

# The 1980s As Seen Across the Annotations to the »Complete Works of Lu Xun«

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80. roky 20. storočia videné pohľadom poznámkového aparátu diela *Zobrané spisy Lu Xuna*

*Resumé* V spomienkovej eseji autor ponúka historické a literárnovedné detaily procesu prípravy nového vydania *Zobraných spisov Lu Xuna* (1981). Príprava nového vydania začala už v 70. rokoch na sklonku Kultúrnej revolúcie. Interpretácia Lu Xunovho diela podliehala prísny ideologickým kritériám a hodnotenie konkrétnych historických postáv slúžilo ako prostriedok na prezentáciu aktuálnych dobových politických stanovísk. Po smrti Mao Zedonga nastalo v Číne uvoľnenie, ktoré umožnilo dokončiť nové kritické vydanie Lu Xunovho diela.

*Summary* In this essay the author reflects historical and literary details related to the 1981 edition of the Complete Works of Lu Xun. The preparation of the new edition was launched in 1970s on the verge of Cultural Revolution. The interpretation of Lu Xun's work was subjected to strict ideological criteria and the assessment of particular historical figures served as means to convey current political standpoints. The death of Mao Zedong resulted in a period of liberalization that made possible a new critical edition of Lu Xun's writings.

*Keywords* China, Literature (20th c.) · Lu Xun 魯迅 (1881–1936), *Lu Xun quanji* 魯迅全集 (1956–58, 1973, 1981, 2005), editorial process and history · *banben yanjiu* 版本研究

## 1 *The Impetus by Ideological Liberation*

### 1.1 *The Inspiration Within the 'Correction Movement to Curb Turmoil'*

The 1980s' culture in China meant a warm rain in Chinese politics. Lu Xun studies were a clear indicator of this warm rain and also highly representative of

the political climate in this realm. The work on the annotations to the Complete Works by Lu Xun was also a manifestation of the cultural and political mood of this period. Though the outcome of the annotations to the Complete Works was only published in the beginning of the 1980s, work on it had begun in 1975 already. When the American president Richard Nixon (1913–1994) had visited China in 1972, and then Prime Minister Zhou Enlai 周恩來 (1898–1976) desired to present him an edition of Lu Xun's Complete Works, it was clear that none such was available.<sup>1</sup> After that, in October 1974, Lu Xun's son Zhou Haiying 周海嬰 (1929–2011) wrote to Mao Zedong 毛澤東 (1893–1976) asking to publish a new edition of Lu Xun's Complete Works. On the very same day when Mao Zedong received the letter he approved the project. Hereafter, the central publication office started preparation to annotate again Lu Xun's Complete Works, and in 1975 convoked a meeting on annotating his works in Ji'nan (Shandong) where the task to comment the 24 collections compiled by Lu Xun was distributed among twenty-odd institutions of higher learning in China; some were assigned one collections, some others two collections. The working mode of that time was 'to unite workers, farmers, and soldiers' [*gongnongbing san jiehe* 工農兵三結合], so that from every school's Chinese departments research groups were formed, with some teachers and research students as their core, and the relevant industrial enterprises and villages appointed people as well, together with the specialized institutions, such as the Lu Xun Museum and Memorials, who all gathered in the universities and set on to start the annotation work. Yet the mode described above entailed a large number of difficulties to the actual work of annotation. Because many among the people appointed were by no means experts, and moreover were mostly accustomed to collective work, despite the great amount of human and material resources invested, the outcome was anything but ideal: it was incoherent, proved impossible to reach agreement about unified standards, and the contributions that came out were inadequate and could hardly be employed. It added considerably to the difficulties that the 'Gang of Four' was smashed precisely at the time when the work of annotation

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- 1 See Zhou Haiying 周海嬰, *Lu Xun yu wo qishi nian* 魯迅與我七十年 [Lu Xun and Me Over Seventy Years] (Haikou: Hainan nanhai chubun gongsi, 2001), 323.

was formally beginning, and that concurrently the ‘correction movement to curb turmoil’ [*boluan fanzheng* 撥亂反正] began as well as the accounts were settled with the ‘Gang of Four’. In this process, people participating in the work of annotation gradually became aware that a certain change in the world of ideological culture was taking place. Though everybody took part in exposing and criticizing the ‘Gang of Four’, all thought it necessary to ‘correct errors’ in order ‘to curb turmoil’. Yet as for what would be ‘correct’, the actual understanding was full of lacunes and shortcomings. From today’s view, most of the positions taken were abundant in biased tendencies, no matter whether from the perspective of the past, or of absorbing foreign ideas, or of the then actual political needs. Therefore, it is difficult to really find any correct or appropriate new positions in the annotation to the 1981 edition of the Complete Works of Lu Xun.

### 1.2 *A Branch of the Current of Reform and Opening*

Ever since the 3rd Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee in late 1978, China has practised her policy of reform and opening. The ideas of reform and opening also affected the editing of the annotations to the Complete Works of Lu Xun. Among others, this became manifest in the following: Many historical documents and materials became accessible [*kaifang* 開放]; many people who had previously been imprisoned were released; many political issues could be openly discussed; and the productivity was increased, so that cross-checking the annotations, editorial work as well as printing became much more efficient. From the present view, the paper used in the Complete Works was still not satisfactory, yet at that time it was already quite an achievement. The Complete Works of 1958 had taken the two years from 1956 to 1958 to be published in full.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, there were also fundamental changes in the management and supervision of the whole editorial work. The previous procedure of just relying on what would be available among the masses was not workable any longer. It was just possible to use the even more accurate manuscripts of annotations, prepared not only by some backbones among university teachers, but also by some experts

2 The first volume was published in October 1956 in Beijing with 15,000 copies, yet the second volume was only published in October 1958, in also 15,000 copies, the third in November 1956 (35,000 copies), the 4th and 5th in July 1957 (both also 35,000 copies), the 6th in April 1958 (35,000 copies), the 7th in September 1958 (27,500 copies), the 8th in December 1957 (35,000 copies), the 9th in October 1958 (30,000), and finally the 10th in the same month with 23,000 copies.

from other social groups who directly entered the editorial department and each took the responsibility for editing each volume. This meant a great progress to the practical outcome of the editorial work, and ensured that the Complete Works could be published in August 1981, thus being even ahead of time for the activities to commemorate the centenary of Lu Xun's birth in September.

### 1.3 *Achievements of the Discussions About Ideological Liberation*

In 1978, a great discussion emerged among Chinese intellectuals about »practice as the sole standard to identify truth«. <sup>3</sup> In the beginning, to purge the ideological and theoretical remnants of the 'Cultural Revolution' also had a certain impact on the work of annotating and editing the Complete Works of Lu Xun. These discussions were marked by refuting the idea that there were 'two whatevers' [*liang ge fanshi* 兩個凡是—whatever policy Mao Zedong orders, we shall realize it, and whatever instruction he gives, we shall defend it], and completely adhered to the spirit of 'seeking truth in facts' [*shishi qiushi* 實事求是]. It resulted in expecting from the Complete Works that they revealed the historical truth, and that this truth should be fully displayed. Therefore, it was of great use to compiling the annotation to the Complete Works, and became evident in the following aspects:

- 1) Many testimonies of historical events find the courage to speak out the truth.—When I visited Xiao Jun 蕭軍 (1907–1988) in the Beihai ya'er hutong 北海鴨兒胡同 no 6 [in Beijing] in early spring of 1980, for instance, he was willing to talk about anything without the least inhibition. This was a great advantage for clarifying a number of historical circumstances. Moreover, at the time a great many people had just been 'liberated' and were in mood of excitement and therefore were even less disposed to seal
  
- 3 On 10 May 1978, the unofficial journal of the Central School of the Communist Party of China *Lilun dongtai* 理論動態 [Trends in Theory] published an article »Shijian shi jianyan zhenli de weiyi biao zhun« 實踐是檢驗真理的唯一標準 [Practice is the Only Experimental Criteria of Truth] that had undergone [CPC Secretary-General] Hu Yaobang's 胡耀邦 (1915–1989) approval. Under the pen-name of 'specially appointed critic', this article appeared in *Guangming ribao* 光明日報, and was distributed by Xinhua News Agency on the same day. On 12 May, both *Renmin ribao* 人民日報 and *Jiefangjun bao* 解放軍報 published the article, so that all newspapers of provinces, autonomous regions and directly administrated cities reprinted it, and a nation-wide discussion about the problem of criteria for truth was triggered which had a lasting influence in Chinese society.

their hearts. Their attitude to historical events was relaxed, and they did not even avoid to talk about things that made themselves not appear in the best light.

- 2) The ideological liberation on the side of the authors and editors of the annotations also meant a great advancement to the facticity of their explanations. It means a totally new perspective in the judgement about historical issues.
- 3) Many taboos fell.—To give an example, in a note in the 1958 edition to Lu Xun's Response to Xu Maoyong 徐懋庸 (1911–1977) Regarding the Problem of a United Front of Resistance Against Japan (1936) drafted by Feng Xuefeng 馮雪峰 (1903–1976), we read the following:

That Xu Maoyong wrote this letter to Lu Xun was a fully individual and erroneous action. The CPC organizations active in Shanghai's cultural scene who worked underground at the time did not know about it beforehand. Lu Xun was sick then, so that the letter was drafted by Feng Xuefeng. In the text, he took a sectarian attitude towards several party members who were leading the work in the League of Left Wing Writers, and found fault in them that does not correspond to the facts. For circumstantial reasons, when Lu Xun approved the text, he was not able to check and verify these facts.<sup>4</sup>

During the 'Cultural Revolution', this annotation were declared a crime of which the 'four annotation fellows' Zhou Yang 周揚 (1908–1989), Xia Yan 夏衍 (1900–1995), Tian Han 田漢 (1898–1968) and Yanghan Sheng 陽翰笙 (1902–1993) were charged. So when after the end of the 'Cultural Revolution' this annotation had to be modified for the new edition of Complete Work, this was a very delicate matter. At the time, the person responsible for the annotations to the new edition was Lin Mohan 林默涵 (1913–2008), Vice-Minister of Culture. The editorial department had a number of discussion with the group in charge of the annotations, and when they had finally drafted a new text for the revised annotation, they handed it to Lin Mohan for approval. He in turn reported to Hu Qiaomu 胡喬木 (1912–1992)<sup>[5]</sup> who gave the following response: essentially, for that annotation, the view of venerable Xia [Yan] should serve as a standard.

4 *Lu Xun quanji* 魯迅全集, 10 vols. (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1956–58) [hereafter *LXQJ* (1958)], 6 (Apr 1958): 614.

5 Native of Yancheng 鹽城 (Jiangsu), CPC member since 1932, 1941 personal secretary to Mao Zedong, 1978 deputy, then honorary president of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, 1980 secretary in the Central Secretariat of the CPC—*Translator's note*.

When this instruction reached the editorial department, it caused a great uproar, because Xia Yan had just published *Some Past Events that Should Be Forgotten Swiftly, And Some Others that May Never Be Forgotten*,<sup>6</sup> where he played the same old tune and still stuck to the slogans from the 1950s of criticizing Feng Xuefeng and Hu Feng 胡風 (1902–1985). Yet back then, Feng Xuefang had already been rehabilitated, and Hu Feng released from prison, and the respective policies were being carried out. In the middle of the wave of reform and opening, Xia Yan's deliberations had become untimely which is why they met vigorous rejection in the scholarly world. Bao Ziyan 包子衍 (1934–1990) and Lou Shiyi 樓適夷 (1905–2001) and many others published articles where they articulated their rejection and criticism.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, if Hu Qiaomu actually made the specialized working group compile the annotations according to Xia Yan's slogans, it obviously meant a grave distortion of historical facts and untimely.

When the editorial department had received Hu Qiaomu's instruction, heated discussions ensued in which everybody believed that the way how Hu Qiaomu handled the matter was inappropriate. Then Chen Zaochun 陳早春 (b1935) and Li Wenbing 李文兵 (b1939) representing the editorial department wrote a report in which they clarified the department's position and expressed their opinion that the annotations should not be written according to Xia Yan's phrasing, because history had already provided evidence that Xia Yan's position was simply wrong. The annotation working group's firm stance did not let Hu

6 «Yi xie zao gai wangque er wei neng wangque de wangshi» 一些早該忘卻而未能忘卻的往事, *Wenxue pinglun* 文學評論 1/1980.

7 Bao Ziyan 包子衍, «Yi jian zao yi kending er you bei fouding de wangshi—guanyu Feng Xuefeng tongzhi 1936 nian daoda Shanghai de shijian wenti» 一件早已肯定而又被否定的往事——關於馮雪峰同志 1936 年到達上海的時間問題 [A Past Event that Is Settled Long Ago and Still Negated—On the Problem of When Comrade Feng Xuefeng Arrived to Shanghai in 1936], *Wenxue pinglun* 文學評論 4/1980; Lou Shiyi 樓適夷, «Weile wangque, weile tuanjie—du Xia Yan tongzhi “Yi xie zao gai wangque er wei neng wangque de wangshi”» 為了忘卻，為了團結——讀夏衍同志《一些早該忘卻而未能忘卻的往事》 [For the Sake of Forgetting, for the Sake of Solidarity—Reading Comrade Xia Yan's «Some Past Events that Should Be Forgotten Swiftly, And Some Others that May Never Be Forgotten»] *Lu Xun yanjiu dongtai* 魯迅研究動態 2/1980. On 16 May 1980, Li Helin 林何林 (1904–1988) «directly wrote a letter to the highest leaders Deng Xiaoping, Chen Yun, Hu Yaobang, Wang Renzhong, and Hu Qiaomu, saying that the publication of Xia Yan's article was evidence for sectarianism in the literary scene.» See Xu Qingquan 徐慶全, *Zhou Yang yu Feng Xuefeng* 周揚與馮雪峰 [Zhou Yang and Feng Xuefeng] (Wuhan: Hubei renmin chubanshe, 2005), and rejecting Xia Yan's view.

Qiaomu any way out. He finally did not respond to the objections, and the editorial department prepared the annotations according to its own ideas and published it. The respective annotation now reads as follows:

[...] whereafter Zhou Yang and others proposed the slogan of 'national defense literature' [*guofang wenxue* 國防文學] that should call writers from all classes and from all orientations to join the whole nation's united front of resistance against Japan, and to make all efforts to create works resisting Japan and saving the country. Yet in the course of propagating 'national defense literature', there were authors who lopsidedly emphasized 'national defense literature' as a general slogan for creative writing; there were authors who despised the leading role of the proletarian class in the united front. When Lu Xun became aware of that, he proposed the slogan of 'mass literature of the nation's revolutionary war' [*minzu geming zhanzheng de dazhong wenxue* 民族革命戰爭的大眾文學], in order to meet the requirements of leftist writers and the aspirations of other writers. In the revolutionary literary scene, there were heated controversies around these two slogans. In the two articles In Response to a Letter of the Trotskyites [*»Da Tuoluosiji pai de xin«* 答托洛斯基派的信] and About Our Present Literary Movement [*»Lun xianzai women de wenxue yundong«* 論現在我們的文學運動] from June [1936], he had already expressed his position towards the policy of the nation's united front of resistance against Japan and towards the contemporary literary movements. In this article he goes a step further in explaining his views.<sup>8</sup>

Here, nothing is said about whether Feng Xuefeng wrote the draft, and thus of course also denies that he committed an error, yet it also does not give a clear explanation as to which position Zhou Yang took towards the slogan of 'national defense literature'.

In the past, this position presented an absolute taboo, but this annotation finally transgressed the hitherto forbidden limits, and with one brush-stroke annihilated the comments on Feng Xuefeng that did not correspond to facts. If there had not been a movement of ideological liberation, and if there had not been an attitude of considering seeking the truth in facts the sole standard, the editorial department would not have dared to think as it did, or to write as it did, and to act as it did.

As for the controversy about the two slogans, it had in fact not only resurfaced and disappeared over and over again ever since the 1930s and up to the 1980s, but far into the 1990s. Even in the new century, it approached repeatedly until it regressed slowly.

8 *Lu Xun quanji*, 16 vols. (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1981) [hereafter *LXQJ* (1981)], 6: 539.

Yet this controversy in turn also became a support for the movement of ideological liberation and for the policy of reform and opening. Though around 1981 central institutions repeatedly published documents urging that the cultural scene should finally refrain from discussing incessantly the controversy about the two slogans, but this was only effective for a limited period of time. It was Xia Yan again who in 1985 published his book *Record About Indolently Seeking for Old Dreams* (*Lanxun jiumeng lu* 懶尋舊夢錄) in which he still stuck to those years' views, and even said that Hu Feng was a bad person, that Feng Xuefeng committed the error of sectarianism, and finally that Lu Xun was not capable to recognize that Hu Feng was a bad person, and that he neglected his supervisory duties.<sup>9</sup> As a result, the taboo of 'no discussion' was smashed again. Though discussions were not as heated as before, the temper in newspapers and journals was still clearly rejective. All this is evidence that establishing taboos was not as easily possible as it used to be; and from another perspective, this could be said to be an outcome of the movement of ideological liberation.

## 2 *Releasing Lu Xun from the Concentration on Contents*

The process of compiling annotations to the Complete Works of Lu Xun also had other outcomes, namely that Lu Xun was released from being read exclusively in view of the merely semantical contents. This was expressed in factual accounts of a great number of people who had been in touch with Lu Xun, usually with a tendency to systematically brush up and unearth hitherto unknown material—except for the cases where the experience was unpleasant. As the working group for annotations inevitably had to consult with contemporaries of Lu Xun in order to understand some historical fact, and many of these persons had just been 'liberated', they devoted a great deal of enthusiasm to comb past events. The overwhelming majority among them spared no effort to examine their memories and checking their records in view of events relating to Lu Xun when members of the working group visited them. Hence, a number of people who had been in close touch with Lu Xun started to record systematically the course of their relationship, so that Xiao Jun, Cao Jinghua 曹靖華 (1897–

9 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1985). As for the passages sticking to certain views, see »Zuoyi shinian (xia)—liang ge kouhao de lunzheng« 左翼十年 (下) · 兩個口號的論爭 [The Ten Years of the League of Left Wing Writers, Part Two—The Controversy About the Two Slogans] and following chapters.



1987), Hu Feng, Huang Yuan 黃源 (1905–2003), Li Jiye 李霽野 (1904–1997), Zhao Jiabi 趙家璧 (1908–1997) and others brought out books about their experience.<sup>10</sup> Yet this process of re-evaluating historical facts started already when the working group for annotations to the Complete Works visited and interviewed these people. During this period, the unearthing of historical sources related to Lu Xun reached an unprecedented tide. If we search for the reasons, in the first place though Lu Xun was a hot topic ever since the 1950s, but as the system put restrictions, there were still many taboos, and many facts about Lu Xun were distorted, suppressed, or covered up. This might be shocking, but this is how it really was.

### 2.1 Long-Term Distortions of Lu Xun

How was Lu Xun distorted, suppressed and covered up? Let me give a short account:

Ever since 1950s, Lu Xun was praised as the standard-bearer of the revolution in culture of China. When in August 1949 the First Conference of Delegates of Literary and Art Workers was held in Beijing, portraits of Lu Xun and Mao Zedong were hanging side by side at the back of the stage. That the memorial emblem issued at the conference also displayed Lu Xun and Mao Zedong shoulder by shoulder makes clear that Lu Xun's position was very high.

10 By Cao Jinghua *Lu Xun shujian (zhi Cao Jinghua)* 魯迅書簡（致曹靖華）[Letters of Lu Xun to Cao Jinghua] (Shanghai: Renmin chubanshe, 1976); von Huang Yuan *Lu Xun shujian zhuiyi* 魯迅書簡追憶 [Searching Memory Around Letters from Lu Xun] (Hangzhou: Zhejiang renmin chubanshe, 1980); by Xiao Jun *Lu Xun gei Xiao Jun Xiao Hong xinjian zhushi lu* 魯迅給蕭軍蕭紅信箋註釋錄 [Collected Annotations to Letters by Lu Xun Addressed to Xiao Jun and Xiao Hong] (Harbin: Heilongjiang renmin chubanshe, 1981); by Hu Feng »Guanyu sanshi niandai qianqi he Lu Xun youguan ershi'er tiao tiwen« 關於三十年代前期和魯迅有關二十二條提問 [22 Questions Related to Lu Xun in the Former Half of the 1930s; 1 and 7 Oct 1977], *Shanghai Lu Xun yanjiu* no 5 (Sep 1991), 161–192 [with Note by Hu Feng's wife Meizhi 梅志, 192–193; and Explanation by Li Bing 李兵 and the author of the present article, 193–194—*Translator's note*] and other articles; by Li Jiye *Lu Xun xiansheng yu Weimingshe* 魯迅先生與未名社 [Lu Xun and the Unnamed Society] (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1984); by Zhao Jiabi *Bianji shengya yi Lu Xun* 編輯生涯憶魯迅 [Memories of Lu Xun from an Editor's Life] (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1981).



Plate 1  
*Emblem Issued for First Conference of Delegates  
 of Literary and Art Workers, 1949—Translator's  
 collection.*

Yet in fact Lu Xun was certainly not seen as somebody who was really standing shoulder by shoulder with Mao Zedong. As for Mao Zedong himself, he certainly did not blindly praise Lu Xun. Mao Zedong has said that if Lu Xun lived up to 1957, he did not want to express himself about whether Lu Xun would be in jail or writing, yet Lu Xun was a person of unyielding integrity, and that is why would probably be writing.<sup>11</sup> Mao Zedong also believed that in *The True History of A Q* («A Q zhengzhuan» 阿Q正傳; 1921/22), Lu Xun had not sufficiently expressed the revolutionary character of peasants.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, Lu Xun's view about traditional Chinese medicine and about Beijing Opera were quite inaccurate.<sup>13</sup> Should be added that these few utterances by Mao Zedong do not suffice

- 11 «Yu xinwen gongzuozhe de tanhua» 與新聞工作者談話 [A Talk With Press Workers], in *Mao Zedong wenji* 毛澤東文集 [Works], 8 vols. (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1993–99), 7: 101–104; see also Zhou Haiying, *Lu Xun yu wo qishi nian*, 373. On 8 March 1957, Mao Zedong said in his Talk With Delegates from Literature and Arts Circles: «Lu Xun nowadays could still write short essays [zawen 雜文], but I am afraid stories would not be suitable. He would probably be the president of the Writers' Association, and would say some words on meetings.» («Tong wenyijie daibiao de tanhua» 同文藝界代表的談話, in *Mao Zedong wenji*, 7: 253–254).
- 12 In a letter to Zhou Yang on 7 Nov 1937, Mao Zedong wrote: «I have already talked to you about how Lu Xun too much emphasized the dark side of peasants, and their feudal side, while completely neglecting their heroic struggle, their resistance against landlords, i.e. their democratic side. This is because he has never experienced the peasants' struggle.» *Mao Zedong wenyi lunji* [Collected Essays of Mao Zedong on Literature and the Arts] (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2002).
- 13 Mao Zedong, «Tong yinyue gongzuozhe de tanhua» [A Talk With Music Workers], in *Mao Zedong wenji*, 7: 81. He says: «Lu Xun's [...] views on traditional Chinese medicine and on Beijing

to establish which prejudices he had against Lu Xun, on the contrary, he knew Lu Xun very well. The few remarks Mao Zedong made had a clear background, that is that some people believed Lu Xun was simply wrong in a number of issues, or that he had been influenced by others. However, in the course of the various political campaigns that started in the 1950s, Lu Xun's followers all disappeared, which seemed to confirm Lu Xun's own ideas and the hidden injury in his character.

In all this, Lu Xun's status appeared nominally high, yet in fact it was simply made a figurehead, because he had been »surrounded by bad people«, to put it mildly—as for the bad things his followers did, is it not reasonable that Lu Xun also bore some responsibility?

Yet the 'Cultural Revolution' made all such considerations obsolete, and the 'four annotation fellows' [*si tiao hanzi* 四條漢子] were pushed into the deepest of hells, so that the issue took another extreme course. If Hu Feng, Xiao Jun and others were far from being rehabilitated, this meant nothing else than pronouncing clearly what had actually happened would be even more impossible, and facts distorted to an even higher degree. The whole literary scene was in turmoil, and there was nobody of good sense. Anybody was an 'ox devil and snake ghost', no matter whether they were ancestors or descendants, they were all thrown into 'cowshed'.

At that time, we had reached the end of the 1970s, and only after everybody had rejected the 'Cultural Revolution' in full sweep, it was possible to consider anew which was the meaning and the value of Lu Xun. Now, it became possible to re-evaluate Lu Xun's genuine meaning and value from a genuinely scholarly and historical perspective. Now, Lu Xun's significance met with a truly existential favourable climate.

## 2.2 *Affirmation and Confirmation*

During the 'Cultural Revolution', Lu Xun was far from being suppressed or silenced, but simply distorted. To mention an example: Among the 'weapons used among factions' [*paizhang* 派仗], both sides used 'magic weapons' [*fabao* 法寶, i.e. 'precious pearls from the Buddhist canon'] in their controversies, besides the Record of Sayings by Chairman Mao (*Mao zhuxi yulu* 毛主席語錄, 1961; translated as *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung*, 1966), there were also the Record of Sayings by Lu Xun (*Lu Xun yulu* 魯迅語錄; numerous editions

opera are quite inaccurate. Traditional medicine had cured his father to death, but he rather liked local opera.«

since 1936). Back then, both sides were ‘using’ Lu Xun in a pragmatist way, and the number of copies printed of the Record of Sayings by Lu Xun ranged second right after the Record of Sayings by Chairman Mao. In the struggle, any of the two sides could take Lu Xun as a weapon. Whether people had a basic understanding of Lu Xun at all, is difficult to tell. The least what can be said, is that the Lu Xun that affirmed by some people, was in the one that should be rejected in the view of others; and that those passages by Lu Xun affirmed by some could be exactly those rejected by their counterparts. But on both sides, what could be affirmed was pushed to the extreme and utterly contradictory. Yet in the new edition of Complete Works, the annotations were necessarily confronted with these contradictions. As a matter of fact, the way how the scholars dealt with the situation was to take drastic measures: to turn back to Lu Xun’s own texts. This proved an appropriate method to recognize again which was the genuine significance of Lu Xun.

### 2.3 *The Inspiration by the ‘Unearthed Cultural Relic’*

When in 1979 China held the Fourth All-China Literature and Arts Delegates’ Conference, Lu Xun’s pupil Xiao Jun who had been silenced and had disappeared for more than thirty years, accepted the invitation to attend the conference and give a speech. His first words were »I am Xiao Jun, and am an unearthed cultural relic«, which did not fail to strike at once the whole audience, because after he had received criticism in 1948 in the northeast, he had ‘evaporated from the human world’ and only then reappeared again. After having not seen the light of the day for several decades, this could well be compared to an unearthed cultural relic. The mood of bitterness, of emotion and of agitation of course afflicted all people present. When in his speech Zhou Yang said that all literary troupes disperses by the ‘Gang of Four’ had gathered again and that »Spring for literature is near!«, 73 years old Xiao Jun shouted from below the podium: »Zhou Yang’s spring is my winter!«<sup>14</sup> These trenchant words made Zhou Yang extremely furious.

At a time when the literary scene happily shouted that spring had drawn close, and when he had himself just been touched by the spring sun, what could the ‘unearthed relic’ Xiao Jun have said else? What he actually wanted to say is that despite the fact that Zhou Yang and others had been affected by the nightmare of the ‘Cultural Revolution’, they were still worlds away from the experien-

14 See Gao Chang 高昌, *Gong Mu zhuan* 公木傳 [A Biography of Gong Mu {1910–1998}] (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 2008), ch. 15.3.

ces and ideas of Xiao Jun and his likes. It was exactly when he and others had suffered all sorts of hardships that Zhou Yang had felt his spring breeze. So if now Zhou Yang again experienced spring, from Xiao Jun's perspective did it then not entail the meaning that he was about to experience another winter?

The deeper meaning of this clash was that Zhou Yang and Xiao Jun were likely to have very different opinions about a great number of issues. For Lu Xun, this was certainly true as well. If in the past Xiao Jun, Hu Feng, Feng Xuefeng, Ding Ling 丁玲 (1904–1986), and others had suffered hardships, in the broadest sense it was also related to how they understood Lu Xun and which attitude they took towards him. Similarly, as for the annotations to Lu Xun's Complete Works, there were still many issues on which there could be divergent views. The intention of the 'cultural relic' was simply to contemplate again the sunlight. Therefore, a number of explanations regarding history needed to be fed by a renewed understanding, allowing people to look at the genuine face of history. As a matter of fact, in the past a number of explanations regarding Lu Xun's works had put on clothes with very confused colours, so that various aspect of Lu Xun were buried which needed to be brought to light again.

#### 2.4 *Renewed Annotations and Sticking to Old Modes of Speaking*

Against the general background of ideological liberation, reform and opening, correction movement to curb turmoil, and rehabilitation of injustices, a great many judgements about historical events and historical figures underwent substantial changes. For instance, the problem of the 'turncoats' or historical judgements about personalities, such as 'traitor', 'counterrevolutionary' and 'rightist element', which were still under examination and processing, had still not come to a conclusion yet. When I visited Hu Feng in hospital in Beijing in February 1980, he was away from being rehabilitated. Even when the Complete Works of Lu Xun were published, his problems were not yet fully solved, and still left a long and chaotic tail of further consequences.<sup>15</sup> Although at the time Ding Ling

15 In reviewing the case of the 'Hu Feng clique' in September 1980, the Central Committee of the CPC came to the conclusion that Hu Feng and his 'clique' were not of counterrevolutionary nature, rehabilitated him politically, saying that since his case had been handled incorrectly and he had been dealt with unjustly, his honour had to be restored. Yet there were still the charges with the 'problem anti-Party ideas' and of the 'activities of a minor sectarian clique' that remained. In 1985 he was rehabilitated again, and in June 1988, the Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPC issued an Amended Notice About a Further Step in Rehabilitating

was already in liberty, her problems were also far from being solved. Zhou Yang and others then still insisted that there was 'one doubt and one stain' with her.<sup>16</sup> Towards people who were declared rehabilitated but where a final conclusion was still subject to change, it was even more difficult put a simple judgement. For example, there was the problem changing judgements about Mu Mutian 穆木天 (1900–1971), or the problem of the 'traitor' Tao Kangde 陶亢德 (1908–1983). It posed a certain difficulty to write a judgement about those persons in the [annotations] to the Complete Works who were still in the process of examination, or where no conclusive statement has been issued yet. Should there finally new annotations be written, or should we stick to the old explanations? If there were already clear conclusions, should we still overthrow them?

The working group for the annotations to the Complete Works back then had the following position: 1) Explaining event on the basis of historical material, that is if Lu Xun had used material containing errors, or if they do not correspond to what historical sources convey, then only objective annotations on the basis of new material should be added, with adding a critical judgement; 2) if there was a clear central conclusive judgement, this should be followed; 3) concentrating on the situation during Lu Xun's lifetime, and usually not paying attention to the circumstances after his death, with the exception of circumstances of overwhelming influence; 4) making things objectively plausible, just talk about confirmed facts, not drawing far-reaching conclusions. As a consequence, in the annotations about persons we generally worked on the basis of the material we had collected ourselves, and concentrated on the functions persons had at the time, and why they were in contact with Lu Xun. As for the reasons, we also limited ourselves to what was known at the time, and did not draw political conclusions. As for persons, we usually did not 'put huts on them' [i.e. classified them morally-politically].

However, as for a number of conclusive judgements about political issues that could not be changed, and even more about some general historical judgements, there were important modifications and the old mode of speaking was

Comrade Hu Feng (»Guanyu wei Hu Feng tongzhi jin yi bu pingfan de buchong tongzhi« 關於為胡風同志進一步平反的補充通知), fully denying all unbased charges and diffamations.

- 16 In 1980, Ding Ling's daughter Jiang Zuhui 蔣祖慧 went to see Zhou Yang, in the hope, her mother's problems could be soon settled. Zhou Yang said that the behaviour of Ding Ling in the past 40 years could lift all doubts, but the stain could not be removed. See Wang Zengru 王增如, *Ding Ling fandang jituan yuan'an shimo* 丁玲反動集團冤案始末 [Beginning and End of the Case of Ding Ling's Anti-Party Clique] (Wuhan: Hubei renmin chubanshe, 2006), 265.

still used. As to the Congratulation Letter to the Red Army by Lu Xun, for example, though we had discovered a number of problems, e.g. that the phrase included in Lu Xun's Collected Letters (*Lu Xun shuxin ji* 魯迅書信集, 2 vols., 1976) »you are entrusted with the hope of China and the future of humankind« was actually taken from somebody else's congratulation letter, yet at the same time, we had found out that other contents of the letter were indeed from Lu Xun, so that we could not totally deny that there was such letter. Yet it proved impossible to establish the authenticity of the whole letter, so we used a modified procedure: we did not include the letter's whole text, but in the abbreviated chronology of Lu Xun's life in volume 16, under heading of February 1936, we quoted some passages from the letter.<sup>17</sup> Yet afterwards there were some people who still doubted its authenticity, but the historical evidence that is known by now shows that surviving documentary witnesses differ from each other, so that the principle of relying on evidence is put in favour.

Moreover, the persons considered traitors, such as Tang Erhe 湯爾和 (1878 to 1940), Tao Kangde, Qian Daosun 錢稻孫 (1887–1966), Zhou Zuoren 周作人 (1885–1967), and Fan Zhongyun 樊仲雲 (1901–1989), because it was after the end of the War of Resistance Against Japan that they were brought to trial, and that evidence is scarce, they were all labelled in wording like »became 'traitors' during the War of Resistance« and similar phrases. Yet afterwards, when for the 2005 edition all annotations were revised, it was clearly said that they had been labelled 'traitors' for the simple fact they had taken offices. To give an example, »Tang Erhe during the War of Resistance served as Head of the Political Commission of Parliament of the illegitimate provisional government, as well as Permanent Member of the Council for the illegitimate Government of Wang [Jingwei 汪精衛 (1883–1944)] in Northern China, and as Highest Secretary for the Ministry of Education«. Zhou Zuoren served as »Head of the Educational Department for the illegitimate government in Northern China«, Qian Taosun in turn »after Beiping had submitted to the enemy, he became rector of Beijing University under the illegitimate Japanese control«, while Fan Zhongyun »during the War of Resistance was Vice-Minister of Education in the illegitimate go-

17 The respective passage reads as follows: »Around February, he wrote the Central Committee of the CPC, praising the Long March of Red Army, saying that "this is the most glorious page in the history of the liberation of the Chinese people" (quoted according to *Hongse Zhonghua bao* 紅色中華報 [Red China Journal] of 28 Oct 1936), "you are entrusted with the hope of China and the future of humankind" (quoted from *Xinhua ribao* 新華日報 [New China Daily] of 27 July 1947).« *LXQJ* (1981), 16: 37.

vernment of Wang [Jingwei]», and as a member of the Committee on Education did not object to ‘traitors’. Yet for the 2005 edition, such passages were eliminated, because they were in fact offending the principles established for annotations to the Complete Works: not to bother about things that happened after Lu Xun’s death.

### 3 *New Methods Applied in the Culture of the New Period*

Under the special conditions of the new period, in the process of compiling the annotations, it logically followed they produced new cultural patterns that abandoned those previously existing, and at the same time met the requirement of paving new ways in the context of the ‘correction movement to curb turmoil’. Among the methods used were investigations both inside and outside [the working unit], employing new theories and amalgamating them with new ideas—all these were peculiarities that made their appearance during this period.

#### 3.1 *Internal and External Examination:*

##### *Methods from the ‘Cultural Revolution’ Supplemented by Empirical Evidence*

The method used in the work of annotating was basically an expansion of the internal and external examination. During the ‘Cultural Revolution’ this working method was frequently employed in enacting political campaigns, yet existed already before the ‘Cultural Revolution’, but it still met the methodological requirement of empirical evidence from historical sciences. The difference consists in that in a political campaign the method entails a distorted view, and concentrates on the ‘historical stains’ in a person, with the intention to prove the existence of ‘historical problems’. The empirical method, however, concentrates on the genuine historical facts, and makes all efforts to reconstruct historical events. Except for the difference in perspective, it also needs to extort the various brands that have been stamped on persons or events during a number of past political campaigns, thus creating a false impression, which could also include the outright forgery of documents—and for these manipulations the ‘the false had to be identified’ [*bianwei* 辨偽].

In 1975, when working on the annotations to the Complete Works started to be organized, it involved recruiting collaborators in all important Chinese universities with literary study programmes. These institutions formed working groups for the annotations according to the principle of the ‘three-in-one combination’ [*san jiehe* 三結合], including workers, peasants and military personnel, as



well as university teachers and a number of M. A. candidates, and moreover some employees from specialized institutes (e. g. from the then existing four Lu Xun museums and memorials [Beijing, Shanghai, Shaoxing, Guangzhou]), so that people from nearly twenty universities participated. There were many people dispersed among a great number of groups, yet the human force was in fact very diverse and heterogeneous, and its scholarly qualification fairly poor. There were some collaborators from the 'workers, peasants and soldiers' in fact unable to conduct any reasonable research. Therefore, doing an internal and external examination proved extremely energy-consuming, and its outcome was very poor. The 'people's war' practised back then proved to be an 'art of war among the masses'. Until 1978, basically all groups from the various places had submitted their manuscripts, yet their quality did by no means meet the expectations. During that period, all working units starting to restore the working discipline, and the 'workers, peasants and soldiers' returned to their original units, as the university teachers. At the same time, in order to assure a certain quality of the annotations, the People's Literature Press formed a group that should make sure the annotations would be finalized in a uniform way. This group consisted of the staff originally responsible, but in addition, also Jiang Xijin 蔣錫金 (1915–2003), Zhu Zheng 朱正 (b1931), Bao Ziyang, and other experts who had just recently been 'liberated' [or released] were appointed to join. These people applied a thorough revision to the manuscripts they had received. Though they were basically following the original principles, they went deeper in the requirements towards the material, established stricter principles as to its evidence, and were more rigorous as to when a judgement could be reversed. This greatly contributed to establish stability in the scholarly basis. In fact, the annotation to the Complete Works of 1981 later on became a basis for the critical evaluation of a number of persons from that period of the 20th century. Should be noted, however, that there were also several shortcomings and errors.

### 3.2 *The Challenges by New Ideas*

After the end of the 'Cultural Revolution', all foreign scholarly and cultural ideas also entered into the interpretation of Lu Xun. During that period, 'opening up' also included Sigmund Freud and Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) and other representatives of foreign intellectual trends that had been noticed by Lu Xun, as well as the degree of influence they might have had on Lu Xun. To give an example, during the 'Cultural Revolution' it was impossible to discuss whether Freud's psychoanalysis had had any impact on Lu Xun's »Butian« 補天 (Mending Heaven; 1935). Yet after that, this issue was not so much affected by censorship.

On the contrary, looking at the 1981 edition of Complete Works and that of 1958, there is a clear change in the annotation provided for Freud. The annotation provided for the 'teachings of Freud' (»Fuluote shuo« 弗羅特說) to the Preface to Old Stories Retold in the second volume to the 1958 edition of Complete Works reads as follows:

Fuluote 弗羅特 (S. Freud, 1856–1939), commonly transcribed as Fuluoyite 佛洛伊特, Austrian psychiatrist, initiator of the teaching of the so-called psychoanalysis. This teaching considers all intellectual phenomena such as literature, arts, philosophy and religion as the outcome of people's 'life force' [*shengmingli* 生命力] (*libido*) oppressed to the subconscious, and in particular as produced by sexual desire. The »teachings of Freud« mentioned here refer to his psychoanalysis. Lu Xun has just taken notice of Freud's psychoanalysis but has certainly not been influenced by it, yet on the contrary took a sceptical attitude towards it. In his 1933 article Hearing About Dreams [»Tingshuo meng« 聽說夢], he had already criticized Freud's ideas (see *Nankong beidiao ji* 南控北調集).<sup>18</sup>

In the 1981 edition, however, the annotation to the same text is as follows:

»Teachings of Freud«, for Freud, see note 14 on page 211 of the present volume. The »teachings of Freud« mentioned here refer to Freud's psychoanalysis. Though the author had taken notice of the psychoanalysis and had been influenced by it to some degrees, he has acquired a critical attitude towards it; see his Hearing About Dreams from 1933 (included in *Nankong beidiao ji* [Northern Tunes with a Southern Accent]) where he critically assessed the psychoanalysis.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, in the 2005 edition, the respective passage in the annotation reads:

»Teachings of Freud«, for Freud, see note 14 on page 248 of the present volume. The »teachings of Freud« mentioned here refer to Freud's psychoanalysis. The author had taken notice of the psychoanalysis and had been influenced by it to some degrees, then acquired a critical and analytical attitude towards it; see Hearing About Dreams (in Northern Tunes with a Southern Accent).<sup>20</sup>

From such a comparison, the changes in the status of Freud in the annotations to Lu Xun's work may be seen clearly. In 1958, only the very fact of Lu Xun's taking notice of Freud was acknowledged, yet not any influence, but criticism and doubt; in 1981, taking notice as well as influence were acknowledged, yet doubts as well as criticism are mentioned, tempering their significance by the syntactical construction »though...«; and in 2005, finally, the influence was

18 *LXQJ* (1958), 2: 437.

19 *LXQJ* (1981), 2: 343.

20 *LXQJ* (2005), 2: 355.

acknowledged, while the doubts are not mentioned, and the term ‘critique’ [*pipan* 批判] is not used, but replaced by ‘an attitude of criticism and analysis’ [*piping* 批評, *fenxi* 分析]. It may be seen that the farther we move onwards, the more objective the attitude towards Freud it is becoming, and the more the assessment of Freud’s influence on Lu Xun is turning appropriate. Nonetheless, in the 1981 edition, the marks of New Ideas as well as the scars of previous judgements are clearly visible in the judgements.

### 3.3 *Employing New Material*

During the ‘Cultural Revolution’, many things were inaccessible, and particularly if it was material involving political issues or sensitive persons, it was more hermetically closed than in a can. As for Hu Feng’s close relationship with Lu Xun in the later period of his life, for instance, it was only Hu Feng himself who could provide material or act as a witness, yet he was imprisoned since 1955 and was totally isolated from the outside world, so that it was impossible to visit him. Moreover, even if it had been possible to visit him, it is unlikely he would have been permitted to provide any clarifications. And even if he had done so, it would not have been acknowledged, so it was impossible to bring it to light.

In 1977, the working-group from Fudan University in Shanghai responsible to compile the annotations to the diaries of Lu Xun encountered a great many questions regarding Hu Feng that needed clarifications, and therefore cautiously articulated the plan to go to Sichuan and ‘fetch the detainee for interrogation’ [*tishen* 提審]—something unimaginable before and during the ‘Cultural Revolution’, and had now become possible thanks to the ‘correction movement to curb turmoil’. Me and another young teacher had the luck to be appointed by the working-group to travel to Sichuan and try ‘interrogate the detainee’ Hu Feng. Though we did not have the opportunity to see Hu Feng in person, yet after we had handed in a detailed list with 22 questions, two months later and very much to our surprise, we received a manuscript of 51 pages in which Hu Feng himself responded to our 22 questions, and clarified a number of historical facts we were unable to verify. Later on, he again wrote 9 pages to another 11 questions we were asking him. All this new material entered into the Complete Works edition of 1981.

During the few years after the end of the ‘Cultural Revolution’, a lot of valuable historical material that had been ‘buried’ or scattered resurfaced again, so that newspapers and journals from all places, most importantly the *Guangming ribao* 光明日報 (Guangming Daily) and the *Lu Xun yanjiu ziliao* 魯迅研究資料 (Material for Lu Xun Research), frequently published freshly discovered texts

written by Lu Xun. All these these text were included in the Complete Works and enormously enriched their textual basis. When in 1937 Xu Guangping 許廣平 (1898–1968) collected Lu Xun's letters at home and abroad, she received more than 800 items. When in 1946 Tang Tao 唐弢 (1913–1992) edited Letters by Lu Xun (*Lu Xun shujian* 魯迅書簡), he included 858 items (with three fragments), and at the time when the Complete Works of 1958 were published, a total of 1,165 letters of Lu Xun were known, yet only 334 were included in the Complete Works, much less than in the Letters by Lu Xun from 1946. The explanation provided then was »only items of interest were selected, whereas letters Lu Xun received are not included«<sup>21</sup> and obviously evasive, while in fact it was based on political consideration. In the 1981 edition, there were 1,445 letters, without counting the Letters Between Two Places (*Liangdi shu* 兩地書, 1933) and 18 fragments given in an appendix, with the following editorial note: »[...] with the exception of letters Lu Xun has himself included in collections and of those edited in the Addenda to the Collection of Uncollected Texts (*Jiwai ji shiyi* 集外集拾遺, 1937 [ed. by Xu Guangping]), all letters written by Lu Xun are included.«<sup>22</sup> The renewal of ideas had also brought about a change in the ways of editing, so that the result also looked completely different than before. Hence, the 1981 edition also reflected its time, and it is unconceivable that such a plentiful and substantial outcome could have been achieved earlier.

#### 4 *Limitations in the Early Period of Opening*

After all, however, during that period the 'correction movement to curb turmoil' as well as the policy of reform and opening had just started. The ideas and concepts of many Chinese were not open yet, because they had been kept under control for so long, their ideas were unable to keep pace with the changes. The idea of the 'two whatevers' presented a huge obstacle to the cultural world in destroying taboos and pushing forth inquiries in order to find out what was at the core. The limitations that came along with this attitude are obvious.

##### 4.1 *Deficiencies of the Material*

The work of compiling annotations is based upon material accumulated over a long period of time. The personnel responsible for the annotations of the 1958

21 »Di jiu juan shuoming« 第九卷說明 [Editorial Note to Volume 9], *LXQJ* (1958), 9: 1.

22 *LXQJ* (1981), 11: 319.

edition of Complete Works did a lot of field-study and research. They visited nearly 2,000 persons who had been in contact with Lu Xun and compiled Persons in Lu Xun's Diaries (*Lu Xun riji renwu* 魯迅日記人物, 2 vols., mimeographed for internal use [*neibu* 內部]). Back then, many people who have been in touch with Lu Xun were still alive and could be directly interviewed, so that a lot of valuable material was left also for future annotations. Moreover, around 1959 the Lu Xun Museum in Beijing compiled a List of Lu Xun's Manuscripts and Book-Holdings (*Lu Xun shouji yu cangshu mulu* 魯迅手跡與藏書目錄, 3 vols., printed for internal use), and later invited several foreign experts of literature to write abstracts on the books in foreign languages held by Lu Xun which also meant a great convenience for writing annotations on the books he had read. Yet from an overall perspective, the material prepared was very insufficient. When the 1981 edition was under preparation, a great number of persons were charged with carrying out the internal and external examination who collected a huge quantity of material and clarified a lot of tricky issues, but also left many issues unsolved. On the one hand, events were already too far back in the past and some historical material remained obscure; on the other hand, during the first period the degree of specialization with the non-experts was insufficient, while the experts who joined during the latter period found themselves under time-pressure, so that were not able to make additional interviews that would have been necessary, so that many lacunes were left in the annotations.

- 1) Missing annotations.—Many citations and literary allusions have not been identified, so that no annotation was given. Such instances may be found in every volume, yet there places where it is particularly obvious, such as in the diaries when »not identified« appears behind a person's name, while in the volumes with essays, though many annotations for direct quotations are missing, not many people will notice it, as apart from specialized scholars ordinary readers are not paying attention to the indication of the original source, and if they were noticing, they might not fully understand it, so they are very few texts with such indications.
- 2) Missing texts.—That the original letters from Letters Between Two Places (*Liangdi shu*) were not included, is a grave shortcoming. When Lu Xun edited *Liangdi shu*, he made a number of textual changes, including persons' names and terms of address, but also including references to events and the mode of expression. To have the opportunity to compare the original letters with their edited version would of course greatly contribute to our understanding of Lu Xun. Yet it was not even considered to include the original

letter in the Complete Works, but on the contrary, the consideration was that Lu Xun had himself edited *Liangdi shu*, and that therefore it was his will to have them published in the version he had edited, so that publishing the original letters would sort of circumvent his own intentions. Moreover, Lu Xun had passed away not even 50 years before, and possibly, there were also copyright consideration. If there were also several freshly discovered letters that were not included in the Complete Works, this was in fact inevitable, either because they surfaced in the last phase before publication, or even after publication, so that it was simply late. It is also a pity that Lu Xun's scientific works *Zhongguo kuangchan zhi* 中國礦產誌 (China's Mineral Resources; 1906 [written with Gu Lang 顧琅]) and *Shenglixue jiangyi* 生理學講義 (Lectures on Physiology; 1910) were not included—which is, by the way, even true for 2005 edition.

- 3) Unclear annotations.—If the annotations to many persons, historical events and allusions are not fully clear, it is mainly due to lacunes in the respective material. If for instance in the case of a contemporary of Lu Xun it proved impossible to identify the person from other sources, nothing else may be done on the basis of the standard of the type of intercourse with than to state, for example, when the person wrote a letter to Lu Xun and in which function. If nothing can be said about what the person did before and afterwards, it is of course a serious deficiency.

#### 4.2 *Non-Standard Annotations*

Due to the long period of repeated political campaigns, there was a lack of emphasis on establishing scholarly standards. Some among the related phenomena are not specific to China. To give an example: Japanese personal names and book-titles were arranged according to the number and sequence of strokes in Chinese, while they should have been arranged according to the Japanese custom [i.e. according to pronunciation in *hiragana*]. After publication of the Complete Works in 1981, several people pointed this out, yet also the 2005 edition did modify the arrangement. If back then characters were not arranged according to the correct Japanese mode, it was because the editorial department had failed to appoint people proficient in Japanese, yet there was also one particular reason for the decision to arrange the characters according to Chinese custom: after all, the index was intended to be used by Chinese readers. In fact, there are also Japanese dictionaries arranging the characters according to number and order of strokes in Chinese characters, such as the *Daijirin* 大辞林 (Great Forest of Words; 1894–96, new ed. 1988, 3rd ed. 2006) or the *Kōjien* 広辞

苑 (Wide Garden of Words; 1955, 6th ed. 2008). However, this may not provide a sufficient basis for a principle, because even though there might be Japanese dictionaries arranging characters according to the Chinese number and sequence of strokes, the *hiragana* are still arranged according to Japanese pronunciation, as are the *kanji* [Chinese characters used in Japanese].

Moreover, the division of the index in volume 16 poses a problem. The 1958 edition of Complete Works had no index at all, so that there was one in 1981 presented a considerable progress, yet the division into ten categories lacked any scholarly coherence, so that it was for sure not frequently used. In many texts, persons from antiquity, both Chinese and foreign, are not annotated at all which is against standards as well. As for the annotations to many historical sources, they are not cited correctly, or they contain errors or even entail contradictory references.

#### 4.3 *Influence of 'Leftist' Ideas*

The assessments by many annotators lacked objectivity. In annotations related to persons considered 'reactionary' or 'decadent', many descriptive passages are biased. For example, in the 1958 edition the annotation to Lu Xun's use of Xu Zhimo's 徐志摩 (1897–1931) phrase »to stand no nonsense« [*bu hao re* 不好惹] in the first text Dogs, Cats, Mice (»Gou · mao · shu« 狗 · 貓 · 鼠) from *Zhaobua xishi* 朝花夕拾 (Dawn Blossoms Plucked at Dusk; 1932) reads as follows:

This is the expression Xu Zhimo then used to address Chen Xiying 陳西滢 [(1896–1970)] and to intimidate Lu Xun. When in 1925 because of the oppression by Zhang Shizhao 章士釗 [(1881–1973), then minister of education] and Yang Yinyu 楊蔭榆 [(1884–1938), then the school's director] a protest movement emerged at the Beijing Women's Normal University, Chen Xiying had viciously denounced the women students in public. After Qiming 啓明 [Zhou Zuoren, Lu Xun's brother] in his »Casual Talk on Casual Talk about Casual Talk« in *Chenbao fukan* 晨報副刊 [Supplement to the Beijing Morning Post] of 20 January 1926 had added further denouncements, Chen Xiying in his Some Letters Incited by »Casual Talk on Casual Talk about Casual Talk« joined with further supportive arguments, while Xu Zhimo on the same day Supplement supported Chen Xiying with Announcement to Readers on the Following Heap of Letters, intimidating Lu Xun by saying »to be sincere, he [i.e. Chen Xiying] is not standing nonsense neither«.<sup>23</sup>

This annotation is indeed much too much marked by political considerations of the time. In the 1981 edition, it was slightly modified as follows:

23 *LXQJ* (1958), 2: 436.

This is the expression Xu Zhimo then used to intimidate Lu Xun. On 30 January 1926 he published Announcement to Readers on the Following Heap of Letters in *Chenbao fukan* in defense of Chen Xiyong, saying that »to be sincere, he [i.e. Chen Xiyong] is not standing nonsense neither».<sup>24</sup>

Compared to the previous one, this annotation is much shorter, and many expressions of criticism and of stereotyped labelling are omitted, such as the »further supportive arguments« substituted by »in defense«, yet they still used the expression »in order to intimidate«. This is obviously not appropriate. In the 2005 edition, this was changed to »Xu Zhimo's wording«, while the remaining annotation was kept the same as in 1981. Thus the course of modifications in this particular annotation is becoming evident. Though there were many changes in the 1981 annotation compared to the version of 1958, they still expressed a lot of the restrictions due to the period, that is the »language of overall criticism« as well as radical leftist ideas.

Beyond that, there were many informal obstructions, such as the influence of past sectarian activities in literary circles, or the still persisting impact of the 'two whatever'. Among the authors of annotation, many did not have any sympathy with the slogan of 'national defense literature' by Zhou Yang and others, or with the Creation Society of Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (1892–1978) or with the critics from the journal *Xiandai* 现代 (»Les Contemporains«; 1932–35). Therefore, many annotations display a tendency that only Lu Xun's point of view is to be respected. Yet the high-placed persons who were in control of the editorial and publishing work for the Complete Works and also decided about its general political line, that is Hu Qiaomu and Lin Mohan, were in favour of Zhou Yang, while Zhou Yang and Xia Yan had a certain direct influence on the actual work of writing the annotations. The controversy on the annotations to the above-mentioned Response to Xu Maoyong Regarding the Problem of a United Front of Resistance Against Japan from 1936 may serve as an example. Hu Qiaomu was in support of Zhou Yang, because when in 1937 in Yan'an the controversy was discussed and Mao Zedong had favoured the slogan of 'national defence literature', this had happened for considerations about the political strategy. Yet the error of Zhou Yang and his supporters had been »not to respect Lu Xun sufficiently«, that means the error lied in lack of respect towards Lu Xun, not in the position itself. When Xu Maoyong later came to Yan'an and reported to Mao Zedong about the course of the controversy about the two slogans, Mao Zedong responded that he considered the polemics an internal matter within the same

24 *LXQJ* (1981), 2: 240.



camp, that polemics were inevitable and even had their advantages. »But your error was that you have not been respectful enough towards Lu Xun«, meaning that not the position was wrong, but the attitude.<sup>25</sup> As a matter of fact, however, the outcome of the discussion in Yan'an was that the correct line was in 'national defence literature'. Hu Qiaomu had clarified, so he could not understand why Xia Yan's article from 1980 caused such an indignation among scholars, and ordered the working group for the annotation to write according to Xia Yan. This caused much distress to the working group, and if the Office for Editing Lu Xun's Works in the People's Literature Publishing House had not argued strongly on just grounds and written a formal report in the name of the publisher explaining the reasons in detail, the annotation might have grave consequences for their authors.

### 5 *The Aftermath of the 1981 Edition of »Complete Works«*

After the publication of the Complete Works in 1981 Lu Xun's influence and the course of Chinese literature became closely connected.

After the end of the 'Cultural Revolution' up to the present day, three phases of Lu Xun's influence may be identified: the first from 1977 to 1986, with the Complete Works in the latter period; the second from 1986 to 2000, and the third in the new century.

In 1977, when the 'Cultural Revolution' was over, though many things popular before were purged, the influence of Lu Xun did not diminish at all, and because he was admired and highly valued by Mao Zedong, his status remained superior. Yet the lopsided evaluation of Lu Xun during the 'Cultural Revolution' began being abandoned in favour of returning to more rational and scholarly view. During this period, the annotation to the Complete Works were just beginning to be compiled, and their publication in 1981 coincided with the centenary of Lu Xun's birth. The state organized memorial activities unprecedented in scope and size, with a big meeting of commemoration held in the Great Hall of the People on which Secretary-General Hu Yaobang gave a long speech. All this contributed to broaden and generalize Lu Xun's influence.

During that time, the impact of Lu Xun was particularly visible in literature and the arts, including Lu Xun research. Inspired by the movement for ideolo-

25 *Xu Maoyong huiyi lu* 徐懋庸回憶錄 [Memoirs by Xu Maoyong] (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1982), 103-104.

gical liberation and the annotation work to the Complete Works, Lu Xun research reached a level it had never had before. Ideological liberation brought forth research in Lu Xun's ideas and works, while the publication of the annotations in the Complete Works meant a great step ahead for building research in historical material. The annotations set standards for research in a particular period of Chinese literary history, and also became a model for modern literature research, for the handling of historical material, as well as for the edition of texts. At the same time, they initiated a wave of of scholarly research in modern literature.

Around the centenary of Lu Xun's birth, a great number of books of considerable scholarly value were published. Apart from the annotated Complete Works in 1981, Lu Xun's Complete Manuscripts (*Lu Xun shougao quanji* 鲁迅手稿全集) started being published in 1978. In 1986, *Lu Xun jijiao guji* 鲁迅辑校古籍 (Ancient Books Recorded and Amended by Lu Xun) and *Lu Xun jijiao shike* 鲁迅辑校石刻 (Stone-Rubbings Recorded and Amended by Lu Xun) appeared, as well as a number facsimiles of works of fine arts Lu Xun had edited. During the same period, many scholarly monographs were published which in turn contributed to broaden the impact of Lu Xun. In 1983, a new Japanese translation of Complete Works saw the light, while in Taiwan where Lu Xun had long been banned, his works could be published again, so that very soon not less than three different editions of Complete Works were compiled and made him widely known there as well.

In 1981, not less than three stories by Lu Xun were turned into movies, namely »A Q zhengzhuan« (The True History of A Q), »Yao« 藥 (Medicine), and »Shangshi« 傷逝 (Sadness), while a documentary about him was also well received. All these activities made Lu Xun even better known among ordinary people and of course increased his influence, so that his historical status as the »nation's soul« was further stabilized. After publication of his Complete Works, the Office for Editing Lu Xun's Works in the People's Literature Publishing House started to edit Complete Works by Guo Moruo, Complete Works by Mao Dun 茅盾 (1896–1981), Works by Ba Jin 巴金 (1904–2005), Complete Works by Lao She 老舍 (1899–1966), Works by Qu Qiubai, and other Chinese first-rate writers' complete or selected works. Later on, the body was renamed Office for Editing Work of the May Fourth and New Culture Period, thus broadening its scope beyond Lu Xun.

After 1981, China's intellectual and cultural world entered into a period 'kakophonic uproar' [*zhongsheng xuanhua* 眾聲喧嘩], while at the same time the concepts of the past forty or fifty years were shaken, doubted and becoming

dazed, so that the influence of Lu Xun also regressed. After the peak of memorial activities in 1981, it was natural that a gorge followed in reaction, and this is what happened also to Lu Xun's influence.

With the policy of reform and opening, foreign ideas swarmed into the country, and the intellectual scene in China that had been isolated from the outside world for so many years was like hungry and thirsty for ideas from abroad, so that the hunger also favoured tendencies to be not very selective in choosing food, whence information was swallowed and caused the disease of maldigestion, and doubt and vacillation emerged even towards the excellent aspects of the own culture.

After the memorial activities on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Lu Xun's death in 1986, the influence of Lu Xun reached a low point. Even before that, this course had already become apparent. It started in 1985 when an article On Lu Xun's Creative Way was published,<sup>26</sup> saying that Lu Xun's creative achievements were insufficient. The author believes that after publication of *Naban* 呐喊 (Call to Arms; 1923) Lu Xun started his way into decline, and that in the latter period, his creative energies had vanished altogether. This article provoked harsh reactions in the cultural work, and many texts were written to refute such position. There were many confused ideas in that period's intellectual world, particularly around 1986.

In the scholarly world, the annotations to the 1981 edition of Complete Works also incessantly received attention and were challenged. On one hand, the edition was widely used and respected as authoritative, being used as basis and source for many theses; on the other hand, there were always researchers who amended annotations and provided new historical material, or they rejected them up to the degree of ridiculizing the low scholarly level. At the same time, readers' choices in an environment of ideological liberation started to become more pluralistic. This made some scholars who had originally done Lu Xun research turn their attention to hitherto neglected fields—over the past few years the field had rapidly developed, and there was a huge amount of material amassed which made it more difficult to get deeper into it. A number of writers and scholars who had not been noticed ever since the 1950s gradually received new attention. Several figures may be very speaking in this respect: Since 1981, 30 to 40 monographs on Lu Xun were published every year, yet in 1985 they had dwindled to 8. For the 50th anniversary of Lu Xun's death in 1986, the number

26 Xing Kongrong 邢孔榮, »Lun Lu Xun de chuanguo shengya« 論魯迅的創作生涯, *Qinghai hu* 青海湖 8/1985.

of monographs went up to 52 again, but in the 1987 to 1990 they went down to 20, 7, 8 and 4, respectively. In the 1990s, despite an increase in 1992 in the aftermath of the 110th anniversary of Lu Xun's birth, during the remaining years the figure never reached 20 monographs. Only after 1996 it gradually increased to 30-40 titles per year. This reveals the course the perspective on Lu Xun took during a certain period. It is also one single aspect reflecting literature and the arts in China's 1980s.

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