan referred to “People’s Livelihood” in the Three People’s Principle as “steady socialism” (*wenjian de shehuizhuyi*). According to him, it was more preferable to Soviet Russia’s “extremist socialism” (*guoji de shehuizhuyi*), *MSS*, no. 21 (January 1932): 5.
- ⁶⁹ Song Yunbing, “Renshi nide zuguo” (Understand your motherland), serialized in *MSSWB*, nos. 1-4 (May-June 1939): 12-13, 6-7, 11-12, 6-7.
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁷¹ See Arif Dirlik’s discussion of the popularity of anarchism and anarchist views on labor and class during May Fourth in his *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, pp. 150-56, 186-90.
- ⁷² Arif Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, p. 186.
- ⁷³ Some readers even mistook the magazine as a publication of Lida Academy. See Jiang Yaguang’s letter to the editor, *MSS*, no. 3 (March 1930): 167.

- ⁷⁴ Kuang Husheng, "Lida xueyuan tongchang gaikuang" (A general report on the farms of Lida Academy), *MSS*, no. 1 (January 1930): 285-286.
- ⁷⁵ Dayi, "Du Muoposang de 'Xianglian'" (Reading Maupassant's "Necklace"), *MSS*, no. 4 (April 1930): 116-19.
- ⁷⁶ Jin Zhonghua, "Qingnian yu laodong" (Youth and work), *MSS*, no. 25 (May 1932): 7-26.
- ⁷⁷ *Ibid.* Immediately following this lengthy treatise in this May 1932 issue was a ten-page report also by Jin on world affairs, testifying to his growing influence at the magazine. He joined the editorship the following year.
- ⁷⁸ Lydia Liu, *Translingual Practice*, Chapter 3.
- ⁷⁹ Arif Dirlik has offered great insights to the relationship of the individual to the society in Chinese anarchist thoughts in his *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, pp. 26-28.
- ⁸⁰ See Arif Dirlik's discussion of the relationship between "discourse" and "ideology," *ibid.*, pp. 35-39.
- ⁸¹ Fu Binren (Binran), "Qingnian duiyu shishi he zisheng de renshi" (What the youth need to understand about current affairs and the position they should take," *MSS*, no. 21 (January 1932): 71-86.
- ⁸² For a discussion of class situation of intellectuals, see Vera Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment*, pp. 184-94.
- ⁸³ Chen Duxiu made an important distinction of what he called "new youth" from the majority of the country's young generation who, though tender in their biological age, had succumbed to old patterns of thought and behavior. Chen Duxiu, "Xin Qingnian" (New Youth), in *Duxiu wencun* (Collected Writings of Chen Duxiu), pp. 1-2.
- ⁸⁴ Major English-language studies on the students' role in these watershed events include Tse-tung Chow, *The May Fourth Movement*; Joseph Chen, *The May Fourth Movement in Shanghai* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971); John Isreal, *Student Nationalism in China, 1927-1937*; Jeffery N. Wasserstrom, *Student Protests in Twentieth-Century: The View from Shanghai* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).
- ⁸⁵ The motto is said to be inscribed on the Temple of Apollo at Delphi in ancient Greece.
- ⁸⁶ Xia Mianzun, *MSS*, no. 1 (January 1930): 2-8.
- ⁸⁷ *Shenghuo* weekly started as an organ of Chinese Society for Vocational Education. For its target audience, see Wen-hsin Yeh, "Progressive Journalism and Shanghai's Petty Urbanites: Zou Taofeng and the *Shenghuo* Enterprise, 1926-1945," in *Shanghai Sojourners*, ed. Fredrick Wakeman and Wen-hsin Yeh. Berkeley: California University Press, 1992), pp. 190-95.
- ⁸⁸ "Fa kan ci" (Inaugural manifesto), *MSS*, no. 1 (January 1930): 1.
- ⁸⁹ In *Dreams of Red Chamber*, for example, the term is used to refer to the students at the clan school of the powerful Jia family. Cao Xueqing, *Honglou Meng* (Dreams of the Red Chamber) (Beijing: Renming wenxue chubanshe, 1990), p. 83. In pre-twentieth-century China, schools of any type accepted only male students.
- ⁹⁰ Liang Qichao, "Shaonian Zhongguo shuo, [On young China]," *Qingyi bao*, no. 35 (1900). Liang adopted *shaonian* for youth, a term which was used interchangeably with *qingnian* at the time. The largest May Fourth organization established in 1919, for example, adopted Liang Qichao's phraseology and called itself *Shaonian Zhongguo xuehui*. In the aftermath of May Fourth, "*qingnian*" became the popularly accepted term for young male and females from the late teens up to late twenties while *shaonian* referred to early teenagers. For pre-May Fourth usage of the term "*qingnian*" as "youth," see, for example, Feng Ziyou, *Geming yishi, chuji*, p. 115, cited in Shanghai shi qinyun shi yanjiuhui, *Shanghai Xuesheng Yundong Shi* [History of Shanghai Student Movement] (Shanghai: Xueling chubanshe, 1995), p. 17.
- ⁹¹ Chen Duxiu, "Jingao qingnian" (Call to the Youth) *New Youth* 1, no. 1 (1915): 1. This was the opening essay of the inaugural issue of the magazine.
- ⁹² *Ibid.*
- ⁹³ Li Jinte, "Liangge ren zai lushang (Two people on the road)," *MSS*, no. 10 (December 1930): 137-38.
- ⁹⁴ See Chapter 4, fn. 115.
- ⁹⁵ For student protests during the late Qing years, see Sang Bin. *Wan Qing xuetao xuesheng yu shehui bianqian* [Students of late Qing schools and social change] (Shanghai: Xueling chubanshe, 1995).
- ⁹⁶ Cited in Chow Tse-tung, *May Fourth Movement*. (Chinese version), p. 103.
- ⁹⁷ Until the reform of 1922, the school system under the Republic offered four years of lower primary school (*chuxiao*), three years of upper primary school (*gaoxiao*), four years of middle school (*zhongxue*) and one to three years of preparatory school (*yuke*) and three to four years of college (*benke*). Accordingly, middle-school students were between the ages of thirteen and seventeen. But in reality, students tended to

be older than what was deemed ideal. The undergraduate program (*benke*) of Beijing University resembled more today's graduate programs than undergraduate programs because after six years of middle school and prior to one's admission to *benke*, one had to go through a three year Preparation Program (*yuke*). See Li Huaying, et al., *Mingguo Jiaoyu shi* [The history of education during the Republican era] (Shanghai: Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshe, 1997), pp. 98-108.

⁹⁸ While few have focused on middle-school students in their studies on student movements in the first half of the twentieth century, many noted their presence. See for example, John Israel, *Student Nationalism in China, 1927-1937*, pp. 3, 48, 103, 116, 143-52, passim.

⁹⁹ *MSS*, no. 10 (December 1930): 57.

¹⁰⁰ Sang Bin, *Wan Qing Xuetao Xuesheng*, pp. 150-51. This estimate was based on a 1886 survey of schools in seven relatively prosperous provinces.

¹⁰¹ See Zhou Weiqun's discussion of the term in his "Zai lun qingnian de shenghuo wenti (Returning to the question of the life of youth)," *Common* (November 1926): 333, 337.

¹⁰² Sang Bin, *Wan Qing xuetao xuesheng.*, pp. 171-72.

¹⁰³ Sang Bin, *Wan Qing xuetao xuesheng*, p. 155-56.

¹⁰⁴ For college enrollment, see *Diyici Zhongguo jiaoyu nianjian* (vol. 5). pp. 29-30; and Li Huaying, et al. *Mingguo jiaoyu shi.*, pp. 606, 613. While higher education failed to expand in the period under study, it did so during the war years of the 1940s. Between 1940 to 1947, college enrollment increased more than three-fold. For middle school enrollment, see *Diyici Zhongguo jiaoyu nianjian*, vol. 5., pp. 137-38; The Ministry of Education, ROC. *Dierci Zhongguo jiaoyu nianjian* [The second education yearbook] (Taipei: Zongqing tushu gongsi, 1948, reprinted in 1982)., pp. 1435-36. By 1945, the middle school population increased to 1,566,392, close to 19 times larger than its college counterpart, which was 83,948.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, dingbian (vol. 5), p. 125.

¹⁰⁶ *MSS*, no. 13 (March 1931): 33-42.

¹⁰⁷ One of the "Four Confucian Texts" (*Sishu*), *Great Learning* (*Daxue*), spells out the eight principles for the educated to follow: Study physical existence, understand the essence of being; rectify one's intentions, curb one's (selfish) desires and (excessive) emotions, cultivate one's moral character, harmonize one's family, govern one's country wisely, and bring peace and order to the world." In an open letter to his fellow students, a reader wrote, "You must contribute to the building of a new society which is characterized by progress and peace, prosperity, and equal rights and responsibilities among all. Your responsibility should be for the whole society. Therefore, you must forsake the selfish notion that education was for your own wellbeing and the profit of your family." See "Zhi womeng de tongban," *MSS* no. 2 (February 1930): 98-99.

¹⁰⁸ Xu Ziming, "A Survey of Lives and Aspirations of Jiaying Middle-School Students," *MSS*, no. 44, (April 1934): 89-109.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*.

¹¹⁰ *MSS*, no. 1 (January 1930): 22.

¹¹¹ Xia Mianzun, *MSS*, no. 1 (January 1930): 7-8.

¹¹² In the same editorial, Xia also wrote, "Today's Chinese youth are avidly consuming Marxist literature.... Western youth of capitalist societies are indulging in escapism while Eastern youth are weary about feudal hero-worship and inclined toward revolution." See Xia Mianzun, "Dong Xi fang xuesheng sixiang," *MSS*, no. 24 (April 1932): 1-2.

¹¹³ *MSS*, no. 21 (January 1932): 15-70.

¹¹⁴ Xu Gusheng's entry to the contest in *MSS*, no. 27, (October 1932), 53-54.

¹¹⁵ *MSS*, no. 36 (September 1933).

¹¹⁶ The image is taken from Jeffery Wasserstrom, *Student Protests in Twentieth-Century China*, p. 125.

¹¹⁷ Marie-Claire Bergere, "Chinese Bourgeoisie, 1911-1937," p. 920.

¹¹⁸ *MSS*, no. 3 (March 1930): 165.

¹¹⁹ Olga Lang, *Chinese Family and Society* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1946)., p. 274.

¹²⁰ Lu Meishan "Zixue de de shi" (The pros and cons of studying on one's own), *MSS* no. 24 (April 1932): 86. See also Xia Mianzun, "Ni xu zhidao ziji," *MSS*, no. 1 (January 1930): 3.

¹²¹ Jonathan Spence, *Search for Modern China* (New York: Norton, 1999). p. 426. Olga Lang, *Chinese Family and Society* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1946). pp. 83, 88. An elementary teacher sometimes only earned a salary of 240 yuan annually.

¹²² See Olga Lang's definition of the middle class, *ibid*, p. 92.

¹²³ See Xia Mianzun, “Ni xu zhidao ziji,” *MSS*, no. 1 (January 1930): 3; and , no. 24 (April 1932): 86. For more information on tuitions, fees, and other typical expenditures of colleague students, see also Wen-hsin Yeh, *The Alienated Academy*, pp. 195-202, 226-28. Yeh points out that, while tuition and fees constituted a significant proportion of the cost of attending college, food, clothing, and activities often took up the lion share of the total costs.

¹²⁴ *MSS*, no. 44, p. 92.

¹²⁵ See fn. 108 of this chapter. Indeed, one typically learnt these skills on the job as an apprentice rather than from expensive schooling. And such jobs were exactly what middle-school students tried to keep at arms length.

¹²⁶ See the forum, “Zhi wenxue qingnian,” *MMS*, no. 15 (May 1931): 1-24. See also the editorial, “Gao yuanyi xiansheng yu wenxue di qingnian,” *MSS*, no. 56 (September 1935): 1-2.

¹²⁷ *MSS*, no. 6, pp. 6-7, 22-23; no. 7, pp. 12-14.

¹²⁸ I derive the figures from the charts in *Dierci Zhongguo jiaoyu nianjian.*, v. 10, p. 1433; and Li Huaying, et al, *Mingguo jiaoyu shi.* p. 606.

¹²⁹ *MSS*, no. 46 (September 1934): 16.

¹³⁰ Xia Mianzun, “Ni xu zhidao ziji,” *MSS*, no. 1 (January 1930): 5.

¹³¹ Wen-hsin Yeh, *The Alienated Academy*, p. 197.

¹³² *Lenbao* (Hankou, 1931) cited in Li Ziqiang’s contribution to “Discussion of Middle School Student’s Future,” *MSS*, no. 6 (October 1930): 23-24.

¹³³ *MSS*, no. 6, (October 1930): 63-64.

¹³⁴ Theoretically, regular middle schools were designed to prepare their students for higher education while normal schools and other vocational schools trained their students for the job market.

¹³⁵ Shu Xincheng, *Education Magazine*, v. 17, no. 4.

¹³⁶ Wang Yanan, “The Ill Fate of the Chinese Intellectual Class,” in *New China*, no. 19 (1933).

¹³⁷ *MSS*, no. 6, (October 1930): 63-64

¹³⁸ See for example Ai Disheng, “Qingnianmen de dasuan,” p. 28-29 and Xia Mianzun’s editorial, “Zixue he ziji jiaoyu,” *MSS* 71 (January 1937): 9-8.

¹³⁹ See Wen-hsin Yeh, *The Alienated Academy*, pp. 202-205.

¹⁴⁰ Ai Disheng, p. 28.

¹⁴¹ Ye Fei, “Tan shiye,” *MSS*, no. 74 (April 1937): 169.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ Wang Huacheng, “Biye ji shiye,” *MSS*, no. 52 (February 1935): 195-96.

¹⁴⁴ Jin Zhonghua, “Qingnian yu jiaoyu,” *MSS*, no. 37 (October 1933): 10-12.

¹⁴⁵ Xia Mianzun, “Student suicide, problem of chulu.” *MSS*, no. no. 8 (1930).

¹⁴⁶ *MSS*, no. 43 (March 1934): 204.

¹⁴⁷ See fn. 30 of this chapter.

¹⁴⁸ *MSS*, no. 23 (March 1932): 199.

¹⁴⁹ See the discussion of the naming of the Lida Academy in Chapter Two.

¹⁵⁰ See for Joseph Esherick, “Ten Thesis on the Chinese Revolution” in *Twenty-Century China: New Approaches*, edited by Jeffery Wasserstrom (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 37-65. For a brief discussion of the GMD’s ideology, see Peter Zarrow, *China in War and Revolution, 1895-1949* (New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 212, 256-57.

¹⁵¹ Jeffrey Wasserstrom, ed. *Twenty-Century China: New Approaches* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 103. In his study of 20th-century student movements, Wasserstrom demonstrates the attempts by the GMD at mobilization especially among youth. Jeffrey Wasserstrom, *Student Protests in Twentieth-Century*.

¹⁵² Wen-Hsin Yeh offers a discussion on the GMD state penetration of college colloquia. See her *The Alienated Academy*, 176-79. *MSS* offered a consistent critique of this GMD effort.

¹⁵³ John Israel, *Student Nationalism in China, 1927-1937*, p. 194.

**EPILOGUE “A NORTHERN EXCURSION OF ZHI,” OR
KNOWLEDGEABLE ELEMENTS MAKE A PILGRIMAGE TO BEIJING**

In the protective darkness of the night on February 27, 1949, a group of 27 men and women secretly boarded a cargo ship in Hong Kong. Over the span of a few months, they had left their homes in Shanghai to travel separately and incognito to this southern city. Twelve of them, all older men and women, went aboard as passengers. The rest were disguised as crewmembers. Anything that might betray their true identities was left behind. To further distract the Hong Kong police, the ship flew a Portuguese flag. Still, the nervous looks on the passengers' faces raised the suspicion of two policemen who thought that they were engaged in smuggling. The police searched their luggage but found nothing. Early next morning, right before the ship weighed anchor, a Hong Kong Customs officer discovered a suspicious photo in a suitcase of an elderly passenger. After a long negotiation and a bribe, the ship was finally allowed to leave Hong Kong. The next day, everyone in the group rehearsed their lines so they could better respond to future interrogations by police. After six days of uneventful journey, the entourage went ashore in Yantai, Shandong, a province already under Communist control. From there, they were courted by a succession of local Communist leaders as they continued to travel toward Beijing.¹

The trip had been planned with the logistic and financial help of the CCP since September 1948, a full eight months before the CCP takeover of Shanghai. Among the invitees, we find five important Kaiming figures. They included Ye Shengtao, successor to Xia Mianzun Kaiming's editor-in-chief after the latter's death in 1946; Zheng Zhenduo who had been on Kaiming's board of directors since the late 1920s; Song Yunbin and Fu

Binran who were senior editors and major voices in *Middle School Students* since the early 1930s; and Zhang Shiming who was Zhang Xichen's son and a project manager for the press. In a sense, these five men represented Kaiming in making this historic journey even though all of them except Zhang Xichen's son were prominent writers in their own right. Other well-known intellectuals on this journey included Cheng Shutong, a senior director of Shangwu; Ma Yinchu, a leading economist; Liu Yazhi, a leader of the Democratic League and famous poet; Wang Yunsheng and Xu Zhucheng, both of whom had served as editor-in-chief of the influential *Dagong bao*; and Cao Yu, the foremost playwright of the Republican era. In late 1948, the Central Committee of the CCP had secretly extended invitations to several hundred influential intellectuals, asking them to come to the newly captured old capital city of Beijing to help form the Chinese Political Consultant Committee.² This group of 27 travelers was the largest among the two dozen CCP-organized groups that made the trip northward.

The six-day boat journey from Hong Kong to Shandong was marked by hope and exuberance. Like the literati gatherings of imperial times, these intellectual friends and their spouses indulged in daily dinner parties where each took turns singing traditional operas, writing classical poetry, exchanging stories about politics and history, and playing majiang, a popular Chinese tile game. Ye, Song, and Zheng all loved to have a drink with dinner and had brought along a dozen bottles of brandy for the trip. Xu Zhucheng was persuaded to join them to make a traditional party of four, or the "four big drinking immortals" (*sida jiuxian*), as they were jokingly called. In an exhilarated mood, the 63-year-old Liu Yazhi composed poems as a souvenir for all the 27 passengers including himself. In more than one poem, he compared the journey as movement "towards a

shining light” (*xiang guangming*).³ One of his folk-style ballads that later became a standard in the large body of paeans to Mao reads:

The sun rises to redden the whole land,
 We now have a Mao Zedong.
 After suffering for 3,000 years,
 A liberated people sing in boundless joy.

The journey was indeed a pilgrimage of intellectuals to the new Communist capital. On the first day when it was Ye’s turn to perform for the group, he instead offered a riddle: “We are embarking on a trip.” This line was the title of a piece in the Daoist classic *Zhuangzi*. The quick-witted Song Yunbin immediately solved the riddle’s double meaning as “a northern excursion of zhi” (“Zhi bei you). Here, the character “zhi” is a pun referring to both a mystic persona in *Zhuangzi* as well as the first character of the neologism, “zhishi fenzi” or “knowledgeable elements,” a term for intellectuals that had gained currency since the mid-1920s.⁴ In compliance to Song’s request of a poem as his reward, Ye composed a seven-word *lu*⁵:

A long journey; we’ve embarked first southward then northward.
 The joy is sharing the rendezvous with kindred minds.
 A liberated people turn over a fresh page in history;
 I am asked to join the planning for a new motherland.
 Never shall I fall behind in putting my brick in the the new structure that is China,
 Just like a creek shouldn’t meander too much before merging into the ocean.
 Let’s all do our part whether our talent is small or grand.
 No need for inhibition in expressing our ambitions.⁶

Many of the shipmates then wrote seven-word *lu* in response, using the same rhyme scheme and ending characters as Ye’s original poem. The four middle lines of Song’s poem read:

In no time the great army will sweep cross the river Yangzi;
 [Intellectuals] shall halt our chamber talks on national affairs.
 Let’s set on a new course to learn from the people;
 With new resolve and insight we search for the truth.⁷

If Ye's lines lacked poetic refinement and brilliance, Song's sounded like a precursor to the lyrical platitudes of the Maoist era. A common theme emerged from the writings of the intellectuals on board: their profound humility and readiness to serve the new Communist state.



25. A pilgrimage to Beijing by boat (February 1949)
 Top row far left: Fu Binran, Song Yunbin, Zheng Zhenduo (4th from left), and
 Ye Shengtao (5th from left).
 Source: Fu Guoyong, *1949 nian*, p. 299.

What brought intellectuals, perhaps even the majority of the well-established names, on board the CCP bandwagon before its final triumph? The question is meaningful here because most of the intellectuals on this particular trip did not swim in what was identified as the Marxist or leftist literary and cultural streams of the late 1920s. They were subsequently excluded from the League of Left-wing Writers in the early 1930s. Neither did they become fellow travelers during the war years. It is beyond the scope of this study to fully address the reasons for this intellectual pilgrimage to the Communist capital. However, a quick look at the intellectual trajectory of Kaiming and

its associated intellectuals will shed light on the reorientation of Chinese *zhishi fenzi*, or the “knowledgeable elements” of society.

The most immediate explanation can be found in intellectuals’ profound disillusionment with the GMD regime and fear of the regime’s political revenge against their criticism during the final moments of its rule. Indeed, the Kaiming intellectuals had been critical of the government since the early 1930s, especially in Kaiming’s flagship magazine, *Middle School Students*. Prior to this time, the press was not in direct opposition to the government even though its politics were decidedly left-leaning. This had to do with its close association to the anarchist experimentation of the Lida Academy as well as the personal ties of its writers to prominent figures on the Nationalist left such as Liu Dabai, Shao Lizhi, and Li Shizheng. These associations set Kaiming apart from the leftist mainstream. During the pre-war thirties, however, Jiang Jieshi’s non-resistance to Japan and cultural conservatism domestically turned Kaiming and *Middle School Students* into a major critical voice against the government. For a short time after the outbreak of the War of Resistance, Kaiming intellectuals tried to rally support for the GMD only to be disillusioned by military incompetence, rampant corruption, and the regime’s continuing conservative and repressive politics.

Ye Shengtao perhaps best represented this hardening of opposition to Nationalist rule. Ye officially joined Kaiming in 1931, assumed the chief editorship of *Middle School Students* in 1939 when the magazine was revived as a wartime bimonthly in the interior, and became the chief editor of the press in 1946.⁸ His loss of faith in the GMD was well illustrated by his support for his son Zhicheng, who planned to abscond for Yan’an when he faced the GMD’s military draft in 1944.⁹ After the start of the Civil War

in 1946, Ye's anger towards the Nationalists grew in intensity. That year, he joined many other writers and publishers in protesting the GMD's censorship laws. Under his leadership, Kaiming and *Middle School Students* refused to submit their galley proofs to government inspectors.¹⁰ Ye was outraged by the assassination of Li Gongpu and Wen Yiduo, whom he called fighters who had given their lives for democracy.¹¹ When he received an official invitation to attend Jiang Jieshi's sixtieth birthday celebration, he showed his defiance by joining his leftist friends on the same day to celebrate instead the sixtieth birthday of the Communist commander Zhu De. During the event, he uncharacteristically got drunk and openly wept.¹² Perhaps his emotional breakdown indicated more of his frustration and bitterness towards the GMD than support for the CCP. In a 1946 poem "Indignation," he wrote,

....
 You love to call yourself revolutionary,
 Well then, I'd rather be called counter-revolutionary;
 But in your bones resides counter-revolution,
 And I am for counter-counter-revolution.¹³

This indeed was a declaration of his final break with Nationalist rule.

The process by which the CCP brought these intellectuals on board again reminds us of the pervasive use of friendship networks in Chinese intellectual and political life. On November 2, 1948, Ye was visited by his old Kaiming friend Wu Juenong who had had close ties with the Communist since the late 1930s and who conveyed to Ye the CCP's invitation to come to Beijing. After two months of anxious indecision, he and his wife left Shanghai on January 7, 1949. When they arrived in Hong Kong after a four-day sailing, the couple's anxiety was alleviated by the presence of many old friends who had arrived earlier. These friends included his current and former Kaiming colleagues Song

Yunbin, Fu Binran, Jin Zhonghua, and Zhang Xichen's oldest son Zhang Shiming, as well as Xia Yan. An author of Kaiming's earlier years as well as a card-carrying member of the CCP since 1927, Xia orchestrated the intellectual exodus in his capacity as a member at the top of the Communist organization in South China.¹⁴ Once in Hong Kong, Ye wrote to his Kaiming colleagues who still remained in Shanghai and asked that they inform Zheng Zhenduo to join him on the trip to protect Zheng from potential GMD retaliation.¹⁵ Ye seemed to voice genuine concern since he had heard rumors about his own name on a GMD blacklist, which had prompted him to sleep at his sister's house for months to avoid possible arrest.¹⁶ That fearful episode coincided with the arrival of the CCP invitation. Zheng had been, in fact, contacted by Communists about leaving for Beijing the previous September.¹⁷ Eventually all of the aforementioned were aboard the same cargo ship that headed north.

“Where to Go?”—Anxieties of the Intellectual Class

Their rejection of GMD rule and the influence of their networks notwithstanding, the deeper reason behind the enthusiasm toward the trip to Beijing can be located in the profound identity crisis Chinese intellectuals had experienced since the second half of the mid-1920s. This identity crisis preceded, and in many ways paralleled, the identity crisis of educated youth discussed in Chapter Five. The long years of war had witnessed a deepening of that crisis that culminated in this moment when many intellectuals chose to become “a creek” “merging into the ocean” of a new nation-state by, of, and for the people. The lettered elite had enjoyed a long tradition of monopoly on interpreting the cosmic process, and by extension, human society, on the behalf of the state. Since the

regularization of the civil service examination system during the Song dynasty (960-1279), the educated elite had evolved into a scholar-official class, which closely identified intellectuals with the state. In the waning years of the Qing, Chinese intellectuals became alienated from the state politically and financially. As they embraced the discourse of the nation, they began to identify themselves as prophets and moral leaders of a new Chinese nation. The modern, mechanized publishing and book market safeguarded the transition of intellectuals from the servants and advisors of the state to the representatives of the nation by allowing them an authoritative voice independent of the state.

During the May Fourth New Culture Movement and its immediate aftermath, intellectuals focused on using this new mass media to secure their legitimacy and influence. At the same time, they poised themselves to bring enlightenment to society and to remold their supposedly morally and intellectually inferior readers into self-aware, autonomous individuals and responsible members of a new society. As print capitalism increasingly came to define their very identity as the intellectual elite as well as furthering their financial well being, it paradoxically started to destabilize the very identity it had helped to create. It undermined these intellectuals' claim to exclusive cultural and moral authority over the buying public. By examining Kaiming's struggle to form a new relationship with the book market, this study has revealed the emergence of a new, less hierarchical cultural relationship between authors and their readers and a cultural space inclusive of active reader participation. As intellectuals became involved in cultural entrepreneurship, writing and publishing increasingly became as much a high-

minded mission as a down-to-earth profession. This transition imposed an often tormented self-reckoning on this May Fourth generation.

My perspective on the shifting power dynamics in the cultural field as a result of print capitalism and the professionalization of the intellectual adds a new and arguably more important dimension to the existing scholarship on the identity crisis of intellectuals in the post-May Fourth 1920s. In her classic study of the May Fourth Movement, Vera Schwarcz focuses on the political violence of the period, in particular the 1927 White Terror, as being responsible for the sudden and widespread loss of faith among intellectuals in their own role as the prophets and leaders of a Chinese revolution. She insists, correctly, that terror destroyed the unacknowledged prerequisite for the functioning of a rational faculty and thus precipitated a trend of self-questioning and despair among the intellectual elite. It also transformed their understanding of the role of the individual in social and political transformation. Politically humbled by mass action and state violence, the Chinese intelligentsia came to terms with their new class situation as mere *zhishi fenzi*, or knowledgeable elements, within the larger class category of the bourgeoisie.¹⁸ Here, I argue that the violence-induced loss of confidence of the May Fourth intellectuals coincided with their quieter but perhaps more keenly-felt distress that was caused by their economic struggles and precarious existence as new urban professionals. Indeed, the dissipation of the self-celebratory mood of the May Fourth generations coincided with a subsiding of the high tide of the New Culture Movement in the early 1920s, long before the bloody days when GMD's bullets struck. The famous case in point is Lu Xun, who in his despondency created vivid images of the indecision

and impotence of oftentimes misanthropic intellectuals in his *Wandering (Panghuang)*, a collection of short stories he produced in 1924-1925.

The Kaiming writers not only articulated their critical self-awareness, but also set that awareness in the context of the oppressiveness of mundane life in a rapidly commercializing world. The mid-1920s proved to be a defining moment of innocence lost. By then, even the younger generation of the May Fourth intellectuals was fast becoming middle-aged fathers (since only a few were mothers) and the breadwinners of their families. The weight of practical life heightened their doubts about the liberating power of their voices, a moment of innocence lost for the younger generation of the May Fourth intelligentsia. In 1923, Ye Shengtao moved to Shanghai from his hometown of Suzhou to join Shangwu as an editor, starting his long career in publishing. His short story, "Sickly Man" ("Bingfu"), written in the same year, about a provincial young man coming to the metropolis for an editing career, betrayed more than a faint hint of an autobiography. In the story, the young man's boss, the editor-in-chief, who was no more than a "philistine" and a "profit-slave," forced him to produce a fast book on "student cultivation" to be released for school curriculum use. Several dozens of colleagues, all "aspiring to entrepreneurship (*qiyexin*)," "mindlessly engaged in endless production" of "[cultural] commodities that would sell well on the market." Toiling like "chained criminals subjected to hard labor," these editors and staff writers dared to express "neither their opinions nor their true sentiments." His heavy workload, low pay, and meaningless job eventually turned the young man into a sickly and bitter cynic as well as a despairing self-doubter. In the end, the young editor cried out, "I hate myself!" "I am my own archenemy!" and "I want to destroy this 'I' all together!"¹⁹

Without fictional drama, Zhu Ziqing, previously an active member of *New Tide*, wrote with equal emotional intensity about his anguish over the professionalization of intellectuals, which had turned them into “a salaried class” (*xingong*), hard at work to make a living.²⁰ As shown earlier, the Kaiming intellectuals, like many others of their generation, placed themselves in both the publishing and education fields where they continued to teach even after they became published authors. The tedium of teaching grade school and the financial necessity to do so wore down their previously idealistic notion about being educators. In 1925, Zhu, at the time teaching at Chuhui Middle School, lamented:

“I am but a classroom menial (*jiaoshu jiang*). Having been a teaching hand for five long years, I feel suffocated! The black board is always so black, and the white chalk so white, and I keep on doing the same old thing! I had thought of life as a lively river flowing freely and turning into different shapes and ripple patterns at different juncture. Now a dam has been erected to stop its flow. How can our lives not feel confusing? One arrives at a dead end if one has to engage in a steady profession (*zhiye*).”²¹

Xia Mianzun, who became Kaiming’s editor-in-chief in 1927 while teaching part-time, put it more bluntly. “[I]f I do not go to class and teach, in the same way that prostitutes carry themselves off to their clients, I would not be able to feed my family.”²² As mentioned earlier, Xia also coined the phrase “small character retailers” to refer to free-lance writers, while Hu Yuzhi conceded that the Kaiming intellectual enterprise was unsustainable until it managed to gain a small share of the textbook market and so be able to fill the rice bowls of its editors and shareholders. Ultimately, schools were their employers when the young intellectuals went into teaching, and readers became their clientele when they engaged in publishing. Both set considerable constraints on them as free thinkers.

In the context of the rising class discourse and the emerging specter of a class war, their new-found middle-income professions forced intellectuals to acknowledge, however reluctantly, their new position as members of the urban bourgeoisie. Equating college-educated elite with a so-called “intellectual class,” Xia Mianzun highlighted its modern predicaments in 1928 and foreshadowed the discussion a few years later of the predicaments experienced by middle school students as evidenced in MSS:

Diamonds are precious but would be treated lightly if they were churned out in every corner of the world. While China’s education system is far from developed, those with higher education are still being turned out in great quantity. Thousands are coming out of colleges and universities annually in Shanghai alone. There must be tens of thousands nationwide. Where can they go?... It is pitiful to watch those well-educated who fail to find a rice bowl. Does it mean that those who are lucky enough to have a position can be optimistic about their condition? Absolutely not, absolutely not!²³

The above heart-wrenching cries demonstrate the condition of the aspiring modern-elite-turned-middle class. This salaried class, overproduced by the new school system, struggled for employment in a saturated job market. By the later 1920s, young educated men and women were finally coming to terms with the notion that it was hard enough to maintain a dignified existence as a national elite, let alone lead the nation to a revolutionary triumph.

Zhu Ziqing asked the painful question of “Where do we go?” in an article he published in the March 1928 issue of the Kaiming magazine, *The Common*.²⁴ Once they acknowledge themselves as members of the bourgeoisie, the May Fourth generations began to conduct self-examination and self-criticism. This started a fundamental questioning of the role of intellectuals in society and in historical change. While the New Culture Movement attacked the Confucian educated elite as keepers of the Confucian tradition, servants of the Confucian state, and exploiters of those who performed manual

labor, as Vera Schwarcz points out, the “accusatory finger [had] not been pointed selfward.”²⁵ Now, they turned the table on themselves. This was evidently encouraged by the rising slogan, “Down with the Intellectual Class” from the quarters of professional revolutionaries in the CCP and their fellow traveling groups such as the Sun Society (*Taiyang she*).²⁶ Under pressure from all directions, Zhu Ziqing despaired, “I dissect myself and see that I am unworthy of revolution!” He continued,

I have lived as a member of the petty-bourgeoisie for thirty years. My sentiments, interests, thoughts, moral notions, and habits are all those of a petty bourgeois. From foot to toe, from skin to bone, I am a thorough petty-bourgeois.... Without a new life, how can I find new strength to destroy [the old world] and to construct [a new world]? So it is out of the question that I become a vanguard for social revolution!²⁷

Zhu’s reflection on the impotence and, indeed “superfluous” nature of intellectuals and their visions in the post-May Fourth mass mobilization and social revolution was shared by the May Fourth generations for years to come. Ye Shengtao offered his reflections on the question in a 1931 article entitled, “The Uselessness of Education.” He began by confirming the arguments of his anarchist friend Zhou Yutong and Marxist friend Mao Dun,

Mr. Yutong has written an article entitled, “On the Crime of the Educated,” in which he asserts that intellectuals should go to the masses with a cross on their backs to atone for their sins. Mr. Hualu (aka Mao Dun) has published an article entitled, “On the Changing Position of the Educated and Uneducated” in which he insists that intellectuals switch positions with the common people and become the tools [*gongju*] of the masses for a change. I admire their willingness to speak honestly, to expose the truth behind the fancy facade of the intellectual elite, and their capacity for self-examination (*fanxing*). Now, I am writing to start my own self-examination.²⁸

One might be surprised at the intellectuals’ willingness and aptitude for self-dissection and criticism long before the CCP made it an effective tool for political suppression during the Yan’an era in the early 1940s. It would be helpful to remind us

that, in Confucian tradition, reflection (*zixing* or *neixing*) and self-criticism (*zisong*) were long promoted as an important means of self-cultivation for the noble mind to reach sagacity. While the manner in which Zhu Ziqing turned the surgeon's knife on himself risked cutting himself into historical irrelevancy, most of his friends took no such chances. Indeed, such a stringent exercise for them was perhaps far more for the purpose of self-renewal and self-regeneration rather than for the effect of self-denial. As they compared the May Fourth intelligentsia, as a whole, to the scholar-gentry class of the past and fervently cast both into the historical dust bin, their very act of meting out criticism to their own class was an assertion of their right to interpret and judge. In so doing, those who chose to do so reclaimed an active agency in making their own history rather than slipping by as victims of rapid historical change.

A more modest underlying goal for those intellectuals who engaged in self-criticism was individual survival during this historical turn of fortune for the May Fourth generations. When Ye Shengtao attacked the intellectual class for shamelessly living off the labors of working people, the individual self in his "self-examination" was absent.²⁹ This was the case with the denunciation of the intelligentsia made by Xia Mianzun, Zhou Yutong, Mao Dun, and almost all others that I have encountered in research. In short, they insisted on being critics of the bourgeois intellectual class while positioning themselves as the new "other."

The intellectuals' disclaim of themselves as prophets of the Chinese revolution and their assertion of the working classes, or the working class, as the embodiment of the revolution, were two sides of the same coin. Glorification of labor was rooted in the May Fourth era. Back then, however, labor was perceived passively as something to be

discovered and emancipated by the May Fourth enlighteners. Now, the intellectuals conceded the revolutionary center stage to the laboring masses. As early as 1925, before the outbreak of the May Thirtieth Movement, Ye Shengtao expressed his impatience with the chimera of enlighteners (*xianxuezh*) awakening the masses. “‘Going to the people!’ ‘Going to the people!’ Your Highnesses, are you dukes, counts, viscounts, and barons?” he sniffed at his fellow intellectuals and their “new youth” followers. “How can you talk about ‘going to the people’ when you yourselves are part of the people [rather than of the ruling class]? ... For what purpose are you going to the people? ... Naturally to lecture them, to lead them, to help them, to save them... to act as if you were their bodhisattvas.” After exposing the fallacy of the May Fourth enlightenment project, he called on the educated to find good company in the working people. “You should hold hands [with the masses] and walk shoulder to shoulder with them. When you are closely connected with them, what discords and misunderstanding would there be between you and them?”³⁰ Surely there was more than a faint anarchist sentiment in this exhortation. As we recall, precisely at this moment, Ye and his Kaiming friends were ardently involved in the Lida anarchist experiment. It is thus not surprising that in his famous essay, “In the Midst of the May 31st Downpour” written right after the massacre, Ye portrayed a humbled “I” narrator paying tribute to a laborer whom he encountered while tracing the route of the May Thirtieth marchers:

“Chinese do not have the same heart! If we have one heart, then, what are we afraid of?” I turned around to see who made this sharp-tongued remark. It was a man in his thirties with coarse clothes. The dark skin of his half-bared chest marked him as a day laborer. There was heroism in his gaze. “You are right,” I thought to myself. “Bare-chested friend shouting out such brief but insightful words, you show your greatness! You show your strength! You have the right to claim your own liberation!” I nodded at him with genuine reverence.³¹

It was with this reverence that Ye Shengtao and Mao Dun were ready to reverse the role between the intellectuals and the masses. As the men insisted, the working class was the master of the future while the intellectuals were its mere servants.³²

Such a professed concession by no means precluded alternative claims that would render greater parity between the intellectuals and their new proletarian masters. As discussed in Chapter Four, the Kaiming writers Zheng Zhenduo, Ye Shengtao, Hu Yuzhi, Zhou Yutong, Feng Zikai, and Zhang Xichen were closely involved in the formation of two short-lived professional associations for writers, the Shanghai Authors Association in February 1927 and the All China Authors Association at the end of 1928. The manifestos of the founding of the Shanghai Association explicitly claimed membership for intellectuals in the working class by insisting that the commodification of culture had turned writers into mere “employees” who shared “the same fate as manual laborers for the selling of their labor. Their endurance of capitalist exploitation certified them as authentic members of the working class.”³³ As for the manifesto of the China Association co-signed by nearly 90 participants, it went a step further in asserting the unique position of intellectuals, which could only mean their greater historical consequence. In this document, they again put themselves on par with the proletariat in their ability to make revolution. Additionally, the manifesto pointed out,

Those who sell their intellectual labor are not entirely comparable to those who sell their manual labor. This is because we do not have the freedom to sell our knowledge and ideas. If we express views not sanctioned by the state, we may incur the wrath of strict censorship to the point of endangering our very lives Therefore, we play the dual role of workers who struggle for economic and legal rights as well as cultural workers who shoulder the heavy responsibility for the construction and development of culture in China.³⁴

This second and more assertive manifesto was published more than a year and half after the start of the White Terror. It indicated that, as debilitating as the political violence might have been, it was not as much a turning point as Vera Schwarcz has suggested. The identity crisis of the May Fourth generations and their struggles for its reformulation unfolded prior to and persisted after the political violence of the mid-1920s. Indeed, as I have established in this study, by 1930, especially with the issuance of *Middle School Students* magazine, Kaiming intellectuals successfully combined a respectable populist mission to spread their ideas and visions with the economic necessity of finding a niche in a competitive publishing market that continued to grow during the relatively peaceful pre-war thirties. In the process, intellectuals were able to reclaim, in a limited way, their role as the educators and enlighteners of the nation, with much less clamor and much more circumspection than during the May Fourth era.

From “Useless Scholars” to “Servants of the People”

While it receded in the 1930s, the call of “Down with the intellectual class,” reemerged to haunt the May Fourth generations during the long war years of the 1940s. Eight years of Resistance War and three years of Civil War radically aggravated the previous political and economic conditions that had contributed to the identity crisis of the intellectuals in the 1920s. More than ever, the prolonged violence of these wars highlighted the importance of collective struggles as well as the dwindling influence of intellectuals in these struggles. In other words, the wars reproduced the environment of the violent mid-1920s and further marginalized May Fourth intellectuals politically and psychologically. Equally importantly, the wars of the 1940s displaced intellectuals

geographically, culturally, and economically. The May Fourth enlightenment themes of the self and critical reason, as well as the notion of the paramount importance of the intelligentsia, finally died a painful death.

The Resistance War severely crippled China's publishing industry, which had given intellectuals a voice as well as livelihood. Concentrated in Shanghai, the industry suffered horrific physical and economic damage during the three month Battle of Shanghai in 1937. For example, the fighting destroyed more than 80% of Kaiming's assets, including its office building and printing shop. Consequently, the Kaiming cultural production came to a grinding halt. Only its sales department on Fourth Street in the foreign concession area remained, spared by the protective powers of extraterritoriality. Like most big publishers, Kaiming suffered further heavy losses during its retreat to the interior and during its 1944 retreat from its Guilin branch, which was temporarily captured by Japanese troops. Although *Middle School Students* was revived as a wartime bimonthly in Guilin, Guangxi Province in 1939, and the Editorial Department regrouped in Chengdu, Sichuan Province in 1942, thereby allowing Kaiming to gradually gain a foothold behind Japanese lines with a new flow of capital and a new distribution network, the wartime Kaiming press was no more than a shadow of its glorious past. With a severely reduced book market, shortages of paper and almost everything else, and skyrocketing inflation, the press led a precarious existence. In the first years of its revival in the interior, it was only capable of reprinting existing popular titles in addition to printing a very slim *MSS Wartime Bimonthly*. After Pearl Harbor and the Japanese occupation of the foreign concession in Shanghai, even the press's remaining editorial work and retailing on Fourth Street had been disrupted. Paper shortages required the

press to print *MMS Wartime Bimonthly* on coarse paper cheaply produced locally.³⁵

During my research of Kaiming's wartime publications, I often found it hard to make out the characters printed on those rough pages. Only in 1944, when the GMD government designated Kaiming as one of seven publishers given a monopoly over printing government-sanctioned textbooks, was it assured a chance to survive the war. By then, the war had been on going for seven years.³⁶

It is hard to overstate the devastation of the Resistance War on the individual lives of Kaiming intellectuals. With the near destruction of the press, its editors and authors lost their income. In addition to the loss of salary and royalties, they also lost the value of the stock they held in the company. Many preferred to join hundreds of thousands of others in the hazardous mass exodus out of Shanghai and other coastal cities and followed the government in its wartime retreat to the western and southwestern provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan, and Guangxi. Ye Shengtao was one of them. Abandoning his newly constructed house in Suzhou and without a clear idea of future employment or source of income, Ye led his family of eight, including his aged mother, out of the Japanese-occupied areas. He wrote to his friends in Shanghai vowing that he was committed to the resistance until the point of "being starved to death" and would not ever come back to live under the Japanese.³⁷ More specifically, he envisioned a future in Sichuan where he would run a small family-based bookstore to sell and perhaps even publish books. Upon arriving in Chongqing, he chuckled at his own naivety. He lamented to his friends,

[Under such chaotic and harsh condition,] I have trouble writing. How can I get paid for my articles? I am willing to go back to teaching. But given the high unemployment rate among teachers, what school would offer me employment? My plan was to start a small bookstore to employ my whole family so that we would

have something to live on. Now I realize that the joke is on me.... I am like duckweed in flowing water; nothing is in my control.³⁸

Fortunately, a series of jobs did come his way. First he gained a teaching position at a middle school in Chongqing; then a professorship at Wuhan University, which had temporarily relocated to the town of Leshan in Sichuan; and finally a more stable job at the Sichuan Education Bureau in Chengdu. By 1939, he was able to preside over *Middle School Students Wartime Bimonthly* to rally support for the war. Once established in Chengdu in 1942, he joined with former Kaiming colleagues in establishing an editorial department there in hopes of reinvigorating the press behind enemy lines. These endeavors in turn re-engaged him in writing and publishing which was essential for an intellectual.

Despite his success in finding employment, the war-time economic collapse had devastating effect on the daily lives of people in the area under the GMD control. Research has shown that by the end of the war in 1945, the average salary of the faculty of Kunming University had fallen so drastically that it equaled merely 3% of its pre-war level in terms of purchasing power.³⁹ Ye could still count himself as among the lucky ones for having a reduced but steady income. Many writers languished in the instability and hardships of a seemingly endless war without a job. By 1944, many writers were succumbing to extreme poverty and poor health. In response, Ye and others active in the Chengdu branch of the All China Association of Art and Cultural Circles to Resist Japan (Zhonghua quanguo weiyijie kangdi xiehui) launched a “Save Writers in Poverty and Illness Fundraising Campaign.”⁴⁰ In a letter to a local newspaper announcing the campaign, Ye reminded the public, “It is no longer possible to rely upon writers suffering from modest poverty and illness to assist writers suffering from severe poverty and

illness.” He thus called upon people from all walks of life to assist the helpless writers.⁴¹ Indeed, the long war had reduced many May Fourth intellectuals to the level of the proletariat in a material sense. They were no different from others displaced by the war and now in need of aid from the rest of society. They had fallen far from their days of high self-image during the May Fourth era.

Kaiming editors and associates who remained in occupied Shanghai to keep the press going found themselves in equally dire conditions. They could draw only twenty yuan a month to subsidize whatever other income they could earn.⁴² In 1941, not long after quitting his job as the Dean of Arts and Letters at Shanghai Jinan University following the Japanese take over of the school, Zheng Zhenduo began to sell his collections of art and rare books.⁴³ Many entries in his 1945 diary recorded the price of food and household items with exclamations such as “It’s frightening!” “How can we afford to live?” and “I lamented with friends about how extremely difficult life has become. We cannot survive for more than another couple of months.”⁴⁴ In 1945, a few months before the Japanese surrender, he was forced to start a new routine between banks and the stock market to try his luck as a stockbroker!⁴⁵

In addition to financial difficulties, anyone remaining in Japanese-occupied Shanghai who engaged in writing and publishing efforts was subjected to severe censorship. Those who published anything containing anti-Japanese messages lived in fear of arrest and even assassination. Twice in 1941, Zheng Zhenduo was forced into hiding for weeks at length.⁴⁶ In 1943, Xia Mianzun and Zhang Xichen were taken from Kaiming and held at a Japanese military police station for ten days.⁴⁷ Grating under the dual burdens of poverty and oppression in Japanese-occupied Shanghai, Zheng groaned,

“As the saying goes, scholars do not even have the strength to wrestle against a chicken. Totally useless are scholars! (*baiwu jiyong shi shushing*)”⁴⁸ To these intellectuals, the quality of life during the Civil War period, with its political oppression and bad economy, was merely a continuation of the previous era.

The notion of intellectuals incapable of wrestling against a chicken signals the May Fourth generations’ final acceptance of their impotence and marginality. The Resistance War, increasingly fought as a “people’s war,” (a term coined by Mao Zedong) tolled the last bell for intellectuals as historical agents independent of either the emerging Communist state engaged or the “masses.” In fact, as Tani Barlow has pointed out, the CCP “claimed the power to act as the ‘state-representing-the-nation,’ the same as the “people-nation.”⁴⁹ The Civil War era saw a new wave of identity crisis for intellectuals, evidenced by concerted discussions in a number of highly respected and widely circulated magazines, including *The Observer* (*Guangcha*, 1946-1948) and *Chinese Reconstruction* (*Zhongguo jianshe*, 1945-1948). As in the mid-1920s, this identity crisis also entailed a search for a new terminology for Chinese intellectuals. Whereas May Fourth intellectuals replaced their self-reference of *zhishi jieji* (the intellectual class) with *zhishi fenzi* (knowledgeable elements) in the mid-1920s, during the last years of the Resistance War and the Civil War, the terminology changed once again into *wenhua ren* (persons with culture). Unlike the empowering “culture” for intellectuals of the May Fourth era, “culture” used in a 1940s context was, to a good extent, discredited by the war, the state, and the people-nation. Therefore, the term “people with culture” became antonymous to the term “the people” who were endowed with real transformative power, the power to make revolution.

What should a person of culture do to make himself or herself relevant to the revolution and to history again? “Start a revolution against oneself” [*ge ziji de ming*] was Ye Shengtao’s proposed solution. In a 1944 article that bore that title, Ye Shengtao asked his fellow intellectuals to cleanse themselves of selfish individualism and to be wholeheartedly committed to his or her assigned role in the service of resisting Japan and reconstructing a new China. “To carry on a revolution against oneself means not only shedding your old skin but also ridding yourself of the old heart, so as to become a complete new person.” This, he continued, was the demand of a new era. “If you refuse to start a revolution against yourself, then revolution would be brought on you.” In that case, the individual would be “crushed by the wheel of history and forgotten.”⁵⁰ Such a self-transformation should be based on “learning” from other more progressive social groups. As Ye observed, “*xuexi*” (to learn from) had become a popular term in the late 1940s. In his 1948 eulogy to Zhu Ziqing, Ye praised his old friend’s willingness to “be educated by his students.” Being less privileged and closer to the masses, young students were more progressive than their professors.⁵¹ Better yet, intellectuals should “learn from the masses” so as to “rid themselves of all the bad habits of the past.”⁵²

The articulation of such a relationship between intellectuals and the masses was nothing new for Ye and his fellow intellectuals, since it was a continuation of the 1920s formulation. What was new was the absence of the contemplative emotions and sincerity that had characterized the earlier articulations. Also new was a clear increase in ideological intensity. Indeed, by now the surviving May Fourth generations had had many opportunities to rehearse and reformulate the lines invented in the 1920s. In a 1945 article, Hu Sheng, a frequent contributor to Kaiming’s *Middle School Student* in the

1940s, affirmed that the ability to engage and identify with the lives of ordinary people was the most important intellectual legacy of the Resistance War. He continued,

Such a notion had clearly been voiced before. During the pre-war years, however, few [intellectuals] seriously practiced it. During the Resistance War, self-criticism and criticism helped them understand that the first step to achieving such a goal [identifying with the people] was to reform themselves [*zhishi fenzi gaizhao*] The problem with the New Culture Movement was its intellectual-centeredness.... Intellectuals have to cleanse themselves of their ego and vanity, and to acknowledge that removed from real life and unappreciated by the masses, their so-called “sophisticated” work is no more than empty pretensions. To acknowledge the above is the first step in intellectuals’ reform.⁵³

The evidence left by Kaiming intellectuals suggests that a “thought reform movement” was under way long before it was officially launched by the CCP in the early 1950s. Alternatively, the CCP programs directed at reforming intellectuals was not a Marxist creation but rather another step along the path of the educated elites’ self-transformation that began even earlier than the May Fourth New Culture Movement. Their major difference from the Confucians was to use it as a formidable tool of political control.

The difference between the pre-1949 thought reform movement and the one launched by the CCP was profound, however. Burdened as they were by the internal logic of radical thought, the continual strength of a class discourse, a debilitating wartime political economy, and the spillover effect of the CCP’s ideological campaign in Yan’an, it was still the initiative of the intellectuals themselves to engage in their own thought reform. Thus, before 1949, their thought reform was the product of their own agency. In other words, the process of change did not so much result in a loss of the intellectuals’ subjective position as much as lead to a reconstructed subjectivity capable of positioning itself in a socialist state-controlled discourse on the people [*renmin*]. Instead of being

targets and victims of the state as they were in the 1950s, intellectuals were still in control of their own metamorphosis during the Republican era.

In the poem composed during his 1949 pilgrimage to Beijing and cited at the beginning of this Epilogue, Ye Shengtao described the intelligentsia as “a creek” that “shall not meander too much before merging into the ocean.” He used his favorite water metaphor at least twice previously during the Resistance War when he discussed the functions of a writer. Toting a popular line set since the beginning of the Resistance War to use literature and art as means for war mobilization, Ye insisted that a writer not only had to be in close touch with the masses but indeed should become one of them “just like a drop of water merges into the sea.”⁵⁴ At the projected end of this self-transformation in thought, intellectuals would ultimately become part of the people, who were to be the masters of the new nation.

Along with Tani Barlow, I take issue with the conventional wisdom that posits the powerlessness of the Chinese intelligentsia against the onslaught of the revolution.⁵⁵ To the contrary, at the end of their self-initiated thought-cleansing process, some intellectuals reclaimed a moral purity and placed themselves on the winning side of political struggles in which they had otherwise played only a small part. Intellectuals welcomed the dawn of the “people’s century” [*renming de shiji*], a new terminology that saturated liberal and radical publications between 1945 and 1949. In this new century,” the people would actively participate in politics and government. As new members of the people, many intellectuals were also prepared to join it. Ye Shengtao put it this way,

Some intellectuals regard politics as the source of evil. They insist on preserving their moral integrity by staying away from politics. That is an old-fashion idea only suitable to old times. According to today’s notion, to be involved in politics does not necessarily mean taking up an official position. Indeed, there is nothing

wrong with taking up an official position as long as we understand that our work is to serve the people....⁵⁶

The theoretical preparation for intellectuals to be reincorporated in the state was thus complete when “knowledgeable elements” from the Kaiming press made their pilgrimage to the new capital. With the final victory in sight, the CCP invited those who had embarked on this intellectual self-transformation to join the new government. Invited to travel northward, Kaiming intellectuals believed that they had secured a place in the new socialist state, or as Ye put it in his poem cited earlier, that they were “asked to join the planning for a new motherland.” Ready to serve the people, they soon became proud officials of the newly formed PRC government.

Postscript

Ye Shengtao (叶圣陶, 1894-1988)

In October 1949 when the People's Republic of China was officially founded, Ye took office in the new capital as deputy minister of publishing. There he worked closely with his old friends Hu Yuzhi, the minister, and Zhou Jiaren, another deputy minister. Hu was likely responsible for Ye and Zhou's appointments as his deputies. In late 1950, Ye picked up two more jobs as the director of Committee on Textbook Review, jointly created by the Education and Publishing Ministries (*Chuban zongshu*) and as the president and editor-in-chief of the newly formed People's Education Press. In 1954 when the Publishing Ministry was disbanded, Ye became the deputy education minister. He managed to weather the anti-rightist campaign in 1957, but the political storm finally caught up with him at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution in 1966 when he was removed and persecuted. After his rehabilitation in 1977, he enjoyed a last stint in office, including positions as the director of Central Archives, the chairman of the rubber-stamp Democratic Progressive Party (*Minzhu cujin hui*) and vice chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese Political Consultant Committee.⁵⁷

Zheng Zhenduo (郑振铎, 1898-1958)

In October 1949, Zheng was named the director of the Bureau of National Treasures (*Wenwu ju*) under the Ministry of Culture, which was under the charge of his old friend Mao Dun. In 1954, he was promoted to Deputy Minister of Culture while maintaining multiple other positions. He died in a plane crash in 1958 on a trip to Moscow.⁵⁸

Song Yunbin (宋云彬, 1897-1979)

Song was pleased to be elected to be on the Political Consultant Committee in 1949. At the PRC's founding, he became deputy director of the Editorial Bureau under the Publishing Ministry and the deputy editor-in-chief of People's Education Press under Ye Shengtao. In 1951, unhappy with his new life in Beijing, he returned to the south to join the top leadership of the Zhejiang provincial government. He was also put in charge of the Bureau for Culture and History, Committee for Sport, and the Alliance for Literature (*wenlian*) of the province until 1957 when he was labeled a rightist. He was rehabilitated 1975 to be on the Political Consultant Committee again.⁵⁹

Fu Binran (傅彬然, 1899-1978)

Fu was elected to the Political Consultant Committee and was a representative to the People's Congress in the 1950s. He also took up the position of deputy director of the Publishing Bureau under the Ministry of Culture in 1954. Other less political but still government-appointed jobs included the deputy editor-in-chief of Classics Publishing House, deputy manager and deputy editor-in-chief of Zhonghua Press.⁶⁰

¹ The account is reconstructed based on the information in Fu Guoyong, *1949 Nian: Zhongguo Zhishifenzi de Siren Jilu* (The Year of 1949: Personal Records of Chinese Intellectuals) (Wuhan: Changjiang wenyi chubanshe, 2005), pp. 297-314.

² For example, one member of the group under discussion, Zheng Zhenduo, received the invitation on September 20, 1948. See Chen Fukang, *Zheng Zhenduo Zhuan*, pp. 529-30. Theoretically, the Political Consultant Committee would be a non-Communist Party political body of political groups outside of the CCP to provide consultation to and supervision of the policies of the CCP government. It would soon be clear, however, that such organizations were only window dressing for CCP rule.

³ Fu Guoyong, pp. 299-300, 302.

⁴ Fu Guoyong, p. 301.

⁵ *Lu* is a classic poetic form consisting of eight lines following a strict rhyming scheme.

⁶ Fu Guoyong, p. 302.

⁷ Fu Guoyong, p. 303.

⁸ The magazine folded in 1937 due to the Japanese bombing and subsequent occupation of Shanghai. The majority of Kaiming personnel then participated in a mass exodus from the metropolis while Xia Mianzun, Zhang Xichen, and few others stayed. Song Yunbin, Fu Binran, and others regrouped in Guilin, Guangxi Province to revive the magazine as the *Middle School Students Wartime Bimonthly*. Ye and his family moved from place to place in Sichuan Province and eventually found refuge in Chengdu. Since he was the most senior and well-known editor at Kaiming after Xia Mianzun, Ye was named the magazine's chief editor.

⁹ It is clear that Ye was influenced by his leftist friends such as Mao Dun and Sha Ting. Sha not only urged Ye Zhicheng to go join the Communists but also further instructed that the young man "should not go there as a literary writer for material and inspiration but rather should take up concrete resistance work." Cited in Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao Zhuanlun*, pp. 622-63. For various reasons, Ye Zhicheng did not join the Communists until 1948.

¹⁰ Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao Zhuanlun*, pp. 617-18.

¹¹ Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao Zhuanlun*, p. 667.

¹² Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao Zhuanlun*, pp. 672-73.

¹³ Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao Zhuanlun*, pp. 674-75.

¹⁴ Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao Zhuanlun*, pp. 685-88.

¹⁵ Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao Zhuanlun*, pp. 687-88.

¹⁶ Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao Zhuanlun*, p. 685.

¹⁷ See Chen Fukang, *Zheng Zhenduo Zhuan*, pp. 529-30.

¹⁸ Vera Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment*, Chapter. 4.

¹⁹ Ye Shengtao, "Binfu" in Ye Zhishang, et al. eds., *Ye Shengtao ji* (The Collected Work of Ye Shengtao) vol. 2 (Nanjing: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe, 1988).

²⁰ The term was Ye Shengtao's. See Ye Shengtao, "Xingong," in Ye Zhishang, et al. eds., *Ye Shengtao ji*, vol. 5, p. 371.

²¹ Cited in Chen Xiaoquan, *Zhu Ziqing zhuan* (Biography of Zhu Ziqing) (Beijing: Shiyue wenyi chubanshe, 1991), p. 110.

²² Xia Mianzun, "Huangbaozhe zhan" (A paean to rickshaw-pullers), in Xia Hongning, ed., *Xia Mianzun Sanwen Yiwen Jingxuan*, p. 145.

²³ Xia Mianzun, "Zhishi fengzi de yuming" (The Fate of the intellectual class), in Xia Hongning, ed., *Xia Mianzun Sanwen Yiwen Jingxuan*, pp. 180-88.

²⁴ Zhu Ziqing, "Nali zou?" [Where to go?], *The Common*, 3, no. 4 (March 1928): 368-69.

²⁵ Vera Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment*, p. 186.

²⁶ Vera Schwarcz., pp. 186-88.

²⁷ Zhu Ziqing, "Nali zou?" pp. 368-69.

²⁸ Ye Shengtao, "Xuwen wuyong lun" in Ye Zhishang, et al. eds., *Ye Shengtao ji*, vol. 5, pp. 312-16. Other articles by Ye delivering the same verdict on the bourgeoisie intellectual class include "Mofa" ["Magic"] and "Zhuxiang" ["Portraits"] in Ye Zhishang, et al. eds., *Ye Shengtao ji*, vol. 5, pp. 162-65, 195-98.

²⁹ Ye Shengtao, "Xuwen wuyong lun" in Ye Zhishang, et al. eds., *Ye Shengtao ji*, vol. 5, pp. 312-16. Other articles by Ye delivering the same verdict on the bourgeoisie intellectual class include "Mofa" ["Magic"] and "Zhuxiang" ["Portraits"] in Ye Zhishang, et al. eds., *Ye Shengtao ji*, vol. 5, pp. 162-65, 195-98.

³⁰ Ye Shengtao, "Muoxiang" [Magic faces], in Ye Zhishang, et al. eds., *Ye Shengtao ji*, vol. 5.

³¹ Ye Shengtao in Ye Zhishang, et al. eds., *Ye Shengtao ji*, vol. 5, pp. 166-69.

³² Ye Shengtao, "Xuwen wuyong lun" (On education as useless) in Ye Zhishang, et al. eds., *Ye Shengtao ji*, vol. 5, p. 225.

³³ "Shanghai zhuzuoren gonghui yuanqi," cited in Chen Fukang, *Zheng Zhenduo zhuan*, pp. 168-69.

³⁴ Cited in Chen Fukang, *Zheng Zhenduo zhuan*, p. 211.

³⁵ During the Republican era, Shanghai publishers print the bulk of their publications on imported paper.

³⁶ For Kaiming's experience during the Resistance War, see Tang Xiguang, "Kaiming de licheng," in *Wo yu Kaiming*, pp. 300-08.

³⁷ Cited in Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao zhuanlun*, pp. 592-94.

³⁸ Shang Jinlin, *Ye Shengtao zhuanlun*, p. 595.

- ³⁹ Yang Ximeng, "Jiunian lai Kunming daxue jiaoshou de xinlu ji xinlu shijia," in *Guancha* (The observer), no. 1 (September 1946):7
- ⁴⁰ The All China Association of Art and Cultural Circles to Resist Japan was initially formed in Wuhan in March 1938. Those on the board who were closely associated to Kaiming include Mao Dun, Xia Yan, Zheng Zhenduo, Zhu Ziqing, and Zhu Guangqian. The association called upon its members to engage in writings and other activities in service of wartime mobilization. After the Japanese surrender in 1945, it became the All China Association of Art and Cultural Circles (Zhonghua quanguo wenyijie xiehui).
- ⁴¹ Ye Shengtao, "Weinian piping zuojia" and "Yuanzhu pinbing zuojia" in *Ye Shengtao ji*, vol. 6, pp. 54-57.
- ⁴² Tang Xiguang, "Kaiming de licheng," in *Wo yu Kaiming*, p. 305. Xia Mianzun, for example, taught at Nanping Middle School in the foreign concessions until 1941 when the Japanese moved in.
- ⁴³ Chen Fukang, pp. 421-24, 456-62.
- ⁴⁴ Chen Fukang, pp. 460-61.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid.
- ⁴⁶ Cheng Fukang, pp. 387-92, 423-31.
- ⁴⁷ Ouyang Wenbin, "Xia Mianzun xiansheng nianbiao," in *Xia Mianzun wenji*, p. 20.
- ⁴⁸ Cited in Chen Fukang, p. 392.
- ⁴⁹ Tani Barlow has adopted Partha Charterjee's phrase. See her "Zhishifenzi [Chinese Intellectuals] and Power," *Dialectical Anthropology* 16 (1991): 214.
- ⁵⁰ Ye Shengtao, "Ge ziji de ming" and "Kanbao ou de" (Reflections after reading the newspaper) in Ye Zhishang, et al. eds., *Ye Shengtao ji*, vol. 6, pp. 47-49, 172-73.
- ⁵¹ Ye Shengtao, "Peixuan de sixun" (News of the passing of Zhu Ziqing), in Ye Zhishang, et al. eds., *Ye Shengtao ji*, vol. 6, pp. 48-51.
- ⁵² Ye Shengtao, "Du shang yu jian shang" in Ye Zhishang, et al. eds., *Ye Shengtao ji*, vol. 6, pp. 121-25. The article was published in April 1945, four months before the Japanese surrender.
- ⁵³ Hu Sheng, "Xin wenhua de fangxiang he tujing" (The direction and path for the new culture) in *Zhongguo jianshe* (Chinese Reconstruction) 2, no. 4 (April 1946): 35-36.
- ⁵⁴ Ye Shengtao, "Dushan yu jianshan" and "Zuozhe haiyou biede shier" (Authors have more important things to do) in Ye Zhishang, et al. eds., *Ye Shengtao ji*, vol. 6, pp. 121-25, 140-42.
- ⁵⁵ See Tani Barlow, "Zhishifenzi [Chinese Intellectuals] and Power," pp. 209-32.
- ⁵⁶ Ye Shengtao, "Dushan yu jianshan," in Ye Zhishang, et al. eds., *Ye Shengtao ji*, vol. 6, pp. 121-25, 140-42.
- ⁵⁷ For Ye's post-1949 career, see Shang Jinlin, Part 8.
- ⁵⁸ Chen Fukang, pp. 554, 584, 654-55.
- ⁵⁹ For a discussion of Song's diary recording his trip to Beijing and his political activities in Beijing, see Fu Guoyong, *1949 Nian*, pp. 161-80. For more biographical information on Song, see *Minguo renwu da cidian*, p. 446 and "Song Yunbin" in *Zhejiang tongzhi*, <http://zjt.zjol.com.cn/05zjtz/system/2005/12/01/006386407.shtml> accessed on May 15, 2008.
- ⁶⁰ For more biographical information on Fu, see *Minguo renwu da cidian*, p. 866 and "Fu Binran" in *Shaoshang renwu ziliao* <http://www.xswh.gov.cn/Subject/Article/2005-10-27/2005102711190211.shtml> accessed on May 15, 2008.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

**The Intellectuals Who Participated in Kaiming's Founding,
Their Birthplaces and Affiliations**

Name	Birthplace	Chunhui	LRA	WQRA	Lida	Shangwu editor	Relationship to Kaiming
Feng Zikai	Congde, Zhejiang	√	√		√		editor(1929), author, share-holder, on the 2nd board of directors
Fu Binran	Xiaoshan, Zhejiang						editor (1931-37, 1943-1949), author, on the 2nd & 3rd board of directors
Gu Junzheng	Jiaxing, Zhejiang,					√	editor (1928-53), author, shareholder
Hu Yuzhi	Shangyu, Zhejiang		√	√	√	√	on the 2nd board of directors
Hu Zhongchi	Shangyu, Zhejiang		√				supervisor, (late 1920s-1930s), shareholder
Liu Shuqing		√			√		editor (late 1920s-1953) author
Liu Xunyu	Guiyang, Guizhou	√			√		editor (late 1920s-1953), author
Shao Lizi	Shaoxing, Zhejiang		√				chair of the board of directors (1929-53)
Song Yunbin	Haining, Zhejiang					√	editor (1930-37), author, on the 2nd board of directors
Sun Fuyuan	Shaoxing, Zhejiang		√				author
Sun Fuxi	Shaoxing, Zhejiang		√				author

Name	Birthplace	Chunhui	LRA	WQRA	Lida	Shangwu editor	Relationship to Kaiming
Wang Boxiang	Suzhou, Jiangsu		√		√	√	editor (1932-53), author, shareholder, on the 3rd board of directors
Wu Juenong	Zhejiang			√			author, share-holder, on the 3rd board of directors
Xia Mianzun	Zhejiang	√	√	√	√		editor-in-chief, (1928-46), author, share-holder
Xu Diaofu	Pinghu, Zhejiang		√			√	editor (1932?-53), author, share-holder
Ye Shengtao	Suzhou, Jiangsu		√		√	√	editor (1930-53), author, shareholder, on the 2nd board of directors
Zhang Xichen	Shaoxing, Zhejiang		√	√	√	√	founder, manager, and on the 1st-3rd board of directors
Zhao Jingshen	Anhui		√		√		first editor-in-chief (1926), author
Zheng Zhenduo	Fujian, ancestral home in Zhejiang		√	√	√	√	author, shareholder, supervisor, (1929-?), on the 3rd board of directors
Zhou Jianren	Shaoxing, Zhejiang		√	√	√	√	editor of New Women, author

Name	Birthplace	Chunhui	LRA	WQRA	Lida	Shangwu editor	Relationship to Kaiming
Zhou Yutong	Ruian, Zhejiang		√		√	√	editor (1943-45), author, shareholder, on the 3rd board of directors,
Zhu Guangqian	Tongchen, Anhui	√			√		author
Zhu Ziqing	Yangzhou, Jiangsu	√	√		√		co-editor of Middle School Students (1931) author

Sources: 1. Jia Zhifang, et al, ed. *Wenxue Yanjiu Hui Ziliao (Source Materials on the Literary Research Association)* (Shijiazhuang: Henan renming chubanshe, 1983). pp. 14-48; 2. the list of co-signers of the association's "Funu yanjiu hui xuanyan," [The manifesto of Women's Question Research Association] *Ladies' Magazine*, vol.8, no. 8 (August 1922): 121; 3. Feng Yiyi. *Xiaosa Fengcai: Wo De Fuqing Feng Zikai (My Father Feng Zikai)* (Shanghai: Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe, 1998). pp. 93, 95; 4. "Kaiming shudian qingqiu yu guojia heyin chenwen (1950)," included in Wang Zhiyi, *Kaiming shudian jishi*, 181; 5. Archive in Zhongyang yanjiu yua jingdai lishi suo dang-an guan, juanzong ming: shangye si, guancang hao: 17-23-0-00-00-093-02.

Appendix B

Publishing Houses Specializing in New Culture Products in Shanghai during the Republican Period

<i>Year of Founding</i>	Name	Founder(s)	Type	<i>Years In Business</i>	Reason for Closing*
1908	Shenzhou guoguang she (specializing in lithograph printing before turning to New Culture publishing in 1932)	Huang Binhong, et. al.		43	
1913	Yadong tushuguan (closely following Chen Duxiu since its early years)	Wang Mengzou	proprietorship (failed attempt at incorporation in 1917)**	40	
1915	Taidong shuju (turning to “new literature” publishing in 1920 by collaborating with the Creation Society)	Zhao Nangong	proprietorship	23	Censorship and death of Zhao Nangong in 1938
1925 ***	Beixing shuju	Li Xiaofeng, Zhiyun brothers	partnership	28	
1925	Guanghua shuju	Zhang Jinglu, Shen Songquan, Lu Fang	partnership	10	crippled by censorship which involved more than 50 titles and 4 periodicals
1925	Liangyou shuju				

<i>Year of Founding</i>	Name	Founder(s)	Type	<i>Years In Business</i>	Reason for Closing*
1926	Chuangzao she chubanbu/ Jiangnan shudian****	the Creation Society		4	Chuangzao she chubanbu shut down by the GMD in 1929, continued publishing in the name of Jiannan for another year
1926	Kaiming shudian	Zhang, Xichen, et. Al.	incorporated in 1928	27	
1927	Xiandai shuju	Hong Xuefan, Zhang Jinlu, Shen Songquan, Lu Fang	incorporated in 1931	7	8 periodicals, 53 titles censored, temporarily shut down by the GMD in 1931; financial problems
1927	Xinyue shudian	Xu Zhimo, Hu Shi, Liang Shiqiu, Yu Shangyuan	incorporated in 1927	5	the death of Xu Zhimo in 1931
1927	Guangming shuju	Wang Zicheng	proprietorship	26	
1927	Zhengshanmei shudian	Zeng Pu and his son Zeng Xubai		9	the death of Zeng Pu
1928	Kunlun shudian	Li Da, Dong Cumin, Shi Cuntong		4	Shut down by concession police
1928	Dajiang shupu	Chen Cheng Wangdao, She Cuntong, Feng Sanwei, Wang Fuquan		5	15 titles censored; financial problems resulted in sale to Kaiming

<i>Year of Founding</i>	Name	Founder(s)	Type	<i>Years In Business</i>	Reason for Closing*
1928	Diyixian shudian**** (changed into Suimo shudian after the former being shut down by the GMD in the same year)	Dai Wangshu, Shi Zhecun, Du Heng, Liu Naou		4	Financial; Personal
1928	Lequn shudian	Zhang Zipin			
1928	Chunchao shudian	Zhang Yousong		6	
1928	Pinfan shudian, Kaihua shudian, changed to Zhongxue sheng shudian after 1940	Erpo Brothers			
1928	Nanqiang shudian			8	
1928	Xin shengming shuju	Zhou Fuhai, Tao Xisheng, Pan Zhongyun		9	
1928	Mingri shudian	Xu Jie, Wang Yuhe		4	
1930	Xinkeng shudian	Zhu Yongkang, Ye Qing,		7	
1935	Wenhua shenghuo chubanshe	Ba Jin, Jin Yi, Wu Langxi	incorporated in 1946	18	

*Prior to Communist takeover.

** Wang Yuanfang was close friends of Chen Duxiu and Hushi. In 1917, Chen proposed a merge of Dongya with Qunyi shushe, owned by Wang's friend for the purpose of incorporation and tried to

raise money on their behalf. His effort was not successful. Later, Hu Shi also made a failed attempt to help incorporate Yadong by introducing investment from Shangwu. See Zhu, Lianbao. *Jin Xian Dai Shanghai Chubanye Yinxiangji (Impressions of Shanghai Publishing in the Modern Era)*.

Shanghai: Xueling chubanshe, 1993, p. 207; and Ren, Jianshu. *Chen Duxiu Zhuang: Cong Xiucan Dao Zong Shuji (Biography of Chen Duxiu: From Xiucan to General Secretary of the CCP)*.

Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1989, p. 127.

***Beixing started in Beijing in 1924 and moved to Shanghai the following year.

****The Creation Society, formed in 1921, first published its members' work through Taidong shuju until 1925 when they formed its own press. The press was suppressed by the GMD government in 1929 but continued to operate under a new name, Jiangnan shudian, for another year.

Sources: Song Yuanfang, "Zhongguo Jindai Chuban Dashiji," *Chuban shiliao* nos. 20-23 (1990-91): no. 20: 74-94; no. 21: 67-79; no. 22: 82-87; no. 23: 111-19; Yang Shouqing. *Zhongguo chuban jianshi (A Concise History of Chinese Publishing)* (Shanghai: Yongxiang yinshuguan, 1946); Zhu Lianbao, *Jin xian dai Shanghai chubanye yinxiangji (Impressions of Shanghai Publishing in the Modern Era)* (Shanghai: Xueling chubanshe, 1993).

GLOSSARY OF CHINESE TERMS, TITLES, AND NAMES

- “Chong xing de taotai shuo dao nuxing zhongxing shuo” 《从性的淘汰说到女性中心说》
- “Dapo roude shenmi guannian” 《打破肉的神秘观念》
- “Jingyu de yanjiu” 《禁欲的研究》
- “Lianai yu xingyu” 《恋爱与性欲》
- “Shaonian zhongguo shuo” 《少年中国论》
- “Tongjian zhi renzhong xue de kaocha” 奸通之人种学的考察
- “tuanti hua de xingjiao” 团体化的性交
- “Xing de dier guannen” 《性的第二关能》
- “Xing de ziran” 《性的自然》
- “Xing shenghuo de biantai” 《性生活的变态》
- “Xing yu yichuan” 性与遗传
- “Xingde youxi jineng” 《性的游戏机能》
- “Yishu yu xingai” 《艺术与性爱》 *Aide jiaoyu* 《爱的教育》
- aiguo 爱国
- Bai Jin 巴金
- baijinshe 拜金者
- Baima hu 白马湖
- ban 板 (as in laoban 老板)
- ban 版
- Beixin shuju 北新书局
- Beixing shuju 北新书局
- bianji bu 编辑部
- Biaozhun yingyu duben* 《标准英文读本》
- bingfu 病夫
- bu 部
- Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培
- Cao Yuling 曹汝霖
- changpian xiaoshuo 长篇小说
- Chen Daqi 陈大齐
- Chen Duxiu 陈独秀
- Chen Wangdao 陈望道
- Chen Wangdao 陈望道
- Chen Yuan 陈源
- chiku 吃苦
- Chu Sunxue 储蓀雪
- Chuangzao she 创造社
- Chuangzao she chubanbu 创造社出版部
- Chuban zongshu 出版总署
- chubanjia 出版家

chulu 出路
 Chunfeng yuehui 春蜂乐会
 Chunhui zhongxue 春晖中学
 Da geming 大革命
 Dadong shuju 大东书局
 Dai Wangshu 戴望舒
 daiye 待业
 danghua jiaoyu 党化教育
 datong shijie 大同世界
 daxuetang 大学堂
 dazhongyu 大众语
 Deng Chumin 邓初民
 Diyixian shudian 第一线书店
 Dongfang zazhi 《东方杂志》
 Du Haisheng 杜海生
 Du Heng 杜衡
 Du Yaquan 杜亚泉
 duanpian xiaoshuo 短篇小说
 dujing yundong 读经运动
 duli renge 独立人格
 dushu ren 读书人
 duzi jingying 独资经营
Ertong shijie 《儿童世界》
 ertong wenxue 儿童文学
 Fan Shoukang 范寿康
 fandi fanfengjian 反帝反封建
 fang ke 坊刻
 fangxing 反省
 Feng Sanwei 冯三昧
 Feng zikai 丰子恺
 fengjian canyu shili 封建残余势力
 fenke daxue 分科大学
 Fugu pai 复古派
Funu pinglun 《妇女评论》
Funu wenti shijiang 《妇女问题十讲》
 Funu wenti yanjiu hui 妇女问题研究会
Funu zazhi 《妇女杂志》
Funu zhoubao 《妇女周报》
Furen de gushi 《妇人的故事》
 gaizao shehui 改造社会
 gangshi 干事

gaodeng xuetang 高等学堂
 gaodeng youmin 高等游民
 ge ziji de ming 革自己的命
 geren zhuyi 个人主义
 Gongchan dang 共产党
 gongnong qunzhong 工农群众
 Gu Jiegang 顾颉刚
 Gu Junzheng 顾均正
Gu shi bian 《古史辨》
 guan ke 官刻
Guangchang xianxing ji 《官场现行记》
 Guangfu hui 光复会
 Guanghua shudian 光华书局
 Guanghua shuju 光华书局
 Guanghua shuju 光华书局 Liangyou shuju 良友
 Guangming shuju 光明书店
 guanxi 关系
 gufeng youxian gongsi 股份有限公司
 Guji chubanshe 古籍出版社
 Guo Shaoyu 郭绍虞
 guojia 国家
 guojia de zhongjian 国家的中坚
 Guoming dang 国民党
 Hangzhou 杭州
 heian de shehui 黑暗的社会
 hesi gongsi 合资公司
 Hong Xuefan 洪雪帆
 Hu Shi 胡适
 Hu Yuzhi 胡愈之
 Hu Zhongchi 胡仲持
 Huang Binhong 黄宾虹
 Hunan yishi 湖南一师
 hunzhan 混战
 ji yu li er liren, ji yu da er daren 己欲立而立人,己欲达而达人
 jia ke 家刻
 jiancharen 监察人
 Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek 蒋介石)
 Jiangsu 江苏
 Jiannan 江南
 jiaoshu jiang 教书匠
 jiating shougong zuofang 家庭手工作坊

Jiayin 《甲寅》
 jiazu zhuyi 家族主义
 jiefang 解放
Jiehun de ai 《结婚的爱》
 jihua 计划
 Jin Zhonghua 金仲华
 Jing Hengyi 经亨颐 (Jing Ziyuan 经子源)
Jingbao fukan 《京报》副刊
 jingshi 进士
 jiu shuye 旧书业
 jiuguo 救国
 jiuguo 救国
 juren 举人
 Kaiming shudian 开明书店
Kaiming yingwen duben 《开明英文读本》
 ke 科
 Kongzi 《孔子》
 Kuaiji 会稽
 Kuang Husheng 匡互生
 Kunlun shudian 昆仑书店
 laodong shengsheng 劳动神圣
 laoren 老人
 Li Da 李达
 Li Dazhao 李大钊
 Li Xiaofeng 李小峰
 Li Xiaofeng 李小峰
 Li Zehou 李泽厚
 Li Zhiyun 李志云
 Li Zhiyun 李志云
 Liang Qichao 梁启超
 Liang Shiqiu 梁实秋
 lianxi sheng 练习生
Libai liu 《礼拜六》
 Lida xuehui 立达学会
 Lida xueyuan 立达学园
 like 理科
 Lin Handa 林汉达
 Lin Yutang 林语堂
 Liu Bannong 刘半农
 Liu Dabai 刘大白
 Liu Naou 刘纳欧

Liu Shuqin 刘叔勤
 Liu Shuqing 刘叔勤
 Liu Xunyu 刘熏宇
 Liu Xunyu 刘熏宇
 Lou Shiyi 楼适夷
 lu 律
 Lu Fang 卢芳
 Lu Jianbo 卢剑波
 Lu Xun 鲁迅 (Zhou Shuren
 Lufei Kui 陆费逵 (Lufei Bohong 陆费伯鸿)
 Luo Jialun 罗家伦
 mai xiaozi 卖小字
 majiang 麻将
 manhua 漫画
 Mao Dun 茅盾 (Shen Yanbin 沈雁宾)
 Mei de shudian 美的书店
 Mengya 《萌芽》
 Ming 明
 Mingguo zhoubao 《民国日报》
 mingjian wenxue 民间文学
 minzhong 民众
 Minzhu cujin hui 民主促进会
 Mofan yingwen duben 《模范英文读本》
 Nan Yang 南洋
 neiwai xiaoxi 内外消息
 neixing 内省
 Panghuang 《彷徨》
 pingdeng 平等
 pinshi 贫士
 Pushe 朴社
 Pushe 朴社
 Qian Fengmian 钱封面
 Qian Juntao 钱君陶
 Qian Xuanton 钱玄同
 Qiandi 谦第
 qiantu 前途
 qimeng 启蒙
 qimeng yundong 启蒙运动
 Qing 清
 qingnian kumeng 青年苦闷
 Qingnian zazhi 《青年杂志》

Qiu Jin 秋瑾
 qiyexin 企业心
 Qu Sihong 吴姒鸿
 Qunjing gailun 《群经概论》
 Qunyi shudian 群艺书店
 rengen jiaoyu 人格教育
 renmin 人民
 renmin de shiji 人民的世纪
 Runbi 润笔
 sanwen 散文
 Shangbao 《商报》
 Shanghai yishu zhuanke shifan 上海艺术专科师范
 Shanghai zhuzuoren xiehui 上海著作人协会
 Shang-huai chuji shfan xuetang 上会初级师范学堂
 shangren 商人
 Shangwu yinshuguan 商务印书馆
 Shangyu 上虞
 Shao Lizi 邵力子
 Shao Lizi 邵力子
 shaonian 少年
 Shaoxing 绍兴
 shehui zuzhi 社会组织
 Shen Songquan 沈松泉
 Shen Yimo 沈一默
 Shenghuo zhoukan 《生活》周刊
 shengyi 生意
 Shenzhou guoguang she 神州国光社
 Shi 《诗》
 Shi Fuliang 施复亮
 Shi Zhecun 施蛰存
 Shidafu 士大夫
 shijie qingbao 世界情报
 Shijie shuju 世界书局
 shike 实科
 Shishen 士绅
 shixue 失学
 shiye 失业
 shiying shehui 适应社会
 shoutou zi 手头字
 shu shang 书商
 shu sheng 书生

si 司
 Si malu 四马路（福州路）
 Sida jingang 四大金刚
 sida jiuxian 四大酒仙
 sixiang jie de xuanwei 思想界的权威
 Song Yunbin 宋云彬
 Suimo shudian 水沫书店
 Sun Fuxi 孙福熙
 Sun Fuyuan 孙伏园
 Sun Zhongshang 孙中山（Sun Yexian, or Sun Yet-sen 孙逸仙）
 Suzhou 苏州
 Taidong shuju 泰东书局
 Taixue 太学
 Taiyang she 太阳社
 Tang Tao 唐弢
 tangzhi 堂侄
 Tao Chengzhang 陶成章
 Tongmeng hui 同盟会
 tongnian 同年
 tongren zazhi 同仁杂志
 tongsheng shizi 童生士子
 tongzhi 同志
 Wang Boxiang 王伯祥
 Wang Chunnong 王纯农
 Wang Fuquan 汪馥泉
 Wang Jingwei 汪精卫
 Wang Maizhi 汪曼之
 Wang Mengzou 汪孟邹
 Wang Xiaoming 王晓明
 Wang Yunwu 王云五
 Wang Zicheng 王子澄
 wengai 文丐
 wenhua ren 文化人
 Wenhua shenghuo chubanshe 文化生活出版社
 wenlian 文联
 wenwu ju 文物局
 Wenxue yanjiu hui 文学研究会
 Wenxue yanjiu hui chunshu 《文学研究会丛书》
 Wenxue zhoubao 《文学周报》
 Wenyi yu xingai 《文艺与性爱》
 Wu Juenong 吴觉农

Wu Mi 吴宓
 Wusi 五四
 Xia Mianzun 夏丏尊
Xiandai funu 《现代妇女》
Xiandai pinlun 《现代评论》
 Xiandai shuju 现代书局
 xiang guangming 向光明
 xiangtu 乡土
 xianjue zhe 先觉者
Xiao jing 《孝经》
 xiao shiming 小市民
Xiaoxuo yuabao 《小说月报》
Xin de zhishi 《性的知识》
Xin nuxing 《新女性》
 xin shi 新诗
 xin shu 新书
 xin shudian 新书店
 xin shuye 新书业
 Xin shuye tonghui 新书业同会
 xin wenyi 新文艺
 xin wenyi 新文艺
 xin xiaoshuo 新小说
Xin xing diode taolun ji 《新性道德讨论集》
Xin yu rensheng 《性与人生》
Xing de gushi 《性的故事》
Xing shi 《性史》
 xingong 薪工
 Xinyue shudian 新月书店
 xiongde shudian 兄弟书店
 Xu Diaofu 徐调福
 Xu Guangpin 许广平
 Xu Xilin 徐锡麟
 Xu Zhimo 徐志摩
 Xu Zhimo 徐志摩
 Xu Zhiyan 许指严
Xue deng 《学灯》
Xueheng 《学衡》
 Yadong tushuguan 亚东图书馆
 Yan Fu 严复
 Ye shengtao 叶圣陶
 Yi Peiji 易培基

Yiban 《一般》
 Yu Dafu 郁达夫
 Yu Pinbo 俞平伯
 Yu Shangyuan 余上沅
 Yuanyuan tang 缘缘堂
 Yue 越
 Zeng Pu 曾朴
 Zeng Xubai 曾虚白
 Zhabei 闸北
 Zhabei 闸北
 Zhang Jinglu 张静庐
 Zhang Jingsheng 张竞生
 Zhang Mingyang 张明养
 Zhang Xichen 章锡琛
 Zhang Yuanji 张元济
 Zhang Zongxiang 章宗祥
 Zhangguo shehui dang 中国社会党
 Zhao Jingshen 赵景深
 Zhao Nangong 赵南公
 Zhaofeng lu 兆丰路
 Zhejiang 浙江
 Zhejiang diyi shifan xuetao 浙江第一师范学堂
 Zhejiang guanli liangji shifan xuetao 浙江官立两级师范学堂
 Zhejiang ji 浙江术专科学校
 Zheng Zhenduo 郑振铎
 Zhengshanmei shudian 真善美书店
 Zhengzhong shuju 正中书局
Zhi bei you 《知北游》
 zhishi fengzi 知识分子
 zhishi fenzi gaizao 知识分子改造
 zhiye 职业
 Zhong Xi taohe 中西调和
Zhong xuesheng 《中学生》
 zhongdeng xuetao 中等学堂
 Zhongguo gongxue 中国公学
 Zhongguo jiaoyu hui 中国教育会
 Zhongguo jieyu yanjiu she 中国节育研究社
 Zhongguo zhuzuo zhe xiehui 中国著作者协会
 Zhongguo zuiyou xin sixiang de shudian 中国最有新思想的书店
 Zhonghua shuju 中华书局
Zhongxuesheng zhanshi bayue kan 《中学生战地半月刊》

Zhou Jianren 周建人
Zhou Yutong 周予同
Zhou Zuoren 周作人
Zhu Guangqian 朱光潜
Zhu Ziqing 朱自清
Zhuangzi 《庄子》
zisong 自讼
zixing 自省
ziyou 自由
Ziyou lianai 自由恋爱
Ziyou nuxing 《自由的女性》
Zuo lian 左联

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abbreviations:

- KM *Kaiming*. Shanghai: Kaiming shudian, 1928-31.
- MSS *Middle School Students* (Zhong xuesheng). Shanghai: Kaiming shudian, 1930-1937, 1937-1953.
- NW *New Women* (Xin nuxing). Shanghai: Kaiming shudian, 1926-1929.
- YB *Yiban* (The Common). Shanghai: Kaiming Shudian, 1926-1929

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