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Affective Betrayal of Translated Political Modernity in Late Qing China

DISSERTATION

submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in East Asian Languages and Literatures

by

Kam Jean Tsui

Dissertation Committee:
Professor Hu Ying, Chair
Professor Michael A. Fuller
Professor Martin W. Huang

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS		iii-vi
CURRICULUM VITAE		v
ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION		vi-vii
INTRODUCTION		1
CHAPTER 1:	"Political Modernity and Its Musical Dissociation"	18
CHAPTER 2:	"Dissolution of Modern Political Languages in the Cinematic Spectacle"	62
CHAPTER 3:	"An Onto-hermeneutic Turn": From New Knowledge to Nameless Truth	129
BIBLIOGRAPHY		192

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CURRICULUM VITAE

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Affective Betrayal of Translated Political Modernity in Late Qing China

By

Kam Jean Tsui

Doctor of Philosophy in East Asian Languages and Literatures

University of California, Irvine, 2015

Professor Hu Ying, Chair

“Affective Betrayal” traces the presence of emotion in journalistic and fictional writings published during the early 1900’s, and examines how it exposes the fragility and fragmentation of Chinese modernity. The dissertation begins with a simple observation: after the 1895 Sino-Japanese War, Chinese intellectuals circulated modern political concepts in a highly provocative fashion. Charged with lyrical intensity and calculated to provoke, their affective presentations contradict the assumption that Chinese modernity began life as a constructed “discourse” derived from cross-cultural exchanges and consolidated by power relations. To explicate how the lyrical intensity disrupted the semantic consistency of these translated concepts, the dissertation studies the formation of a “text” as the production of an aesthetic “object.” In my detailed formal analyses, I show that the leading late Qing intellectual Liang Qichao (1873-1929) circulated his writings as aural texts and pictorial texts, and that translated modern concepts were received as reading as well as listening and visualizing experiences. Focusing on epistemic uncertainties created by Liang’s competing affective presentations, I argue that Chinese modernity often teeters in a state of aesthetic ambivalence. It is displaced from the modern political discourse. By revealing the uncertainty and confusion that are deep-seated in China’s modernization

process, the dissertation seeks to explain why the import of modern concepts had led to China's continued political impasse, rather than rationality and progress, after the 1911 revolution.

INTRODUCTION

Let me begin with a brief background story. In 1895, China was defeated by Japan in the first Sino-Japanese war. Shocked and shaken, some liberal-minded late Qing intellectuals saw the urgent need of calling for a social and institutional reform. As the young intellectual Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873-1929) became increasingly familiar with the modern European history and relevant Western political concepts, he became convinced that it would be a better idea to save China by launching a political revolution.[1] With his mind more or less set, Liang made his first step by circulating revolutionary ideas in an academy he founded with friends in the Hunan 湖南 province in 1897.[2] One year later, Liang and his mentor Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858-1927), a staunch supporter for reform, were received by Emperor Guangxu 光緒 (1875-1908) under a rather unexpected circumstance. With the throne's support, the revolutionary-minded Liang, fortunately or unfortunately, was granted the once-in-a-lifetime chance of leading a nation-wide reformist movement with his mentor. Three months later the reform was pre-maturely crushed by Empress Dowager Cixi 慈禧 (1835-1908). Kang Youwei fled to Hong Kong, and Liang began to spend his long exile years in Japan.

In Japan, Liang launched the bi-weekly journal *The China Discussion* (清議報 *Qingyi bao*) (1898-1901). Apart from going on emphasizing the need to implement constitutional monarchy in China, the young "reformer," who was then nationally famous, carefully coated his

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[1] For a summary on Liang Qichao's support for the revolution before 1897, see Zhang Pengyuan's *Liang Qichao yu qingji geming* 梁啟超與清季革命(Liang Qichao and the Qing revolution) (Shanghai: Sanlian shudian, 2013), 31-78. (The book was published originally by Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo in 1982, in Taipei).

[2] See *Yijiao congbian* 翼教叢編 (A general collection to protect the faith), edited by Su Yu 蘇輿 (Taibei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1971).

some of his revolutionary agenda in "reformist" languages. These proposals, though not without contradictions, were warmly embraced by his contemporaries across the strait.

Having circulated "reformist" thinking for three years, Liang, somewhat strangely, began to mention, condemn, and celebrate the "word" revolution in an elaborate fashion in 1902. Revolution, as Chen Jianhua's careful archeological studies shows, is a term that seldom appears in Liang's early writings.[3] When the young intellectual was promoting constitutional monarchy with his teacher Kang Youwei during his early exile years, he only mentioned this word to deny its moral and political legitimacy. Liang attempted to provide a good explanation for this seemingly abrupt move. His professed logic was: to stop a fatally destructive revolution from taking place in China, he must launch a moral, fictional, historiographical, religious, and literary revolution in advance.

To achieve this goal, Liang replaced *The China Discussion* with a new bi-weekly journal titled *New Citizen Journal* (新民叢報 *Xinmin congbao*) in 1902. In the new journal, whenever he mentions the word revolution, he renders it musically and affectively. Utilizing the familiar acoustic pattern, tonal arrangement, and rhythmical structure in the Chinese rhapsody and poetry,[4] Liang's revolutionary writings are often lyrically and emotionally appealing.

In "Great Preface to Mao's Odes (*Maoshi daxu* 毛詩大序)," it is said that "emotion is stirred in the center and takes shape in words (poetry) 在心為志，發言為詩."[5] According to

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[3] See Chen Jianhua,"Chinese Revolution in the Syntax of World Revolution," in *Tokens of Exchange: the Problem of Translation in Global Circulations*, edited by Lydia Liu (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 355–74.

[4] For Liang discussion on the relationship of poetic writing and the expression emotional experiences, see Liang's "Zhongguo yunwen litou suo bianxian de qinggan" 中國韻文裡頭所表現的情感 (Feelings conveyed in Chinese rhythmic prose), in *Liang Qichao lun Zhongguo wenxue* 梁啟超論中國文學 (Liang Qichao on Chinese Literature) (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 2012), 191-272.

[5] Great Preface to Mao's Odes 毛氏大序. See *Hou hanshu* 後漢書 (The book of later Han) (Peking: Zhonghua shuju, 1965), vol. IX, 2575-6.

Ken Berthel's study, in ancient China sound's intrinsic ability in spreading itself across had been understood as "sympathetic resonance." For early Chinese philosophers, "the idea that different kinds of sounds transmitted different information or emotional content intersubjectively was seen as typologically equivalent to the physical phenomenon of sympathetic resonance so readily observable in nature."[6] Through studying the connection between language and music and the complementary role they play in communicating one's intent, Berthel suggests that "expression is certainly not a simple case of mimetic reproduction of the nonmusical sounds of the external world, but rather a deployment of musical sounds that represent the human affect that arises from external arousal."[7]

Focusing on the role music played in transmitting reality and principle in ancient China, Berthel's studies hopes to achieve the more ambitious goal of questioning the "centrality of language in representing our worldview."[8] A comparable objective has been more vigorously elaborated in David Der-wei Wang's studies on modern Chinese lyrical expressions. In his recent monograph *The Lyrical in the Epic Time: Modern Chinese Intellectuals and Artists Through the 1949 Crisis*, Wang begins by saying that scholarship on China's modernization process has been bound by a "strong," "holistic" mode of thinking. Reluctant to confront the country's crises beyond the level of intellectual deliberation, many scholars have dogmatically divided China's modernization into processes of revolution and enlightenment.[9] To capture idiosyncrasies that are non-synchronic with these grand historical narratives, Wang sets out to

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[6] Ken Berthel, "*Zhiyin* 知音 and *Zhiyan* 知言, Knowing Notes and Knowing Words: Aurality and Reality in Ancient China," (PhD diss., University of California, Irvine, 2010), 101.

[7] Ibid., 102.

[8] Ibid., 99

[9] David Der-wei Wang, *The Lyrical in the Epic Time: Modern Chinese Intellectuals and Artists through the 1949 Crisis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), xii.

explore how different Chinese intellectuals have subjectively experienced and endured China's "modernizing" process. Assuming that these individuals' lived experiences are too complex and subtle for words, Wang focuses on examining how they have strived to convey their intimate feelings in non-discursive representational formats such as poetry, music, painting, calligraphy, and visual representations on screen. For Wang, the myriad "lyrical visions" these formal inputs conjure up will help us "define Chinese modernity in a different light."[10]

Between Modernity and Emotional Irrationality

Like the poets, artists, and filmmakers David Wang studies in his book, Liang Qichao is a sensitive man caught in a radical historical transition. As Liang endeavored to implement a modern political order in China after the Sino-Japanese war, his attempt was followed by strong feelings and intense emotional struggles. Liang, above all, was seized by the pressing need of awakening his people and making China a member of the international community after the Sino-Japanese war.[11] But as soon as the young man had discovered his ideal political solution and became thrilled by it, his excitement was shadowed by the painful realization that his progressive political vision is a betrayal to his teacher Kang Youwei and the reformist camp he officially belonged to. Later on, when Liang's much desired political order was being openly and zealously promoted by his competitor (or former collaborator) Sun Yat-sen 孫中山 (1866-1925), Liang started to condemn such order with his most loving passion.

My previous line, apparently, is an oxymoron, and so as Liang's lyrical presentation of "revolution" as a modern political keyword. To give a quick example on Liang's conflicting

[10] Ibid., xiv.

[11] See Tang Xiaobing, *Global Space and the Nationalist Discourse of Modernity: The Historical Thinking of Liang Qichao* Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1996).

account: in a historical biography he published in 1902, Liang tries to denounce the political revolution by associating the word with heroic sacrifices and glorifying these sacrifices in the highly rhapsodic musical rhythm. The musical effect Liang creates contradicts his rhetorical purpose.

Modernity has been strongly associated with rationality and process. And some uneasy questions Liang Qichao presents us include: what happened if the implementation of China's modern political order was concurrent with the display of one's emotional irrationality? Would the lyrical intensity affect the stability of the recently arrived modern political order? More importantly, what does Liang's engagement tell us about Chinese modernity, and what is the Chinese modern about after all? Through the courageous juxtaposition of the lyrical with the grand narrative of enlightenment, David Wang points us to the fragility of Chinese modernity. But instead of delineating how Chinese modernity has been affectively experienced, my dissertation argues that it began life as an affective experience.

At turn of the twentieth century, the translational context situated China in an unusually liberal zone of linguistic fluidity. In the hope of modernizing the country, Liang tried to import what he considered the most important and relevant Western political concepts to China within a short period of time. The information flux, the peculiarity of these concepts, and the fierce internal political competition turned the meaning of translated political knowledge into a contested zone. In this state of linguistic fluidity, Liang Qichao projected strong emotions to new words and new languages whose meanings had yet been fully consolidated, legitimized, and implemented in China. The young intellectual, in other words, was expressing an ambiguous state of emotional being in languages that were equally so. Apart from dissociating the semantic

consistency of these translated concepts, the emotional disruption may well open us to a new way of approaching Chinese modernity.

For many years, we have tended to understand the formation of late Qing political modernity through the study of the discourse formation. The ranges of questions scholars have examined include: what kinds of new words and new knowledge had been translated to China? Through what means had the newness been incorporated in the indigenous tradition? Is the translational activity a matter of cross cultural exchanges as well as power contest on both the local and the international levels? How different local historical agents had purposefully modified existing discourses to cater their strategic purposes? And under what kinds of circumstances did one particular discourse, or set of languages, succeed in obtaining legitimacy while other competing options fail?

My conviction that translated political modernity is informed by a historical agent's rhetorical intention, charged with lyrical intensity, and affectively presented to the reader is a new response to some famous questions Lydia Liu raises in *Translingual Practice*. Assuming that new meanings formed in late Qing China are hardly the result of knowledge transfer and even less the reciprocal exchange of meanings,[12] Liu is curious about where these "modern" meanings could have arrived from in late Qing China. In addition to "the contending interests of political and ideological struggles,"[13] an observation that was extensively elaborated on in research that followed, Liu evidently implies that these new meanings arrived from the way "people imagine and talk about the Chinese *xiandai* condition."[14] As Liu elaborates more carefully in Leo Ou-fan Lee's words, such imagination refers specifically to the way the "May

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[12] For more details, see Lydia Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity--China, 1900-1937* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1995), 1–43.

[13] Ibid., 26.

[14] Ibid., xvii.

Fourth generation, and their predecessors, attempt to define their difference from the past and articulate a new range of sensibilities which they would consider 'modern.'"[15] Theodore Huters shares the assumption that new meanings in late Qing were conditioned by what historical agents willfully wished to be "modern." In *Bringing the World Home*, he frequently emphasizes that modern knowledge invented in late Qing and early modern China was shaped by the uncertainty arising from intellectuals' unsettling historical experiences.[16] Their anxiety reflects a historical situation of perceived inequality between languages rather than a failing in the language itself.

Liu and Huters believe that late Qing historical agents' psyche and perception shaped the formation of modern political discourse. But by emphasizing that modern political concepts are *affectively presented* in Liang Qichao's new prose style, what I argue is that not only do affect and emotion inform the construction *of* the discourse, they are present *in* the discourse. Meanings of modern political concepts, for this reason, can only be located in the dialectical tension between the semantic "content" and the affective "presentation" conditioned by Liang's rhetorical intention and lyrical intensity.

With recent theoretical perspectives arriving from critical theory, media studies, and the philosophical hermeneutics, part of my dissertation carefully examines the epistemic uncertainty created by the tension between the form and the content. But apart from focusing on the resulting ambivalence, I believe recent poststructuralist thinkers have proposed more

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[15] Ibid., 28. For Leo Ou-fan Lee's original statement, see *The Romantic Generation of Modern Chinese Writers*, 44. Leo has provided a more elaborate discussion on the relationship between emotions, subjectivity, and Chinese modernity in his Chinese essay collection. For more details, see Li Oufan 李歐梵, "Qinggan de lichen 情感的歷程" (The journey of sentimentality) and "Zhuiqiu xiandai xing: yiba jiuwu- yijiuerqi 追求現代性: 一八九五—一九二七" (Searching for modernity: 1895-1927), in *Xiandai xing de zhuiqiu* 現代性的追求 (In search of modernity) (Taibei: Maitian chuban, 1996), 139-60, and 229-300.

[16] Theodore Huters, *Bringing the World Home: Appropriating the West in Late Qing and Early Republican China* (Honolulu : University of Hawai'i Press, 2005).

philosophically compelling reasons to look beyond the study of language, discourse, and representation in general.

Différances between Emotion and Emotional Expression

Before introducing key theoretical assumptions upon which the project is based, perhaps I need to begin by explaining what I mean by "emotional" experiences. In recent years, the study of "emotions," "affects," "psychoanalysis," and "history of emotions" have become increasing important research topics. My understanding of "emotion" is informed chiefly by Rei Terada's monograph *Feeling in Theory: Emotion after the "Death of the Subject*.[17]

In *Feeling in Theory*, Terada begins by saying that in classical Western philosophy, René Descartes (1596- 1650) categorizes the physiological sensation felt by the body as "affect," psychological states experienced by the mind as "emotion," and all the passive thought (non-thought that lies outside thought, and yet inside the soul) "passion."[18] The division that has been widely known as the Cartesian dualism, however, is considered crude by recent theorists. Based on her careful study of Jacques Derrida's *Of Grammatology* and *Writing and Difference*, Terada shows how Derrida's conceptions on "self," "subjectivity," and "subject" have helped her develop more precise definition on ideas such as "emotion," "emotional expression," and "feeling."

For Derrida, the subject is constituted by two separate entities known as the "self" and "subjectivity." The "self" experiences "emotions" that cannot be fully conveyed by words. Instead of commonsensical "feelings" such as happiness, hatred, sadness, or anxiety, the kinds of

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[17] Rei Terada, *Feeling in Theory: Emotion after the "Death of the Subject"* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001).

[18] Ibid., 1-8.

"emotions" Terada refers to are empirical experiences, or pre-linguistic states of being, that can hardly be translated into conceptual terms.

"Emotional expression" (a manifestation of a subject's subjectivity), as it is generally assumed, is an outward expression of the "emotion" experienced by the self, or the exteriority of the interiority. Terada, however, believes that the two are different and there is certain discrepancy lying between them. According to Terada, since the "emotion/self" belongs to the empirical realm and "emotional expressions/ subjectivity" the conceptual one, they need a middleman to draw a connection, or conceal the "self-difference," between them. Terada calls the middleman "feeling," the agent who attempts to look for a frame/ reference/ representation appearing in the form of "emotional expression" to help make sense of the indescribable "emotion." Instead of the biological twin of "self/ emotion," Terada says that "subjectivity as manifested in emotional expression" is only its correspondence and helps to form a "semantic token of unity" between the two.[19] Through a careful reading of Derrida and other modern philosophers' work, Terada challenges the illusive unity of a human subject and the assumption that emotion is an expression of the mind and is thus subordinated to it.

Terada is not the only one who understands "self/emotion" and "subjectivity/ emotional expression" in this vein. In *Affective Mapping: Melancholia and the Politics of Modernism*, John Flatley also endeavors to depict the momentary incomprehension a human subject experiences as one comes across something beyond his immediate comprehension.[20] This momentary incomprehension, in Flatley's words, usually occurs "automatically, before reasoning,

[19] Ibid., 12.

[20] Jonathan Flatley, *Affective Mapping: Melancholia and the Politics of Modernism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008)

deliberation, or other cognitive functions begin."[21] It takes us "outside of ourselves," and "connects us, even transport us into the materiality of the world around us." Similar to Terada's understanding of "emotion," the incomprehension Flatley describes is experienced by self and yet distinguishes itself from subjectivity. Flatley calls this state of being "affective experience," an idea that has little to do with the bodily sensation.

While Terada's definition of "emotion" is inspired chiefly by the differentiation Derrida draws between the "self" and "subjectivity," Flatley acknowledges his theoretical debt to Theodore Adorno, who describes an affective (or "emotional" in Terada's term) experience as if "one has just been temporarily dislocated from one's subjectivity. This is because one has for a moment, had an affect in a space not defined by one's subjectivity, and then one is returned to the subjectivity, reminding one precisely of the subjectivity and its limitness."[22] Adorno's statement describes precisely how emotion is being experienced at the very first place and how the reflection of one's emotional experience implies living (from now on) in the *representation* of the emotional experience and being expelled from the experience itself. The self who experiences and the subjectivity that conceptualizes the self's experience become strangers upon the moment of reflection.

Terada and Flatley have pointed us to a state of being that is beyond human subjective consciousness and that cannot be faithfully represented by language. While some Flatley's key arguments are inspired by Adorno, Terada's theory on emotion is based on her careful interpretation of Derrida and de Man, both of their projects point to a deconstructionist view of language.

[21] Ibid., 14.

[22] Ibid., p. 82.

In *Allegories of Reading*, de Man says that language is "figural" instead of "literal."[23] One of his assumptions is that the world in which we live consists of empirical entities that are known as the "referents." Language, which is a matter of "reference," can only represent the referent metaphorically and figuratively, and there is a definite discrepancy between the "reference" and the "referent." While the figural language is indispensable in the process of human communication, it is, after all, "a form of deception"[24] and "a supplementary figural superposition which narrates the unreadability of the prior narrative."[25] Based on this observation, de Man calls language "the unmediated expression of an unhappy consciousness that it does not cause.

Reformist Journal as an Affective Medium

During the early twentieth century, Liang Qichao articulated new words and new languages he had recently introduced to China in great emotional intensity. The lyrical effect being conveyed in the formal presentation can easily intensify the existing confusion and uncertainties about these new words and new ideas. But in fact Liang Qichao's case is even more complex than that. Apart from expressing one's emotional experiences, it seems that Liang's writing is intended to achieve the strategic purpose of "affecting" the reader through its strong emotional appeals. By "affecting" the people, Liang was not only referring to rhetorical persuasion. He meant it in a literal sense.

In 1902, Liang made modernizing China a national as well as a personal matter. In a series of essays titled *Discourse on the New People* (*Xinmin shuo* 新民說), he suggests that for

[23] See Paul de Man, *Allegories of Reading: Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke, and Proust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979).

[24] Ibid., 33.

[25] Ibid., 205.

China to become fully modernized, people should be able to internalize foreign political concepts as lived experiences and make these concepts their moral and spiritual pursuits. Liang made a concerted effort in materializing his conviction. To make sure that his reader can obtain an enlightened and internalized understanding of modern political concepts, Liang carefully presented them in a number of non-discursive representational formats. Among these formal attempts, the most important ones are Liang's invention of the "new prose style" (*xin wenti* 新文體) and his promotion of the "new fiction" (*Xin xiaoshuo* 新小說).

Assuming that music has the power to move people, Liang tried to make sure the sound, intonation, and rhythm of his writing can speak to the reader on a verbal as well as an acoustic ground. Inspired by the Chinese poetry and rhapsody's formal structure, Liang often wrote in lines with parallel semantic structures, arranged words in resonating rhyming patterns, and juxtaposed his parallel prose with short lines and interjections to create a strong sense of rhythm. Through carefully manipulating the physicality and materiality of words, Liang, in a sense, had turned his writing into musical scores.

In addition, Liang sought to help the reader envision the political modern in the vivid fictional description. In "On the Relationship between Fiction and Public Governance" (論小說與群治之關係) (1902), an essay Liang published in *New Fiction*,[26] he says that fiction is capable of transporting the reader to a "novel realm" that is beyond one's imagination. Since everything can be so vividly presented in the fictional description, the reader can almost envisage this novel realm in the immediacy of a cinematic spectacle. Presuming that words (*wenzi* 文字), speeches (*yuyan* 語言), classical languages (*wenyan* 文言), and parables (*yuyan* 寓言) can by no means be

[26] Liang,"Lun xiaoshuo yu qunzhi zhi guanxi 論小說與群治之關係" (On the Relationship between fiction and public governance), *Xin xiaoshuo* 新小說 (New Fiction) 1 (1902): 1-8.

as descriptive as fiction, Liang asserts that fiction is the most instrumental medium in transmitting modern political knowledge.[27]

Apart from turning the fictional narrative into the visual exhibition, Liang is keen to depict ghastly images of physical damages in his historical biographies. By carefully describing the extreme bodily suffering his protagonists endure in the progress of turning their countries into modern nation states, Liang hopes that the sensory stimulation can kindle the late Qing public's sympathetic resonance and arouse their courage and determination.

Liang rendered foreign political concepts in passionate rhythmic language, contextualized them in vivid fictional narratives, and associated them with ghastly images of physical destruction. His musical, visual, and fictional presentations indicate that in late Qing China, modern political knowledge was circulated as a "text" as well as an aesthetic "object." By fully utilizing the language's musical potential, its capacity to describe things in visual details, and its capacity to conjure the reader's sensory responses, Liang makes the modern knowledge acquisition a listening, visualizing, and corporeal experience. The bi-weekly journals Liang launched during the early 1900's, in this sense, were so much more than new journalism.[28] They

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[27] Ibid., 5.

[28] Natascha Vittinghoff believes that the kind of "new" journalism Liang invented at the turn of the twentieth century strives to achieve more than turning Chinese newspaper into a new forum for social cohesion and political discussion. For originalities of Liang's "new" journalism, see Natascha Vittinghoff, "Unity *vs*. Uniformity: Liang Qichao and the Invention of a "New Journalism" for China." *Late Imperial China* 23.1 (2002): 91-143. For brief references Leo Lee made to Liang's journalistic inventions, see *Shanghai Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 44. For the role Liang Qichao played in the general development of Chinese newspaper and journalism, see Leo Ou-fan Lee and Andrew Nathan, "The Beginnings of Mass Culture: Journalism and Fiction in Late Ch'ing and Beyond," in *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China*, edited by David Johnson, Andrew Nathan, Evelyn Rawski, and Judith Berling (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 361-95; Tang, Xiaobing, *Global Space and the Nationalist Discourse of Modernity: The Historical Thinking of Liang Qichao* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1996); Joan Judge, "The Factional Function of Print: Liang Qichao, Shibao, and the Fissures in the Late Qing Reform Movement," *Late Imperial China*, 16. 1 (1995): 120-40; also see Judge's *Print and Politics: 'Shibao' and the Culture of Reform in Late Qing China* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1996); Qin Shaode 秦紹德, *Shanghai jindai baokan shilun* 上海近代報刊史論 (Empirical records on modern Shanghai newspapers and periodicals) (Shanghai: Fudan daxue, 1993).

are an "affective medium."[29] It is something that "affects" the spectators on a sensory and physiological ground.[30] Instead of communicating new knowledge through the discursive content of words, the musicality and visuality of Liang's writing function as a transmedia presentation. Its intermediality and multimediality, to borrow Bao's description for China's early cinema, "operates as a rhetoric, or a politics that illuminates the changing operation of a medium through the a triad process of unframing, deframing, and reframing, mobilizing the dynamic between the old and the new in a sense of liberating from, annihilating, and redrawing medium boundaries."[31]

In 1902, Liang took the liberty of rendering the recently translated modern political knowledge musically, visually, and fictionally. The perceptual imagination and affective experience conjured by his "transmedia" presentations post some immediate challenges to the study of Chinese modernity as a discursive construct. First, these "transmedia" representations suggest that meanings of modern political concepts can be located elsewhere other than the semantic content of language. Second, because a semantic text was intended to be circulated as an aural and pictorial text, these concepts were received as reading as well as listening and visualizing experiences. The reception of the political modern was predicated on rational reflexivity and embodied aesthetic ambivalence. Third, Liang's attempt to render modern political knowledge in musical, visual, and fictional terms indicates that late Qing China was in a

[29] "Affective medium" is concept coined recently by Bao Weihong. For her stimulating discussion on this concept and key theoretical assumptions that inform the coinage, see her "introduction" to *Fiery Cinema: The Emergence of an Affective Medium in China, 1915-1945* (Minneapolis, MN University of Minnesota Press, 2015), 1-36. In addition to Bao's book, Brian Massumi's foundational definition on "affect" has been particularly helpful. For more details, see Brian Massumi, Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002); Also see Massumi' translator's preface to Gilles Deleuze's and Félix Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (London: Athlone Press, 1988).

[30] Bao, *Fiery Cinema*, 2.

[31] Ibid., 4.

state of representational fluidity. To uncover what Chinese modernity is about, perhaps it is more important to consider epistemic uncertainties created by the collision of different "representational paradigms" than scrutinizing new meanings being consolidated through the competition of "discourses."

To show how Liang's "transmedia" representations had disrupted the semantic consistency of modern political concepts, let me give a concrete example. In "The Future of New China" (新中國未來記) a novella Liang serialized in *New Fiction* in 1902, he carefully describes what China looks like after fifty years of "restoration" (*weixin* 維新).[32] After depicting the country's future prosperity in vivid visual and acoustic details, some narrative plots paradoxically indicate that what Liang calls the "restoration" is constituted by a series of "revolutionary" activities. The three-dimensional perceptual imagination Liang associates "restoration" with is inconsistent with the word's semantic definition. The "signified," in other words, contradicts the "signifier. In this example, Liang's conflicting representations suggest that meanings of modern political concepts are displaced from the modern political discourse. They always linger in the dialectical tension between the form and the content, or one representational format and the other.

Distrust for Language

In 1902, Liang's declared educational purpose is to make sure the late Qing reader can obtain enlightened and internalized understanding of the political modern instead of bookish familiarity with the new words and new languages. But based on the above example, it seems that Liang had made an apparent attempt to override the signifying power of the "name" through the

[32] See Liang, "Xin zhongguo weilai ji 新中國未來記" (The future of new China), in *Xin xiaoshuo* 新小說 (New fiction) 1 (1902): 51-75; 2 (1903): 29-79; 3 (1903): 79-106.

introduction of various competing transmedia presentations. The hope to reclaim the political revolution as the signified truth from the revolutionary camp can be a reason. But in addition to that, Liang provided more compelling reasons to justify his strong resistance to language and representation.

In essays Liang published in 1902, he displays great enthusiasm in replacing the "learning" of discursive knowledge with "intuitive understanding" and "moral internalization." Drawing on his familiarity with the Chinese philosophical tradition and recent acquaintance with Western philosophy, Liang tries to elaborate his argument from various perspectives. Liang, for instance, says that while Francis Bacon's (1561-1626) emphasizes on the observation of the empirical given, Descartes argues that one can only obtain the truth by exercising his perceptual reflection. In Zen Buddhism, it is believed that enlightenment is obtained without the intrusion of words. And by positioning himself as a follower of the "Mind School" of Neo-Confucianism, Liang suggests that the truth can only arrive at understanding by heart instead of studying the discursive text. What is being implied is that during the early 1900's, Liang was not only interested in introducing the Western political knowledge to China, but he was to launch a new epistemic mode of knowledge acquisition.

Apart from bringing people enlightened understanding of the political modern, Liang's affective endeavor, as my dissertation argues, is also a response to an internal intellectual crisis that had surfaced since the early Qing dynasty (1644-1911). Since the mid-eighteenth century, the representative power of the "name" and "language" had been repeatedly questioned in China. In reaction to the school of "evidential scholarship," the orthodox scholarly practice focusing on the philological investigation of the classics, intellectuals in support for "practical statesmanship" and "new text studies" were keen to recover "true" meanings of the classics and apply relevant

principles to the state affair. As the leader of the "new text studies" *and* the reformist movement, Liang strived to achieve the dual goals of implementing modern political concepts in China and enlightening people with "signified" meanings of these foreign concepts. The skepticism Liang and those associated with these rising intellectual trends expressed for words indicates that in late Qing China, language might not be as illustrative and emblematic as scholars focusing on the study of discourse construction have assumed. The heavy emphasis we have placed on language reveals the neglect of these emerging intellectual trends and the influence they exerted on the formation of modern political knowledge.

My purpose of emphasizing on the need to look beyond the discourse is to show that the persisted attention we focus on the semantic content of language exposes our negligence of an internal intellectual development. To uncover the uncertainty and confusion that are deep-rooted in China's modernization process, perhaps we need to turn to a new set of theoretical approaches and carefully examine late Qing intellectuals' engagement with those important but little examined scholarly developments.

Chapter Plan

Considering Chinese modernity an affective experience exposing the limit of representation, my project focuses on explicating epistemic uncertainties created by Liang's "transmedia" representations. The dissertation consists of three chapters, and they are divided as follows:

Chapter One: "Political Modernity and its Musical Dissociation": the chapter shows that Liang was a reformer who wishfully planned to launch a political revolution. By charting the rhapsodic acoustic effect Liang created for the word "revolution" in his new prose style, I argue that the aesthetic pleasure of listening expedited the transmission of modern political concepts at

the expense of their semantic consistency. My theoretical framework is informed by Theodor Adorno's aesthetic theory on music, Paul de Man's concept of irony, and Mladen Dolar's and Michel Poizat's recent studies on sound.

Chapter Two: "Modern Concepts Animated: An Epistemic Shift in Late Qing China": the chapter presents a new reading on Liang's promotion of the new fiction. Instead of considering fiction a tool facilitating the circulation of modern political knowledge, I show that the expressive potential of fiction enabled Liang to expand the meaning of reform by remediating the "word" into visual and cinematic terms. In the cinematic landscape Liang depicts, he invites the reader to perceive the political modern in its virtual immediacy. Apart from destabilizing the referential power of recently translated political languages, the conflicting perceptual imagination made it difficult to tell "reform" apart from "revolution." The chapter draws from affect theory, Murray Krieger's study on *ekphrasis*, and scholars such as Jill Bennett's and Anne Friedberg's recent researches on media studies.

Chapter Three: "An Onto-hermeneutic Turn": From New Knowledge to Nameless Truth: the chapters show that Liang's decision to communicate modern political concepts in musical and fictional means began life as wishful calculation as well as an attempt to replace the "learning of language" with "intuitive understanding." Retrieving frequent references he made to Buddhism, the Mind School of Neo-Confucianism, Tan Sitong's (1865-1898) moral theory, and Western astronomy and physics during the early 1900's, I argue that Liang, having appointed himself the leader of "New Text Studies," was determined to help people internalize "true meanings" of modern political concepts rather than circulating them as "names." The hierarchal contrast Liang drew between the "signified" and the "signifier," however, soon ran the risk of reducing modern political lexicons to deceptive languages.

CHAPTER ONE

Political Modernity and its Musical Dissociation

Introduction

In 1898, the Hundred Days' Reform ended abruptly with the exile of its leaders Liang Qichao and Kang Youwei. However, refusing to give up on the political changes he had long hoped for, Liang went on to promote modern political concepts and advocate ideological reforms in journals he founded in Japan. In an editorial, "A Respectful Announcement to My Fellow Reformists" (敬告我同業諸君), which he published in *New Citizen Journal* in 1902, the reformer compares his new role as a modern journalist to the Grand Historian Sima Qian 司馬遷 (c.145–86 BC).[33] As "the person to guide the national citizen toward the path of evolution,"[34] the modern historian, Liang declares, is responsible for transmitting what he considers the most relevant and favorable modern political knowledge to the public with "objectivity" (*keguan* 客觀).[35] And to ensure the historian can fully convince the public of the importance of these concepts, Liang, somewhat paradoxically, goes on to declare that this historian is entitled to elaborate these concepts in a "subjective" (*zhuguan* 主觀) fashion.[36] However "slightly biased

[33] Liang Qichao,"Jinggao wo tongye zhujun 敬告我同業諸君" (A respectful announcement to my fellow reformists), in *XMCB* 17 (1902):1–8.

[34] Ibid., 4. All translations are mine, unless otherwise noted.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid.

and radical" (*shaopian shaoji* 少偏稍激) the historian's "extreme remarks" (*jiduan zhi yilun* 極端之議論) are, they should not be considered problematic.[37]

Partiality, radicalness, and political instigation, as Liang is aware, violate a journalist's code of ethics. And yet by comparing the modern journalist to the historian and asserting that the historian writes for the people's benefit, Liang exploits an ambiguity to his advantage. At the time Liang published this editorial, he was the leader of the most influential reformist party in China. Considering the party's growing antagonism toward the revolutionary movement led by Sun Yat-sen, it seems plausible that the modern political concepts Liang the subjective historian considered favorable to the public were also *personally* and *strategically* relevant to Liang the reformer.

The moral principle Liang upheld and the strategic purpose he was potentially concerned with bear a striking similarity to the tension between "the philosophical ideal of life" and "the rhetorical ideal of life" in ancient Greece. The former, according to Werner Jaeger, is "based on knowledge of human nature and of what is best for it," and the latter intends to "create pleasure and win approval."[38] Moral concern and rhetorical intention, be it in Liang's announcement or in ancient Greece, are always intricately if not helplessly entangled. In Liang's editorial, perhaps the most crucial implication for understanding origins of Chinese political modernity is that his translated political concepts began life in a "rhetorical situation" and were *affectively presented* to the reader. By declaring himself a historian who lived "to benefit the national citizen" (*yi li guomin* 以利國民), Liang assumed the role of a political orator in the quasi-dramatic setting to

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[37] Ibid., 5.

[38] Werner Jaegar, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture,* vol. 2 (New York: Oxford University Press), 144.

which he had transformed *New Citizen Journal*.[39] Apart from transmitting modern political knowledge, the historian-orator was determined to move and to persuade. As articulated in the reformist journal, modern political concepts were vivid embodiments of *logos*, *pathos*, and *ethos*.

Liang, according to Xia Xiaohong, was convinced that "the persuasive power of *pathos* is far greater than logical reasoning" (*qinggan de yingxiangli yuanzai lizhi zhishang* 情感的影響力遠在理智之上), and that music was by far the most effective instrument in moving people with *pathos*.[40] Having analyzed political writings published by Liang between 1897 and 1903, Xia points out that the "Poetic Revolution" (*shijie geming* 詩界革命) Liang advocated in 1899 reflects the reformer's determination to popularize modern political knowledge by utilizing the formal features of language to make music.[41] And to maximize the persuasive power of his writing, Liang purposefully amplified the rhythmical effects of his prose, making it a signature of his "new prose style".[42]

Xia's observation, at first glance, appears to be a remote echo of the late Qing reformer's personal reflection. Some years later, when Liang looked back to his career as a modern journalist, he acknowledged that his new prose style, which finally reached its full maturity in writings he published in *New Citizen Journal*, was invested with "*ganqing* 感情" (affective

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[39] Liang Qichao, "Jinggao wo tongye zhujun," 4.

[40] Xia Xiaohong 夏曉紅, *Jueshi yu chuanshi: Liang Qichao de wenxue daolu* 覺世與傳世: 梁啟超的文學道理 (Enlightenment and permanence: The literary road of Liang Qichao) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1991), 28. "*Qinggan*" can be finely divided into "emotion," "affect," "feeling" and "*pathos*" in recent scholarly discussions. For the difference between these terms, see footnote 15. In this statement, it seems likely that by "*qinggan*" Liang was referring to the "appeal" to the audience's emotions, and *pathos* is thus the most appropriate translation.

[41] For more details, see Xia's *Jueshi yu chuanshi*, 13–39.

[42] See Xia's chapter five "Kai wenzhang zhi xinti, ji minqi zhi anchao 開文學之新體，啟民氣之暗潮" (Inventing a new style for literature, and inspiring the undercurrent of people's civil thinking), in Xia Xiaohong, *Jueshi yu chuanshi*, 109–48. Elisabeth Kaske has compiled a detailed list of references on the relationship between Liang's new prose style and the circulation of modern political knowledge. For the list, see *The Politics of Language in Chinese Education, 1895–1919*, 114; for Kaske's discussions on this topic, see 114–23.

power). The reformer said that "since then [1902], I had made circulating modern political ideas my primary occupation… Often emotionally charged, my writings had a certain magical power over the reader 自是啟超復以宣傳為業⋯ 筆鋒常帶感情，對於讀者別有一種魔力焉."[43]

Both Xia and the reformer himself suggest that modern political knowledge was *affective*ly presented to the late Qing reader in *New Citizen Journal*. But in addition to trying to move the reader, Liang, to complicate the case further, went on to confess in his reflection that the "*ganqing*" permeated in his political writings was also the expression of his most truthful and intimate "emotion." Liang wrote:

> At that time I wasn't happy with what the revolutionaries were doing. But having become excessively careful and conscious, I only slightly modified my political views. My conservativeness and aggressiveness went on to battle within the chest and exploded with my "*ganqing*" (emotions). For this reason, my words were often self-contradictory."[44]
>
> 啟超亦不慊於當時革命家之所為，懲羹而吹齏，持論稍變矣。然其保守性與進取性常交戰於胸中，隨感情而發，所執往往前後相矛盾。

In this brief confession, Liang exposes us to two faces of "*ganqing*." One is the unmediated and often uncontainable emotional experience, and the other is the affective power. The former arrived from "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings," while the latter was cautiously informed by the reformer's strategic calculation. These two aspects, according to Liang, found themselves side by side and at odds with each other. Sometimes, the presence of the unmediated emotion was too intense that it ran the risk of contradicting if not annihilating the reformer's rhetorical purpose.

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[43] Quoted from Ding Wenjiang 丁文江's and Zhao Fengtian 趙豐田's *Liang Qichao nianpu changbian* 梁啟超年譜長編 (An unabridged chronicle of Liang Qichao) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2009), 181.

[44] Ibid., 196.

Affect and emotion are unmediated and pre-linguistic states of being, and as such, they are difficult to get hold of. The first part of the chapter begins with some of the most fundamental concerns. By analyzing how the modern political concept "national citizen" (*guomin* 國民) is affectively presented in Liang's "Biography of the Hungarian Patriot Kossuth" (*Xiongyali aiguozhe Gesushi zhuan* 匈牙利愛國者噶蘇士), my chapter addresses the following questions: how do we know the term "national citizen" is charged with "*ganqing*"? Through what means can affect and emotion find their ways to Liang's narrative, or the modern political discourse? What kinds of emotion and subjective perception have been projected into the concept? And how does the affective dimension communicate to the late Qing reader?

The second part of the chapter focuses on the much contested political concept "revolution" (*geming* 革命) in Liang's "Biography of Madame Roland, the Greatest Heroine in the Contemporary World" (*Jinshi diyi nüjie Luolan furen zhuan* 近世第一女傑羅蘭夫人傳). By examining the reformer's political activities in 1902 and his correspondence with his mentor Kang Youwei, I explore what might have prompted Liang to depict *geming* so passionately in this biography. Since this political concept is often affectively charged, is it possible to assume that the *meanings* being communicated to late Qing intellectuals rest *beyond*, and are *different from*, the word's semantic content? If Liang's affective presentation, whether it was informed by his rhetorical intention or lyrical intensity, ran the risk of challenging, obscuring, and even destabilizing *geming*'s semantic content, what kinds of "meanings" could Liang have presented to his late Qing readers? By asking these questions, we begin to explore the affective origins of translated political modernity in late Qing China. Only then can we question the extent to which the study of discourse is a reliable way of understanding the nature of Chinese political

modernity in general, and reflect on the ways “affect and emotion” as new analytical categories can transform our imagination of the Chinese “modern.”

Between the Objective Journalist and the Subjective Historian

From 1901 onward, Liang appointed himself the task of transforming the Chinese public into national citizens of the modern political community. His ambition inspired the title of *New Citizen Journal*, which is a literal translation of *Xinmin congbao*. In early issues of the journal, Liang made a concerted effort to define the meaning of *guomin*.

In the “Biography of Kossuth” Liang tries to convince the reader of the urgency of becoming a *guomin* through the Hungarian national hero Lajos Kossuth (1802–94). By claiming that the Hungarian and the Chinese belong to the same ethnic origin and have suffered comparably from imperial invasions, Liang writes that the Hungarian *guomin* serves as a role model for “those who are yellow, who have been oppressed by autocracy, and who live in an age of frustration.”[45] Liang declares that the purpose of writing this biography is to “arouse” (*xing* 興) the reader’s resolve to become a national citizen in this critical historical transition. *Xing*, as it is generally known, is a literary device to stimulate readers’ emotional responses. But in order to emphasize his rhetorical purpose, Liang goes on to align himself with Mencius. The reformer asserts: “didn’t Mencius say that: ‘invigorated by the ancients, a bystander cannot help but being powerfully moved (*xing qi* 興起), and not to mention those have shared similar experiences.’…. Alas, for readers of this biography, they should be moved and inspired.”[46]

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[45] Liang Qichao, “Xiongyali aiguozhe Gesushi zhuan 匈牙利愛國者噶蘇士” (Biography of the Hungarian patriot Kossuth), in XMCB 4 (1902): 32.

[46] Ibid.

In a speech Kossuth gives to his followers in the biography, Liang the self-appointed "New Historian" (*xin shi shi* 新史氏) vividly articulates what it takes to become a *guomin*:

> What is to happen today is the one and only solution to safeguard the independence of Hungary. It also concerns the life and death of my *national citizen* (*guomin*). Gentlemen, if you want liberty, please wait patiently until this internal crisis is appeased. Thereafter, we and our children shall always be able to obtain eternal life in the realm of independence. Our success depends on today; our fall depends on today; our survival, Gentlemen, depends on you; our demise, Gentlemen, depends on you. However incapable I am, I have been appointed with this mission. Today, shedding rivulets of tears and quick drops of blood, holding my heart, draining my gallbladder, and creeping on the ground rubbing my belly against it, I present this proposal before my heroic, honorable Hungarian *national citizens'* hearts and chests. Gentlemen, O Gentlemen, if only we could manifest our pure and noble patriotism ….[47]
>
> 今日之事，實維持匈牙利國家之不二法門，而我國民生死之問題也。諸君若愛自由乎，請忍耐以待此內難之削平。則我輩及我子孫皆永得永生於獨立之天地。其成耶 ，在今日。其敗耶，在今日。其生耶，在諸君，其死耶，在諸君。某也不才，忝受委托。今日揾縷縷之淚，濾滴滴之血，捧心瀝胆，匍匐俯伏以提出此案於我有血性、有榮譽的匈加利國民胸臆之前，諸君乎諸君乎，若我輩各出其高尚純潔之愛國心......

Before Kossuth gives his speech, Liang portrays the Hungarians as "knight-errant-like national citizens" (*xiayi zhi guomin* 俠義之國民) who "act upon their *righteous* wrath" (*ji yu yifen* 激於義憤).[48] Presenting himself as a wounded man who has endured excruciating torment in the process of transforming Hungary into a nation state, Kossuth expects his *guomin* to undergo the

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[47] Liang Qichao, "Xiongyali aiguozhe Gesushi zhuan," vol. 6, 36 (emphasis added). Satoru Hashimoto has recently conducted a detailed analysis on Liang's translation of the biography from Japanese in his dissertation. See Satoru Hashimoto, "Afterlives of the Culture: Engaging with the Trans-East Asian Cultural Tradition in Modern Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Taiwanese Literatures, 1880s-1940s," (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2014). To see differences between Liang's historical biography and that of Hisahi, see Hirata Hisashi 平田久's *Itarī kenkoku sanketsu* 伊太利建国三傑 (Tokyo: Min'yūsha, 1892). Internet access available at the online database *Kindai dejitaruraiburari* 近代デジタルライブラリー (Digital library from the Meiji era) (http://kindai.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/777020).
For an English rendition of Kossuth's speech, see Phineas Camp Headley, *The Life of Louis Kossuth, Governor of Hungary*, 103–4.

[48] Ibid., 34, emphasis added.

same trials for him. In Kossuth's speech, Liang the new historian glosses over the remote parallel between fulfilling a person's obligation as a *guomin* in the modern political system and performing one's righteous duty to a friend in the Chinese moral and fictional traditions. By announcing to the *guomin* that he is speaking in tears and blood, and that to communicate these words is to present the people his heart, drain his gallbladder, and creep on the ground rubbing his belly against it, the Hungarian patriot skillfully engages his *guomin* in the shared code of righteousness (義 *yi*)[49] and appoints them the role of knight-errant (*xiayi* 俠義) in marvel tales (*chuanqi* 傳奇) that have thrived since the Tang dynasty (618–907).[50]

Kossuth humbly suggests that his relationship with the Hungarian *guomin* rests upon equal exchange. The hierarchy between them, however, is repeatedly emphasized throughout the biography. Liang, for instance, introduces Kossuth as a "great man" (*weiren* 偉人) and a "hero" (*yingxiong* 英雄).[51] When Kossuth is released from prison for anti-Austrian activities, it is said that "Hungarians welcomed their "benefactor" (*enren* 恩人) in Budapest, with the joyous sound abruptly quaking the mountains."[52] In addition, "deeply thankful for Kossuth's good deeds… thousands of civilians were ready to sacrifice their lives for him."[53]

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[49] In the *Analects* (*Lunyu*), *yi* means what is right in general and it is not associated it with any particular virtues. While the word is broadly defined as the presence of the moral norm in the *Analects*, it refers to "what ought to be done," particularly in terms of honoring the worthy, in *Means and Harmony* (*Zhongyong*). In *Mencius* (*Mengzi*), *yi* and *ren* (benevolence) are understood as a binomial pair, which is *renyi* (benevolence and a sense of righteousness). For more details, see Zhang Dainian, *Key Concepts in Chinese Philosophy*, 285–310; also see Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 788–89.

[50] According to Yau-woon Ma and Joseph Lau, a knight-errant (*xia*) is "usually seen as a man of extraordinary martial and spiritual discipline. Subscribing to what seems to us to be a very narrow and personal code of honor, a *xia* would often offer his services in the name of justice and benevolence to anyone who happens to cater to his fancy." See Yau-woon Ma and Joseph Lau, *Traditional Chinese Stories: Themes and Variations*, 39.

[51] Liang Qichao, "Xiongyali aiguozhe Gesushi zhuan," *XMCB* 6 (1902):42.

[52] Ibid., *XMCB* 4 (1902): 43.

[53] Ibid., 49.

After contextualizing Kossuth's speech in the biography, it seems apparent that the Hungarian patriot's endeavor to situate his relationship with the *guomin* in the bond of righteousness is also a rhetorical move. By replacing men's "loyalty" (*zhong* 忠) to the political leader with "righteousness" shared between friends, Kossuth legitimizes his call for collective sacrifices. The rhetorical meaning of *guomin* in this biography differs radically from the objective and learned definition Liang gives in editorials he published in the same journal.

Liang the politician and the rhetorician, as mentioned in the introduction, were exceptionally sensitive to the difference between "introducing modern political concepts as new knowledge" and "making these concepts readily appealing to the reader." In each issue of *New Citizen Journal*, Liang only focused on elaborating one modern political concept from various perspectives. His routine approach was to introduce this modern political concept objectively in his scholarly essays and to convince his readers of the importance of the concept in his editorials with a subjective voice. And coming to his historical biographies, Liang would vividly situate this concept in different European historical contexts. Speaking from a third-person omniscient perspective, Liang the "new historian" took the liberty to elucidate what the concept meant to Western politicians he personally admired and to people who found themselves in the middle of a historical transition.

In "On Nationalistic Thought" (*Lun guojia sixiang* 論國家思想), an editorial published in the same issue of *New Citizen Journal* as the opening chapter of the "Biography of Kossuth," Liang defines *guomin* as "people with nationalistic thinking and capable of implementing and participating in the political system" (*you guojia sixiang, neng zibu zhengzhi* 有國家思想，能自布政治).[54] By referencing Western political theories and explaining the operating mechanism of

[54] Liang Qichao, "Lun guojia sixiang," 1.

modern European political institutions, Liang explains that the *guomin* and the government are an equal footing. A *guomin* is entitled to elect the government's legislative body democratically, while the government can impose law and order on the people. But the *guomin* and the government, at the same time, can only enjoy their right (*quanli* 權利) on the condition of fulfilling their obligation (*yiwu* 義務) to the other.[55] The government, for instance, has the contractual obligation to serve the *guomin*, and the *guomin* can enjoy his right by complying with the law stipulated by the government. Modern politics rests precisely on the subtle balance of power between them.

The meaning of *guomin* in the "Biography of Kossuth" is a significant departure from the objective definition Liang draws in his editorial. Rather than "people with nationalistic thinking and capable of implementing and participating in the modern political system," a modern *guomin*, as Kossuth's speech implies, is expected to sacrifice his life and endure extreme physical suffering for the country, and presumably the political leader. What leads the subjective historian's *guomin* further apart from the modern journalist's objective definition is that Liang, through the production of acoustic and visual effects in Kossuth's speech, presents the rhetorical call *affectively* to the late Qing reader.

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[55] Liang had written extensively on the equilibrium between the right and the obligation in *New Citizen Journal*. For the right bestowed to the *guomin* by law, see Liang Qichao, "Dili yu wenmin zhi guanxi 地理與文明之關係" (On the relationship between geography and civilization)," 53–57; for a man's paradoxical role as an independent being and a member of community, and the subtle balance between "man's liberty" (*min zhi ziyouquan*) and "the government's obligation" (*zhengfu zhi quanxian*), see Liang Qichao, "Lun renmin yu zhengfu zi quanxuan 論人民與政府之關係" (On the relationship between the people and the government), 25–32; for a country's right in the international context, see Liang Qichao, "Lun minzhu jingzheng zi dashi 論民族競爭之大勢" (On the historical trend of competitions between ethnic groups), 29–40; for an elaboration on the *guomin*'s right and obligation in a legal context, see Feng Banggan, "Falü pingtan 法律平談" (A general discussion on legal matters), in *XMCB* 4 (1902): 69–76.

From Linguistic Text to Audio Text

In the passage I quote, Liang tries to reproduce the acoustic immediacy of a speech through various literary strategies.[56] Liang's Hungarian hero, for instance, addresses himself as "the humble one" (*mou* 某) and approaches his audience as "Gentlemen" (*zhujun* 諸君), "my national citizen" (*wo guomin* 我國民), and "we" (*wo bei* 我輩). These terms of address, as Barbara Mittler observes in her study of Liang's journalist writings, turn an author into a "subjective presence."[57] Collectively they give the reader the impression that one is being directly engaged and is encouraged to identify himself with the addressee, which is the *guomin* in this case. The audience, or the late Qing reader, has been called upon as many as five times in the short speech. By putting the emphatic particle *hu* between the repetition of "Gentlemen" (*zhujun hu zhujun* 諸君乎諸君), the addresser conveys his emotions effectively to the reader and forms a feeling of intimacy between them.

To emphasize the urgent need to transform Hungary into a nation state, and to convince the reader that one can only accomplish this goal through self-sacrifice, Liang inserts the following parallel prose into Kossuth's speech:

> Our success depends on today; our fall depends on today;
> our survival, Gentlemen, depends on you; our demise, Gentlemen, depends on you.
> 其成耶，在今日。其敗耶，在今日。
> 其生耶，在諸君，其死耶，在諸君.

[56] During the early 1900's, Liang warmly celebrated the effectiveness of circulating modern political knowledge through the orality of speech. For more details, see Chen Pingyuan 陳平原, "Yousheng de Zhongguo: yanshuo yu jinxiandai Zhongguo wenzhang biange" 有聲的中國：'演說'與近現代中國文章變革 (On the relationship between"public speaking" and the development of Chinese prose)," *Wenxue pinglun* 文學評論 (Literary criticism) 3 (2007): 5-21. For a book length study on the crucial role sound and orality played in forming the Chinese public's national identity and shaping one's imagination of the political modern during the twentieth century, see John Crespi, *Voices in Revolution: Poetry and the Auditory Imagination in Modern China*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009.

[57] Barbara Mittler, *A Newspaper for China?*, 110.

The short parallel prose consists of four couplets. They share duplicate grammatical structures, and the parallel prose is a repetition of certain phrases and characters. The first lines of each couplet are organized in the identical pattern of "*qi*" *cheng*/*bai*/*sheng*/*si* "*ye*," and these couplets conclude either with the phrase "*zai jintian*" (depends on today) or "*zai zhujun*" (depends on you, Gentlemen). Although the words "success" and "fall" in the beginning couplets are replaced by "survival" and "demise" in the concluding couplets, the lines in the short parallel prose are semantically parallel. These repetitive, if not redundant, couplets can be categorized as "contrived parallelism." According to Ronald Egan, contrived parallelism "results from padding a statement so that it comes out in parallel phrases even though the sense does not require the matching."[58] Egan believes that the purpose for aligning parallel lines with corresponding intonation and end rhyme is "to keep the rhythm going,"[59] and the creation of contrived parallelism often indicates that the poet "has given priority to rhythm over sense."[60]

Egan's observation seems highly applicable to Liang's "poetic" endeavor. After romanizing the short parallel prose in Mandarin *pinyin*, the phonetic duplication appears more apparent:

Qi cheng ye, zai jinri. Qi bai ye, zai jinri.

Qi shen ye, zai zhujun. Qi zi ye, zai zhujun.

In addition to "*cheng*," "*bai*," "*sheng*," and "*si*," Liang's parallel prose is constructed by the repetition of five phonological units (*qi, ye, zai, jintian, and zhujun*). With a limited number of monosyllabic sounds repeating themselves in the duplicate grammatical pattern, the passage

[58] Ronald Egan, "The Prose Style of Fan Yeh," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 39. 2 (1979): 352.

[59] Ibid., 353.

[60] Ibid.

constitutes a certain rhythm. Although these couplets represent two directly opposed political outcomes, the parallel syntactic structure and semantic components form an organic phonological unity in itself. By producing a musical effect, the short passage speaks to the reader semantically and acoustically.

Repeating a monotonous group of sounds in a predictable sequence also attunes the reader to a particular acoustic rhythm. Liang's musical arrangement distantly resonates what George Steiner considers a poet's attempt to turn from "the linear, denotative, logically determined bonds of linguistic syntax" to "the simultaneities, immediacies, and free play of musical form."[61] The use of contrived parallelism, which is characteristic of Liang's new prose style, demonstrates how the reformer succeeded in creating an audio text through careful syntactic and phonological organization and in expanding the reading experience into a listening one.

The presence of an audio text in Liang's political writings is hardly an accident. Xia Xiaohong, as discussed above, eloquently argues that Liang's creation of the new prose style reflects his determination to disseminate modern political knowledge through the musical effect of language. Judging from Kossuth's speech, the late Qing reformer is conscious of the power of music and skillful in making music with formal features of language. In Liang's writings, however, he never systemically explained what makes the musicality of language a compelling vehicle for political persuasion. The affective power of Liang's quasi-parallel prose, as I believe, arrives from what Michel Poizat calls the *jouissance*, or the phonic ecstasy, created by the rhythm and acoustic effect of language.[62] In his discussions on the interaction between words

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[61] George Steiner, "Silence and the Poet," in *Language and Silence: Essays on Language, Literature, and the Inhumane* (New York, NY: Atheneum, 1967), 43.

[62] For more details, see Michel Poizat, *The Angel's Cry: Beyond the Pleasure Principle in Opera*. For a study on the acoustic excitement generated by the sound effect storytellers created in Chinese vernacular and martial arts

and music in operatic performances, the French theorist believes that "language accents bring vocal materiality to the foreground."[63] And the "corporeality" of acoustic language, as Mladen Dolar carefully elaborates in *A Voice and Nothing More*, provides "aesthetic pleasure" to the reader and easily becomes "an object of fetish reverence."[64] By exposing the late Qing reader to the aural immediacy of Kossuth's speech and creating a rhythm alluringly breathtaking, the acoustic effect of Liang's new prose style drifts one's attention from words to sounds.

Visualizing, Listening, and Sensing: Cinematic Experiences of Being a National Citizen

Apart from "speaking" to the late Qing reader, Kossuth's speech opens one to the cinematic experience of seeing. To arouse the *guomin*'s determination to die for the country, Kossuth fashions himself as a wounded man covered by blood and tears. He announces that he is presenting the people his heart in both hands, draining the bile of his gallbladder, and crawling towards them rubbing his belly against the ground. Tears, blood, heart, gallbladder, and crawling on all four are bodily images that gratify immediate voyeuristic pleasure. The musical rhythm of Kossuth's speech, moreover, intensifies the corporeal sensation promised by the virtual exhibition.

Following the short parallel prose constituted by the group of three-character phrases, Liang introduces an additional pair of parallel couplet in Kossuth's speech: "With rivulets of tears running down and the blood shedding drop after drop" (*wen liuliu zhi lei, lü didi zhi xue* 搵縷縷之淚，濾滴滴之血). The extended sentence length and the reduplications *liuliu* and *didi*

fiction, see Paize Keulemans's chapter three "Sound that Sell: Vendor Calls and the Acoustic Aesthetics of the Market Place" and chapter four "Listening to the Martial Arts Scene: Onomatopoeia in *The Three Knights Series*," in *Sound Rising from the Paper: Nineteenth-Century Martial Arts Fiction and the Chinese Acoustic Imagination* (Cambridge, Massachusetts : Harvard University Asia Center, 2014), 96-144 and 145-178.

[63] Poizat, *The Angel's Cry*, 75.

[64] Mladen Dolar, *A Voice and Nothing More* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), 4.

decelerate the pace of the speech and generate tension. The repetition of sounds prolongs Kossuth's physical suffering and retains the reader's attention in a suspended moment. In the succeeding couplet "presenting my heart, draining my gallbladder, creeping on the ground, and rubbing my belly against it" (*pěng xīn lì dǎn*, *pú fú fǔ fú* 捧心瀝胆， 匍匐俯伏), the phonetic resemblance between the last four characters makes the tension and suspension more pronounced. The speech finally resumes its pace as it arrives at the three-character couplet "my heroic and my honorable" (*you xuexing, you rongyu* 有血性、有榮譽). As the melodic tempo of the speech is about to reach its crescendo, Kossuth draws his *guomin*'s attention in the timeliest manner, calling them "Gentlemen, O Gentlemen" (*zhujun hu zhujun*).

In the speech Kossuth delivers to the *guomin*, creating resonance with the late Qing reader on acoustic, visual, and sensory dimensions is as important as circulating modern political knowledge through the narrative. The acoustic and visual effects of the passage suggest that the modern political concept Liang introduced in late Qing China began life as an *affective* being. In Kossuth's speech, what is being emphasized is not only the *guomin's* moral and hierarchal binding with the political leader, but also the virtual experience of *being* a *guomin* on the eve of an unprecedented historical transition. The immediate aesthetic experiences to which Liang's affective presentation can potentially transport a reader might have easily taken precedence over the semantic definition of a recently translated political concept.

If the meaning of a modern political concept that Liang communicated to his late Qing reader is *different* from its semantic definition, what exactly does the concept signify in Liang's new prose style? In the "Biography of Kossuth," Liang attempts to convert the Hungarian patriot's speech into a virtual performance. Both Michel Poizat and Mladen Dolar agree that phonic sensations offer the reader the aesthetic pleasure of listening. And yet, they are equally

keen to emphasize that such pleasure inevitably distracts one from self-reflexivity. "The *jouissance* associated with vocal materiality," writes Poizat, "tends to corrode or erode the signifying scansion of language."[65] The aesthetic enjoyment one derives from the acoustic effects often "prevents a clear understanding of the text"[66] and can only arrive "at the expense of meanings."[67]

Roland Barthes also tries to explain how the informative language can be "unworked" by the senseless sound.[68] Barthes believes that while the musicality of language reserves its potential to signify, it cannot convey any substantial contents. What has been expressed and denoted by the sound and rhythm is thus the *secret*, "which, concealed in reality, can reach human consciousness only through a code, which serves simultaneously to encipher and to decipher the reality."[69] In the face of an animated speech, the late Qing reader is exposed to a semantic text which delivers intelligible information as well as an audio text transmitting "an unconscious knowledge" encoded in the musicality of language. Since the musical code is often obliviously received, it might be fair to speculate whether the reader-listener in late Qing China was conscious to realize that one might be "listening to the modulations and harmonies of that voice without hearing what it is saying."[70]

By exploring the affective power of Liang's new prose style, I argue that meanings of modern political concepts communicated to the late Qing reader rest *beyond* the conceptual and

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[65] Ibid., 75

[66] Mladen Dolar, *A Voice and Nothing More*, 30.

[67] Ibid., 8.

[68] My use of the word "unwork" is inspired by John Hamilton's monograph *Music, Madness, and the Unworking of Language*. For Hamilton's discussion on the dissociative power of music, see his introduction, "The Subject of Music and Madness," 1-19.

[69] Roland Barthes, *The Responsibility of Forms: Critical Essays on Music, Art, and Representation* (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 1985), 249.

[70] Ibid., 255.

the discursive given. Liang's invention of the new prose style precipitated the circulation of modern political knowledge in late Qing China. But at the same time, the acoustic effect and sensory impact of his writings contribute an affective dimension to these concepts. His affective presentation paradoxically disrupts and unsettles the semantic stability of recently translated political concepts. In Kossuth's speech, meanings of *guomin*, are predicated therefore on the interplay between multiple linguistic systems, the historical agent's contending political interests, as well as aesthetic experiences unleashed by Liang's affective presentation. In this chapter, it is the production of *meanings*, rather than the formation of semantic definitions in the burgeoning modern political discourse, that I am concerned with.

Based on the three post-structural theorists' discussions, I suggest that meanings of the modern political concepts Liang communicated with his readers rest in the "affective disruption," or "acoustic dissociation," anticipated by the formal structure of his new prose style. This assumption, to push it further, can perhaps point us to the "intimate distance" between the reader and translated political modernity in late Qing China. Acoustic effects of Liang's new prose style expedite the transmission of translated political modernity by speaking directly to the reader and appealing to his senses. While the musicality of language captures one's attention, the sensory and aesthetic experiences often arrive at the expense of semantic consistency. The late Qing reader's reception of affective modernity, in this sense, also implies an *estrangement*, if not a *rational discharge*, from what has been prescribed and promised by the readily available modern linguistic apparatus. As the reader went to repeat modern political concepts that Liang introduced in *New Citizen Journal*, there may have been an unbridgeable gap between meanings he lived and textual contents prescribed in his writings.

Intellectual and literary historians have always been interested in what *geming* (revolution) meant during the early twentieth century, and how the term transformed from a cultural taboo into a collective political passion. The second part of the chapter focuses on Liang's affective presentation of *geming* in his biography on Marie-Jeanne Phlippon Roland (1754–93). It explores what prompted Liang to depict *geming* so passionately in 1902 and interpretative possibilities unleashed by his affective presentation.

Dialectic Tension between the Rhetorical and the Lyrical

At the beginning of the "Biography of Madame Roland," Liang suggests that the French heroine is reluctant to launch a political revolution. The following passage shows Liang's denial of the revolution:

> She [Madame Roland] was someone affectionate instead of someone cruel; she was someone who loved peace instead someone who enjoyed violence. Alas! For the benevolent and the martyr who live in an age of revolution, who is not noble and virtuous? And who does not love the people passionately? If one hasn't found herself in desperation, why would she be happy to shed, to splash, and to squander her blood with the blood of hundreds and thousands of civilians? As one hope is dashed after another, and as one disappointment is followed by another, one has no choice but to sever her benevolence, repress her love, swallow her pain, and shed her tears. Alas! Madame Roland was so innocent and tender a person. But why *exactly* was she left with the unwilling choice of throwing herself to the swirl of the unprecedented tragedy in history and bidding farewell to the world by meeting her death? Who, *exactly*, should be responsible for her plight?[71]
>
> 彼慈愛之人， 非殘酷之人也。樂和平之人，非好暴亂之人也。嗚呼！自古革命時代之仁人志士，何一非高尚潔白之性質，具視民如傷之熱情? 苟非萬不得已，豈樂以一身之血，與萬眾之血，相注相搏相糜爛以為快也? 望之無可望， 待之無可待，乃不得不割慈忍愛，茹痛揮淚， 以出于此一途。嗚呼！以肫肫煦煦之羅蘭夫人， 而其究也，乃至投身於千古大悲劇之盤渦中，一死以謝天下。誰實為之，而令若此?

[71] Liang Qichao, "Luolan furen zhuang," *XMCB* 18 (1902): 38.

In the passage, Liang describes the revolution as something "cruel" and "violent." He says that the affectionate and peace-loving French heroine is destined "to shed, to splash, and to squander" her blood "with the blood of hundreds and thousands of civilians." And having swallowed her pain and shed her tears, Madame Roland has no choice but to "meet her death" (*yisi* 一死) in the "unprecedented tragedy in history" (*qiangu da beiju* 千古大悲劇).

In addition to detailing these distressing consequences, Liang emphasizes the French heroine's extreme hesitation in initiating a revolution. In the rhetorical question, "If one hasn't found herself in desperation, why would she be happy to…," Liang indicates that the revolution is something to avoid. In the following couplet "as one hope is dashed after another, and when one disappointment is followed by another" (*wang zi wu ke wang, dai zi wu ke dai* 望之無可望，待之無可待), the repetition of *wang* and *dai*, the negation *wuke*, and the use of the redundant grammatical unit *zi* generate a sense of endless prolongation. Together they manifest Madame Roland's refusal to participate in the revolution and intensify her agony. Immediately after this, the French heroine's reluctance is accentuated by the double negation "have no choice but" (*budebu*), which is a repetition of the negation *bude* in the rhetorical question "If one hasn't found herself in desperation…" (*gou fei wan* ***bude*** *yi* 苟非萬不得已) aforementioned. Finally, Madame Roland's frustration is theatrically announced by the exclamation, "Alas!" (*wuhu* 嗚呼). With an additional rhetorical question asking, "who, *exactly*, should be responsible for her plight," Liang accuses the political revolution for Madame Roland's tragic death.

According to Tang Xiaobing, the "Biography of Madame Roland" reflects Liang's ultimate renunciation of the revolution. Tang argues that at the early stage of Liang's career, a belief in the universal law of progress convinced him that China can only become a nation-state

and a member of the modern global community by undergoing a political revolution.[72] By 1902, however, Liang's growing familiarity with the Hungarian independence movement, the Italian unification, and the French Revolution reminded him of revolution's lethal consequences. Tang therefore believes that the cruel fictional details depicted in the "Biography of Madame Roland" reveal Liang's rejection of *geming* as well as his latest political orientation.

For Chen Jianhua, Liang's usage of *geming* in 1902 was informed by his recent political thinking, as well as the growing antagonism between the reformist and the revolutionary camps.[73] According to Chen's etymological study, Liang's initial uses of *geming* were inspired by the Japanese word *kakumei* 革命. This term refers to a broad range of social, institutional, and ideological reforms, as opposed to an overt overthrow of the status quo.[74] But as Liang's celebration of "poetic revolution" started to generate unexpected enthusiasm for the "political revolution" advocated by his competitor Sun Yat-sen, the reformer was determined to differentiate *geming* as a metaphor for reform from *geming* as physical destruction.

Chen believes that Liang's definitions of *geming* are based on translingual mediations as well as the historical agent's "political motivations and social affiliations."[75] Similar to Liang's depiction of *guomin*, *geming* has been rendered in the reformer's signature new prose style in the "Biography of Madame Roland." The passage above consists of a good number of parallel couplets, empathetic particles, and rhetorical questions. The interplay of long and short lines, the

[72] See Xiaobing Tang's chapter, "The Nation and Revolution: Narrating the Modern Event," in *Global Space and the Nationalist Discourse of Modernity: The Historical Thinking of Liang Qichao*, 80–116.

[73] For more details, see Chen Jianhua, "Chinese Revolution in the Syntax of World Revolution," 355–74; also see Chen's *Geming De Xiandaixing: Zhongguo Geming Huayu kaolun* 革命的現代性: 中國革命話語考論 (The modernity of Geming: A study of the discourse on revolution in China) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2000), 1–59.

[74] Chen believes that since Meiji intellectuals were dissatisfied with the Tokugawa bureaucracy and wished to restore the Emperor, their use of *kakumei* suggests reform instead of dynastic overthrow.

[75] Chen Jianhua, "Chinese Revolution in the Syntax of World Revolution," 357.

rhyming pattern, and repetition of sounds constitute a distinct musical pattern, making the passage an audio text in its own right. Images such as blood, tears, and death are presented in a highly rhythmical pattern, which magnifies the passage's sensory appeal. Judging from Liang's antagonist relations with the revolutionary party, one might conveniently assume that Liang's creation of cinematic effects was intended to satisfy his immediate strategic needs. By amplifying catastrophic consequences caused by the political revolution in visual and acoustic terms, the late Qing reformer was to frighten the public with fatal outcomes that would follow Sun's revolution campaign.

But as I have argued in the first part of the chapter, meanings of modern political concepts Liang communicated to the reader rest in the interplay between the semantic content and the affective presentation. To decide what *geming* means in this long passage and how the acoustic and visual effects can affect the late Qing reader's perception of *geming*, we need to conduct a careful analysis on the tension between Liang's formal arrangement and his textual narrative. To begin with the opening lines announcing Madame Roland's reluctance to die for the political revolution:

> For the benevolent and the martyr who live in an age of revolution, who is not noble and virtuous? And who does not love the people passionately? If one hasn't found herself in desperation, why would she be happy to shed, to splash, and to squander her blood with the blood of hundreds and thousands of civilians?
>
> 自古革命時代之仁人志士，何一非高尚潔白之性質，具視民如傷之熱情? 苟非萬不得已，豈樂以一身之血, (與)萬眾之血, 相注相搏相糜爛以為快**也**？

This short passage is comprised of three parallel couplets. The first couplet consists of two seven-word lines (高尚潔白之性質，[具]視民如傷之熱情). The following parallel pair is a four-word couplet (一身之血, [與]萬眾之血), and the last couplet contains three short phrases

(相注相搏相糜爛). The gradual length reduction (which can be represented numerally as: 11-(3)7-(1)7-6-(3)4-(1)4-2-2-3-(3)1) accelerates the pace of the passage and increases the tension. As the accumulated tension exhales its ultimate relief at the empty word *ye* (也), the passage reaches its musical crescendo.

The rhythmical quality of the passage is inconsistent with the semantic narrative. The musical tempo, for instance, accelerates when Liang announces Madame Roland's reluctance to participate in the political revolution. The impatience and fervor conveyed by the quickening rhythmical pace contradict her hesitation. As the French heroine's physical torment is being emphasized, the passage arrives at its melodic climax. Rather than lamenting Madame Roland's tragic death, the empty word *ye* rejoices at the much anticipated orgasmic relief.

Certain words, as the following chart shows, appear recurrently in the passage:

S1. 彼慈愛之人，非殘酷之人**也**。樂和平之人，非好暴亂之人**也**。	5 - 5 **(1)** - 5 - 6 **(1)**
S2. 嗚呼！自古革命時代之仁人志士，	2 -11
S3. (何一非) 高尚潔白之性質，具視民如傷之熱情?	(3) 7 - (1) 7
S4. 苟非萬不得已，豈樂以一身之血，與萬眾之血，	6 - (3) 4 - (1) 4
S5. 相注相搏相糜爛以為快**也**?	2 - 2- 3- (3) **1**

S1. She [Madame Roland] was someone affectionate instead of someone cruel; she was someone who loved peace instead someone who enjoyed violence.

S2. Alas! For the benevolent and the martyr who live in an age of revolution,

S3. Who is not noble and virtuous? And who does not love the people passionately?

S4. If she hasn't found herself in desperation, why would she be happy … with the blood of hundreds and thousands of civilians

S5. To shed, to splash, and to squander her blood?

There are as many as four z*hi ren* (之人 someone; a person of) in sentence 1. The possessive case *zhi* (之) appears twice in sentence 3, and *zhi xue* (之血, the blood of) also appears twice in sentence 4. In the last sentence, the adverb *xiang* (相) appears three times. The repetition of these words turns the passage into cyclical acoustic cycles. The sense of repetition and undifferentiated conformity is accentuated by the words' phonological monotony. To further parse the first sentence:

Line 1: 彼慈愛之人	b**ei** **ci** o**i** z**i** j**a**n
Line 2: 非殘酷之人**也**	f**ei** caan huk zi **ja**n **ja**a
Line 3: 樂和平之人	l**o**k w**o** p**i**ng z**i** jan
Line 4: 非好暴亂之人**也**	f**ei** **hou** b**ou** lyun zi **ja**n **ja**a

Characters in this extended parallelism are romanized in Cantonese, which was Liang's mother tongue as well as the dialect in which he fine-tuned the sounds of his lyrical composition. The reformer creates alliteration in lines 1, 2, and 4 by repeating the -*ei* vowel (b*ei*, f*ei*, and f*ei*). The lines in the passage all rhyme in the -*a*- vowel (j*a*n, j*a*a, j*a*n, and j*a*a). Liang, as the romanization indicates, tends to repeat the same vowel in each line. In addition to softening the brutality of the political revolution, the phonetic solidarity again shifts the reader's attention from words to sounds.

With syntactical patterns giving rise to the rhythmical totality and the repetition of sound creating acoustic euphony, the *formal* organization of the passage is an organic metrical entity. The anticipation, enthusiasm, and impatience conveyed by the musical development "speak" against Madame Roland's hesitation as declared in the passage. After a careful examination of Liang's syntactic and phonological arrangement, one cannot help questioning whether the

exclamation "alas!" (*wuhu*), double negation "*budebu*," and repeated emphases on Madame Roland's unwillingness are intended to deny the legitimacy of the revolution, or if they are placed to create formal cohesion.

Lyrical Suspension of Political Revolution

Liang's denial of the political revolution is devoid of semantic ambiguity. But as soon as the rhythmical and acoustic effects of the passage are taken into consideration, "the authority of the meaning engendered by the grammatical structure," to borrow Paul de Man's words, "is *fully obscured* by the duplicity of a figure that cries out for the differentiation that it conceals."[76] Apart from the "acoustic dissociation" unbridled by the tension between the semantic content and its musical effect, depictions of physical torment also question whether the political revolution is an absolute negativity in Liang's work.

In Kossuth's speech, as we remember, the Hungarian hero fashions himself as a wounded man suffering from extreme physical pain. He tells his *guomin* that a modern nation-state can only arrive at the expense of blood, tears, and death. After listening to Kossuth's call, the Hungarian *guomin* promptly echoes him, stating that "Give me Liberty or give me Death" (*buziyou, wuningsi* 不自由，毋寧死).[77] In historical biographies Liang published in *New Citizen Journal* in 1902, blood, tears, and death are often evidence of one's moral superiority. In the "Biography of the Three Italian Heroes Who Founded Italy" (*Yidali jianguo sanjie zhuan* 意大利建國三傑傳), which was serialized immediately after the "Biography of Kossuth," Liang says that Giuseppe Mazzini's (1805–72) and Giuseppe Garibaldi's (1807–82) endeavors to unify Italy

[76] Paul de Man, *Allegories of Reading*, 12, emphasis added.

[77] Liang Qichao, "Xiongyali aiguozhe Gesushi zhuan," *XMCB* 6 (1902): 36.

are motivated purely by their affectionate concern for the public.[78] In the biography, Liang carefully describes different physical tortures the two have experienced during the unification process. Besides paving the way for historical evolution, blood, tears, and death are authentications of Mazzini's and Garibaldi's moral integrity. More intriguing descriptions of the bodily suffering appear at the beginning of the "Biography of Madame Roland." The French heroine, according to Liang, has identified herself with many ancient "knight errant" (*haojie* 豪傑) figures since the age of ten.[79] Among books that she has read, Madame Roland shares a special interest in biographies detailing Christ's crucifixion. The young heroine constantly regrets not having been born in Sparta, an ancient state which, as Liang explains in two earlier issues of *New Citizen Journal*, derived its national pride from the citizen's capacity to endure extreme physical torture.[80]

As Liang's long passage is contextualized in the series of historical biographies he contributed to *New Citizen Journal* in 1902, it seems clear that physical suffering and collective sacrifice were meant to be celebrated and glorified. And yet the question is: if the images of blood, tears, sweat, and death were not to warn the late Qing reader of destructive consequences following the political revolution, what would have prompted Liang to construct so dramatic and captivating a lyrical entity?

In Kao Yu-kung's study of classical Chinese poetry, Kao believes that the creation of poetic form is driven by the poet's desire to manifest his intent.[81] Subscribing to the assumption

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[78] For more details, see Liang Qichao, "Yidali jianguo sanjie zhuan," *XMCB* 9 (1902): 31–44; *XMCB* 10 (1902): 40–53; *XMCB* 14 (1902):31–42.

[79] Liang Qichao, "Luolan furen zhuan," *XMCB* 17 (1902):36.

[80] Liang Qichao, "Sibada xiaozhi," *XMCB* 13 (1902):22–24.

[81] For a theoretical exegesis on the "mediating interaction" between an artist's interiority and the "structural frame," see Kao Yu-kung, "Chinese Lyric Aesthetics," in *Words and Images: Chinese Poetry, Calligraphy and Painting, eds., Alfveda Mumck and Wen Fong* (New York, NY: The Metropolitan Museum of Arts, 1991), 47–90.

"poetry expresses intent" (*shi yan zhi* 詩言志), a literary principle originated from the "Great Preface" to the *Book of Songs* (*Shijing* 詩經), Kao notes that "the poetic impulse arises from the desire to express the mental states and acts of the poet through artistic language."[82] Since one's interiority cannot be fully expressed in the discursive language, the creation of a formal structure manifests the poet's "manipulation of rules to adapt to his creative imagination, and his effort of attaining his vision through his specific form."[83] Formal structure, for this reason, is the "an integral part of the poet's intention and is inextricable from the realization of the poet's vision."[84]

Beyond achieving the rhetorical purpose informed by his strategic concerns, Liang's creation of the metrical entity, considering Kao's logic, can be an expression of his *lived* experiences. The assumption that the "musicality" conveyed by the formal and phonetic structure of language is a means of self-expression is shared by Western theorists such as Theodor Adorno.

Adorno is also suspicious about the signifying power of language. Classifying the "name" as something "chained to the form of judgment and proposition and thereby to the synthetic form of the concept,"[85] Adorno observes that "signifying language" always "say[s] the absolute in a mediated way."[86] Since music is an "aconceptual synthesis" that refuses to reduce the empirical experience into the conceptual, he believes that it has the potential to reach "the absolute

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[82] Kao Yu-kung, "The Aesthetics of Regulated Verse," in *The Vitality of the Lyric Voice: Shih Poetry from the Late Han to T'ang*, edited by Shuen-fu Lin and Stephen Owen (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 339. For the book-length monograph Kao to the study of the Chinese lyrical aesthetics, see his *Zhongguo meidian yu wenxue yanjiu lunji* 中國美典與文學研究論集 (Collected essays on researches on the Chinese aesthetic tradition and literature) (Taibei: Guoli Taiwan daxue chuban zhongxin, 2004).

[83] Ibid., 333.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Theodore Adorno, "Parataxis: On Hölderlin's Late Poetry," in *Notes to Literature (Volume Two)*, edited by Rolf Tiedemann and translated by Shierry Weber Nicholsen (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1991), 130.

[86] Theodore Adorno, "Music, Language, and Composition," in *The Musical Quarterly* 77. 3 (Autumn 1993): 404.

immediately."[87] For Adorno, man is constituted by unmediated experiences as well as rationalizing power. It is assumed that the subject's empirical experiences constantly struggle to override his subjective consciousness. In his discussion of Friedrich Hölderlin's (1770–1843) late poetry, Adorno argues that to conceive an internal musical rhythm within a poetic composition is to resist the discursive power of linguistic conceptualization.

The assumption that to create musicality for language is to battle against language, or one's subjective consciousness, seems applicable in Liang's case. At the time Liang published the "Biography of Madame Roland," private letters which he exchanged with Kong Youwei suggest that the late-Qing reformer's personal wishes were painfully at odds with his tactical concerns. Liang, as it is generally known, had been keen to launch a political revolution since early in his career.[88] After his exile to Japan in 1898, the reformer formed a secret alliance with Sun Yat-sen.[89] By 1901, however, Liang was permanently expelled from the revolutionary camp for trying to replace Sun's leadership as he visited Hawaii.[90] Later Liang traveled to different parts of the world in hopes of collecting donations for his own revolution, only to learn that most

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[87] Ibid. Something important to note is that Adorno does not exclude music's potential to articulate the conceptual. In this essay, he draws a distinction between the good "music" and the bad "musical language." What differentiates the two is whether the composer tries to impose logic and an informed structure to his musical composition. Adorno believes that good music should be the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings, and to compose music through rational organization and careful manipulation of its expressive potential is not so much different from conceptualizing the unmediated experience into language. For more details, see Theodore Adorno, "Music, Language, and Composition," 401–14.

[88] For Liang's support for the political revolution, see Tang Xiaobing, *Global Space*, 1–79; Chang Hao's chapters "Liang in Exile," and "The New Citizen," in *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and Intellectual Transition in China, 1890–1907*, 121-219. Zhang Pengyuan provides the most detailed, convincing, and sympathetic analysis on Liang's on persistent hope in launching a revolution and the emotional torment Liang suffered from. See his *Liang Qichao yu qingji geming*.

[89] For Liang's first meeting with Sun Yat-sen in Yokohama, Japan, see Ding Wenjiang and Zhao Fengtian, *Liang Qichao nianpu changbian*, 117; for Liang's alliance with Sun, see Feng Ziyou, *Zhonghua minguo kaiguo qian geming shi*, vol.1, p.44.

[90] See Chang Hao, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and Intellectual Transition in China*, 121-48.

of the resources available were already in Sun's control. Liang had no choice but to return to the reformist camp.

Liang's physical return is by no means an unreserved (re)conversion to reformism. In a letter Liang wrote to his mentor, Kang Youwei, in April 1902, the "reformer" said:

> Overthrowing the Shogun is the most appropriate solution to Japan's political predicaments, and overthrowing the Manchurian the most appropriate solution to China. According to your humble student's view, there is nothing more fitting than this. The Manchurian bureaucracy has been hopeless for so long. Day after day, we hope our Majesty can resume his rule and restore his authority. But how can this be possible? Even if there is such a possibility, we have so many enemies in the court. Our initial campaigns have been deserted for so long. Even if we can be reappointed by the throne, hardly can our aspirations be realized. Sir, you are afraid of destructions. I cannot possibly say that I am not. But if destruction cannot be avoided eventually, the longer we wait the more destructive it becomes. Perhaps it is better early than late. Even if we do not speak of revolution, others will. How can speaking about this [the political revolution] be prohibited?[91]
>
> 日本以討幕為最適宜之主義，中國以討滿為最適宜之主義。弟子所見，謂無以易此矣。滿廷之無可望久矣，今日日望歸朝，望復辟，夫何可得？即得矣，滿朝皆仇敵，百事腐敗已久，雖召吾黨歸用之，而亦決不能行其志也。先生懼破壞，弟子亦未始不懼，然以為破壞終不可免，越遲則越慘，毋寧早耳。且我不言，他人亦言之，豈能禁乎？

Liang's letter discloses a pronounced discrepancy between what he publicly announced and what he privately, personally aspired for. In the "Biography of Madame Roland," the "reformer" denies the legitimacy of the political revolution by associating it with catastrophic consequences. In his letter to Kang, however, Liang holds a directly opposing view. Having foreseen the difficulties in implementing changes in the Qing bureaucracy, Liang tries to convince his mentor that "overthrowing the Manchu" (*taoman* 討滿), a euphemism for the political revolution, is a more promising solution than reformism.

[91] Quoted from Ding Wenjiang and Zhao Fengtian, *Liang Qichao nianpu changbian*, 189.

Liang's support for the physical revolution was fiercely condemned by his mentor. In Kang's reply, he accuses Liang for being "capricious and fickle" (*liu zhi yi bian* 流質易變).[92] Kang announces to Liang that "since you have become interested in launching a revolution, people's hearts are radically changed and became dispersed, almost to the point of not being able to pull them together. If our principles are different, we would have to be parted even if we were father and son 自汝言革命后，人心大變大散，幾不可合。蓋宗旨不同，則父子亦決裂矣."[93]

The frustrated dialogue between the teacher and the student divulges Liang's moral dilemma as well as his political predicament. If the poetic form or musicality of language, as Kao and Adorno believe, confines the poet's unmediated experiences, one might wishfully propose that the frustrated "reformer" at least managed to live the *absent* revolution in his lyrical composition. In his study of the Ruan Ji's 阮籍 (210–63 CE) re-invention of time in his poetry, Xiao Chi says that Ruan's creation of metrical formal unit epitomizes his retreat to a universe of self-containment.[94] Inspired by Kao's discussions on parallelism, Xiao suggests that the artificiality of formal structure marks the poet's departure from the referential world.[95] Through the construction of parallel syntactic structure and careful arrangement of sounds, the poet invents his own temporal sequence and suspends oneself in an alternate temporal-spatial framework. Xiao's discussion subtly implies that a poet's conception of formal structure is

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[92] Ding Wenjiang and Zhao Fengtian, *Liang Qichao nianpu changbian*, 189.

[93] Ibid., 197.

[94] See Xiao Chi, "Lun Ruan Ji yonghuai dui shuqing chuantong zhi zaizao 論阮籍詠懷對抒情傳統之再造" (On Ruan Ji's Reinvention of the Chinese lyrical tradition in his poem "Yonghuai," in *Zhongguo shuqing chuantong de zai faxian: Yige xiandai xueshu sichao de lunwen xuanji* 中國抒情傳統的再發現: 一個現代學術思潮的論文選集 (Rediscovering the Chinese lyrical tradition: Selected essays on a recent academic trend) edited by Xiao Chi and Ke Qingming 柯慶明 (Taipei: Taida chuban zhongxin, 2009).

[95] Ibid., 476.

similar to a child's invention of rhythm in the "Fort-da" game Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) describes in *Beyond Pleasure Principle*.[96] Liang's passionate, heroic depiction of the revolution, to put it in Freudian terms, can be considered the "objectification of negative hallucination" and the reformer might have treated his "psychic strivings as if they were concrete objects."[97]

Meaning beyond Discourse

A psychoanalytical reading of the passage from the "Biography of Madame Roland" invites us to reinterpret Liang's denial of the revolution as the passionate glorification of an unfulfilled hope. But coming to this point, it is important to remember a warning David Wang gives in his recent monograph *Four Readings of the Modern Lyrical Tradition* (*Xiandai shuqing chuantong si lun* 現代抒情傳統四論). Wang agrees with Kao Yu-kung that the creation of form is a lyrical expression of one's inner state. In his discussions on the calligraphy of Tai Jingnong 臺靜農 (1902–90), an advocate of modern Chinese literary reform who devoted himself to calligraphy writing after settling in Taiwan, Wang says that Tai's emotions are too intense and complex that they cannot even be adequately expressed in the musicality of poetry.[98] Tai's "deep feeling and truthful intent" (*shenqing shiyi* 深情厚意), fortunately or unfortunately, can only find expressions in the "encryptography" promised by the "*topos*" of Chinese characters.[99] Wang's discussion on Tai's calligraphy affirms the expressive potential of form. But in Wang's next chapter, he poses an alarming question: how can we be sure that what appears to be a "lyrical expression" is free from "theatricality" (*biaoyan xing* 表演性) and "fictionality" (*xugou xing* 虛

[96] See Sigmund Freud's "Chapter two" in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (New York, NY: Norton, 1961), 11–22.

[97] Alan Bass, *Difference and Disavowal: The Trauma of Eros* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), 15.

[98] For more details, see Wang Dewei, "Guojia buxing shufa xing," in *Xiandai shuqing chuantong si lun*, 149–201.

[99] Ibid., 189–90.

構性)? In his study of Hu Lancheng 胡蘭成 (1906–81), a man who collaborated with the Japanese after falling out of favor with Wang Jingwei's 汪精衛 (1883–1944) puppet government, Wang cogently argues that the most truthful emotions Hu proclaimed to have expressed in his political writings and autobiographies can well be rhetorical strategies to justify his betrayal of China and his second wife, the prodigious modern fiction writer Eileen Chang 張愛玲 (1920–1995).[100] Through Hu's story, Wang points us to the blurred line between strategic calculation and lyrical authenticity.

Wang's suspicion for Hu Lancheng also holds true for Liang's writings. In the long passage in the "Biography of Madame Roland," one can hardly be certain whether the acoustic effects are truthful expressions of Liang's lyrical intensity or rhetorical tactics to denounce the revolutionary camp. Beyond not being able to tell "intent" apart from "intention," both Kao and Adorno suggest that the musicality of language does not tell us the "true meaning"; it only opens interpretative possibilities that rest beyond the linguistic representation.

Adorno is keen to celebrate the realization of subjective freedom in the musicality of language. But in "Parataxis," he also strongly emphasizes that the musical quality of Hölderlin's language cannot be considered more authentic or reliable than the semantic narrative. It is because when one expresses his aconceptual self in language, this unconscious self can only be found in the aconceptual musical quality *of* language. The truth content of language, in other words, lies in the uncertainty and obscurity unwrapped by the musicality of the semantic content. Adorno calls the infinite interpretive possibility conditioned by the tension between the form and

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[100] See Wang Dewei, "Shuqing yu beipan 抒情與背板" (The Lyrical and the Betrayal), in *Xiandai shuqing chuantong si lun* 現代抒情傳統四論 (Four readings of the modern lyrical tradition) (Taipei: Taipei National University Press, 2011), 204–56.

the content "constitutive dissociation."[101] And the "path followed by the determinate negation of meaning," he states, "is the path to the truth content."[102]

Kao shares Adorno's view. Assuming that the formal structure is "the objectification of an inner state," Kao believes that the aesthetic experience anticipated by the interplay between the form and the content allows the poet and the reader to communicate beyond the textual meaning.[103] In "The Aesthetics of Regulated Verse," Kao goes on to elaborate that this "aesthetics is basically an interpretative code" which derives its expressive potential by presenting itself indirectly.[104] "It is," Kao aptly suggests, "difficult to articulate this aesthetic as a code, but the very fact that it never becomes fully explicit protects its power to suggest, to change, and to develop."[105]

Based on Adorno's and Kao's discussions, what Madame Roland's case implies is that the true meaning of *geming* Liang produced and circulated in *New Citizen Journal* is *different from* the word's semantic definition. The true meaning, moreover, is beyond linguistic representation. The ambivalence of *geming* can be considered a remote parallel to what Jacques Derrida calls "*différance*." In *Writing and Difference*, Derrida argues that language is different from, and a deferral of, the truth content.[106] To emphasize that language cannot capture the unrepresentable truth, the theorist says:

> The conscious text is thus not a transcription, because there is no text *present elsewhere* as unconscious one to be transposed or transported. For the value of presence can also dangerously affect the concept of the

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[101] Theodore Adorno, "Parataxis: On Hölderlin's Late Poetry," 130.

[102] Ibid., 112.

[103] Kao Yu-kung, "The Aesthetics of Regulated Verse," 340.

[104] Ibid., 333.

[105] Ibid., 333–4.

[106] For more details, see Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, translated by Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978).

> unconscious. There is then no unconscious truth to be rediscovered by virtue of having been written elsewhere.[107]

Apart from indicating that the true meaning rests elsewhere than language, perhaps Derrida's words have wider implications for the study of late Qing modernity. In this short passage, the theorist points us to the alarming consequence of studying "what it is *not*" as "what it is." From the seventies onward, intellectual historians, political scientists, and scholars of etymology focusing on late Qing China have been keen to trace cultural and linguistic origins of recently translated political keywords and examine how translation has generated new semantic meanings under the reference of Chinese, English, and Japanese cultural, linguistic, and political systems. And in the last two decades or so, we have tended to understand late Qing political modernity as a constructed discourse resulting from cross cultural exchanges and consolidated by power relations on both the local and the international levels. But in our discussion of *geming*, it should now be clear that translated political concepts are affectively presented in Liang's new prose style, and the reformer's affective presentation often runs the risk of challenging, obscuring, and even destabilizing his semantic definition. One may be curious about whether Liang's affective presentation is a lyrical expression of his unmediated emotional experiences or his rhetorical manipulation of language. But apart from opening us to the affective origins of translated political modernity in Qing China, perhaps the unresolvable question barely matters.

Confusion between Reform and Revolution

The long passage from the "Biography of Madame Roland" constitutes certain aesthetic moments in Liang's historical biography, and one might expect more stable definitions for

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[107] See "Freud and the Scene of Writing," in Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, 211.

geming in other parts of the narrative. The following examples, however, indicate that the suspension of meaning is by no means restricted to lyrical moments created by the tension between the form and the content. In the following discussion, I hope to illustrate that the meaning of *geming* is highly unstable in Liang's biography, and that its meanings cannot be easily clarified.

> Although Heaven refuses to let Madame Roland enjoy domestic bliss in the rest of her life, the history of France and the history of the world have to rely on the name of Madame Roland to magnify their glories. Slowly the wind was blowing, clouds getting tangled, thunders striking, and the water pouring. Xi-Xi-Chu-Chu! The French Revolution! Jie-jie-qu-qu. France, finally, can no longer avoid a revolution!!!
>
> 雖然天不許羅蘭夫人享家庭之幸福以終天年也，法蘭西歷史，世界歷史，必要以羅蘭夫人之名以增其光焰也。於是風漸起，雲漸亂，電漸進，水漸湧，譆譆出出！法國革命！！嗟嗟詘詘！ 法國遂不免於大革命!!![108]

Liang suggests that the French history and the world history have been glorified and brightened by the revolution initiated by Madame Roland. Whether to participate in a physical revolution or not is no longer Madame Roland's personal decision, but her historical mission. In the passage, the definition of revolution becomes radically different from the long passage I quoted at the beginning of the section. And yet, something to note is that the rhythmical structure and musical effects of this passage bear striking resemblance with the previous one.

After briefly listing historical events that triggered the French Revolution, Liang goes on to celebrate *geming* as a positive good:

> Thinking that the revolution has now been staged, [Madame Roland] believe that now the republicanism she has always aspired for finally has a chance to be realized. Madame Roland does not love the revolution. But because of her love for France, she has no choice but to love the

[108] Liang, "Luanlan furen zhuan," *XMCB* 17 (1902):39- 40.

revolution. She believes that today's France is died, and the revolution is the only thing that can bring the country back to life. For this reason, the couple has made cultivating revolutionary spirit and circulating revolutionary thinking their vocation.

以為革命既起，平生所夢想之共和主義，今已得實現之機會。夫人非愛革命，然以愛法國故，不得不愛革命。彼以為今日之法國已死，致死而之生之，舍革命未由。於是夫妻專以孕育革命精神，弘布革命思想為事。[109]

Liang announces that the revolution is the only thing that can save France from demise. Despite Madame Roland's reluctance, the late Qing intellectual says that she has no choice but to *love* the physical revolution, and she has made "nurturing the revolutionary spirit" and "circulating the revolutionary thought" her vocation. Now the political revolution becomes the materialization and physical embodiment of Madame Roland's "spiritual pursuit." Rather than trying to unsettle the definition of the revolution through an incongruent rhythmical pattern, in the above passage Liang officially dismantles the difference and hierarchy between the *geming* as a spiritual pursuit and as a physical action. From this point on, it is hardly possible to tell whether the revolution is a spiritual good or a fatal political destruction. Because of its failure to divide itself into two opposite sets of meaning, the *geming* becomes an ambiguous sign which has lost its signifying power. When one wishes to refer to *geming* as a spiritual pursuit, the referral necessarily entails negative definitions associated with *geming* as a political action.

There are still more ambiguities in Liang's biography. As my discussion shows, the zealous and triumphant musical rhythm Liang creates to deny and condemn the revolution has again been used to celebrate Madame Roland's decision to embrace the political revolution. But as soon as Madame Roland is sent to the guillotine by her political opponents, the comparable set

[109] Ibid., 40.

of rhetorical devices has been used to subvert the legitimacy of the physical revolution. Before Madame Roland is sent to the guillotine, Liang writes:

> Madame Roland's ideal has now been realized. Assuming that the peaceful construction is about to take place, she is surprised to learn that the new challenge appears before the prevailing ones can be overcome. One tries to block the tiger at her front door and yet the wolf is crouching at the back door. The biggest enemy on top is dead, but the biggest enemy from below is growing quickly. At this time, Madame Roland had no choice but to throw herself to the revolutionary torrent that she has created, and to be engulfed, snatched, and carried away by it.
>
> 羅蘭夫人之理想，今已現於實際。以為太平建設指日可待，豈意一波未平，一波又起。前門拒虎，后門近狼。在上之大敵已斃，而在下之大敵人，羽翼正成。今也，羅蘭夫人遂不得不投身於己所造出之革命急潮之中，而被裹被挾被捲以去。[110]

Liang begins by reasserting the physical revolution is the materialization of Madame Roland's spiritual ideal. And yet, the physical revolution that has recently been elevated to a positive good resumes its destructive force. In the passage, Liang calls those who participate in the revolution tigers and wolves, and he compares the revolution to the torrent that clutches, swallows, and rolls Madame Roland away. Following the line "thinking that the peaceful construction would arrive soon" (以為太平建設指日可待), Liang presents two sets of parallel prose in a row (一波未平，一波又起。前門拒虎，后門近狼). As the quickening rhythmical pace is suspended by the long line (羅蘭夫人遂不得不投身於己所造出之革命急潮之中), the accumulated tension is relieved by three short parallel phrases (被裹被挾被捲). The musical effect Liang creates is highly similar to the long passage I discussed.

[110] Liang, "Luoran furen zhuan," *XMCB* 18 (1902):45.

Apart from creating comparable musical effects, Liang makes reference to similar natural phenomena to describe both the longed awaited revolution and its destructive outcome. Below is a short passage describing the destructive revolution in vivid details:

> The wild billows of the revolution were bombing the sky and shaking the earth. The guillotine had become sick of man's book. The river was stuffed with man's flesh. Making sa-sa sounds, the wind was filled with the fishy smell of the flesh, and the misery rain made this a misty season…..
>
> 革命之狂瀾轟天撼地，斷頭機厭人之血，布鄂河塞人之肉腥颯颯慘雨濛濛之時節 ….[111]

The wind, cloud, water, and thunder that celebrate Madame Roland's triumphant debut have now become witnesses of its most destructive outcome. In the passage, Liang points late Qing readers to pictorial scenes in which the blood is dripping over the guillotine and dismembered dead bodies are spreading evenly across the field. The blood is everywhere, and ditches are blocked by the human flesh.

In the "Biography of Kossuth" and "Three Heroes," detailed descriptions on blood, tear, pain, and death are intended to arouse readers' sensual responses and kindle their passions for becoming a *guomin* and pursuing *ziyou*. They, moreover, are rhetorical strategies inviting the late Qing reader to perceive modern political concepts on a somatic ground instead of focusing on these keywords' semantic definition. But in the previous examples, the depiction of blood, tear, and death can be just as *appealing* as they are in the "Biography of Kossuth" and "Three Heroes." In the "Biography of Madame Roland," one can no longer tell the spiritual revolution apart from the political revolution, and whether the political revolution is something good or bad. Since the meaning of *geming* has become so ambivalent, a potential question to ask is: could there be a possibility that Liang's rhetorical strategies had invited comparable passion and

[111] Ibid., 48-9.

enthusiasm for the destructive political revolution as well as the spiritual revolution he tried to promote?

Fake Reformers and True Revolutionaries

Coming to this session, I hope to show how the *meaning* of *geming* can be further unsettled by an inter-textual reading, and how the linguistic ambiguity can potentially unleash a larger epistemic crisis in late Qing China. The "Biography of Madame Roland" was serialized in volume 17 and volume 18 of *New Citizen Journal*. As the key contributor to this bi-weekly journal, Liang needed to complete a considerable amount of writing within a short period of time. Instead of introducing and discussing different topics at a time, Liang, as mentioned in the introduction, was in the habit of elaborating a specific topic from different perspectives. What makes his depiction of *geming* intriguing is that in editorials he published in the exact same volumes, Liang denies and subverts the many different meanings he associates the revolution with in the "Biography of Madam Roland."

In "A Respectful Announcement to my Fellow Reformists," the editorial published in volume 17 of *XMCB*, Liang begins by trying to justify why a historian is entitled to articulate his subjective views in an extreme, radical, and biased fashion. Liang says that when the Western learning was introduced to China, even some of the most learned Chinese scholars were daunted by its oddity.[112] But as the call to implement Western political concepts, especially the idea of civil right (*minquan* 民權), had replaced the urgency of popularizing the Western learning, the latter ceased to be terrifying.[113] After presenting these examples, Liang argues that one can only dissipate the general public's fear for the political reform by exposing them to, if not threatening

[112] Liang, "Jinggao wo tongyue zhujun," 6.

[113] Ibid.

them with, something even more intimidating than reform. And for Liang, the most effective threat available is *geming*, the political revolution. Proclaiming that he is deeply frustrated by late Qing intellectuals' lukewarm responses to his reformist proposals, Liang declares that he is determined to convert their fear and resistance for the reform to the political revolution. The late Qing intellectual says:

> In order to familiarize the people with the civil right they are entitled to enjoy, one has no choice but to frighten them with the political revolution. When the talk of revolution becomes prevalent, people will be too frightened to develop fear for the civil right, and not to mention the political reform.
>
> 欲導民以民權也，則不可不駭之以革命。當革命論起，則並民權亦不暇駭，而變法無論矣。[114]

In order to achieve a "reformist" goal as such, Liang announces that from now on, he is to assume the role of a subjective historian, and to depict *geming* in the most extreme and radical fashion possible. These extreme depictions, as the "reformer" repeatedly emphasizes, are nothing but his strategies to promote reform (某以為報館之所以導國民者，不可不操此術).[115]

Coming to volume 18 of *New Citizen Journal*, where the second half of the "Biography of Madame Roland" was serialized, Liang turns his editorial to another open letter. In "A Respectful Note to Those in Power" ("*Jinggao dangdaozhe*" 敬告當道者), Liang says that having spent so many years introducing the Western political system and liberal ideals to China, the general public has finally become aware of the right one is entitled to enjoy.[116] But instead of congratulating himself for such achievement, Liang says he is devastated to learn that the indolence, stupidity, and selfishness of his fellow reformists have turned his efforts into a fatal

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[114] Ibid.

[115] Ibid.

[116] Liang, "Jinggao dangdaozhe 敬告當道者" (A respectful note to those in power), in *XMCB* 18 (1902):1-16.

weapon against him.[117] These "fake reformers" (*wei gaigezhe* 偽改革者), according to Liang, have devoted most of their energies advertising their reformist positions, and hardly anyone has attempted to fulfill the reformist duties that they have promised to undertake.

Liang warns that if these people keep talking about the fake reform (*wei gaigezhe* 偽改革), China would have to face "the most tragic and radical consequences (最慘最劇之現象)" invited by the political revolution.[118] Liang, somewhat interestingly, has no intention to condemn the revolution. Because in the editorial, he points out that these disastrous consequences are the prices revolutionaries pay to remedy the ills of the fake reform. Following that, Liang draws a sharp contrast between the "fake reformers" and the "true revolutionaries" such as Madame Roland, Mazzini, and the Japanese thinker Yoshida Shoin 吉田松蔭 (1830-1859), people whom the late Qing intellectual has expressed unmatched admirations for in *New Citizen Journal* and his earlier writings. By drawing a contrast as such, Liang runs the risk of implying that *the political revolution is the real reform*.

After comparing fake reformers to these foreign historical figures, Liang goes on to compare them to young revolutionaries in China. He says that from the late nineteenth century onward, many Chinese students who studied abroad were convinced that the civil right and freedom could only be achieved through the political revolution. In the editorial, Liang says that for people who have been disappointed again and again by fake reformers, these young revolutionaries' calls would appear increasingly attractive. These young men, according to him, are passionate young people who are packed with hope, energy, and love for China. They would do whatever it takes to realize their political ideals. By emphasizing that the political revolution

[117] Ibid., 13-5.

[118] Ibid., 9.

is a corrective measure to the fake reform, Liang again confirms the revolution's legitimacy. And in late Qing China, if one was to talk about reform, he was left either with the "fake reform," or the "true reform" that is to be manifested in political revolution.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I show that the acoustic effect and sensory appeal created by Liang's new prose style facilitated the circulation of modern political knowledge in late Qing China. His affective presentation, however, could only effectively circulate modern knowledge at the expense of obscuring and unsettling its semantic consistency. Meanings of translated political concepts conveyed to the late Qing reader, for this reason, rest in the interplay between the new prose style operating as a semantic text, an audio text, and a pictorial text. Apart from reflecting where Liang's translated political concepts arrived from and what these modern concepts meant, another important implication we can draw from Liang's affective presentation is the late Qing reader's relationship with political modernity. Although the sensory appeal of Liang's language turned reading into a more exciting and engaging experience in late Qing China, the acoustic and aesthetic pleasure, as Dolar, Poizat, and Barthes suggest, might also have distracted from his textual meaning. When a late Qing reader responded to the concepts Liang circulated, one can hardly be certain whether his responses indicated a rational comprehension of these concepts, or what Barthes calls the "commitment to this voice as a site of opacity."[119]

[119] Roland Barthes, *The Responsibility of Forms*, 207.

CHAPTER TWO

Dissolution of Modern Political Languages in the Cinematic Spectacle

Introduction: "The Future of New China" in Virtual Reality

Liang Qichao's novella "The Future of New China" (1902) is set in 2062, 160 years after the year on which it was published. As the story begins, Liang tries to visualize this futuristic country in pictorial terms. On the day the story takes place, China is celebrating its "Fiftieth Restoration Anniversary" (*Wushinian weixin dadian* 五十年維新大祝典) in two geographical locations. By inserting an inter-textual annotation "Attention" (*zhuyi* 注意), Liang draws the reader's attention to the World Exposition held in Shanghai 上海.[120] While most of celebrations take place in the coastal city, world leaders attending the recently established International Peace Congress (*Wangguo taiping huiyi* 萬國太平會議) are gathered in Nanjing 南京, a city that is 500 miles away from Shanghai. Apart from presenting in person, these world leaders have sent navies and vessels to China to show their respect. The foreign vessels have lined up along the coast of Shanghai, where tens and thousands of visitors arriving from different parts of world are there to attend the Exposition. Having depicted the panoramic view of the crowd that has extended from Shanghai, Jiangbei 江北, Wusongkou 吳淞口, to the Chongming County 崇明縣, Liang, marveling at the breath and scale of the national celebrations, expresses his wonders saying "How magnificent! How magnificent! (闊哉、闊哉)."[121]

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[120] Liang, "Xin zhongguo weilai ji," *XXS* 1 (1902): 53.

[121] Ibid., 54.

After presenting the panoramic geographical exteriority, Liang's focus zooms in to the interiority of the largest exhibition hall located in Shanghai. In the hall, the clock on the wall shows that it is nearly twelve thirty in the afternoon. An audience of twenty thousand has arrived, and over one thousands of them are international visitors coming from the Great Britain, the United States, Germany, France, Russia, Japan, the Philippines, and India.[122] Mimicking the tone of a traditional storyteller (*shuoshuren* 說書人), Liang the narrator addresses his readers as "*kanguan* 看官,"[123] *viewers* who are personally presented in the marketplace to witness the storytelling. By "*kanguan*," Liang means it in a literal sense. Apart from telling people the story, Liang points his *viewers* to an exhibition hall where a keynote speech is about to take place. Inside the hall there is a large stage. As the clock strikes twelve thirty, Mr. Lin, the chairperson of the Historical Association, walks up to the stage. Standing on the second rank of the stairs on the left, he welcomes the audience with a deep bow. As Mr. Lin finishes his welcoming speech at one o'clock, Dr. Kong the keynote speaker appears. The old gentleman is in a gown designed for formal events, and wears a medal of honor before his chest. With his gentile smile, Dr. Kong makes his way slowly onto the stage. At the sight of the old gentleman's elegant postures, the audience stands up to pay him their respect. When they clap, the sounds they make are as loud as landslides and roaring waves.

Through the careful description of the geographical background, design of modern architectures, appearance of refined garments, and sounds coming from the excited audience,

[122] Ibid., 56.

[123] Ibid, 58. For very brief summaries on narrative features vernacular Chinese fiction retains from the oral story telling tradition, see John Bishop, "Some Limitations of Chinese Fiction," *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, 15.2 (February 1956): 239-247; Vibeke Børdahl, "The Storyteller's Manner in Chinese Storytelling," *Asian Folklore Studies* 62 (2003): 1-48. For a recent study on the incorporation of features of "oral telling" into vernacular fiction, see Paize Keulemans' chapter one, "Acts of Ventriloquism: Literati Appropriations of the Storyteller's voice," 33-64.

Liang's novella features China's political future in the immediacy of a cinematic landscape. Instead of summarizing the country's modern progress in conceptual terms, Liang's fictional description is predominately visual and acoustic.[124]

In "On the Relationship between Fiction and Public Governance" (論小說與群治之關係), a much studied essay printed alongside "New China" in the inaugural issue of *New Fiction*, Liang carefully explains in what ways fiction are different from other literary genres, and why it can transmit modern political knowledge more effectively than other types of writing.[125]

Fiction, according to Liang, can create "a life beyond one's life, and a world beyond one's own (身外之身，世界外之世界).[126] In this novel realm, "imaginations the reader

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[124] For the role Liang played in constructing a "discourse" of utopic imagination in "The Future of New China," and how his "discourse" had been instrumental in generating a new consciousness of the global space, exemplifying the modern nation-state building process, and helping the general public create a new national identity, see Xiaobing Tang, *Global Space and the Nationalist Discourse of Modernity*; Chen Jianhua 陳建華, "Minzu "xiangxiang" de moli: chong du Liang Qichao "Lun xiaoshuo yu qunzhi zhi guanxi 民族"想像"的魔力：重讀梁啟超《論小說與群治之關係》" (The magical power of national "imagination": Reading Liang Qichao's "On the Relationship between Fiction and People's Governance), in *Cong ge ming dao gong he: Qing mo zhi Minguo shi qi wen xue, dian ying yu wen hua de zhuan xing* 從革命到共和: 清末至民初時期文學、電影與文化的轉型 (From revolution to the republic: literary, cinematic, and cultural transformations) (Guilin: Guangxi shifan daxue chubanshe, 2009), 65-84; Ban Wang, "Geopolitics, Moral Reform, and Poetic Internationalism: Liang Qichao's "The Future of New China," *Frontiers of Literary Studies in China* vol. 6. 1 (2012): 2-18; Guan Kean-Fung 顏健富, *Cong "shen ti" dao "shi jie": wanqing xiaoshuo de xin gainian ditu* 從「身體」到「世界」──晚清小說的新概念地圖 (From the "body" to the "world": new conceptual maps in late Qing fiction) (Taibei: National Taiwan University Press, 2014), 15-58; Mei Chia-ling 梅家玲, "Faxiang shaonian, xiangxiang zhongguo: Liang Qichao "Shaonian zhongguo shuo" de xiandai xing, qimeng lunshu yu guozu xiangxiang 發現少年，想像中國—梁啟超〈少年中國說〉的現代性、啟蒙論述與國族想像 ("Discovering youth" and "imagining China": Modernity, enlightenment discourse and national imagination in Liang Qichao's "The Youth of China"), *Hanxue yanjiu* 漢學研究 (Chinese Studies) 19.1 (June 2001): 249-75; Leung Shuk Man, "The discursive formation of the utopian imagination in new fiction, 1902- 1911," (PhD diss., SOAS, University of London, 2013). Many of the above titles' discussions on "discourse," "space," and "national communities" are informed by Michel Foucault's theory on discursive formation, Anderson Benedict's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), and Jürgen Habermas's *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1989).

[125] Liang, "Lun xiaoshuo yu qunzhi zhi guanxi 論小說與群治之關係" (On the relationship between fiction and public governance), *XXS* 1(1902): 1-8. For Gek Nai Cheng's translation of the article, see Liang Qichao, "On the Relationship between Fiction and the Government of the People," in *Modern Chinese Literary Thought: Writings on Literature, 1893-1945*, edited by Kirk Denton (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1996), 74-81.

[126] Liang, "Lun xiaoshuo yu qunzhi zhi guanxi," 2.

embraces and the new realms they experience" (所懷抱之想像，所經歷之境界) exceed the ordinary.[127] Among the many different styles of writing, Liang says that there isn't any form of expression that can be as vividly descriptive and evocative as fiction (而諸文之中，能極其妙而神其技者，莫小說曰).[128]

In the opening scene of "New China," Liang tries to create precisely a place as such. Rather than elucidating in what ways China has become different in 2062, Liang focuses on delineating the utopic future as a three-dimensional physical environment. The visual immediacy his novella conveys to the reader indicates that fiction's expressive potentials rest in making things "look" real. The power of fiction, in other words, arrives from its "ekphrasical" capacity in making pictures with words.

First discussed in Plato's *The Republic*, *Ekphrasis* refers to the literary description of a visual scene or object.[129] It is "the name of a literary genre, or at least a *topos*, that attempts to imitate in words an object of the plastic arts."[130] According to Murray Krieger, *ekphrasis* is motivated by man's desire for the natural sign, which is generally understood as "a sign that is to be taken as a visual substitute for its referent."[131] In Krieger's book, he says that a poet is often captured by his naïve wish to see the immediacy of the picture. To make his wish come true, the poet endeavors to capture physical qualities of a scene or object in visual terms. Sometimes, the

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[127] Ibid.

[128] Ibid., 3.

[129] See Plato, "Book X," *The Republic* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 335-353.

[130] See Murray Krieger, *Ekphrasis: The Illusion of the Natural Sign* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 6. Also see Roland Barthes's "The Reality Effect," in *French Literary Theory Today: A Reader*, edited by Tzvetan Todorov (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 11-7.

[131] Ibid. For Derrida, the logocentric desire refers to "the naive desire that leads us to prefer the immediacy of the picture to the mediation of the code in our search for a tangible, 'real' referent that would render the sign transparent." For more details on Derrida's discussion on "logocentrism," see "Linguistics and Grammatology," in *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 29-73.

poet's verbal description appears so real that it gives one the false impression that the words are themselves the "real" referent. *Ekphrasis*, based on Kreiger's account, is not only the description of the visual presence, but a mimetic account that animates the object. The representational transparency is capable of rendering the mediating linguistic code irrelevant.

Having identified himself as a modern journalist, Liang's attempt to make pictures with words is remotely parallel to the rise of the "visual turn" in today's print journalism.[132] In the multi-media age, television, film, and digital technologies such as the virtual reality and computer graphics present the audience the objective reality before the screen. To compete with these visual and digital media, the prose writing in the print media, as Jay David Bolter notes, seems determined to "emulate computer graphics."[133] Instead of using semantic signs to convey information as discursive knowledge, the newspaper and tabloid writing is keen to exploit the expressive potential of words, imageries, and other literary devices to conjure different visual imaginations. With the written text projecting vivid visual imaginations, the popular prose tries to achieve the task of having the reader "pass through the sign to the thing represented by it."[134]

In *New Fiction*, it appears that Liang was trying to create comparable effects by utilizing the expressive potential of fiction. His decision to depict the political modern in fictional terms is somewhat different from interpreting modern political concepts from the perspective of a new historian. In 1902, as mentioned in the first chapter, Liang appointed himself the dual roles of an "objective modern journalist" and a "subjective new historian." The dual roles had enabled him to present an identical modern political concept from two conflicting if not contradictory perspectives. However different the objective journalist's and the subjective historian's views

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[132] See Jay David Bolter, "Ekphrasis, Virtual Reality, and the Future of Writing," in *The Future of The Book*, edited by Geoffrey Nunberg (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 253-72.

[133] Ibid., 269.

[134] Ibid., 265.

might be, inconsistencies between these accounts are only matters of “perspectival differences.” But in *New Fiction*, what Liang tries to do is to transform the conceptual into the physical. Rather than providing different interpretative perspectives for a conceptual idea, Liang intends to make the concept look “animated” and “real.” His fictional animation of the conceptual, in this sense, is comparable to the creation of virtual reality in today’s digital technology. Both begin with the all too familiar object. But after the (digital) remaking, the one-dimensional becomes the three dimensional.

In “Fiction and Public Governance,” Liang declares that “the reformation of the government of people must begin with a revolution in fiction, and the renovation of the people must begin with the renovation of fiction 欲改良群治，必自小說界革命始，欲新民必自新小說始.[135] By making fiction the most indispensable tool in completing the task of renewing the people and enlightening them with the modern political knowledge, Liang indicates that fiction is capable of performing a task that cannot be easily accomplished by linguistic discursion.

“New China” is a story that talks about two men, Huang Keqiang 黃克強 and Li Qubing 李去病, debating whether a reform or a revolution would be the most appropriate solution for China’s political predicament. Later on, Huang’s reformist proposal eventually leads to the great prosperity China enjoys in 2062. Through playing with the expressive potential of fiction and the picture-making capacity of words, Liang turns the discursive given into a series of *lived* fictional events in a novel realm of being he created in “New China.” The novella, in other

[135] Liang, “Lun xiaoshuo yu qunzhi zhi guanxi,” 8. The passage is translated by Gek Nai Cheng. See her “On the Relationship between Fiction and the Government of the People,” in *Modern Chinese Literary Thought*, 81.

words, has translated the two modern political concepts, "reform" and "revolution," into fictional terms.[136]

Liang's fictional translation of the conceptual can perhaps be understood as a form of "remediation," which, according to Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, is the rendition of an identical body of knowledge through a new means of representation.[137] "New China" is the first piece of "new" fiction in China. In addition to its innovative narrative content, what differentiates it from previous fictional endeavors in the Chinese literary history is that the story has rendered some conceptual ideas in a novel representational paradigm. By remediating the conceptual into the vivid visual and audio presence, "new" fiction unfolds what Jill Bennett calls "an intermedial space through which new ways of seeing can emerge."[138] And the new means of representation, in Anne Friedberg's words, often constitutes the frame of a window.[139] Apart from presenting a spectator/ viewer/ user different views of the same image, the limits and multiplicities of the frame of vision are what determine the boundaries and multiplicities of our world.[140]

"New China" was published in the inaugural issue of *New Fiction*, a bi-weekly journal Liang launched in Yokohama 横濱, Japan on 1 October, the 28th year of Emperor Guangxu's reign (1902). Following the much influential *New Citizen Journal* Liang launched ten months ago, this is the second journal he issued on the same year. Through the promotion of the new

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[136] In Theodore Hughes's studies, he also discusses how Korean intellectuals endeavored to create new knowledge through translating conceptual ideas into visual terms during some radical historical transitions. See *Literature and Film in Cold War South Korea Freedom's Frontier* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 1-17.

[137] See Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1999).

[138] Jill Bennett, "Aesthetics of Intermediality," *Art History*, 30.3 (June 2007): 436.

[139] See Anne Friedberg's "Introduction" to *The Virtual Window: From Alberti to Microsoft* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2006), pp. 1-25.

[140] Ibid, 6.

fiction, Liang emphasizes that presenting modern political knowledge in a fictional framework is crucial for renewing the people and reforming the government. While it has been widely assumed that the launch of *New Fiction* is intended to facilitate the circulation of modern political knowledge and "renew the people" (*xinmin* 新民), my chapter focuses on exploring various representational means Liang relied on to invent and circulate modern political knowledge, and how the multiplicity of these means had served the paradoxical purpose of questioning and subverting the modern political knowledge they had created at the first place.

In the chapter, I will begin by addressing some fundamental concerns: first, why was Liang determined to convert modern political languages into a vernacular system of visuality and physicality in 1902? And why can one only renew the people by remediating the readily available modern political concepts into fictional terms? In Krieger's *Ekphrasis* he says that a material object can appear so "real" in a poet's description and the representational transparency often renders the mediating linguistic code irrelevant. Liang strongly emphasizes that fiction can represent the truth more faithfully than discursive language in writings he published in 1902. Coming to the second part of the chapter, I question whether Liang's *ekphrasical* fictional description would ran the risk of undermining the representative power of recently translated modern political languages, and perhaps exposing the vulnerability of the discourse as a whole. The third part of the chapter goes on to explore new perceptual imaginations Liang's fictional presentation has conjured for the familiar discursive modern political knowledge. New representation frameworks, as Jill Bennet and Ann Friedberg suggest, often unleash new ways of seeing. Apart from studying in what ways these modern political concepts' fictional imaginations are different from their denoted semantic content, I question whether Liang's

decision to communicate modern political concepts as virtual fictional reality had anticipated an epistemic shift in late Qing China.

Philosophy as Learning of Words; Religion as Spiritual Truth

In "Fiction and Public Governance," Liang says that fiction is capable of transforming the reader and the society through four affective means, which are *xun* 薰 (thurification), *jin* 浸 (immersion), *ci* 刺 (stimulation), and *ti* 提 (lifting).[141] Of Buddhist origins, these terms refer to the various ways of bringing the reader new perceptual awareness without having to rely on the discursive content of language.[142] While the cultural origins and operating mechanism of "thurification,"

[141] The translation of these four terms is based on Gek Nai Cheng's rendition of "On the Relationship." David Wang translates these terms as "diffusing" (*xun*); "permeating" (*qin*); "piercing" (*ci*); "elevating" (*ti*), and Zhonqi cai "to perfume or influence," "to soak," "to prod" and to "lift." The reason for choosing Cheng's translation is that she is exceptionally sensitive to note that Liang's uses of these terms are under the heavy influence of Buddhism. For Wang's translation, see "Chinese Literature from 1841-1937," in *The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, edited by Kang-i Sun Chang and Stephen Owen (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 443. For Zongqi Cai's translation, see Zongqi Cai, "The rethinking of emotion: the transformation of traditional literary criticism in the late Qing era," *Monumenta Serica* 45 (1997): 81. Rather than focusing on these terms' Buddhist origins, C.T. Hsia provides a highly imaginative and vivid interpretation for their connotative meanings. Hsia says that "by 1902 he (Liang) has somewhat refined his understanding of fiction so that he is able to illustrate its power with four metaphors: fiction spreads a cloud of smoke or incense (*hsün*) around the reader so that his senses and power of judgment are conditioned by his reading; it immerses (*chin*) him in the situations and problems depicted in its pages so that even for days or weeks after the reading he is still seized by sorrow or anger or other appropriate emotion; it pricks (*tz'u*) him into an unusual state of excitement over scenes depicted with great power; lastly, it lifts (*t'i*) him to the level of the hero and motivates him to imitate him. See *C.T. Hsia on Chinese Literature*, 233-4. Unlike scholars who try to explain how these Buddhist terms characterize the ways the novel affects the individual mind, David Wang believes that their importance rest in emphasizing man's capacity in experiencing and generating intense emotions. Wang's words read: 這是在討論梁啟超的小說學時，最常提到的四字真言：薰、浸、刺、提。它的重要意義，在於強調情感本身所產生的強烈的、動人心魄的力量. See Wang Dewei 王德威, *Xian dangdai wenxue xinlun: yili, lunli, dili* 現當代文學新論: 義理・倫理・地理 (New perspectives on modern and contemporary literature: morality, ethics, and geography) (Beijing: shenghuo dushu, xinzhi sanlian shudian, 2014), 61. In the entry Wang contributes earlier to *The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, he interprets these four terms as "methods that can disturb one's emotional equilibrium and thus lead one to a changed apprehension of the world." See Wang's "Chinese Literature from 1841-1937," 443.

[142] For brief discussions on the relationship between the Buddhist theory of cognition and the faith Liang invested in fiction's emotive power and "motivational function," see Theodore Huters, *Bringing the World Home*, 113-6; Chang Hao, *Liang Ch'i-Ch'ao*, 232-7; Milena Dolezelova-Velingerova's introduction to *The Chinese Novel at the Turn of the Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 3-17; Marian Galikm "On the Influence of Foreign Ideas on Chinese Literary Criticism (1898-1904), *Asian and African Studies* (Bratislava) 2 (1966): 38-48;

"immersion," "stimulation," and "lifting" have been elaborately discussed, we have yet carefully examined the intricate connection between these four modes of communication mechanism and the role new fiction plays in renewing the people.[143]

For literary historians, it is generally assumed that Liang advocated new fiction for the sake of achieving certain political purposes instead of reforming fiction or Chinese literature per se.[144] Fiction, in other words, is only a means through which to realize Liang's latest political

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Mori Noriko, "Liang Qichao, Late Qing Buddhism, and Modern Japan," in *The Role of Japan in Liang Qichao's Introduction of Modern Western Civilization to China*, 223-246. For the general influence of Buddhism on Liang's reformism, see Chan Sin-wai, *Buddhism in Late Ch'ing Political Thought* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1985), 40-3.

[143] See Theodore Huters' discussion on "The New Novel," in *Bringing the World Home*, 112-20. Also see Chang Hao's *Liang Ch'i-ich'ao*, 232-7.

[144] Scholars tend to believe that Liang advocated new fiction for two chief purposes. One is to propagate his reformist proposals and the other to make fiction a didactic tool serving the pragmatic purpose of educating the general public. For Liang's theory on the new fiction and the social, political, and educational roles Liang assigned to this particular genre of writing, and see David Wang, "Chinese Literature from 1841-1937," 440-9; Lawrence Wang-chi Wong, "'The Sole Purpose is to Express My Political Views': Liang Qichao and the Translation and Writing of Political Novels in the Late Qing," in *Translation and Creation Readings of Western Literature in Early Modern China, 1840-1918*, edited by David Pollard (Amsterdam: J. Benjamins, 1998), 105-26; Lee Leo and Andrew Nathan, "The Beginnings of Mass Culture," in *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China*, edited by David Johnson, Andrew J. Nathan, and Evelyn S. Rawski (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 360-95; C.T. Hsia, "Yen Fu and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao," 223-46; Alexander Des Forges, "The Uses of Fiction: Liang Qichao and His Contemporaries," in *Modern Chinese Literary Thought: Writings on Literature, 1893-1945*, edited by Kirk Denton (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1996), 340-7; Hu Ying, "Late Qing Fiction," in *Modern Chinese Literary Thought*, 348-54; Helmut Martin, "A Transitional Concept of Chinese literature 1897-1917: Liang Ch'i-chao on Poetry Reform, Historical Drama and the Political Novel," *Oriens Extremus* 20 (1973): 175-217; Huang Jinzhu 黃錦珠, *Wan Qing shi qi xiao shuo guan nian zhi zhuan bian* 晚清時期小說觀念之轉變 (Transformation in the concept of fiction during the late Qing period) (Taibei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1995); Chen Pingyuan 陳平原, *Zhongguo xian dai xiao shuo de qi dian: Qing mo Min chu xiao shuo yan jiu* 中國現代小說的起點：清末民初小說研究 (Origins of modern Chinese fiction: a study of late Qing and early republican fiction) (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2005), 1-23; Xia Xiaohong, *Chuanshi yu jueshi*, 149-64; Lin Mingde 林明德, "梁啟超與新小說 Liang Qichao yu xin xiaoshuo" (Liang Qichao and new fiction), in *Minzu gu jia lunshu--cong Wanqing, wusi dao riju shidai Taiwan xin wenxue* 民族國家論述 : 從晚清, 五四到日據時代臺灣新文學 (Narratives on nation-state: New Taiwan literature from late Qing, may fourth, to the Japanese occupation), edited by Hu Xiaozhen 胡曉眞(Taibei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan Zhongguo wenzhe yanjiusuo choubeichu, 1995), 69-85; Yuan Jin 袁進, *Zhongguo wenxue guannian de jindai biange* 中國文學觀念的近代變革 (Chinese literary concepts' modern transformations) (Shanghai: Shanghai she hui ke xue yuan chu ban she, 1996); Chen Junqi 陳俊啟. "Conggu Liang Qichao xiaoshuo guan ji qi zai xiaoshuo shi shang de yiyi 重估梁啟超小說觀及其在小說史上的意義" (A reassessment of Liang Qichao's theory on fiction and its significance in the history of Chinese fiction), in *Hanxue yanjiu* 漢學研究 (Chinese Studies) 20. 1 (2002): 309-38. QiuWeixuan 邱煒萲, "Xiaoshuo yu minzhi guanxi 小說與民智關係" (Relationship between fiction and people's intelligence), in *Ershi shiji Zhongguo xiaoshuo lilun ziliao: Diyi juan* (*yiba jiuqi yijiu yiliu)* 二十世纪中

goals. Before we can safely decide what new fiction means to Liang, I believe it is more important to clarify some less examined political views the late Qing intellectual expressed toward the end of 1902. Because it is only through a firm grasp of Liang's latest political thinking can we properly understand what the new fiction has to do *with* the modern political knowledge, and what exactly fiction had done *to* it. In the following discussion, I will contextualize Liang "Fiction and Public Governance" in the two articles he published on Buddhism during the same period of time.

On the day "Fiction and Public Governance" was issued on *New Fiction*, Liang published an article titled "The Strength and Shortcoming of the Religious Thinker and the Philosopher" (宗教與哲學家之長短得失) on *New Citizen Journal*.[145] In this article, Liang divides religion and philosophy into two antagonist categories by asserting that "the religious teaching and the philosophical teaching are often contradictory to each other (宗教家言與哲學家言往往相反對

國小說理論資料: (第一卷 一八九七—一九一六), edited by Chen Pingyuan and Xia Xiaohong (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1989), 30-1. While most studies focus on Liang's didactic purposes, Ban Wang suggests that the political function Liang assigned fiction with has enriched this literary genre's expressive potential by incorporating "political aesthetics" to it. For more details, see Ban Wang, "Geopolitics," 2-18. Most of the above studies have addressed the ways in which Liang's theory of fiction were inspired by Japanese intellectuals and reformist fiction published during the Meiji Restoration. For studies that focus on exploring influences Liang received from Meiji Japan, see Hiroko Willcock, "Japanese Modernization and the Emergence of New Fiction in Early Twentieth Century China: A Study of Liang Qichao," *Modern Asian Studies* 27. 4 (1995): 817-40; Keiko Kockum, *Japanese Achievement, Chinese Aspiration: A Study of the Japanese Influence on the Modernisation of the Late Qing Novel* (Löberöd: Plus Ultra, 1990); Saitō Mareshi 齋藤希史, "Jindai wenxue guannian xingcheng qi de Liang Qichao 近代文學觀念形成期的梁啟超" (Liang Qichao in the formation period of modern literary views), in *Liang Qichao, Mingzhi Riben, xi fang: Riben Jingdu da xue ren wen ke xue yan jiu suo gong tong yan jiu bao gao* 梁啟超・明治日本・西方: 日本京都大學人文科學研究所共同研究報告(Liang Qichao, Meiji Japan, and the west: collaborative research reports from Institute for Research in Humanities, Kyoto University), edited by Hazama Naoki 狭間直樹 (Beijing: She hui ke xue wen xian chu ban she, 2001), 244-288. (The article was published originally as 近代文学観念形成期における梁啓超, *Kyōdō kenkyū Ryō Keichō: Seiyō kindai shisō juyō to Meiji Nihon* 共同研究梁啓超 : 西洋近代思想受容と明治日本 (Collaborative research on Liang Qichao: the reception of modern Western thought and Meiji Japan), (Tōkyō: Misuzu Shobō, 1999), 296-330.

[145] Liang Qichao, "Zongjiao yu zhexue zhi changduan deshi 宗教與哲學家之長短得失" (The strengths and shortcomings of religious thinkers and philosophers)," in *XMCB* 19 (1902): 59-68.

者也).[146] He says that while the philosopher outshines the religious thinker in terrain of metaphysical discussion, the former is not comparable to the latter when it comes to addressing practical state affairs (雖然言窮理則宗教不如哲學家，言治事則哲學家不如宗教家)."[147] Based on this assumption, Liang asserts that if China is to be fully modernized, it would be more fruitful to familiarize oneself with particular religious practices than pursuing the philosophical knowledge of the political modern. Having compared China's present political situation to that of Meiji Japan, Liang says that "as for what is the best remedy for reforming a country, it is the religious thinking (論革新國是者，宗教思想為之也)"[148] After carefully elaborating in what ways "religions" such as Buddhism and the Mind School of Neo-Confucianism are superior to the "learning" of Western political theories, Liang re-emphasizes his support for Buddhism in an article titled "On the Relationship between Buddhism and Public Governance" (論佛教與群治之關係).[149]

In "The Religious Thinker and the Philosopher," Liang has carefully fine-tuned his definitions on religion and philosophy. The intellectual begins by dividing philosophy (*zhexue* 哲學) into two schools. One is the "school of object" (*weiwu pai* 唯物派) and the other "the

[146] See Liang, "Zongjiao yu zhexue zhi changduan deshi," 59. Marianne Bastid-Bruguière conducts a meticulous study on Liang's use of the word "zongjiao 宗教" (religion). She believes that before Liang went on political exile in Japan, he used to refer "zongjia" loosely to a number of general concepts such as "teaching," "thinking," or "idea." But under the influence of the Japanese intellectual world, Liang, from 1901 onward, started to define the word straightly as the Western concept "religion," the faith one invests in the divine power or the transcendental. At the same time, Liang's familiarity with "religion" also helped to clarify his definition on "zhexue 哲學" (philosophy). See Marianne Bastid-Bruguière, "Liang Qichao yu zongjiao wenji 梁啓超與宗教問題" (Liang Qichao and the question of Religion), *Toho Gakuho* 東方學報 (Journal of Oriental Studies, Kyoto) 70 (1998): 329-373.

[147] Ibid., 59.

[148] Ibid., 60.

[149] See "Lun fojiao yu qunzhi zhi guanxi 論佛教與群治之關係" (On the Relationship between Buddhism and Public Governance," in *XMCB* 23 (1902):45-55.

school of mind" (*weixin pai* 唯心派).[150] Liang says that since the school of mind focuses on the cultivation of spiritual understanding, it is more of a religious practice than a philosophical school. After narrowing philosophy to the study of objects, Liang further divides the discipline into "scholarly knowledge" (*xuewen* 學問), "academic study" (*xueshu* 學術), "theoretical thinking" (*xueshuo* 學說), and "the theory of science" (*gezhi xueshi* 格致學理).[151] Of these four classifying categories, they all share the suffix "*xue* 學," which can be translated as the "learning (of)." The term often refers to the acquisition of knowledge based on the careful investigation of the text or language. After mentioning these four types of philosophical learning, Liang soon adds *xinxue* 新學 (new learning, or the learning of the West) to the list. He argues that while philosophy is inferior to religion, new learning, compared with other four types of philosophical enquiries, is the most inferior of all. The late Qing intellectual says:

> "In recent times, for those so-called outstanding figures who have been busy showing off the one or two terminologies they picked up from new learning, they have abandoned all the moral traditions we have inherited from the past and said that these traditions are of little significance. And as for the new/ Western moral thoughts conceived by recent philosophers, they have failed to comprehend even the most minor aspects.
>
> 今世所謂識時俊傑者, 口中摭拾一二新學名詞, 遂吐棄古來相傳一切道德，謂為不足輕重。而於近哲所謂新道德者，亦未嘗窺見其一指趾。"[152]

While Liang classifies new learning as philosophy, in this statement, he says that the fashionable young people busy pursuing the new learning are completely ignorant of the traditional as well as recent philosophical development. The so-called "new learning" they have familiarized

[150] Liang, "Zongjiao yu zhexue zhi changduan deshi," 61.

[151] For the keywords Liang uses to describe philosophy in "Zongjiao yu zhexue zhi changduan deshi," scholarly knowledge (*xuewen*) appears on page 61, academic study (*xueshu*) on page 66, and theoretical thinking (*xueshuo*) and the theory of science (*gezhi xueshi*) page 64.

[152] Liang, "Zongjiao yu zhexue zhi changduan deshi," 64.

themselves with refers merely to “new lexicons” that are associated with the new learning” (*xinxue mingci* 新學名詞).[153]

To show that people have taken translated modern concepts as superficial “words” rather than the substantial knowledge that the words are supposed to represent, Liang gives a few examples exemplifying how the thinking of Adam Smith (1723-90), Charles Darwin (1809-82), John Locke (1632-1704), Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), and Otto von Bismarck (1815- 98) had been taken verbatim in late Qing China.[154] According to Liang, the term “原富” (*yuanfu*, original wealth) arrives from Yan Fu’s translation of *The Wealth of Nations* (1776).[155] Since people tend to interpret *yuanfu* in a literal sense, the term has been interpreted generally as the accumulation of private riches instead of the creation of public wealth.[156] The translation of Darwin’s evolutionary theory as *wujing zhi lun* 物競之論 (theory on the competition between species) shares the same fate. Rather than reminding people of the importance of community formation in the context of international competition, the translation’s literal meanings have prompted people to interpret Darwin’s theory as competition within one’s community.[157] Locke’s and Kant’s theory on *yiyu ziyou* 意欲自由 (freedom of will), furthermore, encourages people to justify their collective lascivious indulgence as a right bestowed by God.[158] By giving these examples, Liang shows that “studying” the new learning as “words” implies segregating signifiers from the system of knowledge they are meant to signify. The “segregated signifiers”

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[153] Ibid.

[154] Ibid.

[155] For Benjamin Schwartz’s landmark studies on Yan Fu’s translation of Adam Smith, see *In Search of Wealth and Power: Yen Fu and the West Benjamin Schwartz* (Cambridge :: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1964).

[156] Liang, “Zongjiao yu zhexue zhi changduan deshi,” 64.

[157] Ibid.

[158] Ibid.

open the leeway of literal interpretations. After from distorting the meaning of the foreign knowledge, they run the risk of distancing the late Qing reader from the political modern.

During the late Qing period, different schools of Western political, philosophical, and scientific knowledge had been translated to China.[159] Following the arrival of Buddhism from India during the Tang dynasty (618-907), the late Qing translation project marks the second largest cultural importation in Chinese history. While it is conveniently assumed that the importation of new words and new languages implies the arrival of the new knowledge, Liang subtly re-translates the significance of this monumental translation project. In the above statement, Liang turns the "Western theoretical learning" (*siguo xueshuo* 西國學說) into new learning and further reduces the new learning to lexicons that have been detached from the substantial knowledge they are meant to represent.[160] The late Qing intellectual, in other words, has rendered these recent translations into "words" that have lost their meanings. Liang's conception of words as sheer material objects devoid of signifying power, metaphorically speaking, echoes the contemporary artist Xu Bing's 徐冰 calligraphy. In Xu's artistic invention, words are often character-looking objects projecting false promises of meaning.[161] Liang's decision to simplify philosophy (*zhexue*) as *xue*, moreover, indicates that his definition of this

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[159] For studies on the importation of foreign social, scientific, and medical knowledge to late Qing China, some important references include: Benjamin A Elman, *On Their Own Terms Science in China, 1550-1900* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2005); David Wright, *Translating Science: The Transmission of Western Chemistry into Late Imperial China, 1840-1900* (Leiden: Brill, 2000); Michael Lackner and Natasha Vittinghoff, *Mapping Meanings. The Field of New Learning in Late Qing China* (Leiden: Brill, 2004); Michael Lackner, Iwo Amelung, and Joachim Kurtz, *New Terms for New Ideas: Western Knowledge and Lexical Change in Late Imperial China* (Leiden: Brill, 2001); XiongYuezhi 熊月之, *Xixue dongjian yu wanqing shehui* 西學東漸與晚清社會(The dissemination of western learning and the Late Qing Society) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1994); Chan Man Sing 陳萬成, *Zhongwai wenhua jiaoliu tanyi: xingxue, yixue, qita* 中外文化交流探繹：星學 · 醫學 · 其他 (Exploration of east west cultural exchanges: Astrology, medicine, and others) (Beijing Shi: Zhonghua shuju, 2010).

[160] Liang, "Zongjiao yu zhexue zhi changduan deshi," 64.

[161] For Wu Hung's insightful discussion on Xu Bing's "fake characters," see "A Ghost Rebellion: Notes on Xu Bing's 'Nonsense Writing' and Other Works," *Public Culture* 6 (1994): 411-8.

term differs radically from its conventional sense. Rather than rational investigation of the principles of being, Liang is referring specifically to investigations based on the study of *words* or on a text-based approach.

After drawing equivalence between philosophy and the study of words, Liang goes on to compare philosophical teaching to the "study of the name" (*mingxue* 名學) and the "study of the mathematics" (*suanxue* 算學).[162] As Liang denounces people's tendency to interpret translated political knowledge in a literal sense, the "religious" practices he promotes emphasize precisely the disposal of words. Liang, as mentioned earlier, believes that adopting religious belief is more beneficial to China's political development than learning about the modern concepts as bookish words. For Liang, the key difference between philosophy and religion is that the former focuses on the formal (*youxing* 有形) knowledge and the latter is invested in the formless (*wuxing* 無形) truth.[163] To heighten such contrast in a concrete fashion, Liang compares the formal knowledge prescribed in the philosophical teaching to the physical body (*shen* 身) and the enlightened religious understanding to the heart (*xin* 心) and the soul (*linghun* 靈魂).[164]

In "The Religious Thinker and the Philosopher," Liang classifies Buddhism and the mind school (*xinxue* 心學) of Neo- Confucianism as religious practices (唯心哲學亦宗教之類也).[165] Buddhism and Neo-Confucianism evolve from two different cultural, intellectual, and historical trajectories. While Buddhism is a religious practice arrived from India, the mind school of Neo-Confucianism is an intellectual trend established successively by thinkers such as

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[162] Liang, "Zongjiao yu zhexue zhi changduan deshi," 65.

[163] Ibid., 59-68. Also see Liang, "Jiateng boshi tianze baihua 加藤博士天則百話" (Dr. Kato Hiroyuki's *Hundred Essays on the Law of Evolution*) in *XMCB* 21 (1902): 52. Liang's original words are: 羣治之開化，卻非徒持有形之物質也。而更賴無形之精神。無形有形，相需為用，而始得完全圓滿之真文明。

[164] Liang, "Zongjiao yu zhexue zhi changduan deshi," 65.

[165] Ibid., 61.

Lu Xiangshan 陸象山 (1139-1192) and Wang Yangming 王陽明 (1472-1529) during the Song (960-1279) and the Ming (1368-1644) dynasties.[166] Lu and Wang emphasize the importance of cultivating intuitive knowledge and spiritual understanding without relying heavily on the study of the text. Considering the intellectual and cultural backgrounds under which Lu's and Wang's thinking were conceived, the Mind School of Neo-Confucianism has often been regarded as a philosophical school instead of a religious practice. In Liang's article, however, he re-classifies a philosophical trend as a religion and asserts that the adoption of Lu-Wang's teaching is most favorable to China's modern political development.[167] The late Qing intellectual says:

> For the Wang Yangming school of Neo-Confucianism in China, it can also be classified as the Mind School. For people who can truly understand some of its principles, they will become strong and determined, and will become more aggressive at whether they set their minds on. The manner and practices displayed by Ming Confucian scholars should be good examples. In the recent two hundred years in our country, this school of learning has lost its popularity. Certain branches of the school have made their way to the east of the ocean. For the success of the Meiji Restoration, it has to do with the Mind School. The Mind School, fairly speaking, is the most superior form of practices among different religions.
>
> 吾國之王學，唯心派也，苟學此而得者，則其人必發強剛毅，而任事必加勇猛，觀明儒者之風節，可見也。本朝二百餘年，斯學銷沉，而其支流超渡東海。遂成日本維新之治，是心學之為用也。心學者實宗教之最上乘也。[168]

[166] For an introduction to the "mind school" of Neo-Confucianism, see Tang Chun-i's "The Development of the Concept of Moral Mind from Wang Yang-ming to Wang Chi" and Theodore de Bary's "Individualism and Humanitarianism in Late Ming Thought" in *Self and Society in Ming Thought*, edited by Theodore De Bary (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 93-118 and 145-247.

[167] For Liang's support for the Wang-Lu School of Neo-Confucianism and the school's influences on Liang's political and philosophical thinking, see Wang Hui's *Xiandai Zhongguo sixiang de xingqi (xiajuan: diyi bu)*現代中國思想的興起 (下卷: 第一部) (The rise of modern Chinese thought) (Beijing: Shenghuo, dushu, xinzhi sanlian shudian, 2004), 924-1010; Peter Zarrow, "Liang Qichao and the Citizen-State," in *After Empire: The Conceptual Transformation of the Chinese State, 1885-1924* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2012), 56-89; Philip Huang, *Liang Ch'i-Ch'ao and Modern Chinese Liberalism* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1972).

[168] Liang, "Zongjiao yu zhexue zhi changduan deshi," 61.

Coming to "New China," Liang reinforces the above argument saying that "the Lu-Wang School of learning provides the best solution to resolve today's political predicament 陸王學是今日救時第一法門."[169]

In both statements, Liang labels the Lu-Wang school of Neo-Confucianism as *xinxue* 心學 (the mind school), *wangxue* 王學 (the Wang school), and *luwang xue* 陸王學 (the Lu-Wang school). In "The Religious Thinker and the Philosopher" and "On Buddhism and Public Governance," Liang calls religion "*zongjiao* 宗教" and Buddhism "*fojiao* 佛教." The suffixes *xue* 學 and *jiao* 教 are intended to differentiate the philosophical learning from the religious practice. But in the above examples, Liang has categorized what he considers the most superior kind of religious practice as *xue*. The liberal classification indicates that the hierarchical contrast that Liang is truly concerned with is not the difference between philosophy and religion *per se*. But through turning philosophy and religion into two categorical differences, the late Qing intellectual manage to expand the categorical differences into binary oppositions between the "word and the heart," "the form and the formlessness," and "the study of discursive modern political languages and enlightened understanding of these concepts." Liang's use of the words "philosophy" and "religion," in this sense," is also metaphorical. They cannot be taken in a literal sense.

For Liang, the enlightened understanding of modern political concepts is contradictory to the learned familiarity with modern political languages. And the study of modern political languages as "words," as his examples show, can lead to various forms of distortion and misinterpretation. To make sure people can fully internalize modern political knowledge, Liang argues that it is important to replace learning with intuitive understanding advocated by

[169] See Liang, "Xin zhongguo weilai ji," *XXS* 2 (1902):29.

Buddhism and the Mind School of Neo-Confucianism. I believe this is why the late Qing intellectual emphasizes that the true spiritual enlightenment can only be obtained by heart instead learning through words. As Liang advertised these two "religious schools," what he tried to endorse is not the "substantial content" of these schools, but the two different "modes of knowledge transmission mechanism" these schools represent.

Between Buddhism, Intuitive Knowledge, and New Fiction

Liang's aspiration to transmit modern political knowledge without relying on language as the problematic mediator is repeatedly manifested in 1902. By stating that both Buddhism and the Mind School of Neo-Confucianism emphasize on the importance of communicating the true meaning without words, Liang suggests that the knowledge transmission mechanism adopted by the so-called "religious" practices can bring the general public the enlightened understanding of the political modern. And as for how the intuitive mode of knowledge transmission can be incorporated in the current political situation, I believe Liang's solution rests in the connection he draws between Buddhism and fiction.

In "Fiction and Public Governance," Liang explains how the skillful arrangement of plots, captivating characterization, and construction of fictional background can move people without saying the explicit. By comparing the transformative power of fiction to "thurification," "immersion," "stimulation," and "lifting" as mentioned in Buddhist teaching, Liang reveals the correspondence between the fictional communication and the "religious" mode of intuitive knowledge transmission. Apart from elaborating in what ways fiction's transmission mechanisms are similar to that of Buddhism, Liang explicitly states that fiction is the most non-discursive means of communication among other styles of writing. The intellectual says:

> Zen Buddhism also resorts to the power of stimulation to lead men from their folly to sudden enlightenment. This power is more effective in speech than in writing. However, the effect of spoken word is spatially and temporally limited. Because of the inherent limitations of speech, we must turn to writing. And for writing, the vernacular is a more effective medium than the classical language and the parable is a more effective form than the serious statement. Hence, nothing possesses more power of stimulation than fiction.
>
> 禪宗之一棒一喝，皆利用此刺激力以度人者，此力之為用也。文字不如語言，然語言力所被不能久也。於是不得不乞靈於文字。在文字中，則文言不如其俗語，莊論不如其**寓言**，故具此力最大者，非**小說**末由。[170]

In this brief statement, Liang presents a contoured logic to dissociate fiction from linguistic discursion. He begins by saying that Zen Buddhism is famous for transmitting the teaching to the practitioner through the power of the hinted "simulation" (一棒一喝). The quick reference Liang makes to Zen Buddhism closely responds to a more elaborate summary he presents in "On General Transformational Trends of Chinese Academic Thoughts" (論中國學術思想變遷之大勢), an article published one month after "Fiction and Public Governance."[171] In this article, Liang introduces Zen Buddhism as follows:

> The Teaching of Zen is independent of language, whether spoken or written. It points towards discovering one's own (Buddha) nature; so that one might become a Buddha through his realization (of that nature.)
>
> 禪宗以不著語言，不立文字，直指本心，見性成佛為教義。[172]

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[170] "Lun xiaoshuo yu qunzhi zhi guanxi," in *XXS* 1 (1902):5. The translation arrives from Gek Nai's "On the Relationship between Fiction and the Government," 77.

[171] Liang, "Lun zhongguo xueshu sixiang zhi dashi 論中國學術思想變遷之大勢" (On general transformational trends of Chinese academic thoughts), in *XMCB* 21 (1902):35-50.

[172] "Ibid., 48. Liang's phrases "不立文字，直指本心，見性成佛" are the exact ones Yang Wenhui uses to summarize Zen Buddhism. See Yang Wenhui 楊文會, *Fojiao zongpai xiangzhu* 佛教宗派詳諸 (Detailed annotation on Buddhist sects), annotated by 萬鈞 (Yangzhou: Guanling shushe, 2008), 66. (The book was first published by in 1921, in Shanghai, by Yixue shuju 醫學書局).

According to Liang, doctrines of Zen Buddhism are not transmitted through languages. Since the practitioner "does not have any words written" (*bu zhu yizi* 不著一字), and "does not present any lectures or have any texts composed (*bu shuofa, bu zhushu* 不說法，不著書),"[173] the knowledge Zen Buddhists pursue is similar to the kind of "formless spiritual truth" Liang delineates in "The Religious Thinker and the Philosopher." Liang's summary indicates that he is fully aware that Zen Buddhism emphasizes the complete discard of words. But something interesting is that: by shifting the reader's attention to the difference between speech (*yuyan* 語言) and word (*wenzi* 文字), and arguing that speech is more effective in anticipating Zen Buddhist enlightenment than language, Liang skillfully justifies the use of language in Zen Buddhism. This seemingly logical but highly deceptive reasoning allows Liang to legitimize his comparison between Zen Buddhism and fiction.

Soon after that, Liang says that since speech does not have any lasting power, one has no choice but to resort to words. In the discussion that follows, he glosses over the difference between the use of language and different styles of writing. By claiming that the classical language is not as expressive as slangs, slangs are not as expressive as serious discussions, and serious discussions are not as expressive as parables, Liang subtly elevates the parable to the most metaphorical and indirect means of communication.[174] Based on the implied logic that the parable is created through the fictional fabrication, and that the fictional fabrication is only the *fabrication* of the discursive knowledge, Liang comes to declare that fiction is the most effective means in creating non-verbal stimulation.

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[173] Liang, "Lun zhongguo xueshu sixiang zhi dashi," 48.

[174] Liang, "Lun xiaoshuo yu qunzhi zhi guanxi," 5-6.

Through this contorted logic, Liang reasserts that fiction, like Zen Buddhism, can transmit the truth without relying heavily on languages. In "The Religious Thinker and the Philosopher," Liang says that "the Mind School is the most superior form of religion (心學者實宗教之最上乘者)."[175] And in "Fiction and Public Governance," which was published on the same day as "The Religious Thinker and the Philosopher," Liang declares that "fiction is the most superior form of literature (小說為文學之最上乘也).[176] Liang, in this statement, bestows fiction with the most prestigious statues it has enjoyed in the Chinese literary history.

Liang's discussions indicate that the similarity between fiction and "religious" practices such as Buddhism and Neo-Confucianism rests in their capacity in communicating the signified without having it distorted by the signifier. To describe the unrepresentable truth in fictional terms is a way to communicate the signified to the reader as the way it is. The prestige of new fiction, for this reason, arrives from its affinity with the Mid School of Neo-Confucianism, instead of its internal literary merits. In recent scholarship, it is often assumed that by renewing the fiction, Liang is referring to the reformation of the fictional content. But after contextualizing Liang promotion of fiction in his political discussions and editorials, I argue that what concerns the intellectual is not only the fictional content *per se*, but how fiction can be utilized as a means of non-discursive communication. For Liang, what matters is not "*what*" kinds of new content fiction can encompass, but "*how*" it can express the content more accurately than conceptual discursion. By utilizing the expressive potential of fiction to reproduce vivid visual, audio, and sensory effects, Liang seeks to present the modern political knowledge *as it is*. This is why Liang emphasized that the roles new fiction ought to play are

[175] Ibid.

[176] Liang, "Lun xiaoshuo yu qunzhi zhi guanxi," 3.

thurification, immersion, stimulation, and lifting. His promotion of the new fiction, in other words, is intended to implement an epistemic shift in late Qing China.

An Epistemic Shift: from Name to Nameless Fictional Truth

The editorial, short story, and translated fiction Liang contributed to the inaugural issue of *New Fiction* correspond closely to his celebration of the religious mode of intuitive communication. On the day "The Philosopher and the Religious Thinker" and "Fiction and Public Governance" were issued, Liang published a translated short story titled "Last Days of the World" (世界末日記) alongside the first chapter of "New China."[177] Liang's translation is based on *Sekai no matsujitsu* (世界の末日) a science fiction Tokutomi Roka 德富芦花 (1868-1927) translated from French to Japanese.[178]

In "Last Days of the World," we are told that a massive glacier is quickly expanding across the globe. Everything is about to be frozen by ice, and the earth is left with only two tribes of people. As people gradually die after one and another, the story carefully describes how the last surviving man, woman, and their dog spend their final moments together in the freeze.

From the destruction of geographical landscapes to the demise of men and animals, the story captures the disappearance of different material presences in most concrete terms. In Liang's translator's afterword, he tries to address two questions readers might feel naturally curious about: first, why would he want to publish a story of mass destruction in the inaugural

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[177] Liang, "Shijie mori ji 世界末日記" (Last days of the world), *XXS* 1 (1902):101-18.

[178] Tokutomi Roka's translation was serialized in *Kokumin no tomo* 國民之友 (The nation's friend) published by Minyūsha 民友社 between 1887 and 1892 in Tokyo. For the reprint of Tokutomi's translation, *see Kokumin no tomo* 国民之友 (Tokyo: Meiji Bunken, 1966-1968), vol. 119, 766-8, and vol. 120, 814-6. Tokutomi's *Sekai no matsujitsu* is a re-translation of Camille Flammarion's (1842-1925) *Omega: The Last Days of the World* (New York: Cosmopolitan Pub. Co., 1894).

issue of *New Fiction*?[179] Second, given that the new fiction is intended to bring the late Qing reader enlightened understanding of the political modern, how can translating a story as such serve such purpose?"[180]

Following the adamant protest "*buran* 不然" (No),[181] Liang justifies his decision with those words:

> Under the Bodhi tree my Buddha stood, then summoned on the Avatamsaka for the Great Bodhisattvas. Like deaf and mute all the srāvaka (the hearer; the general disciple) became. The purpose for translating this story is to speak to the bodhisattvas, not to the ordinary men or the srāvaka.
>
> 我佛從菩提樹下起，為大菩薩說華嚴，一切聲聞凡夫，如聾如啞。(謂佛入定，何以故。緣未熟故。)吾之譯此文，以語菩薩，非以語凡夫，語聲聞也。[182]

In this brief protest, Liang compares his fictional translation to the Buddhist preaching. Liang says that according to Buddhism, the Buddha (*fo* 佛) is the one who has attained enlightenment, and Bodhisattvas (*pusa* 菩薩) are enlightened beings who would not enter Nirvana until every living being arrives there. Since everything between the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas is already "known," they do not have to resort to the explicit. What has been communicated between them is completely incomprehensible to their disciples and hearers. The exchange between these enlightened beings reminds one of differences between the philosophical learning and the

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[179] Liang, "Shijie mori ji," 117. Besides attaching a translator's afterword to "Last Days of the World," Liang made a number of revisions and introduced a good deal of Buddhist elements in his (re-)translation of Tokutomi's *Sekai no matsujitsu*. For a brief comparison between Flammarion's novel, Tokutomi's free Japanese adaptation, and Liang's re-translation of Tokutomi's adaptation, see Li Yanli 李艷麗, "Qingmo kexue xiaoshuo yu shiji mo sichao: yi lianbian "shijie mori ji" wei li 清末科學小說與世紀末思潮—以兩篇《世界末日記》为例" (Late Qing science fiction and the *fin-de-siècle* intellectual trend), *Shehui kexue* 社會科學 (Journal of Social Science) 2 (2009): 157-67.

[180] Liang, "The Last Days of the World," 117.

[181] Ibid.

[182] Ibid.

intuitive religious communication. Philosophical learning, as Liang mentions in "The Religious Thinker and the Philosopher," is based on the study of discursive language, and religious teaching refers to understanding the formless spiritual truth by heart. After presenting the brief cultural background, Liang aligns his translation with Buddhist teaching. By declaring that the story is intended to communicate with the enlightened few, Liang indicates that the purpose for translating this piece of story is to communicate the unrepresentable truth.

Having aligned the fictional writing with the Buddhist teaching, Liang goes on to suggest that the fictional content is the *lived expression* of the formless truth, and that fiction can epitomize the truth more faithfully than any linguistic *expressions*. In Liang's translator's afterword, he says: "Listen, Listen, good men and good women. Everything dies, but only the imperishable being survives 諦聽，諦聽, 善男子，善女人，一切皆死，而獨有不死者存."[183] By using the Buddhist term "*diting* 諦聽" (listen), Liang asks his late Qing readers to assume the role of a Buddhist practitioner. The call "listen" again reminds one of the importance of replacing "reading" with "listening." Following that, Liang draws the reader's attention to the difference between the formal, material presence and the formless, spiritual truth. In his call, Liang uses the term the "imperishable being" (*busizhe* 不死者), which means spirit or soul in the Buddhist classics.[184] The imperishable being is a term that Liang has carefully elaborated in "The Religious Thinker and the Philosopher." In the article, he compares the physical body to philosophy, and the soul to religion. The physique (*tipo* 體魄; *shenqu* 身軀), according to Liang, is constituted by elements and minerals (*zazhi* 雜質; *qizhi* 氣質) such as iron, metal, wood,

[183] Ibid. 117-8.

[184] In "Zongjiao yu zhexue zhi changduan deshi," Liang unambiguously indicates that the imperishable being means the soul (*linghun* 靈魂). Liang says: "there rests in me an imperishable being. Its name is the soul. Since it is persistently here, death isn't something that I am fearful of. 吾自有不死者存，曰靈魂。既常有不死者存，則死吾奚畏. See Liang, "Zongjiao yu zhexue zhi changduan deshi," 65.

carbon, sugar, salt, and water.[185] After going through decades of summers and winters, the human body is bound to experience decay and death. The soul, on the other hand, is a spiritual state immune to the physical transformation. It is an "imperishable being" that can survive the destruction of "formal" material presence. And since the soul can transcend time and physical changes, it is superior to the body.

The hierarchical contrast Liang draws between the body and the soul is an extension of the contrast he draws between philosophy and religion, as well as the formal knowledge and the formless spiritual truth. For scholars who are concerned with China's cultural identity in this unprecedented historical transformation, they tend to interpret Liang's discussions on the spirit and soul as the late Qing intellectual's proposed solution to the country's immediate cultural predicament.[186] But in "The Religious Thinker and the Philosopher" at least, Liang's discussion on Buddhism is chiefly metaphorical. Rather than examining in what ways Buddhist teaching can be beneficial to China's political and cultural development, Liang is using Buddhist languages and concepts to refer to the formless truth failed to be represented by words. For Liang, the creation of the binary opposition between the "form" and the "formlessness," and the "body" and the "spirit" is a way to distinguish the difference between the "signifier" and the "signified." For this reason, the kind of transcendence Liang discusses is more of the transcendental truth failed to be represented by words than religious transcendence in a conventional sense.

Liang says in "The Religious Thinker and the Philosopher" that the formless spiritual truth can survive and transcend the formal material presence. And "Last Days of the World" is a

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[185] Ibid.

[186] Guan Kean-Fung, for instance, interprets the story from the perspective of Edward Said's "travel theory" and Max Nordau's discussion on the phenomenon on "*fin de siècle*." See Guan Kean-Fung, *Cong "shenti" dao "shijie"*, 47-9.

story that allows Liang to repeat and re-elaborate such argument in vivid fictional terms. In the Liang's translation, as the swiftly expanding glacier has frozen the earth in ice, the last surviving couple is about to die in each other's arms. After describing the devastation the young lovers see, Liang says the following:

> Among all the formal presence in the universe, everything has died. Among all kinds of appearances, everything has died. Among all the colors, everything has died; among all the sounds, everything has died.
>
> 太空萬有之形，一切既死，萬有之相，一切既死。萬有之色，一切既死，萬有之聲，一切既死。[187]

Pertaining to different forms of material presence, *xing* 形 (material form), *xiang* 象 (physical appearance), *se* 色 (visual images and color), and *sheng* 聲 (sound) are familiar Buddhist concepts. After announcing that the material forms have been completely destroyed on the earth, Liang shifts the focus from the surface of the earth to the universe. He says that as the sun's radiance is gone, one can only see the earth revolving aimlessly around a gigantic black ball.[188]

However gloomy these descriptions may appear, Liang's translation is free of pessimism. Toward the end of the story, he repeats "the imperishable being" for as many as five times. For instance, as the young couple gracefully accepts that they cannot escape the fate of death (不得不死), the young man assures the young woman saying that "the imperishable being of us will live on (我輩有不死者存)."[189] To express her agreement, the young woman repeats his assertion uttering that "the imperishable being of us will live on. And for all other mortals, their imperishable being will also live on (我輩有不死者存，一切眾生，皆有不死者存)."[190]

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[187] Liang, "Shijie mori ji," 116.

[188] Ibid, 116-7.

[189] Ibid., 115.

[190] Ibid.

Busizhe, as Liang has elaborated, refers generally to people's soul and spirit. To define the term more specifically in this particular context, Liang calls the young couple "the lovers (*xiangai zhe* 相愛者),"[191] and says that the flower of their "*love*" that will always be in full bloom (*aizhihua shang kai*「愛」之花尚開).[192] Apart from the spirit and the soul, "the imperishable being," also refers to one's feeling and wishful thinking. Above are the last words the young couple says to each other, and the story ends with them dying in each other's arms. Although the young couple has expressed their faith in obtaining spiritual eternity, Liang concludes the story saying "everything dies, but only the imperishable being survives" (一切皆死，而獨有不死者存).[193] Liang's concluding statement repeats the argument he has made in *New Fiction* and *New Citizen Journal*: the formless, spiritual truth outlives all kinds of formal presence.

"Last Days of the World":
A Belated Dialogue between Liang Qichao and Tan Sitong

Through reading "Last Days of the World" against Liang's other essays, I have highlighted the contrast the late Qing intellectual draws between "the formal learning and the formless truth," "the body and the heart," and "the physique and the soul." In writings Liang published in 1902, he frequently emphasizes how the soul can survive different forms of material destruction. There is evidence indicating that Liang's ideas and keywords are closely informed by arguments Tan Sitong presents in *Renxue* 仁學 (*An Exposition of Benevolence*).[194] Tan's manuscript was

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[191] Ibid., 116.

[192] Ibid., 117.

[193] Ibid., 117-8.

[194] Tan Sitong, *Renxue* 仁學 (An exposition of benevolence), annotated by Tang Zhijun 湯志鈞 and Tang Renze 湯仁澤 (Taibei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1998). For the book's publication background and discrepancies between different editions, see Tang Zhijun, "Renxue banben tanyuan 仁學版本探源" (An exploration of *Renxue*'s editions), in Tan's *Renxue*, 104-141.

completed between 1896 and 1897, and was published in Liang's reformist journal *China Discussion* (*Qingyi bao* 清議報) in 1899, a year after Tan was voluntarily executed for his participation in the Hundred Days' Reform.[195] "Physique 體魄" and "soul 靈魂" are two terms Tan mentions regularly in his book. To show the rhetorical and semantic resemblance between Liang's essay and *Renxue*, I have juxtaposed the two's discussions on the composition of human soul and body as follows:

> For people with religious beliefs, they know that there is no such thing as life, nor as death. By death, it is only the demise of the **aurum**, **xylem**, **amlyum**, **carbohydrate**, **phosphorum**, **hydroxide**, and various **other compounds** in the **body**. The imperishable is always with us, and its name is soul.
>
> 有宗教思想者，則知無所謂生，無所謂死。死者，死吾**體魄**中之鐵若餘**金**類，**木**類，**炭小粉糖鹽水**餘余**雜資**而已。而吾自有不死者存，曰**靈魂**。[196]
>
> (Liang, "The Philosopher and the Religious Thinker" (with emphases added))

> Those who love life and hate death may be said to labour under a serious delusion. For they are ignorant of the fact that all are by nature unborn and undestroyed…..This applies to the finer spirit of the **body**, as well as to its most crude parts such as muscles, bones, blood, and flesh. Those physicians who are also versed in chemistry know that a man is formed by the composition of certain amounts of ferrum, **aurum**, **xylem**, **phosphorum**, **carbonium**, **amlyum**, **carbohydrate**, hydrochloride, adipose, **hydroxide**, and

[195] Tan's *Renxue* was first serialized in Shanghai's *Yadong shibao* 亞東時報 (East Asia Times) in 1899 (Issues 5 (31st January, 1899) to issue 19 (28th February, 1899). Somehow, Liang had decided to republish the manuscript sporadically in *China Discussion* on the same year. *Renxue* was first serialized in *China Discussion* from issue 2 (2nd January, 1899) to issue 14 (10th May, 1899), and Liang did not publish the rest of the manuscript until the beginning of 1900 and the end of 1901. Hazama Naoki believes that Liang's peculiar arrangement is informed by his immediate political and strategic calculation. For his sensitive and insightful discussion, see Hazama Naoki 狹間直樹, "Liang Qichao bixia de Tan Sitong: guanyu renxue de kanxing yu liang zhuan "Tan Sitong zhuan 梁啟超筆下的譚嗣同—關於《仁學》的刊行與梁撰《譚嗣同傳》" (Tan Sitong in Liang Qichao's account: On the publication of *On Benevolence* and Liang's composition of the "Biography of Tan Sitong"), in *Liang Qichao yu jin dai Zhongguo she hui wen hua* 梁啟超與近代中國社會文化 (Liang Qichao and Contemporary Chinese Society and Culture), edited by Li Xisuo 李喜所 (Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe, 2005), 618-32. (The article was translated by Jiang Haibo 蔣海波, and was first published in *Wen shi zhe* 文史哲 (Journal of Literature, History, and Philosophy) vo1. 280. 1 (2004): 30-5. For a comprehensive list of bibliography on the studies of Tan Sitong, see Luke Kwong's *T'an Ssu-T'ung, 1865-1898: Life and Thought of a Reformer* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), 1-12.

[196] Liang, "Zongjiao yu zhexue zhi changduan deshi," 65.

> by various other compounds and gases, which are originally given by heaven. When a man gets old and passes away, the particles that made up his body revert to their original form and then combine with something else to form new things. Birth is actually not birth, death, not death. This is particularly true of the finer spirits of the body, whose birth and death we have no means to see.[197]
>
> 好生而惡死也，可謂大惑不解者矣！蓋於“不生不滅”瞢焉……匪直其精靈然也，即體魄之至粗，為筋骨血肉之屬，兼化學之醫學家則知凡得鐵若干，餘**金**類若干，**木**類若干，燐若干，**炭**若干，**小粉**若干，**糖**若干，**鹽**若干，油若干，**水**若干，餘**雜質**若干，氣質若干，皆用天地固有之質點粘合而成人。及其既敝而散，仍各還其質點之故，復他有所粘合而成新人新物。生固非生，滅亦非滅。又況**體魄**中之精靈，固無從睹其生滅者乎。[198]
>
> (Tan, *An Exposition of Benevolence* (with emphases added))

Both Liang and Tan mention that the human body is constituted by elements such as aurum, xylem, phosphorum, carbonium, amlyum, carbohydrate, hydrochloride, adipose, hydroxide, and various other compounds. Concerning that Liang has arranged comparable keywords in the identical sequence as Tan, there is a good possibility that his passage is a summary of Tan's words. Apart from presenting similar summaries on the makeup of the human body, Liang's description of the universe in "Last Days of the World" appears highly similar to that of Tan. Below are few quotes arriving from *Renxue*:

> We can float on and swim in water when it is in fluid form. When poured into the empty space of a sphere, water remains in an upright position even when inverted of tilted. The same air can first transmit sound and then transmit light without mixing them up. The same electrical waves can sometimes transmit heat and sometimes transmit energy without making any mistakes. We regard the void, with its countless planets and suns, which in turn also have infinite voids, as large.[199]

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[197] The passage is translated by Chan Sin-wai. See his *An Exposition of Benevolence: the "Jen-hsüeh" of T'an Ssu-t'ung* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1984), 92.

[198] Tan, *Renxue*, 25-6,

[199] Chan Sin-wai, *An Exposition of Benevolence*, 106.

若處於空地為圓體，則倒豎橫斜，皆可以立。同一空氣，忽傳聲忽傳光而不殺也；同一電浪，或傳熱或傳力而不外也。虛空有無量之星日，星日有無量之虛空，可謂大矣。[200]

The formation of the earth has gone through a myriad of changes about which we do not know…..This means that there will come a time when even this earth will break up, and the particles broken off from this earth will then be taken up by other planets to form new planets. [201]

地球之生，而不知幾千幾百變矣。……即此地球亦終有隕散之時，然地球之所隕散，他星又將用其質點以成新星矣。[202]

This is only a sun and the earth are destroyed, they will still be sun and earth; so they have no end. All this is due to the fact that ether has no beginning or end.[203]

世間一日一地球云爾，若乃日、地未生之前，必仍為日、地，無始也；日、地既滅之後，必仍為日、地，無終也；以以太固無始終也。[204]

In addition to the interest they share in depicting the universe's astronomic changes, Liang and Tan like to associate these changes with Buddhist concepts such as material form (*xing*), physical appearance (*xiang*), sound (*sheng*), and visual images and color (*se*), emptiness (*xukong* 虛空), and infinity (*wulian* 無量). In Liang's writing, he clearly acknowledges his intellectual debt to Tan.

It has been commonly agreed that the protagonist Huang Keqiang in "New China" is a fictional presence of Liang Qichao. As Dr. Kong traces Huang Keqiang's scholarly background, he says that the development of Huang's political career is chiefly inspired by two books. Of

[200] Tan, *Renxue*, 35.

[201] Chan Sin-wai, *An Exposition of Benevolence*, 90-1.

[202] Tan, *Renxue*, 25.

[203] Chan Sin-wai, *An Exposition of Benevolence*, 136.

[204] Tan, *Renxue*, 51.

one is Tan's *Renxue*.[205] According to Dr. Kong, before Huang studied at Oxford University, he accidentally ran into Tan Sitong in the headquarter of *Current Affair* (*Shiwu Bao* 時務報), a reformist journal Liang established with Wang Kangnian 汪康年 (1860-1911) in 1896.[206] At that time, Tan had recently completed *Renxue*. Huang made a hand-copy of the manuscript, and read it carefully for dozens of times as he traveled to England. Besides the passing reference Dr. Kong makes, Liang recalls his friendship with Tan in most tender terms when *Renxue* was serialized in *China Discussion* in 1899:

> I have known the martyr for only three years. But in these three years, there wasn't a time we didn't study, discuss our ideas, and work together…… In terms of our study, there is anything we didn't shared with each other, and there isn't anything that we didn't agree on. When we were in the same living quarter, we kneeled across the other over the bed, traveling backing and roaming forth, trying to solve the endless mysteries in history and the universe. In the long nights we forgot about the sleep and the food in our endless discussions. If we didn't see each other for ten days, there would a full basket of books and matters for us to talk about.
>
> 余之識烈士，雖僅三年。然此三年之中，學問言論行事，無所不與共。…… 其於學也，無所不言，無所不契，每共居，則促膝對坐一榻中，往復上下，窮天人之奧，或徹夜廢寢食，論不休。每十日不相見，則論事論學之書盈一篋。[207]

In several accounts, Liang admits that most of his thinking and intellectual assumptions are inspired by *Renxue*. The range of physical phenomenon Liang discusses and vocabularies he chooses in "Last Days of the World" confirm such claim.

Tan's philosophical framework is inspired chiefly by Zhang Zai 張載 (1020–1077), a Song Neo-Confucian moral philosopher, and Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 (1619-1692), who was active

[205] Liang, "Xin zhongguo weilai ji," *XXS* 2 (1902): 29-31.

[206] Ibid., 30.

[207] Liang Qichao, "Renxue xu 仁學序" (Preface to an exposition of benevolence), in Tan's *Renxue*, 101.

during the late Ming and the early Qing dynasties.[208] Based on the study of Zhang Zai's essay "Western Inscription" (*Ximing* 西銘), Tan developed the assumption that the earth and the universe are constituted by an all-pervading substance being known as *qi* 氣, a highly versatile element with manifold dimensions. While the congregation of *qi* gives material presence to all forms of being, it is also the moral and spiritual source of life. When an individual is born, *qi*, in Chang Hao's words, "fills the individual's body, and the moral-spiritual qualities inherent in *qi* constitutes the vital center that is connected to the controlling power of the universe: Heaven."[209] For Zhang Zai, since every individual existence "is part and parcel of the all-encompassing whole,"[210] "death means nothing more than the immersion of one particular form of existence into the primordial whole."[211]

Although both the human body and the moral spirit are constituted by *qi*, something crucial to note is that the formation of the physical entity turns a person into a "presence" that is different from the basic "substance" *qi* that the person is made of. For this reason, there are apparent differences between the individual and the nature from where he begins life. In *Renxue*, what concerns Tan is how to overcome this difference and to be reunited with the nature again. For Tan, the human heart (*renxin* 人心) is ignorant of the universe's organizing principles. But through learning and the inherent moral goodness one is born with, a person shares the spiritual capacity to obtain the "original mind" (*benxin* 本心) and the "mind of spirit" (daoxin 道心). Enlightenment arriving from the mind of spirit should bring one the awareness that the self and all the living beings in the nature are constituted by the identical substance. Apart from knowing

[208] See Chang Hao, "T'an Ssu-t'ung," in *Chinese Intellectuals in Crisis*, 21-66.

[209] Ibid., 81.

[210] Ibid.

[211] Ibid.

that the self and the nature are essentially an organic whole, such enlightenment should help one realize that the boundary one perceives between the self and the world is only a matter of perceptual difference. Under the influence of the Lu-Wang school of Neo-Confucianism, Tan believes that every individual shares the same innate moral goodness. As long as the person can activate his innate moral, spiritual capacity, he will be able to discern and dispel these perceptual boundaries. By doing so, every individual can be reunited with their innate moral goodness and become part of the organic universe.[212] For Tan, benevolence (*ren* 仁) is essentially the reunification of the universal moral goodness instead of a general moral quality as it is commonly associated with.[213]

Since Tan believes that the universe and the people belong to an organic whole constituted by an identical substance, he argues that the creation of the "name" (*ming* 名) is what gives people the false impression that the world is a matter of difference instead of uniformity. Unlike the human being and other forms of material presence constituted by *qi*, Tan says that the name does not have any concrete substance to begin with (名本無實體). It is a "categorical" difference willfully invented by people who seek to protect and consolidate their selfish interests.[214] For this reason, the categorical difference arriving from the creation of name is only a matter of constructed differences (一切對待之名，一切對待之分別).[215] But since most

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[212] Tan, *Renxue*, 37.

[213] Luke Kwong, for this reason, has translated *Renxue* as *On Universal Principles*. See *his T'an Ssu-t'ung, 1865-1898*.

[214] In *Renxue*, Tan has made a famous statement: This is why I have time and again asserted than government over the last two thousand years has been government in the style of Ch'in; all those who governed were great robbers. The teaching of the last two thousand years has been the teaching of Hsun Tzu; all those who followed it were village worthies. Only great robbers were good at taking full advantage of village worthies, and only village worthies were skilled in pleasing great robbers. 二千年來之政，秦政也，皆大盜也；二千年來之學，荀學也，皆鄉愿也。惟大盜利用鄉愿，惟鄉愿工媚大盜. See Tan, *Renxue*, 58.

[215] Ibid., 35.

people are ignorant of the cosmos' organizing principles, they perceive the "constructed" differences as "substantial" differences (學人不察，妄生分別).[216] Tan believes that the constructed difference is what anticipated the creation of the three principles and five virtues (三綱五常). Every individual, theoretically speaking, is born equal with the same innate moral goodness. As long as their moral goodness is connected, the world should become an organic moral community. But as certain individuals seek to exercise their power over the other, they start to invent moral restrictions imposed by the three principles and five virtues. A constructed discourse, as Tan goes on to argue, often anticipates the formation of the corresponding reality. These constructed social norms would drive one further and further away from the organic equalitarian moral community in which people are meant to find themselves. In order to return to the authentic organic order, Tan says that it is important to demolish the constructed difference and antagonistic opposition (破分別，破對待).

Above is a brief summary of Tan's *Renxue*, which is a complicated piece of work seeking to grapple with a number of intellectual, political, and personal issues. In his essay "Mind-heart Power and the Demolition of the Antagonistic Opposition" (心力與破對待)," Wang Fanseng 王汎森 agrees with Chang Hao that Tan was inspired by Zhang Zai's theory on *qi*.[217] Among different influences Tan received from Zhang Zai's cosmological supposition, Wang believes that Tan was particularly invested in a concept called *xinli* 心力 (the mind-heart power). Its basic assumption is that since an individual and the universe are constituted by the

[216] Ibid., 13.

[217] Wang Fansen, "Xinli yu po duidai 心力與破對待" (Mind-heart power and the demolition of the antagonistic opposition), in *Zhiniu de diyin: yixie lishi sikao fangshi de fansi* 執拗的低音: 一些歷史思考方式的反思 (The stubborn bass: reflections on historical thinking methods) (Taibei: Yunchen wenhua shiye gufen youxian gongsi, 2014), 73-108.

identical substance, they are naturally attached by a basic force. If the person can activate this force with his spiritual power, he will be able to discern that the name is only a fabricated construct. Wang believes that the faith Tan invested in the power of *xinli* was strengthened by John Fryer's translation of *Ideal Suggestion through Mental Photography*, a self-therapeutic book written by Henry Wood (1869-1944) emphasizing how one can perform self-cure by activating his own power of thought.[218] Considering *xinli* the premise of Tan's philosophical thinking, Wang argues that the late Qing intellectual was interested primarily in searching for a way to abolish "binary oppositions," "differences," and various distortions imposed by the creation of the "name," "Confucian ethics (*mingjiao* 名教)," and three principles and five virtues. According to Wang, Tan believes that it is only by doing so can China evolve into the harmonious moral society that he has envisioned. For Wang, Tan's ultimate wish is to turn China into an equalitarian society with shared moral goodness. And he believes that in later years, Tan's call on abolishing hierarchical opposition had become an importance source of inspiration for young revolutionary martyrs as well as the communist leader Mao Zedong.

Chang Hao is equally sensitive to the social and political commitment Tan expresses in *Renxue*. But at the same time, Chang questions to what extent the book can be considered political. In his English book chapter and the Chinese manuscript on Tan,[219] Chang sympathetically traces the psychological distress Tan expressed after the sudden loss of his mother and three siblings.[220] Chang's study also pays special attention to the mental torment Tan suffered from his step-mother's mistreatment. In *Renxue*, Tan frequently emphasizes that

[218] Ibid., 80-2.

[219] See Chang Hao, *Lieshi jingshen yu pipan yishi: Tan Sitong sixiang de fenxi*. 烈士精神與批評意識: 譚嗣同思想分析 (The spirit of the martyr and critical consciousness: An analysis of Tan Sitong), translated by Cui Zhihai 崔志海 and Ge Fuping 葛夫平 (Beijing: Xinxing chubanshe, 2006), 215-314.

[220] Ibid., 245-51.

following one's death, a person only returns to the substance that he was made of. People and things do not flourish or perish (不生不滅), and there is no such thing as life and death. Chang believes that such belief begins life as an intellectual conception as well as Tang's emotional solace. While Chang admits that the instrumental use of *xinli* can bring forth socio-political changes, he is convinced that the belief that the cultivation of *xinlin* can allow one to reconnect with other identical substances in the cosmos is also a thought that gave Tan the strength to hold on to life. For Chang, the truth (*zhenli* 真理) that Tan had been searching for is not the equalitarian human right being concealed by the invention of the name and other moral restriction. It is the operating principle of the universe. In Chang's study, a rhetorical question he subtly implies is: if *Renxue* is merely a book of political theory, why would Tan be willing to testify and materialize such theory with his own death?

Chang Hao's and Wang Fanshen's discussions show how *Renxue* can be interpreted from two different perspectives. In essays and fictional writings Liang published toward the end of 1902, he inherits a number of keywords from Tan. And yet, what concerns Liang is neither the political nor emotional dimension of Tan's writing. In *Renxue*, Tan often phrases his argument in terms such as "physique," "soul," and "material object," which are expressions he picked up from biblical writing the missionary John Fryer (ca. 1861-1921) introduced him to.[221] Despite the words Tan chose, Chang Hao points out that he was only relying on the fashionable Christian terms "*shenqu*" (physique 身軀) and "*linghun*" (soul 靈魂) to differentiate the *renxin* (human mind) from the *benxin* (the original mind), or *daoxin* (the mind of spirit)."[222] According to Tan,

[221] See Richard H. Shek, "Some Western Influences of T'an Ssu-t'ung's Thought," in *Reform in Nineteenth Century China*, edited by Paul A. Cohen and John E. Schrecker (Cambridge, Mass.: East Asian Research Center, Harvard University, 1976), 194-203.

[222] Chang Hao, *Intellectual in Crisis*, 26.

one can always elevate his “human mind” to the “mind of spirit” through learning and self-cultivation. But since a person is constituted by *qi* as an identical substance, the enlightenment does not transform his basic makeup. For this reason, both the “physique” and the “soul” are parts of a larger organic whole, and none of them will ever perish. And with his recent familiarity with Western science, Tan came to compare the traveling and conversion of these identical elements to the movement of ether (*yitai* 以太).

But as we have learnt earlier, in Laing’s writing he frequently compares “the soul” to “the imperishable.” Liang strongly emphasizes that compared with perishable presences such as the human body and other physical forms, the soul is the only thing that can survive the material destruction. As Liang says in his translator’s afterword to “Last Days of the World,” “everything dies, but only the imperishable being survives (一切皆死，而獨有不死者存).”[223] While Tan argues that all substances are equal, Liang reduces Tan’s complex philosophical thinking to the simple binary opposition between the “imperishable soul” and the “perishable material presence.” And after performing a simplification as such, Liang goes on to extend the hierarchical contrast to binary differences between the “formless truth” and “formal languages” in other essays that we have discussed.

From Complete Destruction to the Futuristic

In articles Liang published in *New Fiction* and *New Citizen Journal* on 1 October, 1902, he argues the formless spiritual truth can transcend the formal material presence. And in “The Future of New China,” the futuristic realm Liang presents is precisely a fictional territory that transcends the temporal and material physicality of the objective present.

[223] Liang, “Shijie moriji,” 117-8.

In “New China,” Liang begins by saying that the story exemplifies what China will look like in year 2513 of the Confucian Calendar.[224] Since the futuristic China he envisages is 60 years away from the year on which the narrative takes place, Liang inserts an inter-textual annotation indicating that the current narrative happens in the year 2453. Following that, Liang says that year 2513 is equivalent to the year 2062 of the liturgical Calendar, and the narrative the late Qing reader was reading is composed on 2002. In the opening paragraph of the story, Liang exaggerates the temporal distance between the immediate present and the futuristic realm by converting the liturgical calendar to the Confucian calendar, citing remote numbers such as 2513 and 2453, and juxtaposing the Confucian calendar years (2513 and 2453) with the futuristic liturgical Calendar years (2062 and 2002). These closely intertwined but confusing numbers create an alienating effect. They convey the impression that the story is set in a remote if not unreachable future. [225]

After situating his story in an alienating future, Liang introduces Dr. Kong, whose lecture is about to take place in year 2062 of the liturgical calendar. Titled “Chinese History in Past

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[224] Liang, “Xin zhongguo wailai ji,” *XXS* 1 (1902): 53. Shao Chaoyong argues that Liang juxtaposes the Confucian calendar with the liturgical calendar to express his subjective wish of aligning China temporally with the modern international community. See Wei Chaoyong 魏朝勇, *Minguo shi qi wen xue de zheng zhi xiang xiang* 民國時期文學的政治想像 *(Political imaginations in literature published in Republican China)* (Beijing Shi: Huaxia chu ban she, 2006), 6. Mei Chia-ling expresses a similar view in her close reading of “The Future of New China.” See “Discovering Youth,” 266-8.

[225] Instead of considering the temporal arrangement a rhetorical strategy Liang employed to create an alienating effect, David Wang argues that “The Future of New China” presents the reader “a mythical moment that transcends time” (305). Focusing on the absence of the progressive narrative and *historical* time in this novella, Wang sees “the unfinished project as symptomatic of Liang’s inabilities to come to terms with a new temporal paradigm.” For more details, see *Fin-De-Siècle Splendor: Repressed Modernities of Late Qing Fiction, 1849-1911* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1997), 302-6. Wang reiterates this argument in his most recent discussion on “The Future of New China.” For more details, see “Wutuobang, wutuobang, yituobang” Cong Lu Xun dao Liu Cixin 烏托邦、惡托邦、異托邦：從魯迅到劉慈欣” (Utopia, dystopia, heterotopias: From Lu Xun to Liu Cixin), in Wang’s *Xian dangdai wenxue xinlun*, 285. Wang’s conclusion closely echoes an observation C.T. Hsia made in 1978. In his discussion on “The Future of New China,” Hsia says that “Liang cannot predict the immediate future and recite the as-yet-unknown careers of the two representative leaders of the new China. He could, of course, fabricate, but fabrication would forfeit the note of urgency so ably maintained in the earlier debate. The gulf between the known present and the utopian future is impassable for Liang or any other novelist.” See C.T. Hsia on *Chinese Literature*, 244.

Sixty Years Recent 中國近六十年史," Dr. Kong's lecture, mathematically speaking, is supposed to cover historical events happening between the immediate present (2062) and what had happened 60 years ago (2002). And yet, as Dr. Kong arrives on the stage, he announces to the audience that his lecture begins with historical events that had taken place since the 28th year of Emperor Guangxu's reign (就從光緒二十八年壬寅講起)."[226] That is year 1902, the year on which "The Future of New China" was published. After mentioning the year 1902, Dr. Kong adds that "(this lecture) concludes with (the history of) of the present year *renyin* 壬寅. Isn't that sixty year in full? 講到今年壬寅，可不是剛足六十年嗎.[227] Dr. Kong statement affirms that 1902 is not a random number, but the year on which his lecture begins. If Dr. Kong's sixty years of recent Chinese history begins from 1902, his lecture should have taken place in 1962 instead of 2062 as Liang has mentioned earlier.

As David Wang and other literary critics have noted, the year on which the futuristic story is staged alters between 1962 and 2062.[228] Whether Dr. Kong's lecture takes place in 1962 or 2062 has been a question. In order to answer this question, I think we need to pay attention to a minor detail that has often been overlooked.

At the very beginning of "New China," Liang states that Dr. Kong's futuristic lecture takes place in 2062.[229] In this general time span, Liang inserts a brief remark saying that 2062 means the year *renyin* in the lunar calendar (歲次壬寅). And as Dr. Kong mentions immediately in his lecture, 1902 is also the year of *renyin*. In the lunar calendar, the year *renyin* occurs every sixty year (in the sequence of 1902, 1962, 2022, and 2082). 2062, in this case, cannot be a

[226] Liang, "Xin zhongguo wailia ji," *XXS* 1 (1902): 55.

[227] Ibid.

[228] See David Wang, "Wutuobang, wutuobang, yituobang," in *Xian dangdai wenxue xinlun*, 284-5.

[229] Liang, "Xin zhongguo wailia ji," *XXS* 1 (1902): 53.

renyin year as Liang declares.[230] In "New China," Liang situates his story in the remote 2062. And at the same time, he decides to associate the future with *renyin*, a year that reminds the late Qing reader of the immediate present (1902). Some literary critics believe that 2062 is a careless mistake.[231] But here, what we need to note is that at the beginning of the story, Liang makes an apparent effort to ensure the consistency of the numbers he presented. He has, for instance, converted 2062 to the Confucian calendar 2513, explained to the reader that 60 years before 2062 is 2002, and gone through the step of converting 2002 to the Confucian calendar 2453.[232] If 2062 is a mistake, it seems unlikely that an individual as precocious as Liang would have failed to discover the mistake in the processes of repeated conversion and calculation. The year *renyin* can refer to both 1902 and 1962. But instead of making any clarification, in the rest of "New China," Liang relies solely on lunar calendar years to designate events happening in China before the country transforms from an imperial state to a republican nation. And since this major political transition, as Dr. Kong says, takes place ten years after 1902, the year of *renyin* can only refer to the years before 1912. *Suici renyi* 歲次壬寅, in this sense, can only mean 1902.

At the beginning of "New China," Liang associates the year of *renyin* with two liturgical calendar years (2002 and 2062) that it has nothing to do with. And as soon as Dr. Kong poses the rhetorical question "Speaking of this year of *renyin* (1902), isn't that precisely sixty years away? 講到今年壬寅 (光緒二十八年壬寅)， 可不是剛足六十年嗎," Liang goes as far to add the peculiar remark "No Wonder(原來如此)!"[233] This again suggests that years 2002 and 2062

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[230] 2062 should be the year of *yinwu* (壬午) in the lunar calendar.

[231] See Zhao Jiheng 趙毅衡, "Ershi Shiji Zhongguo Weilai Xiaoshuo 二十世紀中國未來小說" (Twentieth century Chinese futuristic fiction), in *Ershiyi shiji shuang zhoukang* 二十一世紀雙周刊 (Twenty-First Century Bimonthly) 56 (Dec, 1999):103. (http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/ics/21c/issue/articles/056_990809.pdf)

[232] Since Confucius was born in 551 BC, the Confucian calendar year 2513 is a correct conversion of 2062.

[233] "Xin zhongguo weilai ji," *XXS* 1(1902):55.

cannot be a year of *renyin*. These hints come together to indicate that numbers such as 2002, 2062, 2453, and 2513 are random numbers Liang uses to detach the story from the materiality of the objective present. And after all, perhaps whether the futuristic story happens in 1962 or 2002 is not an important question.

Literary historians have always interpreted "New China" as a futuristic, or even scientific, story featuring Liang's utopic imaginations. But as I have tried to demonstrate in the discussion, Liang's definitions on terms such as "the imperishable being" and "the soul" have little if any religious connotations. Instead of referring to the kind of spiritual transcendence being known as the afterlife in Buddhism or immanence in Christianity, Liang's understanding of the spirit is metaphorical to the formless truth failed to be represented by languages. In Liang's story, there is more evidence indicating that "The Future of New China" is a deceptive title. By "future," Liang is not referring to events taking place in a futuristic time zone, but the formless truth that transcends the formal materiality and discursive language.

In "New China," Liang mentions that Dr. Kong's lecture takes place in year 2513 of the Confucian calendar (or year 2062 of the liturgical calendar) and implicitly implies that the speech is staged in 1962. In several parts of the story, however, both Dr. Kong and the narrator are keen to remind the reader that Dr. Kong is in close connection with Liang, the chief editor of *New Fiction* (小說報主人) who is publishing his lecture in Yokohama on 1902. For example, toward the end of the first chapter, the narrator says that as Dr. Kong is giving his speech, there is a member from the Historical Association undertaking the dual tasks of taking shorthand notes of Dr. Kong's speech and wiring his notes to the headquarter of *New Fiction* in Yokohama for immediate publication (一面速記，一面便遂字打電報交與橫濱新小說報登刊).[234]" By

[234] Liang, "Xin zhongguo weilai ji," *XXS* 1 (1902): 56.

inserting a playful comment complaining the high telegraph cost (這筆電費卻不小),[235] Liang eradicates the temporal gap between the remote future and the immediate present. The proximity of Dr. Kong's speech makes one question whether the "temporal gap" should be taken in a literal sense, or it is a metaphorical way of indicating the difference between the formal materiality and the unrepresentable formless truth.

In Dr. Kong's speech, his personal testimony seems to confirm this observation. Dr. Kong begins the lecture by announcing that his fictional account is based on the "formal, official national history" (堂堂正正的國史).[236] And the decision to translate the formal history into a fictional story is Liang's idea. As Dr. Kong says, "the founder of *New Fiction* of Yokohama asks me to fill one of his columns with the lecture that I am giving. He has reminded me again and again to develop my lecture into the form of fiction (橫濱小說報主人要將我這講義充他的篇幅，再三諄囑，演成小說體裁).[237] In this statement, Dr. Kong suggests that "New China" is a fictional presence *of* the formal, official history. New fiction, in other words, provides an alternative *presence* for the formal, discursive knowledge.

In Liang's preface to "New China," he also says that as he reread the chapters he has completed so far, the story "appears to be fiction but not quite so; appears to be unofficial history but not quite so; appears to be political discussion but not quite so (似說部非說部，似稗史非稗史，似論著非論著).[238] While Liang could not help laughing at the story's categorical ambivalence (不知成何種文體),[239] his remark affirms that there are certain fictional qualities

[235] Ibid., 57.

[236] Ibid., 60.

[237] Ibid., 60.

[238] Ibid., 52.

[239] Ibid.

that distinguish “New China” from historical writings and qualify it as “new fiction.” Apart from the creation of fictional characters such as Huang Keqiang, Li Qubing, and Dr. Kong, what gives the story its fictional appeal is that it is a futuristic story telling stories happening in an even more remote future. The temporal arrangement is what dislocates “New China” from the objective reality and differentiates the story from history.

Competition between the Fictional and the Political Discourses

Both Liang’s and Dr. Kong’s statements suggest that the purpose of composing “New China” is to translate the conceptual political idea into the fictional *presence*. The fictional *presence*, according to Liang’s complementary discussions, is meant to capture these ideas “*more*” faithfully than the recently translated modern political language.

Liang, as mentioned earlier, draws a clear hierarchal contrast between philosophy and religion in “The Philosopher and the Religious Thinker.” He defines philosophy as the study or learning of the “formal” knowledge, and claims that the study of discursive languages has led to different kinds of confusion and transgression. Since the formal knowledge is in nature misleading and deceptive, Liang argues that the Chinese public can only become truly modernized by having enlightened understanding of the formless spiritual truth failed to be represented by language. In another political discussion, “The Political Theory of Aristotle” (亞里士多德之政治學說), Liang published two weeks after “The Philosopher and the Religious Thinker,” he compares enlightened understanding of democracy to the obtainment of Buddhahood.[240] In this article, Buddhist enlightenment is metaphorical to the internalization of Western political theories. Liang’s comparison indicates that his promotion of Buddhism during

[240] See Liang Qichao, “Yalishiduode zhi zhengzhi xueshuo 亞里士多德之政治學說” (The Political Theory of Aristotle),” in *XMCB* 20 (1902): 9.

the early twentieth century is intricately connected to his call for the search of modern political truth that is truer than readily available modern political languages.

Assuming that the modern political language cannot accurately represent the truth, Liang asks people to look beyond words. And fiction, as he suggests in "Fiction and Public Governance," can best capture and communicate the formless truth as the way it is. I believe this is why Liang decided to envisage the new, modernized China in fictional and visual terms. By contextualizing modern political concepts in the fictional reality, Liang tries to re-present the modern political knowledge as a higher level of truth failed to be represented by language. Apart from translating the modern political concept into the signified fictional description, Liang, drawing on the picture-making capacity of words, endeavors to transform the one-dimensional political lexicon into the three dimensional cinematic presence. Liang's new fiction serves the ekphrasical purpose of letting the reader "pass through the sign to the thing represented by it."[241] By *being* the signified, the vivid fictional description discloses the contrast between the signified and the signifier. It exposes the signifier's failure in bridging the gap between its role as a representative tool and the truth it seeks to represent. Compared with the discursive language, fiction is equipped with infinite expressive potentials. The acoustic and visual effects created through the skillful arrangement of language produce a cinematic landscape. Instead of the representation *of* the concept, the expressive potentials of fiction delineate a lived manifestation of the concept in a concrete context. The fictional expression of a modern political concept, for this reason, is supposed be *different from* and more *authentic than* the political lexicon itself.

[241] Kreiger, *Ekphrasis*, 265.

Redefining New Fiction

I believe the hierarchal difference Liang draws between fiction and the formal political language is crucial in re-examining the role of new fiction played in late Qing China, as well as the challenge it posed to the representative power of recently translated modern political languages. Liang celebrates fiction for its easy comprehensibility and its power to entertain. For this reason, it is often believed that the importance of fiction lies in its capacity to transmit new words and new ideas to the general public by explaining, elaborating, and contextualizing these concepts in an approachable fictional context. In "Fiction and Public Governance," Liang declares that "fiction is the most superior form of literature." But instead of taking Liang's statement as his affirmation of fiction's innate literary merits, literary historians believe that Liang elevated the status of fiction by uncovering and utilizing its political functions.[242] New fiction, in other words, has been taken as an auxiliary tool serving the practical purpose of explaining and circulating modern political knowledge to the general public, rather than a producer actively contributing to the modern knowledge formation. The political elevated the status of fiction by making fiction its subordinate. Such is the conventional understanding of new fiction.

But having studied "Fiction and Public Governance" alongside political discussions, fictional translation, and the novella Liang published between October and November in 1902, it seems that fiction means so much more to arguably the most influential late Qing thinker than most literary historians have assumed. For Liang, fiction is neither a supplementary nor ancillary instrument facilitating the circulation of the modern political discourse. His decision to depict modern political concepts in the fictional presence questions the representative power of recently translated political languages and creates a competition between the discursive language and the

[242] See Lawrence Wang-chi Wong, "'The Sole Purpose is to Express My Political Views'," 105-26; Chen Pingyuan, Zhongguo xian dai xiao shuo de qi dian, 6-12, and 104-113.

three-dimensional fictional representation. For this reason, the relationship between the new fiction and the modern political discourse is meant to be confrontational instead of complementary.

So far, what I have tried to emphasize is that in the second half of 1902, Liang systematically set up a hierarchical contrast between the "formal knowledge" and the "formless truth." His attempt to create the formless, transcendental truth in fictional terms is an *antagonist* response to the "formal" political languages. While intellectual historians believe that Liang promoted Buddhism as alternative cultural solution when Confucianism was quickly losing its legitimacy as a state orthodox,[243] I believe that Liang's primary concern is neither China's cultural identity nor the urgent need to renew the people. By accentuating that religion is superior to philosophy and that fiction, like Buddhism, is the most effective tool in communicating intuitive knowledge, Liang was to challenge the legitimacy and representative power of modern political languages.

Arriving at this part of the chapter, a crucial question we can no longer avoid is: why was Liang keen to subvert the representative power of recently translated modern political "languages," or "words" in general? I believe it has to do with a few different and yet closely related factors. According to Liang's own account, his purpose for promoting the communication of modern political ideas as intuitive knowledge is educational. The new fiction is intended to help the general public obtain enlightened understanding of the political modern. In political discussions the late Qing intellectual published during the same period, he frequently emphasizes that although many key Western philosophical and political theories had been

[243] See Ted Huters's discussion on Chang Hao, *Bringing the World Home*, 113.

translated to China, people are too senseless (根器薄弱) to understand their true meanings.[244] By comparing the people to the "confused and silly ones" (迷而愚者) in Buddhist teaching, Liang says that the Chinese public "is not qualified to obtain Buddhahood in any given senses (未能有一切成佛之資格),"[245] and not to mention the prospect of creating a (modern) new world (無望能做新世界焉矣).[246] Liang attributes the collective failure to the "learning" of "formal" Western philosophical theories. And Liang, as discussed earlier, has carefully elaborated how the literal interpretation of political keywords such as "*gongli*" (utilitarianism), "*ziyou*" (freedom), and "*yuanfu*" (original wealth; wealth of the nation) has anticipated different forms of abuse and distortion.

Through the promotion of new fiction, Liang shows the possibility of making sense of the political modern without having to rely on modern political languages as misleading mediators. For Liang, it is the "true" modern political meaning, rather than the fashionable political lexicon, that he wants to enlighten the public with. Liang's declared educational purpose is consistent with his purpose for launching *New Citizen Journal*. But in the following discussion, I hope to show that Liang's goal is far more ambitious and complicated than what he has declared.

From "Crisis of Meaning" to "Political Confusion"

As Liang attempted to challenge the legitimacy of the Qing imperial bureaucracy with Western political theories, there was a keen competition going on between intellectuals who were in support for two competing scholarly trends. Identifying himself as the most active advocate of new text studies, a rapidly growing academic trend seeking to subvert the Han learning and the

[244] See Liang, "Jiateng boshi tianze baihua," 52.

[245] Ibid.

[246] Liang, "Fojiao yu qunzhi zhi guanxi," in *XMCB* 23 (1902):49.

evidential studies as the orthodox learning of the state, Liang believed that one can only strengthen this new intellectual trend by materializing the trend's "true" exegetical principles in the physical reality. As the biggest importer of Western political knowledge and staunch spokesperson for a burgeoning intellectual trend, Liang saw the obvious attraction of making sense of Western political concepts with exegetical principles proposed by new text studies.

During the early twentieth century, Liang concentrated on exemplifying how one can embrace and embody the true meaning of Western political concepts without being mistaken by these concepts' semantic definitions. Liang's endeavor to syncretize his intellectual conviction with his political ambition appears to be a laudable attempt. However, if we contextualize such attempt in the critical political transition in which Liang found himself, it seems that the marriage he arranged between new text studies and Western political concepts was also intended to serve a personal political interest. The subjective wish to realize three equally important, but potentially conflicting, goals at a time might have anticipated some ironic consequences. Now we will explore these causes and consequences in more details.

Considering fashionable political lexicons signifiers that had failed to represent the true modern political meanings, Liang sought to differentiate the signified from the signifier. In 1902, Liang launched *New Fiction* and said that one can only renew the people through renewing the fiction (欲新一國之民，必先新小說). By emphasizing that fiction's power rests in affecting people through "thurification," "immersion," "stimulation," and "lifting," Liang indicates that communication is not only based on words, but also perceptual imagination, visualization, and intuitive understanding. Unlike language, fiction is capable of providing the late Qing reader with unobstructed exposure to the signified through the creation of a novel physical landscape. It allows people to make sense of modern political knowledge as mental pictures. And for Liang, it

is only by discarding the interference of language can one obtain enlightened understanding of the political modern.

For Liang, the semantic meaning of modern political lexicon is unrepresentative and misleading. Rather than elaborating what the word restoration (維新) means as a "signifier," in "New China" he tries to recover the "signified" truth that the word has failed to represent. In Liang's fictional creation, he invites the late Qing reader to re-imagine the modern political knowledge as the signified envisaged in the fictional cinematic landscape. Apart from that, his fictional creation completes the "corrective" task of re-associating the translated lexicon with true meanings that it is *meant* to represent. In other words, by providing the reader with the *true signified* meaning, the vivid fictional description is intended to *revise*, instead of *explain*, the meaning of "restoration" as a modern political lexicon.

In "New China," Liang encourages the late Qing reader to imagine and visualize "restoration" as a series of animated events in a three-dimensional cinematic setting. Instead of a semantic lexicon, the modern political concept has been transformed into moving fictional and pictorial imaginations in one's mind. Liang's fictional representation of reform materializes his wish to communicate modern political concept as the formless truth rather the formal language. The introduction of fiction, in this sense, signifies Liang's call for an epistemic shift in late Qing China.

In the preface to "New China," Liang calls the story a "parable" (*yuyan*) that he has diligently conceived and handled with meticulous care (編中**寓言**，頗費覃思，不敢草草). [247]

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[247] Liang, "Xinzhongguo weilai ji," *XXS* 1 (1902): 51. Kou Zhengfeng points out that Liang's "The Future of New China" is structured on the basis of the interplay between the abstract fictionality (虛 *xu*) and the factual historicity (實 *shi*). In Kuo's article, he focuses on exploring influences Liang received from Japanese fiction published during the Meiji period. See Ko Zhenfeng 寇振鋒, "Xin zhongguo weilai ji zhong de Mingzhi zhengzhi xiaoshuo yinsu《新中國未來記》中的日本明治政治小說因素" (Elements of Meiji Japan's political

"Parable," as I have discussed earlier, is a synonym to fiction in "Fiction and Public Governance." According to Liang, it is by comparison the most faithful means of epitomizing the unrepresentable truth. Since fiction is a more abstract, indirect, and fabricated mode of expression than the classical language, slangs, and serious discussions, it is meant to be used as a means to communicate intuitive knowledge like Zen Buddhism. By categorizing "New China" as a parable, Liang implies that the significance of the story rests in transmitting the formless truth through a non-discursive means. And in response to Dr. Kong's testimony, Liang reaffirms that his political views are what he wants to render in fictional terms. As the late Qing intellectual says, "this piece of work is written solely for the purpose of expressing my *political views*, and to communicate these views to the patriotic and sensible gentlemen (茲編之作，專欲發表區區政見，以就正於愛國達識之君子)."[248] To make himself even clearer, Liang repeats his purpose by emphasizing that "since my wish is to express my political views and propose solutions to the national politics (既欲發表政見，商榷國計),[249] the hope of writing "New China" has prompted me to launch *New Fiction* as a journal (其發願專為此編也)."[250]

In the opening chapter of "New China," Liang carefully describes the prosperity China enjoys on "the fiftieth anniversary of the reformist movement" (*weixin wushinian dazhudian* 維新五十年大祝典).[251] After visualizing the cosmopolitan affluence in Shanghai, Liang draws the

fiction in the future of new China) (Accessed May 11, 2015. http://www.jsc.fudan.edu.cn/picture/jl080210.pdf.). While Liang calls his fictional creation an "allegory," Chen Jianhua insightfully suggests that Liang's promotion of fiction has achieved the paradoxical ends of subverting the prestige of more respected literary genres such as poetry, Confucian classics, and historical writing. See Chen, "The magic power of national "imagination," 69.

[248] Liang, "Xinzhongguo weilai ji," *XXS* 1 (1902):51.

[249] Ibid., 52.

[250] Ibid., 51.

[251] Ibid., 53.

reader's attention to Dr. Kong's lecture, in which he carefully describes the means through which China has completed its "*reformist*" project.

In the lecture, Dr. Kong unambiguously attributes the current prosperity to the series of "reformist achievements" (*weixin shiye* 維新事業) accomplished by the heroic man (*zhishi* 志士) Huang Keqian 黃克強 and his comrades.[252] According to Dr. Kong's historical timeline, this series of reformist movements begins with the independence of Guangdong (*Guangdong rishi* 廣東自治) that took place after the Alliance's invasion of Beijing (*lianjun po* Beijing 聯軍破北京)[253] in 1900, a hint further indicating that the lecture that covers the past 60 years of Chinese history could not have taken place in 2002 or 2062. At that time, Dr. Kong elaborates, Huang Keqiang had recently formed a constitutional party titled *xianzheng dang* 憲政黨. The party immediately gathered more than four million members in Guangdong province alone. With the help of other nine million members scattered across other provinces, the party was determined to fight for Guangdong's independence. After learning about the rise of the collective local force, "the emperor was moved and crafty officials were scared out of their wit" (天子動容，權奸褫魄).[254] By describing the ruler's and his subjects' emotional shock, Dr. Kong indicates that the independent movement is a political activity that had not been approved by the throne. Within a very short period of time, Guangdong province declared independence from the Qing monarchy and became the first province governed by the constitutional law. Following Guangdong's success, all other provinces across China started to declare independence. Soon the national

[252] Ibid., 60.

[253] Ibid., 59.

[254] Ibid., 65. Liang's original reads: 直至廣東自治時代，這憲政黨黨員已有了一千四百萬人，廣東一省四百多萬，其餘各省，合共九百多萬，所以同聲一呼，天子動容，權奸褫魄，便把廣東自治的憲法得到手了，隨後各省紛紛繼起，到底做成了今天的局面。

congress (*guohui* 國會) was formed, and the last Qing emperor Luo Zaitian 羅在田 was made the first president (*datongling* 大統領) of China. The emperor's presidential title suggests that it is republicanism rather than constitutional monarchy that China had transformed into. While Luo Zaitian still occupied the ruling position, the establishment of the national congress is based on overthrowing the Qing imperial rule. As the former emperor was in his first presidential term, he, according to Dr. Kong, made the sensible decision of returning his presidency to the people and was being praised for his understanding of the latest political situation (前王英明能審時勢排羣議，讓權與民).[255] After Luo resigned, Huang Keqiang became the first elected president in China. The decade-long "reformist" project finally reached completion.

Above is the development of China's "*reformist*" process. "New China" was published on *New Fiction*, and Liang advertised the piece as a fictional creation.[256] The futuristic setting, characterization, dramatic narrative development, and careful visualization of the prosperous city life situate the "reformist" activities Dr. Kong recounts in a fictional context, and invite the late Qing reader to re-imagine the word "reform" in a new epistemic paradigm. For Liang, this is where the power of fiction lies. As he says in "Fiction and Public Governance," fiction unfolds a "physical presence beyond one's physical surrounding and a world beyond his world." It is a vehicle that transports one to a novel realm that transcends one's imagination. In this strange and foreign physical environment, one needs to activate different modes of perception to re-imagine, re-perceive, and re-experience what appears to be familiar. Rather than introducing new political ideas, fiction transforms the familiar into the strange and foreign, and calls for a new epistemic framework to understand the familiar stranger.

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[255] Ibid., 58.

[256] See advertisements published on volume 18 and volume 19 of *XMCB*.

Remediating “Revolutionary” in “Reformist” Terms

After Dr. Kong delineates the reformist movements China has undergone, he goes on to trace a prolonged debate Huang Keqiang and his best friend Li Qubing had in 1902. In their debate, the two protagonists repeat the strong dissatisfaction Liang expresses toward the modern political lexicons. Beginning with the examples “liberty” (*ziyou*) and “equality” (*pingdeng*), Huang, expounding on what Liang says in “The Philosopher and the Religion Thinker,” complains that many of his contemporaries do not seek to understand what these modern concepts truly mean. Reciting liberty and equality in a literal sense, people use these terms to justify corruptions such as drinking, visiting the brothel, and running away from school.[257] According to Huang, people’s literal interpretation of these keywords runs the serious risk of turning “liberty” and “equality” into “sinful and evil lexicons” (罪大惡極的名詞).[258]

After criticizing people’s distortion of “liberty” and “equality,” Huang and Li show how the word “reform” has been badly abused. For Huang, those who are being known as the leading reformers and restoration leaders (維新改革第一流人物) are only “a bunch of thieves and bandits” (一羣民賊).[259] Their decision to develop partnership with foreigners is like a pimp working for brothel visitors.[260] For Huang and Li, these thieves and bandits take the reformist movement as a profit making enterprise. Since they do not have any informed understanding about the reform, the “reform” and “revolution” they articulate are only “words” that are detached from the *true* political meanings they are meant to represent. As Huang declares:

> “For the bunch of thieves and bandits who are now in power, from their mouths they say such words as reform, or such words as restoration. But

[257] Liang, “Xin zhongguo weilaiji,” *XXS* 2 (1902):60

[258] Ibid.

[259] Ibid., 37.

[260] Ibid.

> if you are to ask them, do you think they know what does it *mean* by reform and restoration? (Emphasis added)
>
> 那政府當道一羣民賊：他們嘴裡頭，講什麼維新，什麼改革，你問他們知道維新改革這兩個字，是什麼一句話麼？[261]

In this conversation, Huang and Li condemn those who misuse and misinterpret the words "reform" and "restoration." As the person who knows the true meaning of reform, Huang, as "New China" tells us, has eventually realized his *reformist* goals in China in the years that follow. According to Dr. Kong, the "reformist" movements Huang Keqiang accomplishes include declaring the independence of Guangdong, liberating the rest of provinces in China from the Qing monarchy, replacing the imperial rule with the national congress, establishing the presidential system, and undertaking Luo Zaitian's presidency under the call of people's collective will. These so-called "reformist" activities, somewhat paradoxically, are precisely what the political "revolution" is about.[262]

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[261] Ibid.

[262] Yamada Keizō is one of the very few scholars who are sensitive to note that the word "reform" (*weixin* 維新) that Liang uses refers neither to republicanism nor the kind of constitutional monarchy Japan established based on the Prusso-German model. Keizō believes that the reason Liang chooses to use "reform" instead of "revolution" (*geming* 革命) is that the word emphasizes the prospect of achieving the revolutionary ends through peaceful instead of violent means. In Keizō's discussion, he unambiguously suggests that the "reform" Liang envisions in "The Future of New China" is directly opposite from the kind reform Kang Youwei endorses. In addition, Keizō believes that it would be extremely unlikely for Liang to propose a kind of reformism that completely excludes revolutionary elements. Keizō words read: 「維新」は、しかし共和制ではない。それはあくまでも帝政のもとに憲法を制定し、国会を召集するものであって、日本の明治維新をモデルとした「立憲君主制」の確立こそが変法維新の理念であった。にもかかわらず、梁が十年後に共和制国家の実現を描いたのは、むろんそれが当時の彼の願望に合致する目標であったからにほかならない。だが、それが「革命」ではなく「維新」と表記されているのは、彼の理想が武力によってではなく、平和的な手段----ここでは光緒帝の自発的な退位と初代大統領への就任----によるものと想定されているからであろう……. ただこの時点で、一〇年後の一九＝一年に共和国家の成立を夢見ることは、変法維新運動のプログラムにはなく、師の康有為の見解にも違背する先走った提言であった。See Yamada Keizō 山田敬三, "Shin chūgoku miraiki o megutte: Ryō Keichō ni okeru kakumei to henkaku no ronri 新中国未来記」をめぐって：梁啓超における革命と変革の論理" (On "The Future of new China": Liang's logic on reform and revolution), in *Kyōdō kenkyū Ryō Keichō*, 342. For a Chinese translation of Keizō's article, see "Weirao xin zhongguo weilai ji suo jian Liang Qichao geming yu biange sixiang 圍繞新中國未來記所見梁啟超革命與變革思想," in *Liang Qichao・Mingzhi riben・Sifang*, 321-46. Zhu Lin has made a similar remark as Keizō, suggesting that the "reform" Liang refers to is *not* a binary opposition to "revolution" as it is generally assumed. See Zhu Lin 朱琳, "Liang Qichao de "geming" lun 梁启超的'革命'论" (Liang Qichao's

In "New China," something even more interesting is that the "reformist" activities Dr. Kong delineates in his lecture have been categorized as a different "name" in Huang's and Li's debate. The two young men, as mentioned earlier, shared different political visions. Li was in support for the revolution and Huang the political reform. Having identified himself with the Italian revolutionary hero Mazzini, Li vigorously defends the need to launch a revolution in China. In this debate, Li finds himself "a person who has the true revolutionary thinking" (有真正革命思想的人).[263] Li says:

> Today, for a person who has the true revolutionary thinking, his understanding must be the same as mine. If a person who does not share the same understanding talks about revolution, he cannot achieve the goal regardless how capable he is. It's fine if China does not have any revolution in the future. But if China does have one, these thieves' and bandits' sinful associates will perish permanently in the hell without any hopes of salvation.
>
> 今日有真正革命思想的人，他見識一定是和我一樣。沒有這種思想的人，他要講革命，任憑他多大本事，一定是做不成的。中國往後沒有革命便罷，若有革命，這些民賊的孽苗，是要人無餘涅槃而滅度之的了。[264]

In this declaration, Li makes three important points. First, Li, as he states explicitly, is the person who knows the true *meaning* of revolution. Second, for those who do not know this true meaning, the revolution they "*talk about*" (講) are bound to be different from Li's authentic understanding. Third, if this bunch of thieves and bandits eventually launch a revolution in accordance to what they have talked about, the revolution they stage would not be the same as the true revolution as Li understands it. And if we insist on pushing the third reading further, one

thoughts on "revolution"), *Higashi Ajia bunka kōshō kenkyū* 東アジア文化交渉研究 (Journal of East Asian cultural interaction studies) 5 [n.d.] 119. For Chen Jianhua, the utopic reformist construct Liang envisions in *New China* is neither an epitome of constitutional monarchy nor representative democracy. It is medley of the different modern political models that Liang was interesting in implementing in China. See his "The magic power of national "imagination," 67.

[263] Liang, "Xin zhongguo weilai ji," *XXS* 2 (1902):39.

[264] Ibid., 39-40.

might go as far to suggest that what Li implies is that the “true revolution” would not be titled with the word “revolution.”

In the prolonged debate, Li lists a number of progressive movements through which his “true” revolution can be realized. These movements include helping different provinces declare independence, replacing the imperial rule with the republican government, and establishing the national congress and the presidential system. After manifesting his revolutionary vision, Li compares Huang to Cavour[265] and classifies Huang’s “reformist” proposals as “constitutional monarchy” (君主立憲主義).[266] What Li considers to be the true revolution is precisely what Dr. Kong calls the “reformist” movements in his fictional account.[267] And in their debate, the “reformist” proposal Huang elaborates is radically different from the “reformist” movements Dr. Kong describes in his fictional account.

According to the debate, Huang is firmly convinced that the Chinese public is not ready for the revolution. Instead of trying to form a constitutional party and gather millions of members in Guangzhou and other provinces, Huang strongly emphasizes that the Chinese public “do not have any spirit of self-governance, and they haven’t made any process in the past few thousand years 自治毫無精神，幾千年沒有一點進步.” For Huang, the Chinese public is completely uninformed of one’s right and obligation in a democratic society. This disorganized crowd of ignorant people is “directly opposite from the “organic” body as defined in the modern political philosophy (和那政治學上所謂“有機體”正相反).”[268] Revolution, theoretically speaking, can transform China from the imperial monarchy to a “self-governed community” (自

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[265] Liang, “Xin zhongguo weilai ji,” *XXS* 2 (1902):75.

[266] Ibid., 74.

[267] See the first and second chapters of Liang’s “Xin zhongguo weilai ji.”

[268] Ibid., 60.

治團體).[269] But since the people are not ready for self-governance, Huang says that it would only take one or two powerful figures to ruin and destroy the self-governed community the Chinese forms (只要一兩個官吏紳士有權勢的人，可以任意把他的自治團體糟蹋敗壞).[270] After listing the Chinese public's shortcomings and destructive consequences the revolution will lead to, Huang says that it would be a better idea to set up legislative councils in different provincial regions. But as for the national congress, it is better to wait for another twenty to thirty years (先把地方議會開了，這就遲二三十年再開國會也是無妨的).[271] Since different provinces can begin to have trial legislative councils, Huang completely denies the prospect of declaring different provinces independent from the Qing monarchy. He says that if this ever happens, internal conflicts will turn China into a state of chaos, and different imperial powers will make the country their colonial states.[272]

It has been widely acknowledged that the debate between Huang and Li epitomizes Liang's personal ambivalence about reform and revolution.[273] "To be or not to be?" This is the question that Liang had translated into fictional terms. But before one can safely read the debate as a fictional expression of Liang's psychological struggle, there is an important piece of

[269] Ibid.

[270] Ibid.

[271] Ibid., 63.

[272] Ibid., 69.

[273] For discussions on Liang's divided loyalty toward reform and revolution, see Philip Huang, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao*, 88-9; Tang, *Global Space*, 121-2; Chang, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao*, 222-3. For Zhang Pengyuan, Huang keqian represents Liang's conservatism, while Li Qubing speaks for Liang's progressive thinking. See *Liang Qichao yu qingji geming*, 63; Chen Jianhua believes that the debate between Huang and Li implies Liang's increasing suspicion for the revolution, and his clear resistance for political violence. See Chen, "Napolun yu wanqing "xiaoshuo geming" 拿破崙與晚清小說革命 (Napoleon and the late Qing fictional revolution), in *Cong geming dao gonghe*, 108. Having carefully considered Liang's support for the revolution and his differences from Kang Youwei, Xia Xiaohong is one of the few scholars who believes that Huang and Li represent "the two faces that co-exist in the Liang Qichao's thought" (梁啟超思想中同時並存的兩個方面) instead of the Qing intellectual's ambivalence toward reform and revolution. See *Chuangshi yu jueshi*, 51-2.

background information to consider. At the time "New China" was published in *New Fiction*, Liang was just about to depart for the United States and Europe to collect donations for the political revolution he had long aspired for.[274] The apparent question is: why would Liang bother to publish an elaborate debate on reform and revolution when he was busy preparing for his own revolutionary movement?

Rectifying the Name through its Own Subversion

In Huang's and Li's debate, Liang indicates that the "words" reform and revolution cannot reflect the "true/ authentic" (*zhenzheng de* 真正的) meaning of reform and revolution. In the opening chapter of "New China," he vividly envisages the revolutionary activities the word "reform" truly refers to in a cinematic landscape. In the first part of the chapter, I have carefully examined how Liang has systematically undermined the representative power of words in his essays and fictional translation. But coming to "New China," Liang's attempt to associate the "word" reform with its "signified meanings" indicates that he has denied the conventionally received meaning of reform to achieve the paradoxical goal of giving the word reform its true revolutionary connotations. The name, in other words, is still something that Liang was deeply concerned with, though he had completed the task of correcting and revising the "*name*" by denying the legitimacy of the readily available modern political languages and exposing the vulnerability of discourse as a whole.

Toward the end of 1902, Liang was to collect donations for his own political revolution in the United States and Europe. In "New China," he tries to expand the meanings of the "word" reform by associating the word with revolutionary activities in his fictional description. In fact

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[274] See Ding Wenjiang and Zhao Fengtian, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changpian*, 203-220.

Liang's re-invention of the "word" reform in "New China" is a complementary attempt to his essay "Exegesis on Ge" (釋革). The essay was published on volume 22 of *New Citizen Journal*, the date on which Huang and Li's prolonged debates appeared on *New Fiction*.[275] That was a time when Liang was still uncertain whether the fund collection trip will bring him enough money to launch his own revolution. Liang's revolutionary plan, moreover, had been strongly opposed by his teacher Kang Youwei. Instead of announcing his support for revolution, I believe the uncertainty of Liang's political future had given rise to the pragmatic need of making sure the word "reform" was flexible enough to allow him alter between the reform and the revolution.

By 1902, differences between meanings of "reform," "restoration," and "revolution" had been generally acknowledged by the public. But in "Exegesis of Ge," by singling out the character "ge" 革 shared by the words *gai"ge"* 改"革" (reform) and *"ge"ming* "革"命 (revolution), Liang argues that *gaige* and *geming* are essentially identical.

In this essay, Liang begins by saying that revolution (*geming*) refers to radical changes of modern political consciousness and the creation of a new world (從根底處掀翻之，而別造一新世界).[276] Compared with these fundamental ideological changes, the replacement of a particular dynasty is too insignificant to be considered Revo, an initial Liang invents for revolution (皆指王朝易姓而言，是不足以當 Revo).[277] Paying special attention to the set of radical ideological "changes," Liang announces that the word *biange* 變革 (change) is a more appropriate "name" for the revolution. As Liang says in his own words: "what others called *geming* (revolution) in

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[275] Liang Qichao, "Shi ge 釋革" (Exegesis on Ge)," in *XMCB* 22 (1902):1-8.

[276] Ibid., 1.

[277] Ibid.

the past is what I call *biange* (change) now. It is the one and only solution to save China 即日人所謂革命，今我所謂變革， 為今日就中國獨一無二法門."[278] In the discussion that follows, Liang soon brings over the term *gaige* 改革. By glossing over the resemblance between *biange* and *gaige*, he concludes that revolution is essentially a matter of *gaige* (reform).[279]

Apart from declaring that "*gaige*" and "*biange*" can represent revolution more accurately than the word "*geming*," Liang tries to restore "*geming*" (revolution) as a translated modern political concept to its indigenous cultural sense. In "New China," Liang re-associates "*geming*" with stories of bloody dynastic replacement in China's imperial past and compares his contemporary revolutionary leaders to notorious usurpers such as Emperor Qin Shi Huang 秦始皇 (260–210 BC), Emperor Wu of Han 漢武帝 (156-87 BC), and Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 (1328-98). In Huang's and Li's debate, they label what they consider the first-generation revolutionaries "robbers (*qiangdao* 強盜), rascals (*wulai* 無賴), and insidious thieves (*jianzei* 奸賊)" who had completely discarded conducts of moral goodness.[280] "In the last two thousand years," the two claims, "China had undergone enormous revolutions and chaos (中國這兩千年來，革了又革，亂了又亂)."[281] By equating the revolution with ruthless chaos, Liang re-contextualizes the word "*geming*" as a translated modern political concept in China's dynastic history, and restores its primitive association with violence, immorality, and brutal dynastic upheaval.

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[278] Ibid., 4.

[279] For Yamada Keizō's discussion on Liang's ambiguous uses of the words "*weixin* 維新," "*geming* 革命," and "*biange* 變革," see Keizo, "Shin chūgoku miraiki kōsetsu," 353-6.

[280] Liang,"Xin zhongguo weilaiji," *XXS* 2 (1902):37.

[281] Ibid.

At the turn of the twentieth century, Liang's call for movements such as "poetic revolution" and "religious revolution" transformed the word "revolution" to a symbol of linear historical progression. But while Liang enjoyed the liberty of inventing, circulating, and legitimizing new semantic meanings for translated modern political concepts, he was also in a position to restore the word "*geming's*" pre-modern connotations, as well as invalidating the word's representative power as a whole.

Through his skillful rhetorical arrangement, Liang tries to make the words "*gaige*" and "*biange*" replacement for the word "*geming*" (revolution) in "Exegesis on Ge." Regardless of the apparent mismatch, Liang goes as far to accuse the word "*geming*" for being a mistranslation for "Revo" (revolution), the word he often puts alongside with the initial "Ref" (reform). To argue that "*gaige*" and "*biange*" are the more accurate names for revolution, Liang openly declares that calling Revo "*geming*" is a matter of "misnaming and dis-legitimization" (名不正，言不順). Liang says:

> Nowadays, the translation of revolution as Revo has confined learned gentlemen to the literal meanings of words. It gives them the assumption that the mentioning of this word indicates one's antagonist relationship with the imperial monarchy. Now it is too late to revise such assumption. For those who are in power also find the assumption harmful. They try to suppress and destroy it, making it impossible for a country to make adjustment to follow the international trend. If this is the case, the **incorrect names** and **incongruous languages** are the ones to blame.
>
> 今日革命譯 Revo, 遂使天下君子拘墟於字面。以為談及此義，必與現在王朝一人一姓為敵，迴之若將晚已，而彼憑權籍勢力者，亦恃曰是不利我也。相與窒遏之摧鋤之，使一國不能順應於世界大勢以自存，若是者，皆**名不正**，**言不順**為害也。[282]

During the last decade of late Qing China, there are certain shared consensus on the difference between reform and revolution. For this reason, it is difficult for Liang's rhetorical persuasion in

[282] Liang, "Shi ge," 1-2.

the “Exegesis of Ge” to go beyond the level of word play. The attempt to make the word “reform” mean its binary other (revolution) is not an easy task. And in Liang’s case, a greater obstacle he faced is that the word *geming* is officially affiliated with the revolutionary camp. While there is a chance that he could be given an opportunity to launch his own revolution, it is difficult for Liang, a person who had been permanently expelled from the revolutionary camp, to adopt the exact words “*geming*” in his upcoming political campaigns. And in discussions he published in the second half of 1902, Liang comes to indicate that it is the “signified” truth rather than the linguistic “signifier” that he is truly concerned with.

Competition of Discourses, or Representational Paradigms?

Through the creation of reality and cinematic effects in “New China,” Liang presents the late Qing reader a series of political activities that constitute a political revolution. The fictional description allows the reader to imagine these activities as *lived* political events, rather than particular political lexicons. In Liang’s political discussions, he declares that the purpose for delineating the signified truth in fictional terms is to help the late Qing reader obtain enlightened understanding of, rather than linguistic familiarity with, the modern political knowledge. But in “New China,” Liang has gone as far as associating the visual and fictional imagination of revolution with the word “reform.” To label visual imaginations with a linguistic category to which they do not belong marks Liang’s attempt to reorganize modern political knowledge. In this sense, not only did the fictional description in “New China” try to transcend language, it provides what is absent in translated political languages, enabling the languages to say more than their semantic meanings. I believe Liang’s reinvention of semantic meanings has important implications for the study of translated political modernity in late Qing China.

As I have discussed in my first chapter, in the past two decades we have tended to understand late Qing political modernity as a constructed discourse resulting from cross cultural exchanges and consolidated by power relations on both the local and the international levels. Apart from trying to make sense of the Chinese political modern through the study of semantic meanings prescribed in the constructed discourse, we are keen to examine how one particular discourse, or set of languages, had succeeded in obtaining legitimacy while many other competing ones failed. But in Liang's cases, he points us to alternative ways of approaching late Qing political modernity.

The first and most important point to note is that in 1902, Liang re-introduced the famous philosophical distinction between the name (*ming* 名) and the substance (*shi* 實). In writings published in 1902, he is keen to remind the late Qing reader that true modern political meanings and modern political languages are two *different* things, and that the formal language can by no means faithfully represent the formless truth. Second, since the signified meaning is different from its signifier, the discursive language, or discourse in general, is only *one of* the many means to represent the truth. In "Fiction and Public Governance," Liang comes to propose that fiction, which is capable of transmitting intuitive understanding as Zen Buddhism, can transmit the formless truth more faithfully than language. Liang's introduction of fiction as a "competing means of representation" discloses the pitfalls in examining the formation of late Qing political modernity as the "competition of discourses."

In *Rescuing History from the Nation*, Duara Prasenjit persuasively argues that the Chinese public's *perceptual understanding* of the modern political keyword "Nationalism" is

bound to be different from the word's semantic definition.[283] His keen observation aptly summarizes from where meanings of modern political concepts arrive at the turn of the early twentieth century. But in 1902, the direct and indirect arguments Liang presented are no longer concerned with "meanings of words." What he tried to argue instead is that words are signifiers that have failed to represent the true meaning. Liang's denial of words and his introduction of fiction as a more faithful means of representation/ communication indicate that not only was late Qing China in a state of linguistic fluidity, but it was in a state of "representational crisis." In late Qing China, different discourses representing different political forces were busy competing for meaning and legitimacy. But while this was a time to invent and modify the new discourse, it was also a time during which one was also given the right to deny the legitimacy of discourse as a whole.

In Liang's fictional attempt, he vividly exemplifies how one can subvert the legitimacy of one representational medium and shift the legitimacy to a new medium. In this sense, "legitimacy" in late Qing China can refer to the legitimacy of *words*, as well as the legitimacy of the *representational media*. Based on this observation, I propose shifting the current attention from the "competition of discourses" to the competition of "representational paradigms." Apart from examining what kinds of new meaning have been created in the dominate discourse, perhaps it is equally important to question how other means of representations such as fictional narrative, visual description, and the musical quality of words had challenged, undermined, and destabilized the representative power of discourse as a general whole.

[283] Duara Prasenjit, *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China* (Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1995).

CHAPTER THREE

An Onto-hermeneutic Turn in China's Political Modernity: From New Knowledge to Nameless Truth"

Introduction

Liang Qichao's *Discourse on the New Citizen* (*Xinmin shuo* 新民說) series was published in *New Citizen Journal* in 1902. In "On Public Morality" (*Lun gongde* 論公德),[284] one of his most extensively studied articles among the series, Laing inserts a lengthy interlinear annotation toward the end of the discussion explaining what has contributed to the Chinese's lack of morality. Printed in fonts one-third smaller than the rest of the text, the long passage crammed in the margin says the following:

> Recent literati and officials who talk of reform call for everything new except *new morality*. This is because they cannot get rid of their *academic slavishness*, and their love for the nation, the community, and the *truth* is not sincere enough.
>
> 今世士夫談維新者，諸事皆言新，惟不敢言新道德。此由學界奴性未去，愛國愛群愛真理之心未誠也。[285]

Like the way that it is presented in print, the short passage conveys a view that seems marginal to arguments Liang makes in "On Public Morality" as well as scholarly interpretations this article has received.

In his *Discourse on the New Citizen*, Liang begins by questioning why China had hardly made any visible progress in the past few decades of reform (吾國言新法數十年而效不睹者何也).[286] He says that while people in the West are fully capable of self-governance, the Chinese,

[284] See Liang, "Lun gongde 論公德" (On public morality), in *XMCB* 3 (1902): 1-7.

[285] Ibid., 6. Emphasis added.

[286] Liang, "Xinmin shuo yi: diyijie: sulun 新民說一: 第一節-敘論," in *XMCB* 1 (1902): 3.

deficient in “morality” (*minde* 民德), “intellectual courage” (*minzhi* 民智),[287] and “physical power” (*minli* 民力), cannot reach such degree of sophistication even with the guidance of a virtuous monarch or minister.”[288] By comparing the Chinese public to the British and the American, Liang asserts that the Chinese are inadequate in many senses.[289] Among these inadequacies, “public morality (*gongde* 公德)” is something people need most desperately.[290]

In Liang’s writing, he draws close connection between “political reform,” “new morality,” and “intellectual slavishness.” By attributing the lack of new morality, which is crucial to the success of China’s political reform, to the academic inertia, Liang implies that the lack of new morality is the “result” of a cause instead of the “cause” in itself.

Such a reading, seemingly an over interpretation, points to larger patterns in Liang’s project. In 1902, Liang, as my second chapter shows, was determined to replace the learning of words with intuitive understanding. By contextualizing recently translated modern political keywords in a lively animated fictional setting, Liang encourages the reader to observe the modern political as *lived* experiences instead of studying it as discursive knowledge. His launch of the “new fiction” signifies an initial attempt to implement an epistemic shift in late Qing China.

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[287] My decision to translate (zhi 智) as “intellectual courage” is inspired by Philip Huang’s discussions on Liang’s *Discourse of the New People*. Although this is not the standard translation Huang provides, I believe intellectual courage are the closest to the implied meaning Liang sought to articulate. I have decided to use “intellectual courage” for the convenience of discussing Liang’s academic assumptions. For Huang’s discussion, see *Liang Ch’i-ch’ao*, p. 66.

[288] Ibid.

[289] In addition to Liang’s “Lun gongde,” also see his “Lun jiaoyu dangding zongzhi 論教育當論宗旨” (On education and the importance of its purposes), in *XMCB* 1 (1902):61-78, and *XMCB* 2 (1902): 21-8.

[290] Liang, “Lun gongde,”1.

Liang Qichao's promotion of people's morality, intellectual courage, and physical power has often been taken as a critique of the Chinese's deficiencies.[291] Instead of interpreting these categories as separate aspects that Liang expected the Chinese to improve on,[292] this chapter begins by addressing a few basic questions to reframe the interpretation: why would Liang contribute the lack of new morality to "intellectual slavishness" (*xuejie nuxing* 學界奴性) and one's lack of interest in the "truth" (*zhenli* 真理)? What has morality to do with the Qing dynasty's academic practice, or the Chinese intellectual tradition in general? If new morality comes into being as a result of the intellectual reform, what would this new morality look like? More importantly, why would have the implementation of the political modern take place under the framework of fundamental intellectual and moral changes, how would these fundamental changes affect the epistemological status of modern political knowledge, and in turn the late Qing public's perceptual relationship, if not distance, with the political modern?

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[291] See Huang ko-wu's (Max Huang) chapter four, "Liang Qichao dui shijie shishi yu zhongguo xiangkuang de guancha 梁啟超對世界歷史與中國現況的觀察" (Liang Qichao's observation of world history and China's current situation), in *Yige bei fangqi de xuanze: Liang Qichao tiaoshi sixiang zhi yanjiu* 一個被放棄的選擇: 梁啓超調適思想之研究 (The rejected path: A Study of Liang Ch'i-ch'ao's accommodative thinking) (Taibei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo, 1994), 93-106.

[292] Huang Ko-wu argues that Liang's *Discourse on the New Citizen* is a critique of the Chinese's public's intellectual slavishness, as well as their lack of public and private morality. For Huang's detailed elaboration, see *Yige bei fangqi de xuanze*, 44-60, 66-80, and 114-5; Peter Zarrow shows that during the early 1900's, Liang "had hungered to create a new morality to supplement the old." See *After Empire*, 80-1. According to his earlier article, Zarrow believes that Liang strongly emphasized the importance of cultivating the Chinese public's moral autonomy, for such quality is crucial in transforming the "people" into the "new citizen." See Peter Zarrow, "Citizenship in China and the West," in *Imagining the People: Chinese Intellectuals and the Concept of Citizenship, 1890-1920*, edited by Joshua Fogel and Peter Gue Zarrow (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), p. 17. For Philip Huang, Liang's *Discourse on the New Citizen* was "to advance new set of morals for the "new citizen" of a modern China (65)." See Philip Huang's *Liang Ch'i-chao*, 64-7. For Chang Hao, Liang's promotion of new morality was based on the keen awareness that "in the realm of social ethics and state ethics, traditional morality proved to be woefully inadequate (154)." For more details, see Chang's chapter "The New Citizen," in *Liang Ch'i-chao*, 149-219.

From Conceptual Objectivity to Perceptual Self-reflection

In 1902, Liang constantly indicated that the reformist measures he introduced in *Discourse on the New Citizen* was intended to propose a pragmatic way of realizing a more momentous intellectual, moral, and political vision. In "On the Basic Trends of Chinese Intellectual Change" (論中國學術思想變遷之大勢),[293] he emphasizes that there has never been a shortage of new knowledge (*zhishi* 智識) during China's reformist process. Although many different forms of "foreign scholarly thinking" (外國學術思想)[294] and "Western material civilization" (泰西物質文明)[295] were imported to China in the past twenty years, the arrival of new knowledge did not bring people the much needed wisdom (*zhihui* 智慧). "Those who have appointed themselves the task of importing Western culture (輸入文明自任者)," according to Liang, had converted their blind, slavish respect for Chinese ancient sages to the equally blind, slavish respect for the foreigner.[296] For the late Qing intellectual, the problem China faces is not the lack of familiarity with the new knowledge, but the lack of capacity for reflection to make sense of it. Commenting on the learning habit and intellectual practice that were fashionable in China, Liang asserts that "the more knowledgeable the people become, the more well versed and knowledgeable slaves and traitors we will have 夫使一個增若干之學問，隨即增若干有學問有知識之漢奸奴隸."[297]

In Liang's writings, he is keen to differentiate the difference between *zhishi* 智識 (knowledge; conceptual objectivity) and *zhihui* 智慧 (wisdom; perceptual self-reflection). In

[293] See Liang, "Lun zhongguo xueshu sixiang bianqian zhi da shi 論中國學術思想變遷之大勢" (On the general transformational trend of Chinese academic thoughts), in *XMCB* 3 (1902): 41-56; *XMCB* 5 (1902): 57-80; *XMCB* 12 (1902): 39-56.

[294] Liang, "Lun zhongguo xueshu sixiang bianqian zhi dashi," in *XMCB* 3 (1902): 44.

[295] Liang, "Lun gongde," 7.

[296] Liang,"Lun zhongguo xueshu sixiang bianqian zhi dashi," 44.

[297] Liang, "Lun jiaoyu dangding zongzhi," *XMCB* 1 (1902): 65.

"Theories of the Two Founding Masters of Recent Civilization" (近世文明初祖二大家之學說), a sequel of essays Liang devoted to the introduction of Francis Bacon and René Descartes's philosophical thinking, Liang tries to elaborate differences between them. According to Liang, knowledge, or conceptual objectivity, refers to the observation of the physical reality (見事理者).[298] It is based on the examination of the material given (驗諸實物而有所徵).[299] While knowledge arrives from objective, empirical observation, wisdom is closely associated with *yishi* 意識 (consciousness). Through critically reflecting the empirical given with one's perceptual awareness (反諸本心而悉安者),[300] consciousness is the agent who makes sense of the factual observation (斷事理者).[301]

Liang believes that "consciousness is limitless and knowledge is limited 意無涯而智有涯."[302] To support this view, he says that Descartes is firmly convinced that knowledge is unreliable (*buke chi* 不可持),[303] and one's reliance on it can easily lead him "astray from the truth" (*shi zhen* 失真).[304] Descartes, according to Liang, sees knowledge, or conceptual objectivity, as a mirror. While it clearly reflects the matter's apparent manifestation (明現於其前者), it fails to reveal "what has yet been manifested" (*wei xiang lai zhe* 未現來者) and "what

[298] Liang, "Jinshi wenming chuzhu er dajia zhi xue 近世文明初祖二大家之學" (The theories of two great precursors of modern civilization), in *XMCB* 2 (1902): 10.

[299] Ibid., 18

[300] Ibid.

[301] Ibid., 10.

[302] Ibid.

[303] Ibid.

[304] Ibid.

has been surfaced but unclear" (*xiang er bushen ming zhe* 現而不甚明者).[305] Since the mirror can only show the surface reflection, Descartes believes that knowledge is a confined zone that is limited and narrowed (智識之區域本甚狹而有所限制).[306] For this reason, he sees knowledge as the cause of every misapprehension (一切迷謬之而起).[307] It is something that can causally lead to delusion (易生迷妄).[308]

In contrast to conceptual objectivity (智識), which is a narrow and confined zone, Liang shows that one's consciousness is a wide and free-ranged terrain with unlimited possibilities (意識則區域甚博且自由而無限者也). It critically reflects and questions what it sees (自審自疑).[309] Knowledge presents one with the face or facets (*xiang* 相), and the truth (*zhengxiang* 真相) often rests in what has been concealed underneath the surface (外物之真相).[310] To discover truth, one has to activate his consciousness, or perceptual self-reflection, the mental compartment that is complementary but superior to conceptual objectivity. It is only through the mindful exercise of consciousness can one discern the concealed and the obscured.[311]

In the hope of emphasizing the fine but important difference between knowledge and consciousness, Liang says that when one finds himself in the physical reality, apart from being able to observe the material fact with his conceptual objectivity, the consciousness he possesses

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[305] Ibid.

[306] Ibid.

[307] Ibid.

[308] Ibid.,11.

[309] Ibid.

[310] See Liang's discussion on Bacon in "Jinshi wenming chuzhu er dajia zhi xue," in *XMCB* 1 (1902): 13-5.

[311] Liang, "Jinshi wenming," *XMCB* 2 (1902): 10.

constitutes "subjective freedom in his spirit" (精神中則別有自由者存).[312] Instead of readily accepting the sheer fact presented to him, the person can critically interrogate the factual given with his subjective freedom. For Liang, one's spirit (*jingshen* 精神) is an independent being that resists any forms of authoritative influences.[313] It is only through exercising such independent spirit can one obtain the truth.[314] Liang then suggests that the most convenient way of exercising such capacity is to be consistently suspicious (*yi* 疑) about the conventional wisdom.[315] He says that it is only by doing so can one protect his freedom (是以之故，我得保其自由).[316]

The distinction Liang draws between "knowledge/ conceptual objectivity" and "wisdom/ perceptual self-reflection" may appear peculiar to the late Qing reader. This is because the both conceptual objectivity and perceptual self-reflection are considered traits of human intelligence. But instead of interpreting the term wisdom (*zhihui*) as the all comprehensive human intelligence, Liang seeks to associate it with consciousness (*yishi*), a mental faculty that is allegedly superior to conceptual objectivity (*zhishi*). To further dissociate conceptual objectivity from wisdom as general intelligence, Liang tries to find resonances for his summary of Descartes in the Chinese philosophical tradition. In his discussion, Liang says that the empirical observation made by conceptual objectivity is based completely on information received by the five senses (五官之智識). After reducing conceptual objectivity to a receiving rather than reflective agent, Liang, conjuring a logic that is familiar to readers well-versed in Chinese classics, says that what Descartes means by consciousness is similar to Mencius' definition of the heart (*xin* 心), which is

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[312] Ibid., 9 and 11.

[313] Ibid.,19.

[314] Ibid.,12.

[315] Ibid.11.

[316] Ibid.

responsible for perceptual reflection.[317] By aligning Mencius' definition of the heart with Descartes' understanding of consciousness, Liang manages to restrict the meaning of knowledge, or conceptual objectivity, to the observation of the phenomenal surface.

In his discussion on Bacon and Descartes, Liang strongly emphasizes the superiority of consciousness (智慧) and the importance of exercising one's capacity for reflection (意識) and subjective freedom. His arrangement is intended to deliver a clear message: it is only with such awareness and critical endeavor can the Chinese break away from the intellectual slavishness that has been so deeply rooted in its academic practice (破學界之奴性是也).[318] In an article Liang published in the third volume of *New Citizen Journal*, he points out that academic thinking to a country is like spirit is to a person (學術思想之在一國，猶人之有精神也). According to Liang, China once enjoyed the freedom of thought (思想自由) during the Warring States.[319] But soon this freedom of thought was restricted by Emperor Wu of Han and had weakened even further during the Song dynasty (960-1279).[320] Coming to the Qing dynasty, scholars of evidential scholarship have exhausted themselves debating about trivial details such as the semantic definition of words, or exact years and dates (本朝考據家之疲舌戰於字句之異同，

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[317] Ibid.,13. In ancient China, it was believed that the heart is the spring of all thoughts and emotions (萬事皆發於心). The doctrine that heart is in charge of cognition and wisdom was gravely challenged by missionaries arriving from Europe since the late Ming. The most comprehensive description on the function of the brain in the mid-nineteenth century arrives at Benjamin Hobson's *Quanti xinlun* 全體新論 (Treatise on physiology). In the chapter titled "Nao wei quanti zhi zhu" 腦為全體之主 (The Brain Governs the Entire Body), Hobson asserts that the seat of all mental activities rests in the brain (靈之在腦). It is the organ generating thoughts which may be translated into actions (以顯其思慮行為者). See Benjamin Hobson, *Quanti xinlun* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1991), 75. (The book was first published in 1851, by Huiai yiguan 惠愛醫館. The current edition is reprinted from Haishan xianguan congshu ben 海山仙館叢書 edition.)

[318] Liang, "Jinshi wenming," in *XMCB* 2 (1902): 14.

[319] Ibid., 19.

[320] Ibid.

鉤心角於年月之比較).[321] Instead of critically reflecting on the classics, Liang believes that the pre-occupation with the evidential investigation shows that Chinese scholars were constrained and confined by the classics. For Liang, the Chinese intellectual practice in general is corrupted in spirit.[322] Even for those who devote themselves to the study of the new learning and Western classics, they continue the practice of focusing one's sole attention on the knowledge's form and content instead of the spirit (即今所謂涉獵新學，研究西書者，亦大率其形質遺其精神).[323] By comparing formal content to the material object (*wu* 物), Liang says that his contemporaries' obsession with the formal content is a sheer matter of 玩物喪志 (losing one's spirit in the process of playing with objects).[324]

Scholars who study Liang's *Discourse on the New Citizen* tend to focus on differences between public morality and private morality.[325] But in many parallel articles Liang published in

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[321] Ibid.

[322] Ibid.

[323] Ibid.

[324] Liang, "Dili yu wenming zhi guanxi 地理與文明之關係" (The relationship between geography and civilization), in *XMCB* 3 (1902): 49.

[325] These questions can be divided into three general categories: first, how does Liang define "public morality"? What are the intellectual, philosophical, and historical resources that inform his definition of public morality? In what ways is Liang's understanding inspired by the Confucian moral tradition and indigenous socio-political framework, and in what ways have his understanding departed from these traditions? Second, does Liang's promotion of "public morality" indicate that China's modernization process had taken an "inward turn" during the early twentieth century, meaning that the focus had shifted from the national to the personal, or from modernizing the political system to modernizing the individual morality? How did this happen and what are the potential consequences? Third, what kind of social changes, national projects, and ideological consequences did this "inward turn" inspired during the early twentieth century? For more details, see Chang Hao, *Liang Ch'i-Ch'ao*; Philip Huang, *Liang Ch'i-Ch'ao and Modern Chinese Liberalism*; Yang Zhende 楊貞德's *Zhuanxiang ziwo: jindai Zhongguo zhengzhi sixiang shang de geren* 轉向自我: 近代中國政治思想上的個人(Taibei: Zhongyangyan jiuyuan zhongguo wenzhe yanjiusuo, 2009), 111-38; Wang Fansen 王汎森, "Cong xinmin dao xinren- jindai sixiang zhong de ziwo yu zhengzhi 從新民到新人- 近代思想中的「自我」與「政治」(From From the new citizen to the new man: self and politics in the modern thought), in *Zhong guo jin dai si xiang shi de zhuan xing shi dai* 中國近代思想史的轉型時代 (Transitional periods in modern Chinese intellectual history) (Taibei: Lianjing, 2007), 171-200; Wang Fansen, "Zhongguo jindai xixiang zhong de chuantong yinsu—jian lun sixiang de benzhi yu sixiang de gongneng 中國近代思想中的傳統因素—兼論思想的本質與思想的功能" (Elements of tradition in modern Chinese thought: discussions on the nature of thought and its function), in

New Citizen Journal in 1902, Liang openly declares that what he expects from China is one's critical self-reflection. From now on, he hopes that the Chinese can liberate oneself from the shackle of different classical or ideological doctrines (不必更以宗教之末法自缚也).[326] This is because Liang believes that "following the arrival of new intellectual practice, there will be new morality, new politics, and new technical advancement, and new material invention (有新學術, 然後有新道德, 新政治, 新技藝, 新器物).[327] In this statement, the late Qing reformer clearly indicates that the new intellectual trend is the foundation of new morality. The call for new morality only highlights the indispensability of implementing a new academic practice in China.

Knowing that the West had undergone similar experiences, Liang says that his purpose of introducing Bacon and Descartes is to show the Chinese public how these two philosophers had succeeded in breaking away from such intellectual slavishness. Bacon, for instance, believes that the truth arrives from the empirical observation of the physical phenomenon instead of the classics. Descartes, on the other hand, believes that the truth arrives from the exercise of one's subjective freedom. Since the promotion of Bacon and Descartes is intended to show the late Qing public the two ways of breaking away from the Chinese's intellectual slavishness, Liang uses to the identical head-initial *zhi* 智 (intelligence) to denote the *zhishi* 智識 and *zhihui* 智慧 two philosophers offer to the Chinese public. But at the same time, Liang's attempt to prioritize perceptual reflection (智慧) associated with Descartes to conceptual objectivity (智識)

Zhongguo jindai sixiang yu xueshu xipu 中國近代思想與學術的系譜 (Genealogy of modern Chinese thought and academic trends) (Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiaoyu chubanshe, 2001), 117-48.

[326] Liang, "Lun zhongguo xueshu sixiang zhi dashi," *XMCB* 3 (1902): 45.

[327] Liang, "Jinshi wenming," *XMCB* 2 (1902): 11.

represented by Bacon indicates his clear personal preference for the former.[328] This is something that I will return to in a latter part of the chapter.

Between the "Truth" and New Text Studies

In "Theories of the Two Founding Masters of Recent Civilization," Liang emphasizes the importance of exercising one's critical reflection. His insistence on going beneath the surface and uncovering the hidden truth closely responds to the philosophical ideal Tan Sitong expressed in *Renxue* (On Benevolence). In *Renxue*, one of Tan's key arguments is that all the living and material beings are created by *qi* as a single, identical substance. But since individuals are ignorant of the cosmos' organizing principle, they perceive the constructed "categorical" differences as "substantial" differences. Tan believes that it is only by destroying the constructed binary difference can the truth be surfaced (真理出，斯對待不破以自破).[329]

Liang openly acknowledges Tan's influence in his book review on *Renxue*.[330] In the review, Liang begins by re-emphasizing that the Chinese is slavish in both the practical and

[328] Wang Hui has also provided a reading on Liang's discussion of Bacon and Descartes. He perceptively argues that Bacon and Descartes had provided Liang with European perspectives to analyze differences between the two schools of Neo-Confucianism. Of these schools, one is represented by Zhu Xu 朱熹 and Cheng Yi 程頤, who emphasize the importance of investigating the object (*gewu* 格物), and the other one is represented by Wang Yangming and Lu Xiangshan, who focus on the exploring one's heart (or moral nature) (*gexin* 格心). For more details, see Wang's *The Rise of Modern Chinese Thought*, 961-4. Ko-wu Huang holds an opposite view from Wang and me. He believes that for Liang, the careful empirical observation provides the gateway for the obtainment of knowledge and the observation of good moral practice. See Huang's chapter four, "Liang Qichao dui zhishi de kanfa 梁啟超對知識的看法" (Liang Qichao's view on knowledge), in *Yige bi fangqi de xuanzhe*, 93-106.

[329] Since Liang emphasizes the importance of cultivating public and private morality and Tan calls for the demolition of traditional moral constraints and hierarchy, some scholars tend to focus on differences between the two. See Huang ko-wu, *Yige bei fangqi de xuanze*, 127; Li Zehou 李澤厚, "Tan Sitong yanjiu 譚嗣同研究" (A Study on Tan Sitong), in *Zhongguo jindai sixiang shilun* 中國近代思想史論 (Discussions on modern Chinese intellectual history) (Tianjin: Tianjin shehui kexueyuan chubanshe, 2004), 164-226. (The article was published originally in *Xin jianshe* 新建設 (New construction) 7 (1955).)

[330] Liang, "Renxue 仁學" (An exposition of benevolence), in *XMCB* 1 (1902): 116-7.

mental senses (吾國人於形質上精神上有種種奴隸性).[331] He says that since most people cannot critically reflect on what they have read, they are only capable of boosting their erudition by quoting words of others (拾人牙慧以自炫).[332] By comparing *Renxue* to the lion's roar, Liang says that Tan's purpose of composing the book is to awaken the people on a spiritual ground (震盪之而滌除之).[333] As a man of great sincerity, Tan's words were expression of true feelings collected in his heart. Rather than preaching to people with the theoretically speaking, Tan tries to move the people's spirit with his sincerity (著者，至誠之人也，誠積於心而形於言。此書非徒教授學者以理論，而感化者以精神也).[334]

In Liang's review on *Renxue*, he subtly demarcates two views he shares with Tan. One is the assumption that the Chinese is intellectually and practically constrained by their slavish conformity. The other is that one can only help liberating people from such conformity by awakening their spirit (*jingshen*) instead of preaching to them in words. Apart from outlining views they shared, Liang's identification with Tan reveals their position in a much larger intellectual debate in which the two found themselves at the turn of the twentieth century.

In *Intellectual Trends of the Qing Period* (清代學術概論), Liang devotes a chapter to Tan's *Renxue*.[335] Speaking as an intellectual historian, Liang suggests that the most important contribution Tan made to the development of Qing intellectual history is his attack on the "name" (*ming* 名) as an artificial construct and the Confucian ethics that draws its supremacy through the

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[331] Ibid., 116.

[332] Ibid., 117.

[333] Ibid., 116.

[334] Ibid., 117.

[335] See Liang Qichao, *Qingdai xueshi gailun* 清代學術概論 (Intellectual trends of the Qing period) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1998), 90-94.

creation of the name. Calling Tan a man who “boldly and explicitly attacks Confucian ethics” (明目張膽以詆名教),[336] Liang believes that Tan’s work has “completely liberated itself from the conservative confines. Its innovativeness is unparalleled in the Qing Dynasty (盡脫舊思想之束縛，戛戛獨造，則前清一代，未有其比也).[337] In *Intellectual Trends*, Liang quotes two extensive passages in which Tan lists ills caused by the manipulative uses of “name” and “Confucian authority.”[338] After listing these long passages, Liang says that similar examples can be infinitely produced from Tan’s book.[339]

Tan, as discussed in the previous chapter, is a troubled man trying to come to terms with a number of intellectual, political, and personal crises in *Renxue*. Despite the book’s great complexity, Liang summarizes it as a work that subverts the legitimacy of name and Confucian ethics.[340] He says that Tan’s key arguments are precisely “ideas advocated by the school of new text studies (皆當時今文學派所日倡道者).”[341] While Tan had never been formally associated with the school of “new text studies” (今文經學), Liang makes Tan’s attack on name and Confucian ethics the promotion of new text principles.

[336] Ibid., p. 92.

[337] Ibid.

[338] Ibid., 92-3.

[339] Liang, *Qingdai xueshu gailun*, 94.

[340] Tan, *Rexue*, 94. In the conclusion of Liang’s chapter, he denounces the utopic order Tan envisions in *Renxue* as “prejudiced and narrow-minded nationalism” (褊狹的國家主義). Liang believes that Tan’s social-political proposals undermine *Renxue*’s intellectual contribution, and he attributes the regression to his own absence. Liang says: Later, when Liang Ch’i-ch’ao lived in the East [i.e. Japan] and was gradually subjected to the vulgar influence of Europe and Japan, he ardently promoted a narrow nationalism- what an affront to his late friend! 其後梁啟超居東，漸然歐、日俗論，乃盛倡褊狹的國家主義，慚其死友矣). See Liang, *Qingdai xueshu gailun*, 94. For Immanuel C. Y. Hsü’s translation, see *Intellectual Trends in the Chi’ing Period* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1959), 110.

[341] Ibid.

In *Renxue*, Tan's philosophical framework was inspired by several different schools of thinking. In addition to Zhang Zai's *qi* theory and Wang Fuzhi's view of the cosmos, these schools include Neo-Confucianism, Christianity, and Buddhist learning Tan picked up from Yang Wenhui 楊文會 (1837-1911).[342] Instead of fully acknowledging these scholarly influences, Liang focuses on discussing resources that prepared Tan for his conversion to new text studies. By quoting a line of poetry in which Tan affirms the eminence of Wang Zhong 汪中(1745－94), Wei Yuan 魏源 (1794-1857), Gong Zizheng 龔自珍 (1972-1841), and Wang Kaiyun 王闓運 (1833-1916) ("汪魏龔王始是才"), who are the founding people of new text studies, Liang says that new text studies is what Tan's heart leans toward (其向往所自).[343]

Before presenting Tan as a spokesperson for new text studies, Liang has systematically traced academic movements that had anticipated the rise of new text studies during the second half of the Qing dynasty.[344] After outlining a general academic development during the Qing

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[342] See Chang Hao, *Chinese Intellectuals in Crisis*, 78-9.

[343] Liang, *Qingdai*, 91.

[344] See Liang, *Qingdai*. For the rise of new text Confucianism during the Qing dynasty, and the roles Zhuang Cunyu, Liu Fenglu, and Gong Zizhen played in this intellectual movement, see Benjamin Elman, *Classicism, Politics, and Kinship The Ch'ang-Chou School of New Text Confucianism in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); On-cho Ng, "Text in context : chin-wen learning in Ch'ing thought," (PhD diss., University of Hawaii , 1986); On Cho Ng and Q. Edward Wang, *Mirroring the Past: The Writing and Use of History in Imperial China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005); Wang Hui, *Xiandai Zhongguo sixiang de xingqi (shangjuan: dierbu)*現代中國思想的興起 (上卷：第二部) (The rise of modern Chinese thought) (Beijing: Shenghuo, dushu, xinzhi sanlian shudian, 2004), 489-519 and 737-829; Wang Hui, "Idea of China in New Text Confucianism, 1780-1911," in *Critical Zone 2: A Forum of Chinese and Western Knowledge*, edited by Q. S. Tong, Shouren Wang, and Douglas Kerr (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2006), 167-80; Qian Mu 錢穆, *Qian Binsi xiansheng quanji* 中國近三百年學術史 (Chinese intellectual history of recent three hundred years) (Taibei: shangwu yanshu guan, 1998); Zhou Yutong 周予同, *Jing jin gu wen xue* 經今古文學 (New and Old Text Studies) (Taibei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1965); Sang Bing 桑兵 and Guan Xiaohong 關曉紅, *Xian yin hou chuang yu bu po bu li: jin dai Zhongguo xue shu liu pai yan jiu* 先因後創與不破不立: 近代中國學術流派研究 (Beijing: Shenghuo, dushu, xinzhi sanlian shudian, 2007), 75-297; Pi Xirui 皮錫瑞, *Jing xue li shi 經學歷史(Confucian history)* ([China]: Si xian shuju, 1906); Shi Gexin 史革新, *Wanqing lixue yanjiu* 晚清理學研究 (A study of Neo-Confucianism in late Qing China) (Beijing: Shangwu yinshu guan, 2007). For discussions focusing on Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao's involvement in the development of new text studies, see Hsiao Kung-chuan, *A Modern China and a New World: K'ang Yu-Wei, Reformer and Utopian*, 1858-1927 (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975); Xie Xizhang 解玺璋,

dynasty, he suggests that this new scholarly trend finally reached its full maturity when Kang Youwei came along with his intellectual breakthroughs.[345] Liang's historical account situates Kang in the center of new text studies (今文學運動之中心，曰南海康有為).[346] Calling himself Kang's disciple (*dizi* 弟子),[347] Liang says that he was the person who helped Kang promote new text studies in the most ferocious fashion.[348]

It is generally known that Liang is Kang's student. Something interesting to note is that in Liang's editor's preface to *Renxue*, he mentions that both he and Tan Sitong have worshipped Kang as students (其於學也，同服膺南海).[349] Apart from indicating that *Renxue* is a result of Kang's teaching, Liang announces that Tan Sitong's purpose of composing the book is to circulate and expand Kang's teaching ((《仁學》何為而作也？將以光大南海之宗旨).[350] In Liang biography on Tan, he also states that Tan's interest in elaborating and expanding Kang's philosophy is what prompted him to complete *Renxue* (衍繹南海之宗旨，成《仁學》一書).[351]

"Baoguo shusheng: Liang Qichao yu Kang Youwei (shang) 報國書生：梁啟超與康有為 (上)," in *Liang Qichao zhuan* 梁啟超傳 (Biography on Liang Qichao) (Shanghai: Shanghai wenhua chubanshe, 2012), 65-114; Tang Zhijun 湯志鈞, "Kang Youwei he jinwen jinxue 康有為和今文經學" (Kang Youwei and new text Confucianism), in *Kang Youwei yu wuxu bianfa* 康有為與戊戌變法 (Kang Youwei and the 1898 reform) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984), 35-49; Luke Kwong, "An Incipient Radicalism," in *A Mosaic of the Hundred Days: Personalities, Politics, and Ideas of 1898* (Cambridge, Mass: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1984), 105-27; Philip Huang's "From New Text Confucianism to "Democratic" Reform, 1890-1898," in *Liang Ch'i-Ch'ao*, 11-35.

345 Liang, *Qingdai xueshu gailun*, 77-80.

346 Ibid., 77.

347 Ibid., 78 and 83.

348 Ibid., 83.

349 Liang Qichao, "Renxue su," 101

350 Ibid.

351 Quoted from Wang Fanshen, "Xinli yu po duidai," 75.

And yet, according to studies of recent scholars and Tan Sitong's own account, Tan only learnt about Kang's theory from Liang.[352] He never officially studied with Kang.

Liang carefully includes Tan as a member of new text studies and suggests that the composition of *Renxue* reflects this new intellectual trend's most recent development. In Liang's novella "The Future of New China," *Renxue* has again been juxtaposed with Kang Youwei's writing. In the story, Liang says that his protagonist Huang Keqiang's political thinking is inspired chiefly by two books.[353] One is *Renxue*, and the other one is Kang's autobiographical writing *Changxing xueji* 長興學記 (*Notes on studies at Changxing*). After putting these two books on the same par, in the novella Liang goes on to trace his protagonist Huang Keqiang's intellectual genealogy. Huang's father, according to Liang, is a student of Mr. Zhu Jiujiang 朱九江. Being known as Zhu Ciqi 朱次琦 (1807-82), this learned man is actually Kang Youwei's teacher.[354] Apart from being a distinguished Confucian philosopher, Zhu is the leading scholar of the "Guangdong Learning (粵學)," a scholarly trend that had heavily influenced Southern China's intellectual climate in the nineteenth century.

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[352] Luke Kwong has conducted at least two detailed studies showing Tan Sitong had never been closely affiliated with Kang. For more details, see *A Mosaic of the Hundred Days*, 115-20; also see Kwong's *T'an Ssu-T'ung,* 165-9.

[353] Liang, "Xin Zhongguo weilai ji," in *XXS* 2 (1902): 30-1.

[354] According to Liang's biography on Kang Youwei, Kang studied six years with Zhu Ciqi. But in Kang's personal account, he says that he had only spent less than two years studying with Zhu. Contemporary scholars such as Zhu Weizheng 朱維錚 consider Zhu Ciqi an important source of intellectual influence for Kang, but Sang Bing and Guan Xiaohong find it debatable. For Liang's biography on Kang, see "Nanhai Kang xiansheng zhuang 南海康先生傳" (Biography of Mr. Kang Youwei), in *Qingyi bao* 清議報, vol. 100; for Kang Youwei's moving and affective account on his experience of studying with Zhu, see his *Kang Nanhai zibian nianpu: wai erzhong* 康南海自編年譜: 外二種(Kang Youwei's self-compiled chronicle and others) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1992), 8; for Zhu Weizheng's view on Kang with relations with Zhu Ciqi, see Zhu Weizheng, "Kang Youwei zai shijiu shiji 康有為在十九世紀" (Kang Youwei in the nineteenth century), in *Qiu suo zhen wenming: wanqing xueshu shi lun* 求索真文明：晚清學術史論 (Discussions on the late Qing academic history: The search of the true civilization) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1996), 172-4; for the uncertainty Sang Bing and Guan Xiaohong express, see *Xian yin hou chuang yu bupo boli*, 238-9.

In the first half of the Qing dynasty, China's scholarly scene was largely dominated by the "evidential studies" of the Han learning, an intellectual movement seeking to decipher meanings of Confucian classics through highly sophisticated philological methods.[355] Classical texts this school of scholars studied are based on editions compiled by Zheng Xuan 鄭玄, Xu Shen 許慎, Ma Rong 馬融, and Jia Kui 賈逵 during the Eastern Han Period (25 AD - 220 AD). As scholars of "evidential studies" were torn by endless debates that focused on discussing correct philological interpretations of words, scholars under the influence of Song learning, which is often associated with the abstract discussion of moral principles, argued that the Confucian classics were written for purposes of providing moral guidance in handling practical state affairs. During the time, intellectuals such as Wei Yuan started to advocate "practical statesmanship (經世致用)," an intellectual movement emphasizing the need to implement a series of administrative (rather than political) reform under the guidance of Confucian teaching.[356] Although "statecraft learning" began life as a reaction to evidential studies, something its followers were keen to emphasize is that administrative reformation is by no means divorced from the Confucian moral principle. Rather, the school was looking for means to realize Confucian teaching in the social reality.

Since "practical statesmanship" shares clear Confucian moral purposes, its practitioners believed that one can only fulfil the guiding principle by knowing the exact meaning of Confucian classics. Their awareness was partly influenced by the rise of new text studies, a

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[355] For the rise of evidential studies during the early Qing dynasty, representative scholars of this intellectual trend, and its distinct academic practices, see Elman Benjamin, *From Philosophy to Philology: Intellectual and Social Aspects of Change in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, Mass: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1984).

[356] See Benjamin Elman, "The Relevance of Sung Learning in the Late Qing: Wei Yuan and the Huang-ch'ao Ching-shih Wen-pien," in *Late Imperial China*, 9.2 (December 1988): 56-85.

scholarly trend that emphasizes the importance of exploring more reliable ways of interpreting Confucian classics as well as more reliable editions available.

Scholars of "evidential studies," as mentioned earlier, based their studies of Confucian classics on editions compiled during the Eastern Han dynasty. This practice is often associated with "old text studies" (古文經學). But coming to 1866, Liao Ping 廖平 (1852-1932) argued in his *Gujin xuekao* 今古學考 (*On Old and New Texts Studies*) that the Eastern Han editions Qing scholars examined are forgeries of the Western Han (206 BC—AD 9) historian Liu Xin 劉歆 (ca. 50 BC – AD 23).[357] Before Kang Youwei popularized Liao Ping's theory in his *Xinxue weijing kao* 新學偽經考 (*A Study of the "New Text" Forgeries*) (1891), there were already other scholars questioning the practice of "evidential studies." Among these scholars, Liang says that the most influential one is Zhuang Cunyu 莊存與 (1719—1788).[358] As evidential scholars were occupied by philological meanings of words, Zhuang argued that what truly matters is the "meaning" words seek to express rather than the "semantic content" of words per se. Zhuang, to summarize his theory, says that what he is concerned with is the *weiyan dayi* 微言大義 (the profound principles concealed in subtle language). Like Zhuang Cunyu, Gong Zizhen was also interested in different "interpretative possibilities" the classical texts can potentially open one to rather than philological investigation of semantic definition.[359] Liang believes that Gong was the first person who tried to implement practical statesmanship with reference to new text studies' approach to text. And when it comes to Zhu Ciqi, he became one of the first persons who sought

[357] For a recent book-length study on Liu Ping, see Cui Hailiang 崔海亮, *Liao Ping jingu xue yanjiu* 廖平今古学研究 (An Examination on Liao Ping's new text studies) (Changsha: yuelu shushe, 2014).

[358] See Liang, *Qingdai xueshu gailun*, 61-94. For more details on Zhuang's academic background and theoretical assumption, see Elman, *Classicism*, 74-144; also see On-cho Ng, "Text in Context: Chin-wen Learning in Ch'ing Thought" (Ph.D. diss., University of Hawaii, 1986).

[359] Liang, *Qingdai xueshu gailun*, 74-7.

to combine the many competing schools of learning during the mid-1800. Zhu affirms that the implementation of administrative reform is intended to safeguard and realize moral guidance prescribed in Confucian classics. His inclination vividly reflects the possibility and prospect of incorporating moral-metaphysical studies of Song studies into practical statesmanship. In the hope of realizing "true" moral purposes that the sages had intended, Zhu believes that it is important to consult both "evidential studies" of Han learning and new text studies for the most reliable interpretations available.[360]

What may now appear to be a natural synthesis of different schools of learning was a great leap forward at Zhu's times. In the Qing dynasty, "evidential studies" of Han learning was the orthodox learning of the state. The decision to support or pursue alternative intellectual trends such as new text studies often indicates one's decision to depart from the state orthodox. Zhu Ciqi is the teacher of Kang Youwei. While Zhu tried to synthesize different competing, and possibly contradictory, academic trends, Kang consciously aligned himself with new text studies. Kang published *A Study of the "New Text" Forgeries* in 1891. The book, as Liang and many modern scholars believe, is an elaboration of key arguments Liao Ping published in *On Old and New Texts Studies*.[361] Liang says that Kang's most important contribution to new text studies lies in *Kongzi gaizhi kao* 孔子改制考 (Study of the Reforms of Confucius), a book Kang

[360] Chang Hao, *Liang Ch'i-chao*, 22.

[361] There have been repeated debates on whether Kang Youwei's *A Study of the "New Text" Forgeries* is the plagiarism of Liao Ping's *On Old and New Texts Studies*. For a brief summary on Liao's accusation against Kang and Kang's defense, see Sang Bing and Guan Xiaohong, *Xian yin hou chuang yu bupo buli*, 206-10. For some of the most representable views on this debate, see Qian Mu, "Kang shi zhi xin kaoju 康氏之新考據" (Kang youwei's new text studies), in *Zhongguo jinsanbai nian*, 641-62; Tang Zhijun, "Kang Youwei he jinwen jinxue," 35-49; Zhu Weizheng, "Kang Youwei zai shijiu shiji," 165-213. For a more recent discussion, see Cai Lesu 蔡樂蘇, Zhang Yong 張勇, and Wang Xianming 王憲明, *Wuxu bianfa shishu lungao* 戊戌變法史述論稿 (A historical narrative and discussion on the 1898 reformist movement) (Beijing: Qinghua daxue chubanshe, 2001), 125-34.

completed in 1892 and publish in 1897.[362] In this book, Kang argues that all the classics Confucius claimed to have "compiled" are in fact the sage's own "compositions." Instead of going on conducting philological investigations on the textual meaning of the classics, Kang believes that it is more important to explore reformist goals Confucius tries to achieve through his reconstruction, if not fabrication, of the utopic ancient past. Kang's *Study of the Reforms of Confucius* was inspired by Zhuang Cunyu's emphasis on *weiyan dayi* (the profound principles concealed in subtle language). Kang was apparently sensitive to Zhuang's key philosophical assumption that meanings of words are contingent upon messages the author seeks to express rather than the semantic definition of words. In other words, the classics should be perceived and interpreted as a matter of "lived expressions" rather than "expressions." And yet, a point that worth special attention is that while Kang was conscious of such philosophical underpinning, in *Study of the Reforms of Confucius* his focus shifts elsewhere. Among the many arguments Kang tries to make in the book, the one he focuses on elaborating is that Confucius is also in support for reform. Rather than reminding the reader that meanings of the classics are determined by purposes that informed Confucius's reconstruction of a utopian social order under the disguise of a compiler, Kang uses the case he makes about Confucius's reformist attempt to justify the legitimacy of the political reform he was preparing to launch in China.[363]

Liang is famous for having obtained his *juren* degree at the young age of sixteen. Before becoming Kang's disciple in 1890, he focused his study on evidential studies and the Han learning, which are materials on which the imperial examination was based. As soon as Liang

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[362] Liang, *Qingdai xueshu gailun*, 79-80

[363] See Kang Youwei, *Kongzi gaizhi kao* 孔子改制考 (Study of the reforms of Confucius) (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1991).

met Kang, he decided to abandon the training he had received.[364] It is commonly known that Kang inspired Liang to participate in the reformist movement, and so far, much scholarly attention has been devoted to their collective reformist effort. But Kang and Liang were so much more than reformist partners. The teacher-student relationship between them also registers the most recent development of new text studies as a rapidly rising intellectual trend seeking to replace the legitimacy of the Han learning. As Liang recalls in *Intellectual Trends of the Qing Period*, the appeal of Kang's scholarship was what prompted him to abandon his previous learning. Liang says that as he attended Kang's private home school the Thousand Thatched Hall (*Wanmu caotang* 萬木草堂), the class focused on "strongly attacking the old-school learning (大詆訶舊學)."[365] Although Liang was not particularly satisfied with certain assigned readings and Kang's insistence on having students perform ancient rituals, he says that learning about Kang's theory on "the great unity" (*datong* 大同) was a euphoric experience that had almost driven him mad (喜欲狂).[366]

For Liang, Kang's theory on "universalism" signifies an unprecedented progress in the development of new text studies. As a recent convert to this rising intellectual trend, Liang agrees with Kang that after the decease of Confucius, Confucianism had been divided into two schools.[367] One is represented by Mencius and the other by Xunzi 荀子. The Mencius school seeks to elaborate and expand social, moral ideas discussed in *Chunqiu* 春秋 (*Spring and Autumn Annals*), and the school of Xunzi is solely interested in circulating ideas prescribed in the

[364] Liang, *Qingdai xueshu gailun*, 83.

[365] Ibid., 83.

[366] Ibid.

[367] See Liang, "Lun zhongguo xueshu sixiang," in *XMCB* 2 (1902): 39-55.

classic (傳經).[368] Most people believed that the difference between new text studies and old text studies rests in the edition of texts, with the former claiming that the edition complied in Western Han dynasty is more reliable than the Eastern Han edition. And yet, Liang believes that the concern about editions is essentially a matter of circulation. Instead of arguing which is the most accurate and reliable edition to circulate and study, it appears to Liang that the purpose of new text studies rests in recovering the repressed moral-political ideals Mencius inherited and developed from Confucius's teaching. Liang personally assumes that Mencius's political thinking can be summarized with the word *datong*, the great unity (謂為大同精義所寄), and he believes that such ideal can be *inferred* from Mencius' discussions on issues such as "killing and punishing "enemies of the people" (民賊), "autocrate"（獨夫）; "having those skilled in making war suffer the highest punishment (善戰服上刑); and "disturbing land in order to regulate property holding" (授田制產"諸義).[369]

In *Intellectual Trends*, Liang says that he "persistently tried to propagate" (日倡道之) what he considered to be Mencius's utopian ideal."[370] I believe that Liang's means of circulating this *datong* ideal is to combine discussions in *Mencius* with recently translated Western political theories on people's sovereignty (民權論), and to circulate his syntheses in Hunan Contemporary Affairs Academy (*Shiwu xuetang* 時務學堂) and the Reform Society of Southern China (*Nanxue hui* 南學會), two private academies he established with Tan Sitong and other

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[368] Ibid, 46. Apart from delineating the historical development of these schools, Liang also provides three tree diagrams delineating these schools' intellectual genealogy.

[369] Liang, *Qingdai xueshu gailun*, 84. See Immanuel C. Y. Hsü's translation in *Intellectual Trends in the Chi'ing Period*, 100.

[370] Ibid.

friends in the Hunan province.[371] Apart from preaching these ideas on an academic level, Liang said that he had intended to "call for a political revolution" (盛倡革命) through the circulation of these ideas.[372]

Liang's promotion of Mencius alongside Western political theories has at least two important implications. To begin with, Liang's decision in promoting *datong* is motivated by the wish to revive a repressed moral-scholarly tradition. Later on, Liang came to find manifestation of Mencius's moral ideal in recently translated Western political theories. Based on Western political concepts Liang went on to circulate, we have been given the impression that Liang was essentially interested in launching a reformist, or revolutionary, movement in China. But as soon as Liang's initial incentive is taken into consideration, it becomes clear that what appears to be a reformist movement is not entirely political. It is also a new moral-scholarly movement. Western political concepts Liang circulated began life with a moral purpose, and their appearance signifies that what Liang considered a marginalized moral-scholarly ideal had managed to find modern political expression. Moreover, the so called "repressed" moral-scholarly tradition Liang sought to revive is antagonistic to the orthodox intellectual trend endorsed by the state. As indicated in the above discussion, the assumption that *datong* is Mencius's ultimate ideal arrives from Liang's interpretation of the sage's writing. His approach to text manifests Zhuang Cunyu's exegetical principle "*weiyan dayi*"--- meaning arrives from the interpretative possibility rather than the semantic content of words. His interpretative method marks a clear departure from "evidential studies" advocated by the Han learning. And more obviously, Liang's promotion of Mencius's teaching is inspired by Kang Youwei, who was the most prominent spokesperson for new text studies.

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[371] Ibid., 84-5.

[372] Ibid., 85

At the time Liang introduced Western political concepts to China, it appears that he was trying to make multiple breakthroughs. First, Western political concepts Liang promoted directly questioned the legitimacy of the Qing monarchy's imperial rule. Second, the wish to restore what he considered to be the "true" meaning of Mencius, who Liang wishfully labels as a much neglected figure in a scholarly tradition that focuses on the importance of circulating the classic and conducting philological investigation of text, posed a serious challenge to the "evidential studies" of "Han learning" as the orthodox learning of the state. Apart from trying to lead both a new political and a new scholarly trends in late Qing, Liang was focusing on still another breakthrough, which is to "moralize" Western political concepts he had recently promoted in China. The move marks Liang's attempt to synthesize Western political concepts into Song learning and the teaching of Mencius as a repressed moral-scholarly tradition.

An Onto-Hermeneutic Turn in China's Political Modernization

At the turn of the twentieth century, Liang believed that the implementation of Western political concepts can help to realize the "true" *datong* moral ideal envisioned by Mencius. He was, in other words, seeking to introduce a modern political order alongside both a marginal intellectual practice and what he labeled as a repressed Confucian moral order.

In *Discourse on the New Citizen*, Liang places equal emphasis on the importance of renewing the people's morality, intellectual courage, and physical power. These objectives witness his engagement with new text studies and his aspiration to contextualize these new text principles in the political reality. *Discourse on the New Citizen*, in a sense, provides Liang with a venue to communicate his larger intellectual agenda to the general public and convince them the importance of realizing such intellectual vision in the immediate present.

Liang's promotion of "public morality" has received a good deal of scholarly attention. For scholars who are keen to show that Liang's reformist project has actively drawn cultural sources from China's moral and intellectual tradition, they have carefully shown that while public morality can be manifest as different modern political values or civil attributes, these attributes often share an anonymous Confucian moral origins.[373] My purpose, however, is not to delineate how Liang had helped to bridge Confucian moral attributes with modern political values, and in what ways the modern political manifestation of these Confucian moral attributes have departed from their traditional cultural connotations. What I am interested in is how the connection Liang draws between morality and modern political concepts has revised the epistemological status of modern political concepts, elevating them from discursive modern political knowledge to moral, ethic, and religious principles that are meant to be internalized and embodied as subjective ontological experiences.

Liang's promotion of *zhi* 智 (intellectual courage), as discussed in the first part of the chapter, is intended to expose the fallacy of learning Western ideas as discursive knowledge. In a concluding remark he makes in "On Public Civility," Liang says that "I'm afraid that the more sophisticated the country becomes in the domain of knowledge, the weaker in the moral cultivation (吾恐今後智育愈盛，則德育愈衰)."[374] To emphasize his concern, he goes on to suggest that "as Western material civilization was being extensively imported to China, the four billion people will grow collectively into beasts (泰西物質文明盡輸入中國，而四萬萬人且相率而為禽獸也)."[375] By equating knowledge with moral decline, Liang subverts the prestige of

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[373] See Peter Zarrow, *After Empire*, 56-89; Philip Huang, "From Next Text Confucianism to "Democratic Reform," in *Liang Ch'i-chao*, 11-35.

[374] Liang "Lun gongde," 7.

[375] Ibid.

translated modern political knowledge in late Qing China. Instead of deeming them vital tools in saving China from its political turmoil, Liang is keen to emphasize the limitation of learning Western knowledge as mere discursive knowledge.

Both statements above suggest that instead of interpreting the *zhi* 智 (intellectual courage) and *de* 德 (morality) Liang promoted in 1902 as two separate entities, the two should be understood in close relation to each other. In Liang's discussions on Bacon and Descartes, he emphasizes the importance of making the new knowledge a subject of vigorous intellectual scrutiny instead of an object for worship. In these statements, he goes on to add that modern political concepts would not be "meaningful" if they are treated as intellectual properties that are divorced from moral and spiritual purposes.[376]

I believe what Liang tries to propose in *New Citizen Journal* is so much more than the importance of contextualizing Western political concepts in a repressed Confucian moral paradigm and learning to make sense of the new knowledge with exegetical principles advocated by new text studies. In Wang Hui's and Peter Zarrow's insightful study on Liang, they carefully trace the late Qing reformer's close affiliation with new text studies and the ways in which Liang's reformism were informed by new text principles.[377] Like Wang and Zarrow, I believe that the study of Liang's engagement with new texts studies will prove instrumental in revealing the intellectual complexity and discovering the logical order in his seemingly muddled political thinking. In this chapter, I have tried to show how tracing Liang's engagement with new text studies can help us interpret *Discourse on the New Citizen* from a new light. But in addition to

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[376] Wang Hui makes a similar remark in his discussion on Liang, though he believes that Liang's understanding of morality is based predominately on Wang Yangming's and Lu Xiangshan's theory on "nourishing the nature." See *Xiandai Zhongguo sixiang de xingqi*, 939. While Philip Huang holds comparable views, he believes that the emphasis Liang placed on Confucian morality was inspired by Nakamura Masanao's 中村忠行 translation of Samuel Smiles's *Self-Help* (1859). For more details, see Philip Huang's *Liang Ch'i-chao*, 62-3.

[377] See Peter Zarrow, *After Empire*, 56-89; Wang Hui, *Zhongguo xiandai sixiang de xingqi*, 924-1010.

that, what I am particularly interested in is how encouraging the Chinese public to perceive the Western political knowledge from an alternative epistemic framework can reconfigure the epistemological status of Western knowledge and in turn revise the Chinese public's "perceptual distance" with political modernity in a precarious historical junction.

In Liang's discussion on Bacon and Descartes, he says that the two's endorsement for conceptual objectivity; knowledge (智識) and self-reflection; wisdom (智慧) had abolished people's slavish respect for different religious and philosophical doctrines.[378] Although Liang considers Bacon and Descartes the two who opened a new chapter for Western philosophy, he shows clear preference for the latter. As Liang says:

> Of the two schools represented by Bacon and Descartes, they, judging from their formal supposition, are two antagonist schools. One (Bacon) focuses on the material object and the other (Descartes) the heart. One believes that intellectual knowledge arrives from the external empirical experience, and the other one's innate spirit.
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> 倍根與笛卡兒兩派，自其外形論之，實兩反對派也。甲（倍根）倚於物，乙（笛卡兒）倚於心中。甲以智識為外界經驗之所得。乙以智識為精神本來之所有。[379]

In Liang's discussion, he often prioritizes the heart (*xin* 心) and spiritual intuition (jingshen 精神) above the material object (*wu* 物), intellectual knowledge (*zhishi* 智識), and scholarly investigation (*xueshu* 學術). The sensitivity Liang shows in the contrast he draws between Bacon and Descartes remotely echoes Martin Heidegger's (1889-1976), and later Hans-Georg Gadamer's (1900-2002) continued, attempt to introduce a hermeneutic turn in critique of the dominant scientific culture based on objective rationality. Heidegger, as it is generally known, believes that knowledge does not only arrive from the empirical observation of the

[378] Liang, "Jinsi wenming," 19.

[379] Ibid.

material given; it is also informed by the ontological condition of being in the world.[380] Since a man's *Being* (*dasein*) comprehends the factual given in terms of his projected relations to the world, understanding is both hermeneutic and existential.

Liang's summary on Bacon and Descartes introduced a Western hermeneutics to China. It might to fair to suggest that Liang's preference for Descartes, who, as Liang puts it, seeks to uncover the truth appearing underneath the surface, bears considerable resemblance to exegetical principles upheld by new text studies. But apart from introducing to the Chinese public what he considers the most appropriate methods of understanding, Liang shows particular enthusiasm in expanding the hermeneutic exercise into an ontological one.

In 1902, Liang emphasized that modern political concepts can only be "meaningful" if one can make his understanding of these concepts a state of spiritual being and make the application of these concepts the natural expression of his innate moral goodness. To make his argument clear, Liang utilized the analytical categorical "*zhen*" 真 (authentic) to draw the hierarchical distinction between the modern political knowledge as the "subjective internal spirit" and as the "undigested factual given." Such distinction is most clearly manifested in Liang's discussion on the modern political concept *ziyou* 自由 (liberty).

The distinction Liang draws between the "truth" and the "factual knowledge" first appears in his discussion on the French political philosopher Montesquieu (1689－1755).[381] Liang says that word "liberty" can be understood in two different senses. The first kind of

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[380] Apart from arguing that understanding is existential, Heidegger emphasizes the role time plays in man's understanding. For Heidegger, a man's being is essentially temporal: his lived horizon includes past, present, and future, but he projects himself primarily toward the future. Understanding is the mode through which the "possibilities" and "potentialities" of his life are disclosed to a person. "Understanding," for this reason, "bears an inner relationship to his temporality." For a brief summary of Heidegger's philosophical assumption, see Kurt Mueller-Vollmer's *Hermeneutics Reader: Texts of the German Tradition from the Enlightenment to the Present* (New York: Continuum, 1985), 34-5.

[381] Liang, "Mengdesijiu 孟德斯鳩" (Montesquieu), in *XMCB* 4 (1902): 22.

liberty is the right bestowed on one by law. But since the legal constitution is an imperfect artificial construct that cannot fully agree with the heavenly way (*dao* 道),[382] enjoying one's the legal liberty can hardly be considered the obtainment of "authentic" liberty (*zhen ziyou* 真自由). For Liang, the true liberty rests in the benevolent righteousness that rests within a person (仁義中正之自由).[383]

In "On Liberty" ("Lun ziyou" 論自由), the eighth article in Liang's *Discourse on the New Citizen*, he draws an explicit connection between "authenticity" and "moral spirituality.[384] After exposing the superficiality of liberty as a learned scholarly idea, or legal concept in "Montesquieu," Liang focuses on illustrating that liberty can only be considered authentic when it becomes a moral, spiritual state of mind.[385] By emphasizing the word "authentic," Liang indicates that the modern political definition is only *one* of the possible meanings for the word *ziyou*. This political definition, moreover, is less authentic than the word's *true* meanings. Liang's use of the descriptive category "authentic" seems to remind the late Qing reader that the political knowledge they had become increasingly familiar with is only the superficial. In his discussion, Liang lists three different types of liberty:

> To be enslaved by the other has nothing to be fearful for, for it is more painful to turn oneself into the slave of the other. And yet to become the slave of the other is still not something to be fearful of, for there is nothing more miserable than imprisoning *oneself by oneself*. Zhuangzi says, "No sorrow can be compared to indifference, and death only comes second." I would also say, "No humiliation can be possibly compared to the enslavement of one's heart, and the physical

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382 Ibid.

383 Ibid.

384 Liang, "Lun ziyou 論自由" (On Liberty), in *XMCB* 8 (1902): 1-8.

385 Yang Zhende is careful to note that Liang was particularly interested in drawing a connection between one's political freedom and personal freedom on a moral ground at the turn of the twentieth century. Yang, however, says that it is uncertain under what kinds of intellectual influences Liang had come to see that one's moral potential can be transformed into political willpower. For more details, see Yang Zhende, *Zhuanxiang ziwo*, 124.

> enslavement only comes second.”…… If one wishes to obtain ***true liberty***, he can only do it by liberating himself from the slave of his heart. (Emphasis added)
>
> 是故人之奴隸我，不足畏也，而莫痛於自奴隸於人，之奴隸於人猶不足畏也，而莫慘於我奴隸於我。莊子曰：哀莫大於心死，而身死次之。吾亦曰：辱莫大於心奴，而身奴斯為未矣。……有欲求**真自由**者乎，其必自除心中之奴隸始。[386]

According to Liang, the first type of liberty means being liberated by the other. The second type of liberty is to liberate oneself from the other. The third one refers to spiritual liberation one obtains by freeing oneself from shackles imposed by different social, ideological, and bodily constraints. The third definition looks similar to the meanings of *ziyou* in the Chinese philosophical tradition. For Liang, only the spiritual *ziyou* can be considered the *authentic liberty*. After presenting the hierarchical contrast between the modern political *ziyou* and the spiritual *ziyou*, Liang devotes the second half of the essay listing four obstacles one needs to overcome if he is to obtain true liberty. These obstacles include the influence of the ancient (*guren* 古人), social conventions (*shisu* 世俗), circumstances in life (*jingyu* 境遇), and the sexual desire (*qingyu* 情欲).[387]

In an article that follows, Liang argues that the same logic is equally applicable in understanding another modern political concept “self-governance” (*zizhi* 自治). In “On Self-governance” (*Lun zizhi* 論自治), the ninth article Liang published on *Discourse on the New Citizen*, he shows that this term vividly exposes the limitation of learning the translated modern concept as descriptive knowledge.[388] “Self-governance,” legally speaking, refers to the condition of performing personal management without any external intervention. And yet, since “self-

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[386] Liang, “Lun ziyou,” 2-3.

[387] Ibid., 3-8.

[388] Liang, “Lun zizhi 論自治” (On self-goverance), in *XMCB* 9 (1902): 1-7.

governance" arrives from the determination and self-control that comes from within instead of from without, one can only obtain the "true self-governance" (*zhen zizhi* 真自治) by consciously exercising one's will power.[389] Self-governance, for this reason, can only be considered "authentic" if it is a self-motivated spirit coming from within (以為自治之精神也).[390]

In *Discourse on the New Citizen*, Liang accentuates that one can only authenticate the modern political knowledge by making it a state of one's internal spiritual being. Part of Liang's logic closely echoes what Chung-ying Cheng (成中英) calls "onto-hermeneutics," a theory that seeks to bridge the gap between ontology and hermeneutics.[391] According to On-cho Ng, who vigorously traces intellectual origins of Cheng's thinking, Cheng's creation of "onto-hermeneutics" is intended to achieve two goals: first, to invent a new hermeneutics that can more accurately describe the Confucian onto-cosmological conception of reality; second, to expand the scope and depth of Heidegger's and Gadamer's hermeneutic theories by incorporating the Confucian exegetical principle as a comparative perspective.[392]

While Hermeneutics refers to a general science of interpretation that applies to all texts, thinkers such Wilhelm Dilthey (1833- 1911), Heidegger, and Gadamer are sharply aware that the reader's existential experience often subjectively reinvents the text he tries to make sense of.[393] Ng says that while these theorists see the reader's psychology as the subjective component of

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[389] Ibid., 4.

[390] Ibid., 6-7.

[391] Chung-ying Cheng, "Confucian Onto-Hermeneutics: Morality and Ontology," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 27.1 (2000): 33–68. For Cheng's extensive elaboration on "onto-hermeneutics," see *Yixue bengti lun* 易學本體論 (Body, mind, and spirit) (Taibei: Kangde chubanshe, 2008).

[392] See On-cho Ng, "Toward a Hermeneutic Turn in Chinese Philosophy: Western Theory, Confucian Tradition, and Cheng Chung-ying's Onto-hermeneutics," *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy* 6.4(December 2007):383-395; "Chinese Philosophy, Hermeneutics, and Onto-Hermeneutics," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 30.3/4(September/December 2003):373-85; "Religious Hermeneutics: Text and Truth in Neo-Confucian Readings of the Yijing," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 34.1(March 2007): 5-24.

[393] Ng, "Chinese Philosophy," 375

comprehension, their understanding of hermeneutic is epistemological in nature. What Cheng is interested in doing is to show how "Confucian insights and ideas can be fruitfully and meaningfully appropriated to construct a hermeneutics that is truly ontological."[394]

Cheng believes that in the Confucian tradition, a proper understanding of the classics can only arrive at one's emotional identification with its teaching and in turn the realization of the wisdom of the teaching in action. To elaborate Cheng's theory on "onto-hermeneutics" in more details: understanding begins with the "comprehensive observation" of both the symbolic and textual meaning of the discursive scripture. The feeling and emotional responses one develops for the text transforms his existential makeup and turns his understanding of the scripture into an embodied, ontological experience. As the moral being puts the moral teaching in practice, he realizes his ontologically premised understanding of the Confucian teaching by fulfilling its moral potentials in action. For this reason, one's existential application of moral wisdom transcends the dichotomy of fact and value, knowledge and reality, and virtue and reason. For Cheng, understanding in Confucian teaching is more of "the ontological conflation of epistemological exercise and experiential exertion" than a disembodied, narrowly instrumental, and mechanistically technical process.[395]

Cheng's theory on "onto-hermeneutics" is developed on the basis of his study of *Yijing* 易經 (The Book of Changes). He believes that the Confucian "onto-hermeneutics" consists of four interrelated principles. The first one, "principle of comprehensive observation," refers to the "careful and wide-ranging investigation of both the graphic and symbolic meaning of the universe represented by the hexagrams."[396] The second one, the "principle of congruence of

[394] Ibid., 377.

[395] Ibid., 378.

[396] Ibid., 381.

reciprocal feelings," designates the "cultivation of the moral ability to feel the sentiments of others and thereby experiences reality as it really is."[397] The third one is the "principle of practice and self-cultivation." It stands for the realization of knowledge through action. The fourth one is the "principle of unity of virtues and reason." Derived from the Confucian dictum and injunction of "rectification of names" (*zhengming* 正名), this principle emphasizes that reality must be both recognized and rectified in order that its descriptions are true.[398]

In 1902, Liang argued that one can only obtain the true understanding of the modern political concept by internalizing such understanding as a subjective spirit. His insistence on making conceptual understanding a subjective ontological experience closely corresponds to the first two principles Cheng describes in his "onto-hermeneutics."

After defining what he means by "true" liberty and self-governance, in *Discourse on the New Citizen*, Liang goes on to exemplify how one can embody a modern political concept as an existential moral experience in a historical scenario. Liang, as mentioned in the first chapter, defines "national citizen" as "people with nationalistic thinking and capable of implementing and participating in the political system" (*you guojia sixiang, neng zibu zhengzhi*) in his scholarly essay. In the "Biography of Kossuth," the historical biography he serialized in *New Citizen Journal*, Liang points readers to a larger number of Kossuth's supporters who endeavored to resist Austria's colonial aggression. Since these people are seeking to safeguard the independence of Hungary as a modern nation state, Liang labels them as the "national citizen." And as the narrative unfolds, Liang carefully delineates what differentiate the national citizen from the "authentic" national citizen (*zhen guomin* 真國民).

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[397] Ibid.

[398] Ibid.

According to Liang, the national citizens Kossuth gathers display three unique traits. First, they are people with burning passion (r*encheng* 熱誠), wit (*jizhi* 機智),[399] and great courage (*xuexing* 血性; *yong* 勇).[400] Second, they are people who bear pure, noble, and burning patriotic love for the country (愛國之血淚；高尚純潔之愛國心).[401] And third, they are determined to follow the great leader Kossuth, a great man they respect, love, fantasize, and worship (吾輩所敬所愛所夢想所崇拜之絕代偉人噶素氏者).[402]

After stating that Hungarian provides the best role model for the Chinese public to learn from, Liang contextualizes "national citizen" and the two keywords, right (*quanli* 權利) and obligation (*yiwu* 義務) that define the national citizen's relationship to the modern government in the Hungarian's struggle for national independence.

The biography begins with Austria's attempt to turn Hungary into its colony by violating the Golden Bull contract. Liang describes the Hungarian's military action as "the right they share to fight against the tyranny with arms 匈人執干戈以抗暴政之權利." According to Liang's scholarly articles and editorials, people are entitled to confront the state or a foreign country if the latter violates its obligation in the contractual relationship they share. But in the Hungarian's case, what makes Liang's use of the word "right" interesting is that he accuses Austria for its "tyranny" (*baozheng* 暴政), a term implying moral illegitimacy in the Chinese historical and cultural tradition. By doing so, Liang contextualizes the Hungarian's fight for national independence in a Chinese moral paradigm.

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[399] Liang, "Xiongyali aiguozhe Gesushi zhuan," in *XMCB* 6 (1902): 28.

[400] Ibid., 37.

[401] Ibid., 37.

[402] Ibid., 28.

Following that, by tracing disputes Hungary and Austria had in the past, Liang suggests that Hungarians are defending their rights on a moral rather than a legal ground. When the Alliance of France and Prussia invaded Austria in the Seven Year's War (1756-1763), it is said that "the Hungarian, driven by their righteous wrath (義憤), formed an alliance and expelled the Alliance."[403] "The Hungarians," as Liang explains, "were so righteous and full of knight-errant spirit. They cannot bear possibly bear with behaviors that are against benevolence and propriety without doing anything to it 義俠之匈加利人，豈肯束手坐視此辜恩非禮之行哉."[404] And later on as Europe's political order was challenged by Napoleon, Liang says that "the Austrian Emperor Francis I (Franz I) had survived because of the help of the righteous and knight-errant liked Hungarians (奧王佛蘭西士第一，亦匈民俠義之力，僅乃自保)."[405]

As Austria violates the Golden Bull contract and tries to colonize Hungary, Liang the new historian declares that "the Austrian disregarded the Hungarian's benevolence, and treated them with jealousy and suspicion (奧人不念匈民之德，且忌且嫉之)."[406] Propriety is a key component in Confucian morality. In the biography, Liang shows that the Hungarian's determination to fight against the Austrian is not based on the concern for national survival, but that the Austrians have violated propriety and the good practice of reciprocity. Assuming that Hungary is the benefactor and Austria the beneficiary, Liang replaces the legal, contractual relationship between these two countries with a moral one and accuses Austria for "returning the flavor with revenge 恩將仇報."

[403] Ibid., 34.

[404] Ibid., 36.

[405] Ibid.

[406] Ibid.

In Liang's biography, to exercise one's right is more about reasserting the legitimate moral order than striving for the balance between right and obligation in the modern politics. By refashioning the Hungarian's struggle to transform into a nation state as an attempt to reinstall the appropriate moral order, Liang replaces national spirit with morality, and turns the modern *guomin* into moral agents.

"The Hungarian national citizens," as Liang says repeatedly, "are national citizens with a knight-errant's sense of the right (*xiayi zhi guomin* 俠義之國民)." Both the terms "duty" (*yi* 義) and "knight-errant" (*xia* 俠) are loaded with heavy cultural connotations. When Confucius mentions the word "the right," he refers it to what is right in general and does not have any specific virtue in mind. While "the right" refers to the existence of the moral norm in *The Analects*, it is being interpreted as what ought to be done, particularly in terms of honoring the worthy, in *Means and Harmony* (*Zhong yong* 中庸)."[407] Coming to *Mencius* (*Meng zi* 孟子), righteousness and benevolence (*ren* 仁) are being defined as a binomial pair, which is *renyi* 仁義 (benevolence and a sense of righteousness).[408] Although these virtues are two fundamental moral principles, benevolence, according to D.C. Lau's introduction to *Mencius*, is considered more basic, and it is from where righteousness takes root.[409] Only a man with benevolence can proceed to righteousness, which, in Lau's words, "can be applied to an act which is right, to the agent who does what is right and to a duty which an agent ought to do."[410]

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[407] Ibid, 300.

[408] Apart from benevolence, *ren* has been translated variously as goodness (Arthur Waley), human-heartedness (E. R. Hughes), love (Derk Bodde), humanity (Peter Boodberg), true manhood (Lin Yutang) etc. For relative merits, or shortcomings, of each translation, see Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963), 788-9.

[409] See D.C. Lau trans, *Mencius* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970), 12.

[410] Ibid.

While *yi* refers to the moral disposition to do good, knight errant is not so much a philosophical concept. Knight-errant is someone who often appears in marvel tales (*chuanqi* 傳奇) that thrived in the Tang dynasty (618-907). According to Yau-woon Ma and Joseph Lau, a knight-errant is "usually seen as a man of extraordinary martial and spiritual discipline. Subscribing to what seems to us to be a very narrow and personal code of honor, a *xia* would often offer his services in the name of justice and benevolence to anyone who happens to cater to his fancy."[411]

The national citizen being portrayed in the "Biography of Kossuth" is meant to serve as the "living example" for the late Qing public. But the modern political concept Liang introduced is often associated with good moral practices. Apart from trying to fulfill the role of a moral agent in the modern political context, Hungarian national citizens' moral qualities become more pronounced when they are with their political leader Kossuth.

According to Liang, since Klemens von Metternich (1773-1859) has tried to take over the control of Hungary by closing down the Congress, Kossuth becomes determined to regain independence for Hungary. Apart from a man "with great determination, mental prowess, and physical power (其心力強，其腦力強，其體魄亦必有大過人者),"[412] what distinguishes Kossuth from other great politicians is his insistence on "cultivating his character and bettering his moral behavior 復養其人格，以高其品行."[413] In the biography, Liang calls Kossuth the Great Man (*weiren* 偉人), the hero (*yingxiong* 英雄), and the Great knight-errant (*haojie* 豪傑).

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[411] See Yau-woon and Joseph S. M. Lau edited, *Traditional Chinese Stories: Themes and Variations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), 39.

[412] Liang, "Xiongyali aiguozhe Gesushi zhuan," in *XMCB* 4 (1902): 40.

[413] Ibid., 42.

As Kossuth is being characterized as a great hero, Liang strongly praises Hungarian national citizens for their devotion to Kossuth. Upon receiving the newspaper published by the great hero, "the national citizen felt as if they finally saw the rainbow after the drought, and finally get to drink after a great thirst (日為點石一紙，以布於國民，國民如旱望霓，如渴得飲)."[414] Liang makes Kossuth a benefactor (*enren* 恩人) of the Hungarian.[415] After Kossuth is being released for anti-Austria activities, "Hungarians welcomed their benefactor in Budapest, the joyous sound they made had shaken the mountain (匈加利人迎其恩人於布打獄城…歡呼之聲忽震山岳)."[416] And as Kossuth decides to launch a revolution, "people in the province are deeply grateful for his virtue. There are several thousand people who are ready to die for him 闔省之人，皆感其德，願為效死力者數千人焉。"

Liang describes the Hungarian's love for Kossuth and the country with verbs and adjectives that are highly affective. Some of these verbs include love, respect, fantasize, worship, feeling grateful, and to die for. Although Liang's descriptions are affectively appealing, he suggests that they pertain to emotional experiences that begin life with Confucian moral origins.

In *Discourse on the New Citizen*, one of Liang's main purposes is to promote public morality. For him, "public morality" is essentially an extension, transfiguration, and manifestation of "private morality" in the modern political context. As he says:

> "Morality is an organic oneness. But once it is expressed outward, there rises the categorical differences between the public and the private. When one focuses on cultivating his personal moral well-being, we call it private morality. And as one tries to extend his moral goodness to their peers, we call it public moraliy.

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[414] Ibid., 39.

[415] Ibid., 42.

[416] Ibid., 43.

道德之一本體而已。但其發表於外，則公私之名立焉。人人獨善其身者，謂之私德，人人相善其群者，謂之公德) ."[417]

Instead of two distinct sets of proprieties, "private morality" and "public morality" are identical sentiments taking different forms of manifestation in different contextual settings. To elaborate his argument, Liang says that a country showing mercy to its people is like the parents showing mercy to their children (國家之於國民，其恩與父母同).[418] Since the mercy one receives from the country and the parents is identical, the person shares the obligation (*yiwu*) to serve the parents and the country with the equal degree of kindness. For this reason, Confucian morality emphasizes the importance of being filial (*xiao* 孝) to one's parents and being loyal (*zhong* 忠) to his lord.[419] Liang believes that people who find themselves in a modern political context share the same obligation. But since the word "loyalty" refers specifically to private sentiments the subject shares for his lord, one cannot use the same word to denote identical sentiments he shares for the country, which is a shared property that belongs to every individual instead of a singular person.

In Liang's historical biography, Hungarians are national citizens rather than subjects serving their lord. Their expression of moral sentiments, for this reason, can no longer be categorized with a familiar Confucian moral term. Instead of displaying loyalty to Kossuth, the true national citizens are those who fight for their love for the country and their fervent admiration for the national leader. In the Hungarian's case, a foreign political concept is so much more than a piece of conceptual knowledge. It is the manifestation of one's sincere moral intent in a modern political context. Although their moral sentiments no longer carry a

[417] Liang, "Lun gongde," 1.

[418] Liang, "Lun guojia sixiang," 4.

[419] Ibid., 5.

Confucian moral label, the realization of one's modern political mission becomes a modern way of manifesting his moral intent. To be politically modern, in other words, is to be moral.

Apart from exemplifying how the Chinese public can "authenticate" their understanding of modern political concepts by turning them into subjective emotional experiences, Liang's decision to speak as a "new historian" allows him to make a larger intellectual claim. Liang, as mentioned earlier, states that Confucianism is divided into two schools. One is represented by Mencius and the other Xunzi. As the Xunzi school of Confucianism thrived since the Han dynasty, it had overshadowed the Mencius school of Confucianism and became the dominated intellectual practice (故自漢以後名雖為昌明孔學，實則所傳者僅荀學一支派而已).[420] Liang says that of these two schools, only the one represented by Mencius can be considered "true Confucianism" (*zhen kongxue* 真孔學).[421] After delineating how the Mencius school had slowly disappeared from the intellectual scene, Liang suggests that the Grand Historian Sima Qian is one of the very few successors who managed to exemplify Mencius's teaching.[422] Having manifested his determination in reviving the "true Confucianism," Liang appoints himself "the new historian" in historical biographies he serialized in *New Citizen Journal*. In this sense, Liang's purpose of showcasing the expression, transformation, and application of Confucian morality in a modern political context is so much more than educational. It seems as if Liang tries to achieve at least three purposes: first, to show how the so-called "repressed" Confucian moral ideals can find perfect manifestation in modern political terms; second, to illustrate how

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[420] Liang, "Lun Zhongguo xueshu sixiang," in *XMCB* 4 (1902): 46. Also see "Lun Zhongguo xueshu sixiang," in *XMCB* 12 (1902): 45-55.

[421] Ibid., 46. For divided views late Qing intellectuals shared on Xunzi, see Zhu Weizheng, "Wanqing hanxue: "pai xun" yu "zhun xun" 晚清漢學: '排荀'與 ,'尊荀'" (Han learning in late Qing China: Against Xunzi and in support for Xunzi), in *Qiu suo zhen wenming*, 333-50.

[422] "Lun Zhongguo xueshu sixiang," in *XMCB* 12 (1902): 53.

the modern political application of such moral tradition can respond to new text studies' call for implementing moral teaching in practical state affairs; third, to suggest how the logic of the Confucian "onto-hermeneutics" can be flexibly applied to the acquisition of modern political knowledge.

From the Political to the Political "Moralization"

Liang's *Discourse on the New Citizen* is perhaps a more complicated and ambitious piece of work than it is conventionally assumed. Apart from exemplifying how the traditional moral attributes can be translated into the modern political mentality, Liang argues that modern political knowledge should be received with an alternative epistemological framework. In addition to understanding modern political concepts as a hermeneutic exercise, one should make such knowledge a subjective ontological experience.

In 1902 Liang frequently mentioned that only the "enlightened" spiritual understanding of modern political concepts can be considered the ultimate obtainment of these concepts. His emphasis on the need to combine political ideals with moral pursuit is a familiar cultural logic to the educated reader in late Qing China. As Ying-shih Yu points out in his famous discussions, Chinese intellectuals are essentially interested in obtaining "internal transcendence" (*nei zai chaoyue* 內在超越).[423] According to Yu, what concerns the Chinese intellectual most is not whether one can fully implement his political ideal in the secular world, but whether one can

[423] For Yu Ying-shih's brief summary of this concept, see his "Cong jiazhi xitong kan zhongguo wenhua de xiandai yiyi 從價值系統看中國文化的現代意義" (Understanding Chinese culture's modern significane through its value system), in *Zhishi ren yu zhongguo wenhua de jiazhi* 知識人與中國文化的價值 (Intellectuals and the value of Chinese culture) (Taibei: Shibao chubanshe, 2007), 10-68. (This essay is based on a speech Yu gave in Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall in Taipei, on 1st September, 1984.) For a more comprehensive overview of Yu's discussions on this topic, see his collected essay titled *Neizai chaoyue zhi lu: Yu Yingshi xin ruxue lunzhu jiyao* 內在超越之路：余英時新儒學論著輯要 (The path to internal transcedence: collected essays on Yu Ying-shih's discussions on new confucianism) (Beijing: Zhongguo guangbo dianshi chubanshe, 1992).

become a better person and achieve some form of moral perfection in the process of realizing this ideal. In the Chinese cultural tradition, personal moral pursuit and worldly political ambition have always been two sides of the same coin.

In writings Liang published during the period, he contextualizes modern political concepts in a cultural schema shared by late Qing intellectuals, and asks his readers to imagine these modern concepts anew from the familiar cultural lens. However familiar this cultural framework may seem, its arrival might have created unexpected distance between the reader and the modern political knowledge that they had become increasingly familiar with. By asking his reader to re-imagine modern political knowledge with the indigenous cultural logic, Liang shows that what appears to the familiar whole is only a superficial parcel of the whole. For years late Qing intellectuals had struggled to grapple with the new and the foreign. But as the new words and new meanings have finally become the more or less familiar knowledge, Liang negated the recently gained confidence by announcing that there is something *truer* than the discursive given.

In writings Liang produced in 1902, he emphasized it is only through "enlightened" understanding informed by noble, moral purposes can one obtain the "authentic" meaning of a modern political concept. By emphasizing the conceptual category "authentic" and drawing equivalence between authenticity, personal enlightenment, and moral integrity, Liang shows that the "truth" rests in one's internalized spiritual understanding rather than the discursive knowledge itself. By emphasizing the division between the name and the substance, not only did Liang reduce translated political concepts to bookish knowledge one fails to internalized, he subtly subverted the legitimacy of words.

It has widely acknowledged that from 1902 onward, Liang had made renewing the people and transforming them into modern citizens his primary concern. In my discussion, I try to show

that that the significance of cultivating "enlightened" new citizen rests in the paradoxical purposes of popularizing modern political concepts among the general public as well as defamiliarizing and depoliticizing these concepts from the political reality. In *New Citizen Journal*, Liang made a repeated effort in elucidating and consolidating semantic definitions for recently translated modern political concepts. But at the same time, he was equally keen to expose the inadequacies and fallacies of learning these definitions. The late Qing intellectual, in other words, performed the dual tasks of expanding and consolidating the content of modern political discourse and subverting the legitimacy of such creation. The implications of Liang's campaign in renewing the people are far more complex than the educational purposes he declared. By explaining the political definition of a modern concept and, at the same time, emphasizing that the concept can only be considered "authentic" if one can fully internalize its true meanings, Liang created a hierarchal distinction between the discursive political knowledge and its true meaning. The rise of the awareness that there is a higher truth and the growing distrust for the discursive given, I believe, plays an important role in intensifying the "crisis of meaning" that has surfaced during the early twentieth century.

Studies on Chinese's modernization process often emphasize the need to consider the role the indigenous force plays in forming the local modernity. Liang's cultural background and classical learning play a crucial role in his formation and circulation of modern knowledge. But in the cases that I have examined, Liang's conjuration of a familiar cultural logic also has the peculiar effect of exposing that the recently translated modern political discourse is only a matter of discourse. It is something vulnerable as a whole. By reminding the reader that China can only be fully modernized if one can internalize this discourse, Liang exposed his readers to a gap that divides China from the political modern.

Transcending the Name

Let me elaborate my argument in a more systematic manner. As Chung-ying Cheng says, Confucian "Onto-hermeneutics" consists of four principles, which are "principle of comprehensive observation," "principle of congruence of reciprocal feelings," "principle of practice and self-cultivation," and "principle of unity of virtues and reason." The last principle can also be understood as the "rectification of names." For Cheng, rectifying the name is as important as making one's comprehension of Confucian classics a subjective lived experience. For it is only by eventuating one's understanding of the name in praxis can one make the name one tries to comprehend and internalize at the first place meaningful. In other words, the name as a signifier only becomes significant when the signified is being realized. And the importance of understanding, internalizing, and eventuating the Confucian teaching rests in realizing the significance of the classics rather than analyzing it scientifically as a logical system of signifiers. This is the ultimate way of transcending the barrier between the fact and the value.

Liang encouraged his reader to re-imagine modern political concepts with a cultural logic that bears close resemblance to what Chung-ying Cheng calls "onto-hermeneutics." Liang strongly emphasizes that only the enlightened moral understanding of modern political concepts can be considered the ultimate obtainment of these concepts. But for him, the purpose of obtaining such understanding is *not* to rectify or authenticate the very political concepts that he introduced. What Liang tries to argue is that the true spiritual understanding itself is *superior* to and *different from* the name, or discursive knowledge, that he sought to repudiate.

In 1902, Liang made a concerted effort to exemplify the difference between the "formal content" and the "spirit." For him, the theoretical concepts/ principles being stipulated in the

legal or institutional constitution is only a matter of "material form."[424] Only the internal and self-motivated impulse to realize these theoretical concepts can be considered "spirit."[425] In *New Citizen Journal*, Liang tries to articulate such distinction in various terms. In his essay on "Thoughts on Right" (權利思想), he calls the institutional implementation of theoretical concepts of the existence of the physical (形而下之生存), and the willpower to live and internalize these concepts the metaphysical existence (形而上之生存).[426] A more explicit way of distinguishing the difference between Western knowledge as the formal content and as the enlightened spiritual understanding arrives at "On Aggression and Adventure" (*Lun jinqu maoxian* 論進取冒險). In this essay, Liang says that in one's life a person often lives between two worlds. One is the world of physical reality (*shiji jie* 實跡界), which refers to behaviors being realized in the immediate present. The other is the world of ideal (*lixiang jie* 理想界), which is the hope and vision one has for the future. Liang says that while the hope and vision are a person's spiritual home, and physical reality is only the materialization of one's vision and hope.[427]

The comparison Liang draws between "formal content" and "spirit" appears to be a continuation of his discussion on Tan Sitong's *Renxue*. In "Future of New China," Liang says that *Renxue* and Kang's *Notes on studies at Changxing* are two most important books to Huang Keqiang.[428] Before mentioning Kang's book, Liang presents a brief sketch of Huang's family history. According to the story, Huang's father is a respected Canton scholar sharing special

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[424] Liang, "Lun xueshu sixiang," *XMCB* 3 (1902): 41.

[425] Liang, "Mengdesijiu," 22.

[426] Liang, "Lun quanli sixiang," 1.

[427] Liang, "Lun jinqu maoxian 論進取冒險" (On aggression and adventure), in *XMCB* 5 (1902): 4-5.

[428] Liang, "Xin Zhongguo weilai ji," in *XXS* 2 (1902): 30.

enthusiasm for the "Mind School" of Neo Confucianism represented by Wang Yangming and Lu Xiangshan.[429] Since Huang's father is also a student of Zhu Ciqi, he is a classmate as well as a close friend of Kang Youwei. This fictional arrangement suggests some subtle intricacies of the relationship Liang shares with Kang and Tan. While Kang Youwei is the protagonist's father's the best friend, Tan Sitong is the protagonist's best friend. Tan, compared with Kang, shares a more imitate bound with the protagonist.

Liang includes Tan as one of Kang's students in his "preface to *Renxue*" and says that the composition of this book is intended to "elaborate and expand Kang's philosophy." In Liang's writings, he frequently emphasizes the contrast Tan draws between the "soul" and the "body." But instead of contextualizing the contrast in Tan's complicated philosophical framework, Liang extends the contrast to the hierarchical difference between the "formless truth" and the deceptive "formal language." While Liang indicates that he and Tan are both Kang's students, he makes careful uses of Tan's rhetoric to voice his disagreement with Kang's promotion of Confucian ethics.

In the second volume of *New Citizen Journal*, Liang published a famous essay titled "The preservation of teaching is not the reason to venerate Confucius (保教非所以尊孔論)."[430] In this essay, Liang says that some of his contemporaries have attempted to justify the legitimacy of reform by asserting that Confucius had imposed similar changes through comparable means (某某孔子所以知也，某某孔子所曾言也).[431] Instead of considering the reformists measure one proposes as a right in itself, people only sought to legitimize their proposal by drawing authority

[429] Ibid., 29-30.

[430] See Liang's, "Baojiao fei souyi zun kong lun 保教非所以尊孔論" (The preservation of teaching is not the reason to venerate Confucius), in *XMCB* 2(1902): 59-72.

[431] Ibid., 67.

from the sage. Liang argues that such approach imposes serious limitation to the moral-reformist movement he was advocating. The first and most obvious one is that one would not be able to promote useful and important reformist proposals if he fails to find a corresponding theory in the Confucian classics (萬一遍索諸四書六經而終無可比附者，則將明知為真理而亦不敢從矣).[432] And second, if the recently arrived Western political concepts are circulated in Confucian terms, or under name of Confucius, the reader is likely to receive new concepts as knowledge that they are already familiar with. In this case, the reader will be confined to their restricted knowledge framework and can hardly understand what these new concepts are truly about.

In *Intellectual Trends of the Qing Period*, Liang openly admits that the essay was written to express his disagreement with Kang Youwei. Liang says that the difference between Kang and him is that his teacher supports Confucius instead of the truth (是所愛者，乃在孔子，非在真理也).[433] Kang, as Liang points out in his study, is the most prominent spokesperson for new text studies. On one hand, Kang emphasizes the need to realize what he and Liang consider the repressed Confucian moral ideals Mencius sought to advocate. On the other hand, by arguing that Confucius is a reformer seeking to express his reformist visions through reconstructing a utopic past in the classics, Kang aims to legitimize his own reformist proposal by turning Confucius into a reformer. Based on arguments he developed in *Study of the Reforms of Confucius*, Kang came to propose making Confucianism the state religion at the turn of the twentieth century, and he went on to assert that reformist measures he proposed can find precedence in Confucius' personal attempts. Liang affirms that Kang had made two significant

[432] Ibid.

[433] See Liang, "Baojiao fei souyi zun kong lun," 67, and *Qingdai xueshu gailun*, 87

intellectual breakthroughs for new text studies. But of these two paths he had unearthed, Kang chose to pursue the much narrower one.

It appears to Liang that Kang's decision is a great leap backward. As far as Liang believes, the most important contribution new text studies made to the development of Chinese intellectual history rests in emphasizing that words are meant to express meanings rather than being meanings themselves. But so far, Kang's attempt is a matter of "confining one's worldviews to words and lines he formed analogies with 見局見縛於所比附之文句" and "giving up one's search for where the true meanings rest 不复追求其真義之所存."[434] For this reason, Liang declares in"The preservation of teaching is not the reason to venerate Confucius" that his love for the truth exceeds the love for Confucius (吾愛孔子，吾尤愛真理), and says that even Confucius will agree with him on this (又知孔子之愛真理).[435] Assuming that *datong* is the moral ideal that Mencius truly tries to express, Liang believes that what matters most in the immediate present is to search for means to "realize" true meanings the sage had intended instead of delineating in what ways one's recent reformist proposals can meet the sage's expectations. For this reason, the "name" is not meant to be rectified. And I believe this is why also Liang insisted on repudiating the name and drawing repeated hierarchal contrast between the "spirit" and the "material content."

Liang's repudiation of the name is clearly manifested in another historical biography he serialized in *New Citizen Journal* in 1902. In the "Biography of the Three Heroes who founded Italy (意大利建國三傑傳)," Liang describes Giuseppe Mazzini's (1805-1872), Giuseppe Garibaldi's (1807-1882), and Camillo Cavour's (1810-1861) collective endeavor to unify Italy.

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[434] Liang, *Qingdai xueshu gailun*, 88.

[435] Liang, "Baojiao fei souyi zun kong lun," 72.

In this biography, Liang portrays Mazzini as a national hero who pursues "liberty, equality, independence, and self-governance"[436] as lofty moral goals. While Mazzini sees the prospect of launching a revolution for Italy the materialization of his moral pursuit, his contemporary Cavour is only interested in implementing political reform on an institutional level. Mazzini, in other words, is an embodiment of transcendental spiritual truth, and Cavour the worldly material success.

Liang introduces Mazzini as a man "whose intention is purer than ice and snow, and the integrity of his emotions is higher than cloud 其純潔之理想，瑩於冰雪，其精一之情感，高於雲霄."[437] He sees fighting for Italy's independence a religious and moral pursuit instead of a political ambition. Rather than a modern political theory that can be applied in various social circumstances, liberty is "an idealist religion" (維心論之宗教) Mazzini devotes his heart and soul to, as well as "an educational spirit" (教育之精神) he tries to enlighten the people with."[438] Because of his lofty aspiration, Liang says that "Mazzini is so much more than a heroic knight-errant. He is a saint 豈徒豪傑，實聖賢也."[439]

The pursuit of liberty is a religious pilgrimage for Mazzini the saint, and the way he understands and pursues the goal is nearly identical with what Liang describes in "On Liberty." Mazzini, for instance, is convinced that one can only obtain liberty by undergoing extreme physical sufferings and personal sacrifice. After Mazzini assigns himself the task of launching a revolution, Liang presents the following monologue:

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[436] Liang, "Yidali jianguo sanjie zhuan Yidali," *XMCB* 9 (1902): 42.

[437] Ibid.

[438] Ibid.

[439] Ibid.

> "If I am determined to have the final victory, I should know that there is only one way to do it, which is letting go of my life. For those who speak of letting go of one's enjoyment, they are only speaking of letting go of their material enjoyment
>
> 是故當知欲獲勝者，只有一途，曰舍**身**而已。曰舍目前之樂利，舍**物質**上之樂利而已." [440]

Shortly after arriving at this conclusion, Mazzini reasserts his conviction:

> "Now my country is still nowhere to be found. I don't know if there is a home to attach to and a place to inhabit this body. …. Hereafter, I swear, I am going to be destroyed together with this body and this shield
>
> 今也國不知何在，家不知伺附，**身**不知何存。…自今以往，誓以此身與此盾俱碎矣." [441]

In these two monologues, Liang mentions the word *wuzhi* (material objects) and makes repeated references to man's physical body (*shen* 身). It is clearly indicated that in order to realize the spiritual goal of bringing liberty to Italy, Mazzini is determined to sacrifice his life and other forms of worldly materialistic gain. Liang then provides a detailed description on the many physical sufferings the Italian hero has endured for the sake of achieving the lofty goal of transforming his country into an independent nation state.

While Mazzini pursues liberty as a spiritual goal, Cavour is solely concerned with implementing liberty as a modern political concept on an institutional level. During Cavour's years of exile, he appoints himself the future Prime Minister of Italy. Cavour is determined to realize liberty in the modern Italian government waiting to be founded.[442] Rather than taking liberty as a religious pursuit, Cavour's understanding of liberty is informed chiefly by the British liberal thinker Richard Cobden (1804-1865) and the school of conservative liberalism advocated

[440] Ibid.

[441] Ibid, 39.

[442] Ibid., 45.

by the French statesman François Guizot (1787-1874).[443] Having traveled extensively in different parts of Europe and carefully observed the British Parliament's administrative structure, Cavour believes that the kind of liberty he aspires for can be best manifested in the election amendment recently passed in the Great Britain.[444] Cavour believes that liberty can only be implemented in Italy by codifying laws that "enable people with freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and freedom of publication, and eradicate whatever that has been prohibited 興民以言論自由，集會自由，出版自由，除一切忌諱."[445]

Cavour's political aspiration is practical. For this reason, it seems to him that Mazzini's lofty, spiritual ideal is fruitlessly unrealistic. Consciously situating himself in a competition with Mazzini, Cavour makes the following remark:

> In the political present, it's surprising that someone affords to say that winning or losing hardly matters, and that difficulties do not count. I cannot say that these people are not highly principled. But when it comes to realizing a practice goal, one wants the goal to be achieved
>
> 居今日之天下，而惟侈言不顧成敗，不恤利鈍，陳義非不甚高，然業也者，期成者也."[446]

Mazzini and Cavour are living embodiments of two kinds of liberty. One is a spiritual ideal and the other is a practical political goal. For Cavour, the political goal can only be realized through strategic planning (*daoshu* 道術), careful calculation (*mo* 謀), brain power (*zhili* 智力), and thinking (*si* 思).[447] For this reason, Cavour finds Mazzini a man "with plenty of

[443] Ibid., 46.

[444] Ibid., 46.

[445] Liang, "Yidali jianguo sanjie zhuan, " *XMCB* 15 (1902): 40.

[446] Liang, "Yidali jianguo sanjie zhuan," *XMCB* 10 (1902): 44.

[447] Ibid., 41.

passion but not enough intelligence 至誠有餘而智力不足," and his passionate endeavor "can hardly bring any practical changes to Italy 不足以為濟."[448]

According to modern Italian history, Cavour later became the first Prime Minister of Italy, and Mazzini's efforts did not bring him any direct physical achievement. But in the "Biography of the Three Heroes," Liang the new historian refuses to accept the convenient historical truth. Apart from repeatedly declaring that Mazzini is the person he admires most in modern Western history, Liang tries to redefine what it means by ultimate success. Toward the end of the biography, he makes the following announcement:

> Considering who made the greatest contribution to the founding of Italy, the most important person is Mazzini for sure. Mazzini farmed and Cavour reaped. Can the reaper's merit be possibly compared to that of the farmer? Mazzini was a moral being instead someone who cared about career success. Even though he had failed to launch a revolution, he reached his personal limit.
>
> 故論意大利建國之功，首必推馬志尼，馬志尼耕焉，加富爾獲焉，試問獲者之功德，視耕者可如？夫馬志尼有道之士，非功名之人也。倡革命不成，其究極也。[449]

By drawing a comparison between "*dao* 道" (heavenly way) and "*gongming* 功名" (worldly fame), Liang reinforces the hierarchical contrast between the formless spiritual truth and the formal achievement. In the new historian's comment, he clearly indicates that although

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[448] Ibid.

[449] Ibid., 36. Matsuo Yoji's 松尾洋二 study shows that Liang's composition of the "Biography of the Three Italian" is based on his free translation of *Itarī kenkoku sanketsu* 伊太利建国三傑 (Three Italian heroes who founded Italy), a historical biography published by Hirata Hisashi 平田久 in 1892. While Liang followed most of Hirata's chronological narratives, the two expressed radically different views on Mazzini and Cavour. Liang, for instance, tries to declare Mazzini's ultimate victory on the spiritual ground, while Hirati attributes the success of Italy's unification to Cavour. A comparison between these two historical biographies indicates that statements quoted above are Liang's personal inventions instead of his translation of Hirata's biography. For Matsuo Yoji's study of Liang's historical biography, see his "Liang Qichao yu shizhuan--- dongya jindai jingshen shi de bengliu 梁啟超與史傳--- 東亞近代精神史的奔流" (Liang Qichao and his historical biography: the torrent of modern Asian spiritual history), in *Liang Qichao, Mingzhi Riben, xi fang*, 244-288. (This essay was published originally as 梁啓超と史伝：東アジアにおける近代精神史の奔流, in *Kyōdō kenkyū Ryō Keichō*, pp. 257-95.)

Mazzini has failed to accomplish worldly goals, his decision to pursue modern political concepts on a spiritual ground is far superior to pursuing them for practical purposes. While Mazzini does not have anything to advertise himself, Liang declares his the final victory on the spiritual ground.

Being the person who led Italy to independence, Cavour is the embodiment of the name as well as action in the objective political reality. And as the person who kindled the Italian's revolutionary spirit, Mazzini signifies the substantial effort not being acknowledged by the name and the objective political reality. Through the contrast between Cavour and Mazzini, Liang highlights the difference between the name and the substance. While the name is the physical appearance, the substance is something there but has failed to make material presence. In this historical biography, Liang makes it clear that the substance is superior to the name.

In the biography, Liang's repudiation of name implies that the authentic political truth is different from and superior to the discursive modern knowledge being implemented in the political reality. While Chung-ying Cheng believes that to realizing one's subjective lived experience in action is a way of rectifying the name, Liang believes that the purpose of obtaining the enlightened spiritual understanding is to transcend the name, or to dissociate and divorce itself from the material given.

Displacement of Truth from the Discursive Given

In *New Citizen Journal*, Liang indicates that a person can only truly obtain a modern political concept if he sincerely wishes to internalize this concept and lets the concept perform a transformative impact on one's personal and moral makeup. Apart from demonstrating how one can internalize modern political concept with the spirit of new text Confucianism and make the

execution of modern political concepts an expression of one's inner moral goodness, I believe there is an additional purpose Liang hoped to achieve.

After Mazzini has failed to launch a revolution in Italy, he makes an elaborated comparison between the revolutionary and the reform. Mazzini says:

> The biggest problem that we face today is a religious one. For the materialist, they said that if one has to endure torturous labor to build a nation, it would better to reform it on the basis of the existing model. As long as the reform can benefit the people, how big the harm would the political segregation be. For people holding such view, they have ignored the sacred calling they received from their religious belief. It should be clear that if one is to obtain the ultimate success, there is only one way, and that is making self-sacrifices. All it takes is to sacrifice one's immediate worldly gain, and what one gains from the material achievement. This is the spiritual religion embraced by Mazzini and what his educational spirit is about.
>
> 今日之大問題，宗教的問題也。彼持唯物論者，謂 X 爾許之辛苦周折，以求建一國，毋寧乃其舊而改革之。苟能維新便民，雖分裂何害？為此論者，是對宗教上而放棄其高尚之天職者也。故當知欲獲勝者，只有一途，曰舍身而已。曰舍目前之樂利，舍物質上之樂利而已。是所謂馬志尼唯心論之宗教，馬志尼教育之精神也。"[450]

In this passage, Mazzini draws an alignment between revolution and moral religiosity. Having categorized those in support for reform as the materialist (*weiwu lunzhe* 唯物論者) and those in support for revolution the idealist (*weixin lunzhe* 唯心論者), Mazzini accuses the former for abandoning their sacred heavenly duty. Before announcing Mazzini's disapproval for the reformer in the biography, Liang suggests that revolution begins life as a moral goodness. Initiating a revolution, according to him, is a national citizen's vocation (革命者，國民之天職也。)[451] It is based on the principle of "for people" and "by people" (是根於『為國民』for people,『由國民』by people 之兩大義而來者也). For Liang, only people with such courage

[450] Liang, "Yidali jianguo sanjie zhuan," *XMCB* 9 (1902): 42.

[451] Ibid., 41.

and vision are qualified to talk about the revolution, and such courage and vision arrive from one's moral goodness (非有此等氣魄，此等識想者，不足以言革命。… 而欲養成此氣魄此識想，不可不推本於道德).[452]

In his historical biographies, Liang discloses the subtle connection between morality and revolution. In the "Biography of Kossuth," for instance, the "authentic" national citizens who are ready to sacrifice themselves for true liberty and self-governance are fighting ultimately for revolutionary purposes. Besides these national citizens, Liang's historical protagonists such as Mazzini, Kossuth, Madame Roland, and even Li Keqiang are people who seek to realize their moral vision through revolutionary ends. By making the revolution a fine medley of the political modern and the moral intention, Liang has subtly authenticated the legitimacy of revolution by transforming it into a moral good.

In 1902, Liang made direct and indirect attempts to elevate revolution from a modern political concept to a superior moral goodness. And yet, the true revolution he celebrates is a paradoxical existence. In Liang's biographies, none of the "true revolution" his protagonists embrace with the strength of their soul has been realized in the physical reality. While the revolution these great heroes supported has been authenticated by their sincere moral intention, the true revolution cannot be materialized in the physical reality. For Liang and Tan Sitong, the truth is in direct contrast to the name. Once it manifested, it becomes the deceptive name that the two seek to subvert. Logically speaking, the true revolution embraced by Liang's protagonists is not meant to be realized and can only be displaced from the political reality.

In Liang's historical biography, he subtly implies that the truth can only be completely authentic if it is displaced from the material reality. Authenticity, in other words, thrives on its

[452] Ibid., 38.

apparent absence. Considering what happened to Liang between 1900 and 1902, there seems to be an interesting parallel between such logic and recent developments in his political career. As I have explained in the previous chapter, Liang had been keen to launch a political revolution since his early career. But after he was expelled by Sun Yat-sen from the revolutionary camp in 1901, Liang was aggrieved to learn that he might never be able to materialize his political ambition in the physical reality. The frustrated politician's great disappointment was repeatedly manifested in his some of autobiographies and personal letters.[453] In historical biographies Liang published in 1902, there is a peculiar tendency to define what counts as the real, ultimate success. Liang's historical biographies and his promotion of the truth all took place in 1902. Judging from these parallel examples, it seems that Liang was keen to divide translated political concepts into the inferior discursive knowledge and the superior moral, spiritual, and religious pursuit that cannot be realized.

Liang repeatedly manifests his distrust for discursive knowledge in *New Citizen Journal*. In the second half of the "Biography of Madame Roland," which was serialized on volume 19 of the *New Citizen Journal*, Liang openly accuses the "word" liberty (*ziyou*) for being a false signifier for the "authentic" liberty.

Toward the end of the biography, Madame Roland is sent to the guillotine. Before her head is to be removed, she sees a statue of the God of liberty. The French heroine steps forth, pays her tribute, and asks the statue a rhetorical question: "Alas, liberty, liberty, in this world, how many crimes in the past and present have been committed under your *name*? (嗚呼, 自由自

[453] Liang candidly revealed his frustration in personal letters he exchanges with his friends between 1902 and 1903. See Ding Wenjian and Zhao Fengtian's *Nianpu*, 179-219.

由，天下古今幾多之罪惡，假汝之名以行 (emphasis added)."[454] The question Madame Roland raises is also the question that Liang poses at the very beginning of the biography.[455] Before the late Qing reformer repeats this question for the third time when he describes the French heroine's tragic death, Madame Roland makes the following declaration:

> "Today's world is dirty and chaotic, with people drinking men's blood as wine. I would be more than happy to leave, with nothing to linger on. I only wish my national citizens would be able to obtain the *true liberty* (*zhenzheng zi ziyou*)."[456] (Emphasis added)
>
> 今日此等污濁混亂以人血為酒漿之世界，余甚樂脫離之，無所留戀。余惟願我國民速得真正之自由。[457]

In her one-way dialogue with the God of liberty, Madame Roland addresses the God she worships in its name, only to lament how the name has been used as an excuse to commit evil deeds.[458] Her rhetorical question indicates one's keen awareness of the difference between *the*

[454] See Liang, "Luolan furen zhuan," in *XMCB* 18 (1902): 51. Matsuo Yoji's study of Liang's historical biography shows that the "Biography of Madame Roland" is based on Tokutomi Roka's 德富蘆花 biography "Futsukoku kakumei no hana" 佛國革命の花 (Flower of the French Revolution), which is collected in *Sekai kokon meifu kagami* 世界古今名婦鑑 (Mirror of renowned women from ancient and modern Times) (Tōkyō: Min'yūsha, 1898), 1-48. The monologues that I discuss are again Liang's invention instead of his translation of Tokutomi's original work. Tokutomi's biography is available at "Digital Library from the Meiji Era" (http://kindai.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/777148?itemId=info%3Andljp%2Fpid%2F777148&__lang=en). For Xia Xiaohong's comparison on Liang's "Biography of Madame Roland" and Tokutomi's "Flower of the French Revolution," see "Shijie gujin mingfu jian yu wanqing waiguo nüjie zhuang《世界古今名婦鑑》與晚清外國女傑傳" ("Mirror of renowned women from ancient and modern times" and western heroines in late Qing China), *Beijing daxue xuebao (zhexue shehui bao)* 北京大學學報 (哲学社會科學版) (Journal of Peking University: philosophy and social science edition) 46. 2 (March 2009): 35-48. Also see Xia's "Wanqing nübao zhong de xifang nüjie--- mingzhi "furen lizhi" duwu de zhongguo zhilu 晚清女報中的西方女傑—明治'婦人立志'" (Western heroines in late Qing's women's newspaper--- The journal of Meiji Japan's women's magazines in China), in *Wen shi zhe* 文史哲 (Literature, history, and Philosophy) 4 (2012): 20-34.

[455] Liang, "Luolan furen zhuan," in *XMCB* 17 (1902): 35.

[456] Liang, "Luolan furenn zhuan," in *XMCB* 18 (1902): 50.

[457] Ibid.

[458] Chang Hao and Tang Xiaobing offer two alternative readings for this final episode. Chang Hao, for instance, believes that "Madame Roland's sacrifice at the altar of liberty conveyed clearly his (Liang's) disenchantment with Rousseau's ideals of liberty and natural rights. See Chang, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao*, 193. For Tang, Madame Roland's last words indicate that the "radical destruction" had prompted Liang to ponder consequences created by the revolution as well as the "individual and personal dimension of collective action." See *Global Space*, 112.

God of liberty she speaks to and *the name* of the God that she is addressing. Although Madame Roland questions the representative power of the name as a signifier, she has no choice but to address the God with its name. To ask the rhetorical question is to affirm her belief in the existence of God as well as acknowledging her failure to designate the God she believes in. Perhaps this partly explains why Madame Roland's rhetorical question is charged with strong emotions. Her question begins with the lamentation *wuhu* 嗚呼, which refers to lamentation, astonishment, as well as glorification.[459] Standing on the guillotine and speaking to the God of Liberty she worships the very last time, Madame Roland expresses the anguish and disappointment at how her attempts to implement liberty in the political reality has turned liberty into an excuse to destroy her. And yet these lamentations and accusations could only have arrived from the ardent love and passion she has always shared for the liberty she aspires for.

Based on the realization of how the present linguistic condition has deprived her of the chance to designate the kind of liberty she has aspired for, Madame Roland only wishes her citizens will soon be able to obtain the authentic liberty. Through her emphasis of "authentic" Madame Roland repudiates the "word" liberty as a contaminated signifier. But the French heroine, ironically, can only try to indicate the "truth content" with the word "authentic." What liberty truly means remains a suspension, leaving Madame Roland with the anguish, disappointment, and the frustrated passion for the falsity of its name.

From Crisis of Meaning to Crisis of Morality

If the truth is not meant to be realized in the physical reality, China, from this point on, can only be left with the material given that is untrue. During the second half of 1902, Liang accused the

[459] *Gudai hanyu xuci cidian* 古代漢語虛詞詞典 (A Dictionary of empty words in classical Chinese) (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1999), 606.

reformer and young revolutionary for their moral corruption. A quick glimpse of *Discourse on the New Citizen* might give one the impression that Liang's promotion of people's morality, intellectual courage, and physical prowess was intended to address the shortcomings he witnessed in late Qing China. In this chapter, however, I show that moral crisis Liang disclosed was created by his pursuit for the intangible authenticity. Liang's search for authenticity, to put it the other way, is motivated by a noble intellectual vision. In 1902, he shared the sincere hope of incorporating the political modern in the repressed intellectual and moral tradition. But at the same time, in order to authenticate his unrealized revolutionary ideal as well as new text principles he upheld, Liang was compelled to displace the truth from the material given. And since Liang established a clear connection between the political and the morality, the absence of political authenticity can easily imply the absence of morality.

In 1903, an anonymous author contributed a sequel to the "Future of New China."[460] In the sequel, the two protagonists of Liang's novella have returned to China after completing their studies in Europe. The anonymous author, like what Liang habitually does in the previous chapters, emphasizes that protagonists are those who know the "true" meaning of the revolution.

[460] See the fifth chapter of the "Xin Zhongguo weilai ji," in *XXS* 7 (1902): 107-40. The editor of the journal did not include the name of its author, but there are at least two pieces of evidence indicating that the fifth chapter was composed by someone other than Liang Qichao. First, in inter-textual commentaries inserted in previous chapters of the "Xin Zhongguo weilai ji," Liang said that he had only intended to write three chapters and the fourth chapter is an unexpected addition. C.T. Hsia arrives at a similar observation. He points out that "He (Liang) says he had written two or three chapters, but since the second and third chapters are equally inventive in technique, while the fourth chapter departs in mood and method completely from the preceding narrative, I believe Liang must have completed three chapters by the time he wrote the preface, and it was his realization that chapter 4 was a false start that led him to discontinue the novel." See C. T. Hsia, *C. T. Hsia on Chinese Literature*, 242. Second, there are considerable stylistic differences between the first four chapters of the novella and the fifth one. For a study on these differences, see Yu Lixin 余立新, "Xin zhongguo weilai ji di wu hui bushi chuzi Liang Qichao zhi shou 《新中國未來記》第五回不是出自梁啟超之手" (The future of new China's fifth chapter did not arrive from Liang Qichao), *Guji yanjiu* 古籍研究 (Journal of ancient books studies) 2 (1997): 85-7. For an investigation of the fifth chapter's authorship see Yamada Keizō's "Shin chūgoku miraiki o megutte," 331-358. For Xia Xiaohong's responses to Yu and Yamada, see "Shui shi xin zhongguo weilai ji di wu hui de zuozhe 誰是《新中國未來記第五回》的作者" (Who is the author of the future of the China's chapter five), in *Zhonghua dushu bao* 中華讀書報 (China Reading Weekly), 21st May, 2003.

But instead of elucidating what the "true" revolution is about, he devotes the entire the chapter exposing and condemning "fake" revolutionaries the protagonists encounter in Shanghai, as well as the hypocrisy of their revolutionary talks. The "word" revolution, as Liang has elaborated in his novella, is violent and immoral. But at the same time, what Liang considers to be the "true," "authentic" revolution remains an intuitive imagination that cannot be materialized in the physical reality. The true political modern Liang calls for, in this sense, can only an unnamable truth contained in one's aesthetic conviction.

The enthusiasm in exposing the word "revolution," and other modern political concepts' deceptiveness continued in the second half of the 1910's.[461] In *Strange things Witnessed in twenty years* 二十年目睹之怪現狀, the late Qing novelist Wu Jianren 吳趼人 (1866-1910) meticulously describes how modern terms such as liberty, women's right, national citizen, and constitutional monarchy have been abused to serve different insidious purposes.[462] An

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[461] Juan Wang has devoted a book length study exploring why late Qing tabloid writers such as Wu Jianren and Li Baojia (李寶嘉) (courtesy name Li Boyuan 李伯元) (1867-1906) shared particular enthusiasm in making fun of Liang Qichao and his fellow reformists. See *Merry Laughter and Angry Curses The Shanghai Tabloid Press, 1897-1911* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012). For discussions on sarcastic allusions late Qing tabloid writers made to Liang Qichao in their fictional creation, see A Ying 阿英, "Lixian yundong liangmian guan 立憲運動兩面觀" (Two faces of the constitutional movement), in *Wanqing xiaoshuo shi* 晚清小說史 (A history of late Qing fiction) (Jiangsu: Fenghuang chuban jituan, 2009), 76-89; Xia Xiaohong, "Wu Jianren yu Liang Qichao guanxi gouchen 吳趼人與梁啟超關係鉤沉" (Complicated Liaisons Between Wu Jianren and Liang Qichao), in *Wan Qing bao kan, xing bie yu wen hua zhuan xing: Xia Xiaohong xuan ji* 晚清報刊、性別與文化轉型：夏曉虹選集 (Late Qing newspapers and journals, gender, and cultural transformation: Selected works by Xia Xiaohong), compiled and edited by LüWencui 呂文翠 (Taibei: Renjian chubanshe, 2013), 87-99 (The article was published originally in Anhui shifan daxue xuebao 安徽師範大學學報 (*Journal of Anhui Normal University*) 30.6 (November 2002): 636-40.) Leo Lee has also pointed out that the use of the word *xiao* 笑 (laugh) became increasingly frequent in journals and newspapers as late Qing China's political situation deteriorated. See Lee Ou-fan, "Dizhi mo de xuanwa--- wanqing wenxue chongtan 帝制末日的喧嘩—晚清文學重探" (Uproar at the end of imperial China: Re-exploration of the late Qing literature), *Zhongguo wenzhe yanjiu tongxun* 中國文哲研究通訊 (Newsletter from the Institute of Chinese Literature and Philosophy, Academia Sinica) 20. 2 (June 2010): 215.

[462] Wu Jianren 吳研人, *Jin shi nian zhi guai xian zhuang* 二十年目睹之怪現狀 (Strange things of the past ten years) (Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe, 1986). Besides *Strange Things*, Wu expresses sarcastic mockery towards the reformer in titles such as *Xin shitou ji* 新石頭記 (New story of the stone) (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, 1986), *Shanghai youcan lu* 上海游驂錄 (Travels in Shanghai), in Wu Jianren quanji: san 吳趼人全集 (3) (Ha'erbin: Beifang wenyi chubanshe, 1998), 437- 491.

interesting question one can go on exploring is how the late Qing public had tried to make sense of the so-called "fake," or "deceptive" modern political languages. By examining how fear, laughter, anger, and frustration had been circulated *as* "meanings" through the rapidly developing print media in Shanghai, it might be interesting to question whether the rise of the national community in late Qing China is actually an emotional community hinged upon collective affective responses toward these modern concepts as unfulfilled promises.

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