

~~*Firing Cannon towards the Sky*—In summer of 1927 there was an extended drought and all the crops dried up in the fields. Zhang issued an order that forbid butchering any animal. He then personally conducted a prayer at the Dragon King Temple for water, which failed. Incensed, Zhang shook his fists towards the Dragon King and later ordered the cannons at the Zhangzhuang fort be fired towards the sky every couple of hours to express his anger towards the heaven. The rains still did not come.~~

~~*Public Sale of Opium*—Zhang ordered that opium be allowed to be sold publicly. There were opportunists who opened opium shops on the second floor of the newly built commercial building in Baotu~~

~~Fountain district [Jinan city], and dubbed it the “Quit Smoking Shop.” Opium sales taxes were paid directly to Zhang monthly.~~

~~*Drafting Soldiers*—In Jinan, under Zhang’s regime, people would commonly be arrested on the street and sent directly to the military front. There they often ended up being killed. During that period, pedestrians on the street were under constant threat of being ‘drafted’ in this manner. The captured ones were all healthy men. Students from school were often detained and could only be released after negotiations to have them released. To prevent such incidents, schools made a special cloth badge pinned to their chest for students to wear with their names and school’s official stamp in order to distinguish them from the non-students.~~

MAY FOURTH MOVEMENT

As the military and political crises deepened, intellectually charged movements arose. These movements advocated publicly for a unified response by China’s fragmented political and military leaders. The **May Fourth Movement** is best understood as a popular movement unified by a desire to *intellectually* redefine China’s traditional culture and society, even its language (7.11). The catalysts for these changes were varied, such as the humiliating political and economic demands imposed on China by Japan, the demeaning treatment China received in the Versailles settlement of World War One, and the debilitating effect of the rampant Warlord militarism (7.9). The May Fourth Movement, though a response to these kinds of external pressures, was first and foremost an internal, intellectual movement that sought to alter what it meant for anything or anyone to be Chinese. Journals such as *New Youth*, intellectuals such as **Chen Duxiu**, and literary figures like Lu Xun were all part of a broad public dialogue that sought to reshape the basic building blocks of Chinese society. This dialogue covered political ideology, literature, and the composition of Chinese “national essence” (*guocui*). In many of the following documents we see the political, social and cultural seeds of China’s future, though the context in which these events took place gave little evidence of their eventual success.

MAY FOURTH MOVEMENT—A movement narrowly defined as events sparked by the student-led demonstrations of May 4, 1919 against the Treaty of Versailles. More often it is used to identify the broad intellectual and cultural transformations that took place after Japan’s Twenty-One Demands (1915) lasting well into the 1920s.

CHEN DUXIU (1880–1942)—A gifted May Fourth intellectual who helped launch and edit *New Youth* in 1915, was appointed as Dean to the School of Arts at Beijing University in 1917, and was a founding member and first party secretary of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921.

NEW CULTURE MOVEMENT (c. 1917–1923)—A movement roughly equivalent to the “May Fourth Movement,” though some suggest the New Culture Movement indicates a more “thought” oriented movement compared to the “action” agenda of the May Fourth Movement. The conflation of the terms has made them interchangeable in popular discourse.

7.9 JAPAN'S TWENTY-ONE DEMANDS (JANUARY 18TH, 1915)

On January 18, 1915, Eki Hoiki, the Japanese minister in Beijing, handed President Yuan Shikai the following list of twenty-one demands grouped into five sections. The timing of the demands took full advantage of Great Britain's recent entrance into the First World War. The Japanese calculated that Britain would be hard pressed to hold Japan to the terms of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1905 which stated that both countries would be bound to the "preservation of the ... independence, and integrity of the Chinese Empire." On May 7, the Japanese minister presented an ultimatum including a revised series of demands (in particular the postponement of the demands in Group 5 (see below) and the threat that if these terms were not accepted within 48 hours the Japanese government would "take such steps as they deem necessary." The next day, Yuan Shikai accepted the demands and on May 25, 1915 he officially signed treaties and diplomatic notes acknowledging China's assent to the terms. His acceptance set off a furor and sparked popular anti-Japanese movements throughout China.

Questions

1. Rank the five groups of demands into what you surmise China (and the Chinese people) found most to least objectionable?
2. In what ways are Japan's twenty-one demands similar or different from the unequal treaties China was forced to sign with Western powers during the nineteenth century (Chapter 4)?

GROUP I

The Japanese Government and the Chinese Government being desirous of maintaining the general peace in Eastern Asia and further strengthening the friendly relations and good neighborhood existing between the two nations agree to the following articles:

ARTICLE 1—The Chinese Government engages to give full assent to all matters upon which the Japanese Government may hereafter agree with the German Government relating to the disposition of all rights, interests and concessions which Germany, by virtue of treaties or otherwise, possesses in relation to the province of Shandong.

ARTICLE 2—The Chinese Government engages that within the Province of Shandong and along its coast, no territory or island will be ceded or leased to a third power under any pretext.

ARTICLE 3—The Chinese government consents to Japan's building a railway from Yantai or Longkou to join the Jiaozhou-Jinanfu Railway.

ARTICLE 4—The Chinese Government engages in interest of trade and for the residence of foreigners, to open by herself as soon as possible certain important cities and towns in the province of Shandong as commercial ports. What places shall be opened are to be jointly decided upon in a separate agreement.

GROUP II

The Japanese government and the Chinese government, since the Chinese government has always acknowledged the special position enjoyed by Japan in South Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia, agree to the following articles:

ARTICLE 1—The two contracting parties mutually agree that the term of lease of Port Arthur

[Lüshun] and Dalian and the term of lease of the South Manchurian Railway and the Andong-Shenyang Railway shall be extended to the period of 99 years.

ARTICLE 2—Japanese subjects in South Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia shall have the right to lease or own land required either for erecting suitable buildings for trade and manufacture or for farming.

ARTICLE 3—Japanese subjects shall be free to reside and travel in South Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia and to engage in business and in manufacture of any kind whatsoever.

ARTICLE 4—The Chinese government agrees to grant to Japanese subjects the right of opening the mines in South Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia. As regards what mines are to be opened, they shall be decided upon jointly.

ARTICLE 5—The Chinese government agrees that in respect of the (two) cases mentioned herein below the Japanese Government's consent shall be first obtained before action is taken:

- a. Whenever permission is granted to the subject of a third power to build a railway or to make a loan with a third power for the purpose of building a railway in South Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia.
- b. Whenever a loan is to be made with a third power pledging the local taxes of South Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia as security.

ARTICLE 6—The Chinese government agrees that if the Chinese Government employs political, financial or military advisers or instructors in South Manchuria or Eastern Inner Mongolia, the Japanese government shall first be consulted.

ARTICLE 7—The Chinese government agrees that the control and management of the Jilin-Changchun shall be handed over to the Japanese government for terms of 99 years dating from the signing of this agreement.

GROUP III

The Japanese government and the Chinese government, seeing that Japanese financiers and the Hanyeping Co.

have close relations with each other at present and desiring that common interests of the two nations shall be advanced, agree to the following articles:

ARTICLE 1—The two contracting parties mutually agree that when the opportune moment arrives the Hanyeping Company shall be made a joint concern of the two nations and they further agree that without the previous consent of Japan China shall not by her own act dispose of the rights and property of whatsoever nature of the said company nor cause the said company to dispose freely of the same.

ARTICLE 2—The Chinese government agrees that all mines in the neighborhood of those owned by the Hanyeping Company shall not be permitted, without the consent of the said Company, to be worked by other persons outside of the said Company; and further agrees that if it is desired to carry out any undertaking which, it is apprehended, may directly or indirectly affect the interests of the said Company, the consent of the said Company shall first be obtained.

GROUP IV

The Japanese government and the Chinese government with the object of effectively preserving the territorial integrity of China agree to the following special article:

The Chinese government engages not to cede or lease to a third power any harbor or bay or island along the coast of China.

GROUP V

ARTICLE 1—The Chinese Central Government shall employ influential Japanese as advisers in political, financial and military affairs.

ARTICLE 2—Japanese hospitals, churches and schools in the interior of China shall be granted the right of owning land.

ARTICLE 3—Inasmuch as the Japanese Government and the Chinese Government have had many cases of dispute between Japanese and Chinese police which caused no little misunderstanding, it is for this reason necessary that the police departments of important places (in China) shall be jointly administered by

Japanese and Chinese or that the police departments of these places shall employ numerous Japanese, so that they may at the same time help to plan for the improvement of the Chinese Police Service.

ARTICLE 4 — China shall purchase from Japan a fixed amount of munitions of war (say 50 percent or more of what is needed by the Chinese government) or that there shall be established in China a Sino-Japanese jointly worked arsenal. Japanese technical experts are to be employed and Japanese material to be purchased.

ARTICLE 5 — China agrees to grant to Japan the right of constructing a railway connecting Wuchang with Jiujiang and Nanchang, another line between Nanchang and Hangzhou, and another between Nanchang and Chaozhou.

ARTICLE 6 — If China needs foreign capital to work mines, build railways and construct harborworks (including dockyards) in the Province of Fujian, Japan shall be first consulted.

ARTICLE 7 — China agrees that Japanese subjects shall have the right of missionary propaganda in China.

7.10 MAY FOURTH MANIFESTO (MAY 4, 1919)

China, like many non-Western European nations, had placed considerable confidence in President Wilson's Fourteen Points. Many non-Western countries took Wilson's Fourteen Points to mean he advocated equality among all nations in the World War One peace proceedings at Versailles outside of Paris. When word finally reached China that Germany's holdings would be given to Japan instead of reverting to Chinese control, public outrage boiled over. Students in Beijing took to the streets to protest the peace negotiations. One of the student leaders, Luo Jialun, wrote the following manifesto which was the only publication printed that day. The demonstration by today's standards was small—only 3,000 students from Beijing's thirteen colleges. However the impact was immediate and sparked a countrywide reaction against the treaty and against Japan. The Treaty of Versailles, formally signed eight months after the war's end in June 28, 1919, did not include China's signature.

Questions

1. At what target is the anger of the May Fourth demonstrations directed?
2. What political and military contingencies (within China) made it difficult for the Chinese (Beijing) government to oppose the Versailles Peace Treaty?

At the Paris Peace Conference, Japan's request to occupy and control Shandong, is about to be granted! Their diplomacy has triumphed completely while ours has failed utterly! The loss of Shandong can only denote the end of China's territorial integrity. The end of China's territorial integrity can only mean China is done for! Therefore today, we, the students, form a procession and demonstrate in front of every embassy of every country, and demand that they defend justice. We hope people in industry, business and every walk

of life all over the country will hold citizens meetings to fight; internationally for China's sovereignty, and domestically to rid the country of traitors. China's survival depends on this next move! Today we take two oaths with all our fellow countrymen:

China's territory can be conquered, but not given away!

The Chinese people may be killed, but they will not submit!

The country will be lost! Fellow citizens, rise up!

7.11 CHEN DUXIU'S "NEW YOUTH" MANIFESTO (DECEMBER 1, 1919)

The leading journal of the May Fourth Movement was *New Youth* (*Xin Qingnian*). Founded in 1915, it was in the vanguard of an intellectual movement promoting science, vernacular Chinese literature, and an often leftist political ideology. In late 1919 the journal issued a novel and idealistic manifesto, which captured the rapidly shifting political mood in China. This was unlike anything it had printed before. Among other things, this manifesto exhibited a far more radical attitude towards political parties than had been previously published. It captured the sharp shift in thought that transpired in the post-May Fourth period, and it asserted that Chinese citizens must begin to participate in political change.

Questions

1. Who in 1919 would disagree that “politics, ethnic science, the arts, religion, and education should meet all practical needs . . . for present and future social life”?
2. What is the editorial’s final paragraph suggesting? Why?

We believe that the moral progress of mankind should expand to a standard above the life based on animal impulse (i.e., aggressive and possessive); therefore, we should extend a feeling of friendship and mutual assistance to all peoples of the world. But toward aggressive and possessive warlords and plutocrats, we have to be hostile.

We advocate mass movement and social reconstruction, absolutely cutting off any relations with past and present political parties.

Although we do not believe in the omnipotence of politics, we recognize that politics is an important aspect of public life. And we believe that in a genuine democracy, political rights must be distributed to all the people. Even though there may be limitations, the criteria for the distribution will be whether they work or not, rather than whether they own property or not. This kind of politics is really inevitable in the process of introducing the new era and a useful instrument for the development of the new society. As for political parties,

we also recognize them as a necessary device for political practice, but we shall never tolerate membership in parties that support the interests of the few or of one class rather than the happiness of the whole society.

We believe that politics, ethics, science, the arts, religion, and education should all meet practical needs in the achievement of progress for present and future social life.

We have to give up the useless and irrelevant elements of traditional literature and ethics, because we want to create those needed for the progress of the new era and new society.

We believe that it is requisite for the progress of our present society to uphold natural science and pragmatic philosophy and to abolish superstition and fantasy.

We believe that to respect women’s personality and rights is a practical need for the social progress at present, and we hope that they themselves will be completely aware of their duty to society.

[. . .]

7.12 LU XUN'S CALL TO ARMS (DECEMBER 3, 1922)

No single literary figure more accurately captured the mood, aspirations, and musings of the May Fourth era than **Lu Xun** (1881–1936). Still revered in China today (especially

LU XUN (1881–1936)—A prominent twentieth-century Chinese author, a major proponent of vernacular (*baihua*) literature, and a major figure in the May Fourth Movement in 1919. While leftist in his political thought he never joined the CCP.

for his sardonic tale of a village idiot in “The True Story of A Q”), Lu Xun actively pushed his leftist agenda in his writings. His clear affinity with the lower classes and his ability to capture the choices facing all Chinese in his writings transcended standard political divisions. The following excerpt is taken from his preface to a collection of short stories entitled *Call to Arms*. The autobiographical themes he describes would have resonated among many of the May Fourthers and with the growing numbers of politically disaffected Chinese.

Questions

1. From his preface can you deduce why Lu Xun entitled his collected works *Call to Arms*?
2. What are the parallels between the “iron house” metaphor and the May Fourth generation?

When I was young I, too, had many dreams. Most of them I later forgot, but I see nothing in this to regret. For although recalling the past may bring happiness, at times it cannot but bring loneliness, and what is the point of clinging in spirit to lonely bygone days? However, my trouble is that I cannot forget completely, and these stories stem from those things which I have been unable to forget.

For more than four years I frequented, almost daily, a pawnshop and pharmacy. I cannot remember how old I was at the time but the pharmacy counter was exactly my height and that in the pawnshop twice my height. I used to hand clothes and trinkets up to the counter twice my height, then take the money given me with contempt to the counter my own height to buy medicine for my father, a chronic invalid. On my return home I had other things to keep me busy, for our physician was so eminent that he prescribed unusual drugs and adjuvants: aloe roots dug up in winter, sugar-cane that had been three years exposed to frost, original pairs of crickets, and an ardisia [shrub] that had seeded . . . most of which were difficult to come by. But my father’s illness went from bad to worse until he died.

It is my belief that those who come down in the world will probably learn in the process what society is really like. My eagerness to go to N— and study in the K— seems to have shown a desire to strike out for myself, escape, and find people of a different kind. My mother had no choice but to raise eight dollars for my traveling expenses and say I might do as I pleased. That she cried was only natural, for at that time the proper thing was to study the classics and take the official examinations. Anyone who studied “foreign subjects” was a social outcast regarded as

someone who could find no way out and was forced to sell his soul to foreign devils. Besides, she was sorry to part with me. But in spite of all this, I went to N— (**translator’s note:** Nanjing) and entered the K— Academy (**translator’s note:** Jiangnan Naval Academy where author studies in 1898); and it was there that I learned of the existence of physics, arithmetic, geography, history, drawing and physical training. They had no physiology course, but we saw woodblock editions of such works as *A New Course on the Human Body* and *Essays on Chemistry and Hygiene*. Recalling the talk and prescriptions of physicians I had known and comparing them with what I now knew, I came to the conclusion that those physicians must be either unwitting or deliberate charlatans; and I began to feel great sympathy for the invalids and families who suffered at their hands. From translated histories I also learned that the Japanese Reformation owed its rise, to a great extent, to the introduction of Western medical science to Japan.

These inklings took me to a medical college in the Japanese countryside. It was my fine dream that on my return to China I would cure patients like my father who had suffered from the wrong treatment, while if war broke out I would serve as an army doctor, at the same time promoting my countrymen’s faith in reform.

I have no idea what improved methods are now used to teach microbiology, but in those days we were shown lantern slides of microbes; and if the lecture ended early, the instructor might show slides of natural scenery or news to fill up the time. Since this was during the Russo-Japanese War, there were many war slides, and I had to join in the clapping and cheering in the lecture hall along with the other

students. It was a long time since I had seen any compatriots, but one day I saw a news-reel slide of a number of Chinese, one of them bound and the rest standing around him. They were all sturdy fellows but appeared completely apathetic. According to the commentary, the one with his hands bound was a spy working for the Russians who was to be beheaded by the Japanese military as a warning to others, while the Chinese beside him had come to enjoy the spectacle.

Before the term was over I had left for Tokyo, because this slide convinced me that medical science was not so important after all. The people of a weak and backward country, however strong and healthy they might be, could only serve to be made examples of or as witnesses of such futile spectacles; and it was not necessarily deplorable if many of them died of illness. The most important thing, therefore, was to change their spirit; and since at that time I felt that literature was the best means to this end, I decided to promote a literary movement. There were many Chinese students in Tokyo studying law, political science, physics and chemistry, even police work and engineering, but not one studying literature and art. However, even in this uncongenial atmosphere I was fortunate enough to find some kindred spirits. We gathered the few others we needed and after discussion our first step, of course, was to publish a magazine, the title of which denoted that this was a new birth. As we were then rather classically inclined, we called it *Vita Nova* (New Life).

When the time for publication drew near, some of our contributors dropped out and then our funds ran out, until there were only three of us left and we were penniless. Since we had started our venture at an unlucky hour, there was naturally no one to whom we could complain when we failed; but later even we three were destined to part, and our discussions of a future dream world had to cease. So ended this abortive *Vita Nova*.

Only later did I feel the futility of it all. At that time I had not a clue. Later it seemed to me that if a man's proposals met with approval, that should encourage him to advance; if they met with opposition, that should make him fight back; but the real tragedy was for him to lift up his voice among the living and meet with no response, neither approval nor opposition, just as if he were stranded in a boundless desert completely at a loss. That was when I became conscious of loneliness.

And this sense of loneliness grew from day to day, entwining itself about my soul like some huge poisonous snake.

But in spite of my groundless sadness, I felt no indignation; for this experience had made me reflect and see that I was definitely not the type of hero who could rally multitudes at his call.

However, my loneliness had to be dispelled because it was causing me agony. So I used various means to dull my senses, to immerse myself among my fellow nationals and to turn to the past. Later I experienced or witnessed even greater loneliness and sadness which I am unwilling to recall, preferring that it should perish with my mind in the dust. Still my attempt to deaden my senses was not unsuccessful—I lost the enthusiasm and fervor of my youth.

In S—Hostel was a three-roomed house with a courtyard in which grew a locust tree, and it was said that a woman had hanged herself there. Although the tree had grown so tall that its branches were now out of reach, the rooms remained deserted. For some years I stayed here, copying ancient inscriptions. I had few visitors, the inscriptions raised no political problems or issues, and so the days slipped quietly away, which was all that I desired. On summer nights, when mosquitoes swarmed, I would sit under the locust tree waving my fan and looking at specks of blue sky through chinks in the thick foliage, while belated caterpillars would fall, icy-cold, on to my neck.

The only visitor to drop in occasionally for a talk was my old friend Jin Xinyi. Having put his big portfolio on the rickety table he would take off his long gown and sit down opposite me, looking as if his heart was still beating fast because he was afraid of dogs.

“What’s the use of copying these?” One night, while leafing through the inscriptions I had copied, he asked me for enlightenment on this point.

“There isn’t any use.”

“What’s the point, then, of copying them?”

“There isn’t any point.”

“Why don’t you write something? . . .”

I understood. They were bringing out *New Youth*, but since there did not seem to have been any reaction, favorable or otherwise, no doubt they felt lonely. However I said:

“Imagine an iron house having not a single window and virtually indestructible, with all its inmates

sound asleep and about to die of suffocation. Dying in their sleep, they won't feel the pain of death. Now if you raise a shout to wake a few of the lighter sleepers, making these unfortunate few suffer the agony of irrevocable death, do you really think you are doing them a good turn?"

"But if a few wake up, you can't say there is no hope of destroying the iron house."

True, in spite of my own conviction, I could not blot out hope, for hope belongs to the future. I had no negative evidence able to refute his affirmation of faith. So I finally agreed to write, and the result was my first story "A Madman's Diary." And once started I could not give up but would write some sort of short story from time to time to humor my friends, until I had written more than a dozen of them.

As far as I am concerned, I no longer feel any great urge to express myself; yet, perhaps because I have not forgotten the grief of my past loneliness, I sometimes call out to encourage those fighters who are galloping on in loneliness, so that they do not lose heart. Whether my cry is brave or sad, repellent or

ridiculous, I do not care. However, since this is a call to arms I must naturally obey my general's orders. This is why I often resort to innuendoes, as when I made a wreath appear from nowhere at the son's grave in "Medicine," while in "Tomorrow" I did not say the Fourth Shan's Wife never dreamed of her little boy. For our chiefs in those days were against pessimism. And I, for my part, did not want to infect with the loneliness which I had found so bitter those young people who were still dreaming pleasant dreams, just as I had done when young.

It is clear, then, that my stories fall far short of being works of art; hence I must at least count myself fortunate that they are still known as stories and are even being brought out in one volume. Although such good fortune makes me uneasy, it still pleases me to think that they have readers in the world of men, for the time being at any rate.

So now that these stories of mine are being reprinted in one collection, for the reasons given above I have chosen to entitle it *Call to Arms*.

Beijing

December 3, 1922

7.13 HU SHI'S LITERARY REVOLUTION AND RENAISSANCE IN CHINA (1926)

While it is possible to see the May Fourth Movement in largely political terms, it is important to recognize its diverse intellectual dimensions as well. **Hu Shi's** aggressive promotion of the "vernacular movement" is one of his greatest legacies. Many intellectuals sought to promote a written language that reflected the spoken language (*baihua*). Up until this point, the bulk of the written literature was "classical Chinese" which differed considerably from the type of Chinese spoken on the street. The foremost proponent of this linguistic revolution was Hu Shi. Educated in the United States on a Boxer Indemnity scholarship, Hu Shi returned to China in 1917 and became a prominent philosophical force among intellectuals. Although liberal in thought, Hu Shi's focus on language reform put him at odds with the socialists and anarchists that dominated many of the May Fourth groups. By the time he delivered this talk he had become a strong supporter of the **Guomindang** (calling it the "only political party worthy of the name"). His talk offers a forthright assessment of the challenges China faced in the first two decades of the twentieth century.

HU SHI (1891–1962)—Born in Shanghai and educated at Cornell University with funds from the Boxer Indemnity Scholarship Program, he returned to China to become a leading intellectual luminary, in particular advocating vernacular Chinese. Hu Shi supported the GMD and in 1949 retreated to Taiwan where he became the president of the Academia Sinica.

GUOMINDANG (NATIONALIST PARTY)—The party founded by Sun Zhongshan in 1912 after the founding of the Republic of China. It ruled China from 1928 until 1949. Defeated by the CCP, it retreated to Taiwan where it remains an important political force.

Questions

1. In what ways does Hu Shi argue that language is the foundation of the “Chinese Renaissance?”
2. Why would Hu Shi’s emphasis on vernacular reform be such a key step in altering China’s education system?

In 1914, 1915, and 1916 there was an all-pervading sense of despair. A number of young men committed suicide because they could think of no way out, could see no ray of light ahead. It was not like those last years of the Manchu Dynasty, when people knew that somewhere and some time a rebellion would come. Now it had come, had been swept out of the path and had left only depression and despair. One of my young friends jumped into the West Lake at Hangzhou, leaving letters of farewell to his friends expressing his joy at escape from a situation without hope. In those years people began at last to realize the futility of superficial political change, and to seek some new factor which could be made the corner-stone of a new age.

May I read to you an extract from a letter of Huang Yuanyong, one of the leading publicists of the day, written just before leaving the country in 1915 at the height of Yuan Shikai’s power. “Politics are in such confusion that I am at a loss to know what to talk about. Ideal schemes will have to be buried for future generations to unearth As to fundamental salvation, I believe its beginning must be sought in the promotion of a *new literature*. We must endeavor to bring Chinese thought into contact with the contemporary thought of the world and thus accelerate its radical awakening. And we must see to it that the basic ideals of the modern world produce some direct effect upon the life of the average man. The method seems to lie in using simple language and literature for the wide dissemination of ideas among the people. Have we not seen that historians regard the European Renaissance as the foundation of the overthrow of medievalism in Europe?”

[. . .]

It was at that time that the new movement began which forms the title and topic of my address tonight. In the years 1915 and 1916 groups of Chinese students in American universities were carrying on a controversy on problems of literature. The results of the controversy were published in the early days of 1917, and formed the first declarations of a movement which has created a revolution in Chinese literature. This literary revolution marks the first stage in the Chinese

Renaissance, for here will be found a spirit essentially different from the earlier stages of modernization. . . . We have realized at last that certain things must be given up if China is to live. If we really want education, general and universal education, we must first have a new language, a language which can be used and understood by tongue and ear and pen, and which will be a living language for the people. For years and years we tried to have education, but we feared to use the spoken language. We tried to compromise in various ways, but we clung as scholars to the scholarly language. It was impossible to preach a language, to ask people to accept a language, which was not good enough for us. China went through a stage of contradictions and remained unconscious of the fact.

At last the new movement began in earnest, the Literary Revolution. It advocates the adoption of the spoken language, the vulgar tongue of the people, as the lay medium for all official and literary composition. Its aim is to elevate the despised vulgar tongue of the people to the dignified position of the literary language of the nation. It is a revolution in a sense because it has involved a reassessment of the vulgar literature of the past and of the classical tradition. It seeks to introduce the spoken language of the people as the medium of expression in all textbooks, in all the newspapers, in all the respectable branches of literature.

[. . .]

This Literary Revolution formed the first phase of the Chinese Renaissance. It marked a new phase, a new life. It was not a complete breaking from the past, it was an historical development; it was a conscious effort to make articulate all the valuable elements we already possessed. At the same time the methods were modern, the inspirations were modern. It thus presented to the people a new and living idea.

As language is the most important vehicle of thought and of expression, any radical and fundamental change in a national language could not but involve a great change in a national language, could not but involve a great change in other phases of social and intellectual life. So during the past ten years, this

Literary Revolution has spread and has affected various phases of Chinese life. I shall not describe those different phases in great detail. I shall confine myself to two particular phases: first, the intellectual changes, and secondly, the social and political developments.

However multifarious these tendencies may seem, there are certain general characteristics which unite them more or less into one great National Movement. The whole movement may be characterized, in the

words of Nietzsche, as a movement of the transvaluation of all values. It is a movement in a way to make everything upside down; to try to judge, to criticize, to doubt, to revalue old things according to new standards. Nothing is too high or too low to be subjected to this process of transvaluation. Marriage, concubinage, widowhood, Confucianism, Christianity—nothing is too sacred to be allowed to pass without criticism. It is for us an age of doubt, of criticism, of protest.

of the “May Fourth Youth” (8.11). The desire to have premarital relationships and marry according to one’s own wishes was a common theme not only in the 1920s, but on into the 1940s. Arranged marriages decrease but remain common for several more decades and as Ba Jin’s *Family* throws into sharp relief, it was not only the women who suffered from such arrangements, but also the men (8.13). The advent of daily newspapers, weeklies, and other periodicals, provided ample avenues for the dissemination of these new beliefs. While novels and short stories might appear quite conventional, it should be remembered that stories written in a colloquial manner (and about young love) were perceived in the 1920s still as quite innovative and even risqué (8.12).

8.11 YANG ZHIHUA’S LOVE AND SOCIALIZING BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN (JULY 1922)

Yang Zhihua (1900–1973), a prominent feminist author of the May Fourth Movement and communist labor organizer, wrote many short articles for various newspapers. A well-known proponent of women adopting a more prominent voice in love relationships and marriage, Yang’s own love life was particularly open for her era. When she fell in love with Qu Qiubei (a well-known writer) while married to another man, she orchestrated a meeting between herself, her husband and Qu to work out their individual wants and desires. As a result, on a single day, three announcements appeared side-by-side in the daily newspaper. The first announced that Yang and Qu Qiubei had married, the second declared that Yang and her first husband were divorced, and the third that Qu Qiubei and Yang’s first husband had become good friends. A stylish dresser and a striking beauty, she was a leading figure in 1930s Shanghai. The following article, published in *Women’s Critic* as an insert of the *Republican Daily*, typifies her mixture of personal experiences with more generalized changes occurring in Chinese society.

Questions

1. In what ways do Yang Zhihua’s ideas about love break with those in China’s past?
2. What does Yang Zhihua suggest is the basic problem(s) with the way dating occurs in 1920s China?

There stood several young men, who all wore new-style clothes, hats, and shoes, and usually spoke and wrote in a brand new language and fancy style. Suddenly, one of them came up to me and said: “Your relationship with so-and-so is already known to us all. Aha, you two are in love!” I simply laughed. If he had been smart, he would have instantly known what my laughter meant. What did I laugh at? I simply laughed at his “newness” and

the fact that he was new on the outside but old on the inside. His mixture of old and new is even older than the old and dirtier than dirt. Then he continued to ask me: “Why don’t you tell us more about it, since you two are indeed in love?” Once again, I laughed coldly. He had no idea.

How many people who are supposedly engaged in the New Culture movement these days truly mean business? Far too many of them are just wearing

masks! As it is, there are more destroyers than builders; if this continues, our future is really in grave danger!

Open socializing between men and women is a very important issue. There has been a lot of public demand for that since the May Fourth Movement. Unfortunately, it has not been easy to carry out. Why not? In my opinion, it is due to the obstacles created by the men and women involved. On the one hand, they advocate open socializing between men and women; on the other hand, they are doing things to hinder it. This is a real self-contradiction; it is like blocking one's own way with rocks.

This is where the obstacles lie.

First, when a man and a woman start to socialize by speaking and writing to each other, going to the parks together, or studying together, people jump to the conclusion that this young man and this young woman are in love, even though they are actually just friends. Consequently, some young men and women succumb to these outside pressures and speculations, go ahead and push themselves into the "business of love," and then have sex. After that, they break up, agonize, and part ways. The whole process usually lasts a very short time because their relationship has the wrong foundation to begin with. This kind of love is caused by outside pressure, so it is not true love. It is not a personal choice, so it usually does not last long. It is certainly not a good thing for society when couples separate, though divorce is an expedient means to deal with problems caused by the old marriage system. Any society that allows people to copulate and then casually separate is a primitive one and exists only in periods of barbarism. Now that such things happen in our society, it is no wonder that those old moralists feel disgusted.

As I have shown, this situation results from the fact that some people who have been steeped in the old tradition resent and make a fuss about socializing between men and women. This is an objective obstacle.

The second obstacle—one that is caused by the men and women themselves. Often, one feels excited when one meets a stranger of the opposite sex. When this happens, people behave strangely, assuming that

the purpose of socializing with someone of the opposite sex is to "love and marry." For the sole purpose of speeding up the game of love, they discard their personal integrity and try all sorts of tricks to seduce the opposite sex. They never question whether love should be achieved that way and whether this kind of union between the sexes is natural or everlasting. This is completely wrong! This kind of union has nothing to do with love. It is nothing but animal desire. With this kind of animalistic socializing going on, it is no wonder that those old moralists curse the absurdity of the New Culture Movement and prevent their own children from going to public gatherings.

Third, there are some who tend to misunderstand the intention of the other party, assuming that even the slightest agreement in language and thought signifies "love." They then seek love without trying to understand the other party. Suffering from "unrequited love," many of them end up becoming ill, insane, or suicidal. Those who are smarter may come back to their senses in time. Observation of these kinds of encounters may cause pessimism and loneliness in other people, and keep them from going out and socializing.

The above are the obstacles that hinder the socializing between men and women.

Love is sacred and should not be spoken of lightly. It is a union of character. Anybody who misinterprets the concept of character, fails to distinguish between the part and the whole, or fails to understand the significance of character is not qualified to talk about "love."

I respect my own and others' character. If I actually fall in love with someone, I will not be afraid to talk about it. If not, however, I will certainly curse those who don't respect the character of others. Who can sway my will? Who can force me? Who would dare to control me? I have the right to control my own life and would never allow anybody else to control me. I sincerely advise young people: Raise your consciousness, never take lightly your own character or others', never try to destroy our New Culture Movement, and avoid hindering our progress. It is my hope that there will be more discussion on socializing between men and women. I also welcome comments and criticisms.