

## Chapter 3

# Wei Jianguo as linguist activist

How did Wei Jianguo first become involved in *guoyu*? What were his earliest texts on the matter? Who influenced him? How did he position himself within the New Culture Movement? Were his arguments in favor of *guoyu* connected with other concerns of the revolutionary intellectuals of that time? How did he argue against the classical language? This chapter introduces the young Wei Jianguo and his first experiences as teacher, journalist, student activist and vigorous spokesperson for a modern national language.

### 3.1 May Fourth Peking University Student

Wei Jianguo can be described as a May Fourth student. The May Fourth and the New Culture Movement (these two terms sometimes overlap) have been described elsewhere. Here, a concise overview of some main aspects will enable us to better understand Wei Jianguo's motivations, the period he lived in, and the events and debates that took place at his time.

The “May Fourth Movement” (*wu si yundong* 五四運動) 1919 as a specific incident has been described as “a student-led anti-imperialist reaction to China's mistreatment at the Versailles treaty negotiations”,<sup>1</sup> where the former German colony on the Shandong Peninsula was given to Japan. Levenson called its political dimension “a surge of feeling against the Japanese expropriators of Shantung province, etc., their World War allies, and their Chinese official creatures”, while describing the cultural dimension of it as a movement “against the temper and institutions of China, which had allegedly made her such easy, helpless game”.<sup>2</sup>

1 Schneider, Laurence A., *Ku Chieh-kang and China's New History: Nationalism and the Quest for Alternative Traditions*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1971, 4.

2 Levenson, Joseph R., *Confucian China and its Modern Fate – Volume One: The Problem of Intellectual Continuity* (1958), 125.

Many of the participants (including Wei Jiangong) of this “New Culture Movement” (*xin wenhua yundong*), “a multifaceted attempt to find the internal sources of China’s weakness”,<sup>3</sup> advocated modernization in order to “save the nation” (*jiu guo* 救國). Internally, they criticized cultural traditions that were passed down, especially Confucianism and its emphasis on hierarchy, familial authority and “ritualized subordination”, wanting to replace it with science and democracy imported from the West.<sup>4</sup> This is also the reason why Schwarcz likens the movement to the European Enlightenment.

Hu Shi, himself involved in the New Culture Movement, terms it “The Chinese Renaissance”: he perceived not only the individual’s protest against and emancipation from traditional culture as a crucial part of it but also the promotion of “a new literature in the living language of the people” and the study of the cultural heritage “with the new methodology of modern historical criticism and research.”<sup>5</sup>

In view of the “totalistic iconoclasm” of New Culture intellectuals like Chen Duxiu,<sup>6</sup> the movement did of course spur opposition from cultural conservatives or traditionalists, who envisaged a more Chinese modernity closer to traditional values.<sup>7</sup> Zhang Shizhao 章士釗 (1881–1973) was a member of this group, and he will play a role in this dissertation. Some intellectuals were afraid that too much reform and doing away with all cultural tradition would lead to the extinction of China. They argued, for example, in favor of the classical language that the New Culture intellectuals wanted to do away with. Some tried to distill a “national essence” (*guocui* 國粹) from traditional culture that had to be preserved.<sup>8</sup>

This first part of the first chapter establishes Wei Jiangong as a New Culture Movement student<sup>9</sup> at Peking University in three main dimensions. The first dimension is the personal dimension, showing the people with whom he had personal ties as well as his perceived enemies. We will see that Wei Jiangong collaborated with some of the most important May Fourth intellectuals. He also cooperated with Qian Xuanton and Li Jinxi in the editorship of the magazine

---

3 Schneider, Laurence A., *Ku Chieh-kang and China’s New History: Nationalism and the Quest for Alternative Traditions* (1971), 4.

4 Schwarcz, Vera, *The Chinese Enlightenment. Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919*, Berkeley / Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1986, 3–6.

5 Hu Shi, *The Chinese Renaissance* (1963), 44.

6 Lin, Yü-sheng, *The Crisis of Chinese Consciousness: Radical antitraditionalism in the May Fourth Era*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979, 7–9.

7 Fung, Edmund S. K., *The Intellectual Foundations of Chinese Modernity. Cultural and Political Thought in the Republican Era*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 21–22.

8 Schneider, Laurence A., “National essence and the new intelligentsia”, in: *The Limits of Change: Essays on Conservative Alternatives in Republican China*, ed. by Furth, Charlotte, Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press, 1976, 57–89.

9 Wei Jiangong’s son Wei Zhi 魏至 also presents his father as a “May Fourth youth” (*wu si qingnian* 五四青年), see Wei Zhi 魏至, “Junzi yi guo xing yu de – Ji Wei Jiangong xiansheng de zhixue yu weiren” 君子以果行育德——记魏建功先生的治学与为人 [The gentleman cultivates virtue with resolute action – Remembering Wei Jiangong’s scholarship and conduct], in: *Xuelin wangshi* 学林往事 [Past events in the academic world], ed. by Zhang Shilin 张世林, Beijing 北京: Chao-Hua chubanshe 朝华出版社, 2000, 797–817, see 797.

*Guoyu zhoukan* 國語週刊 (National Language Weekly)<sup>10</sup> and argued vehemently against the traditionalist Zhang Shizhao.

The second dimension is the conceptual dimension. The concept of language Wei Jianguo put forward during the early and mid 1920s (which he will more or less adhere to for the rest of his life) is representative of the views taken by the May Fourth reformists: language and script are subject to natural changes and therefore reformable.

The third dimension is the political dimension, also extending into social issues. He was preoccupied with social issues at the core of the New Culture Movement, such as the education of the people and of women. These three dimensions are intertwined and are evidenced in the most important intellectual battlegrounds of the time: magazines. I will frame these dimensions in the historical context and decisive events of Wei Jianguo's life. Many concepts and contacts that would prove crucial to Wei Jianguo's work as a linguist and language planner already appeared during his time as a student; these would pave the way for his later career.

Wei Jianguo's interest in language and script study was already awakened during his middle school years at Nantong shengli di qi zhongxue 南通省立第七中學 (Nantong provincial middle school no. 7, 1914–1918)<sup>11</sup> by teachers such as Miao Wengong 繆文功 (Minzhi 敏之, headmaster)<sup>12</sup> and Xu Yixuan 徐亦軒 (Ang 昂).<sup>13</sup> Wei recalled that Miao, teaching *guowen*, awakened his interest in

10 The title is actually printed in Zhuyin on the front page: ㄍㄨㄛˊㄩㄛˊㄓㄨㄛˊㄓㄨㄛˊㄓㄨㄛˊ.

11 Nowadays, the school is known as Jiangsu Sheng Nantong zhongxue 江苏省南通中学 (Nantong High School). It was founded in 1906.

12 Miao was member of the Jiangsu educators association, which listed him as headmaster of Nantong provincial middle school no. 7 and as being 45 years (*sui* 歲) old. Jiangsu sheng jiaoyuhui 江苏省教育会 [Jiangsu province educators association] (ed.), *Jiangsu sheng jiaoyuhui nianjian* 江苏省教育会年鉴 [Yearbook of the Jiangsu province educators association], vol. 1: Jiangsu sheng jiaoyuhui 江苏省教育会, 1916, 52. He was therefore probably born in 1872. (On the age in current years, see Wilkinson, Endymion, *Chinese History: A New Manual* (2018), 168.) He authored several middle school language textbooks and morality textbooks. An advertisement for his “Middle school moral education textbook” *Zhongxue xiushen jiaokeshu* 中學修身教科書 can be found in a history textbook of 1908. The advertisement describes Miao Wengong as born in Dongtai 東臺 (northwest of Nantong in Jiangsu Province) and currently occupied in teachers' education in Tongzhou 通州 (now part of Nantong). The approach of his morality textbook is described as aiming at advancing or bettering social customs by neither denying the importance of the national essence (*guocui*) nor blindly collating together the best of existing textbooks. Zhang Qin 章歆, *Zhongxue Zhongguo lishi jiaokeshu* 中國歷史教科書 [Middle school Chinese history textbook], vol. 2, Shanghai 上海: Wenming shuju 文明書局, 1908. For example, one of his books begins with the historical Chinese (我國固有之倫理學說) and ends with the newly introduced ethics teachings (新輸入之倫理學說); with the latter he means newly formulated approaches in general, not strictly Western ideas. Miao Wengong 繆文功, *Zhonghua zhongxue xiushen jiaokeshu* 中華中學修身教科書 [Chinese middle school moral education textbook], vol. 4, Shanghai 上海: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1912. A photograph of Miao can be found in: Anonymous, “Jiangsu shengli di qi zhongxue xiaozhang Miao Minzhi xiansheng” 前江苏省立第七中学校校長繆敏之先生 [Miao Minzhi, principal of Jiangsu provincial middle school no. 7], in: *Jiangsu shengli Nantong zhongxue xiaokan* 江苏省立南通中学校刊 [Jiangsu provincial Nantong middle school school paper] ershiwu zhou jinian zhuanhao 二十五周年纪念专号 [special number on the 25th anniversary] (1934).

13 Wei Nai 魏乃, Wei Zhi 魏至 and Wei Chong 魏重, Short biography (1996), 3.

paleography and sources like the *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 and the *Erya* 爾雅.<sup>14</sup> Xu, teaching him *guowen* in the senior years, deepened this philological interest of Wei by teaching more about the shape, sound and meaning (*xing yin yi* 形音義) of the characters.<sup>15</sup> Wei Jianguo entered Peking University in 1919, one year later than intended due to a severe lung disease, and first enrolled in the preparatory course for English. Starting in 1921, he became a student at Zhongguo yuyan wenxue xi 中國語言文學系 (Department of Chinese language and literature, often abbreviated Zhongwenxi).

His teachers at Peking University included some of the most prolific linguists of the time, such as Qian Xuanton, Shen Jianshi 沈兼士 (1887–1947), Ma Yuzao 馬裕藻 (courtesy name Youyu 幼魚, 1878–1945), Huang Kan 黃侃 (Ligang 李剛, 1886–1935), Zhu Xizu 朱希祖 (Yaoxian 邀先), Shen Yinmo 沈尹默 (1883–1971), Chen Hanzhang 陳漢章, Liu Wendian 劉文典 (Shuya 叔雅), Zhou Zuoren, Ma Heng 馬衡, Hu Shi, Wu Mei 吳梅, Lu Xun (who taught his famous “Brief history of Chinese fiction” *Zhongguo xiaoshuo shilue* 中國小說史略), and Liu Bannong (Liu Fu, still studying in France at the time Wei Jianguo enrolled).<sup>16</sup> Ma Yuzao and Zhu Xizu were members of the Duiyin tongyi hui.<sup>17</sup> The humanities at Peking University were dominated by the “three Shens and two Mas” (*san Shen er Ma* 三沈二馬), which were two groups of brothers from Zhejiang 浙江 and included, in addition to the above-mentioned Shens and Mas, also Shen Shiyuan 沈士遠 (1881–1955).<sup>18</sup>

During his studies at Peking University, Wei Jianguo became involved in a number of volunteer activities, such as the students executive committee (xuesheng ganshihui 學生幹事會). I would like to point out his involvement in several commoners’ education projects. The author of his *nianpu* claims that Wei was one of the young intellectuals who advocated “saving the nation with education” (*jiaoyu jiu guo* 教育救國).<sup>19</sup> This catchphrase could not be located in Wei Jianguo’s own writings, but it is safe to say that he did indeed assign an important

14 The books date from the 1st century CE and, at least partially, and from the Western Han (202 BCE–8 CE), respectively. More information follows below.

15 Wei describes in the preface of his *Guyinxi yanjiu* that they used this textbook in class: Zhang Zhichun 張之純 and Zhuang Qingxiang 庄庆祥, *Zhongxuexiao yong gongheguo jiaokeshu wenzi yuanliu* 中學校用共和國教科書文字源流 [Origin and development of the script, Republican textbook for middle schools], Shanghai 上海: Shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館, 1914. Wei also claims that he studied Duan Yucai’s 段玉裁 (1735–1815) *Shuowen jiezi* commentary at the time. Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Guyinxi yanjiu” (2001), 14.

16 Ma Si 馬嘶, *Yidai zongshi Wei Jianguo* (2007), 22.

17 Li Jinxi 黎錦熙, *Guoyu yundong shigang*, vol. 2, (1990), juan 卷 2, p. 51.

18 Weston, Timothy B., *The Power of Position: Beijing University, Intellectuals, and Chinese Political Culture, 1898–1929*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004, 235–236. See also Zhou Zuoren 周作人, “San Shen er Ma” 三沈二馬 [Three Shens and two Mas], in: *Beida jiushi* 北大旧事 [Old matters of Peking University], ed. by Chen Pingyuan 陈平原 and Xia Xiaohong 夏晓虹, Beijing: Sanlian shudian 三聯書店, 1998. Ma Yuzao studied in Japan and was, apart from a university professor at different institutions, also a school inspector for the Zhejiang Department of Education. See Xu Youchun 徐友春 (ed.), “Ma Yuzao (1878–1945)” 馬裕藻 (1878–1945), in: *Minguo renwu da cidian* 民國人物大辭典 [Large biographical dictionary of Republican China], ed. by Xu Youchun 徐友春, Shijiazhuang 石家莊: Hebei renmin chubanshe 河北人民出版社, 2007, 714–15.

19 Cao Da 曹達, “Wei Jianguo nianpu” (1996), 4.

role to education and the well-being of the nation. A motto he definitely did put forward was “saving the nation through scholarship” (*xueshu jiu guo* 學術救國).<sup>20</sup>

### 3.1.1 Commoners’ Education Projects

In 1920, Wei Jianguo began to teach at the Peking University Common People’s Night School (Beida pingmin yexiao 北大平民夜校, located at Jingshan dongjie 景山東街, the second campus of Peking University, Beida er yuan 北大二院). In 1921, he organized a “commoners education laboratory” *Pingmin jiaoyu shiyanshi* 平民教育實驗室 alongside some teachers of the commoners evening school, and participated in opening a second evening school at the other Peking University campus, Beiheyan Beida sanyuan 北河沿北大三院.<sup>21</sup>

The Peking University Common People’s Night School was founded in 1920 by the “Beijing University Commoners’ Education Lecture Society”<sup>22</sup> or “Beijing University Commoners’ Education Lecture Corps” (Beijing Daxue pingmin jiaoyu jiangyantuan 北京大學平民教育講演團), which was established in March 1919 by the Marxist and Beijing University graduate Deng Zhongxia 鄧中夏 (1894–1933) and others.<sup>23</sup> The Night School was supported by Cai Yuanpei, and it echoed his view that intellectuals should contribute to the education of workers. The students were indeed workers who worked in factories during the day and attended the school in the evening. Its predecessor was a series of “itinerant Sunday street corner speeches that had been started in the spring of 1919. The first class formally graduated in 1922.”<sup>24</sup>

Wei taught a teacher training class for language and literature (*yuwen* 語文) in the Night School. In the summer of 1922, Wei Jianguo began participating in an education project in his hometown, the “Commoners’ society of Rugao” (Rugao pingminshe 如皋平民社). This society was founded by students from Rugao in Beijing and Nanjing and was said to have had up to 100 members. It declared its aim as “study science, promote the commoners’ education, attack the local tyrants and evil gentry and corruption.”<sup>25</sup> Wei Jianguo managed the society’s affairs after being elected secretary of the committee for general affairs (*zongwu weiyuanhui* 总务委员会). They published “The voice of the commoners” (*Pingmin sheng* 平民聲).<sup>26</sup>

20 This is the title of an article originally published in the magazine *Mengjin* 猛進 (Vigorous progress), vol. 27, on September 4, 1925: Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Xueshu jiu guo” 學術救國 [Saving the nation through scholarship], in: *Wei Jianguo wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jianguo], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 马镇, vol. 5, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 443–44, see 443.

21 Ma Si 马嘶, *Yidai zongshi Wei Jianguo* (2007), 18.

22 Schwarcz, Vera, *The Chinese Enlightenment* (1986), 130.

23 Kwan, Daniel Y. K., *Marxist Intellectuals and the Chinese Labor Movement. A Study of Deng Zhongxia (1894–1933)*, Seattle & London: University of Washington Press, 1997, 17.

24 Schwarcz, Vera, *The Chinese Enlightenment* (1986), 131.

25 “yanjiu xueshu, tuidong pingmin jiaoyu, daji tuhao lieshen he tanwu 研究学术, 推动平民教育, 打击土豪劣绅和贪污”, see Ma Si 马嘶, *Yidai zongshi Wei Jianguo* (2007), 38.

26 Wei Jianguo also participated in political projects. He and other students from Jiangsu who were studying in Beijing at Peking University, Beijing Women’s Normal University (Beijing nüzi shifan

### 3.1.2 Folklore and Dialectology

In addition to educating commoners, Wei Jianguo was also involved in the research of folklore, folk culture and dialect linguistics.<sup>27</sup> In 1921, Wei Jianguo began working as an assistant for Gu Jiegang. Together with Gu, he worked on a classification of folk songs (*geyao fenlei* 歌謠分類).<sup>28</sup>

Gu Jiegang, together with Qian Xuanton, was the most important proponent of the “Doubting Antiquity School” (*yigu pai*) that questioned traditional doctrines and sought to approach historical sources with scientific objectivity.<sup>29</sup> Alongside Hu Shi, he is perceived as a founder of “national studies” or “national learning” *guoxue* 國學.<sup>30</sup> The key concepts were actually developed by the “National Essence clique” *guocui pai* 國粹派, a group perceived to be conservative, although their idea also was to achieve modernization based on this national essence. Gu Jiegang’s “thought constantly interacted” with this very “cultural conservatism”.<sup>31</sup> The role of conservatism will be explained below.

Gu Jiegang, Liu Fu (Liu Bannong), Shen Yinmo, Zhou Zuoren, Hu Shi, Chang Hui 常惠 (Chang Weijun 常維鈞, 1894–1985),<sup>32</sup> Qian Xuanton, Shen Jianshi,

---

daxue 北京女子師範大學, BWNÜ) and other institutions, united in the “Jiangsu pure criticism society” (Jiangsu qingyi she 江蘇清議社). Ma Si 马嘶, *Yidai zongshi Wei Jianguo* (2007), 38. The term “pure criticism” (*qingyi*) goes back to Eastern Han dynasty (25–220) and refers to the practice of determining the worth of candidates for public office by assessing their characters in brief phrases. See: Tang Yiming 唐翼明, *Wei-jin wenxue yu xuanxue – Tang Yiming xueshu lunwenji* 魏晋文学与玄学 – 唐翼明学术论文集 [Literature and mysticism of the Wei and Jin – collected academic works of Tang Yiming], Wuhan 武汉: Changjiang wenyi chubanshe 长江文艺出版社, 1914, 159. See also: Williams, Nicholas Morrow, “The Metaphysical Lyric of the Six Dynasties”, in: *T’oung Pao* 98.1–3 (2012), 65–112, see 68. Alan Chan describes *qingyi* as “protest movement” of scholar-officials who criticized “alleged abuses of powerful palace eunuchs” (and translates *xuanxue* 玄學 as Neo-Daoism). Cf. Chan, Alan K.L., “Neo-Daoism”, in: *History of Chinese Philosophy* (Routledge History of World Philosophies 3), ed. by Mou, Bo, London / New York: Routledge, 303–323, see 304.

27 Wei Jianguo published many articles in the magazine “Folk songs” (*geyao* 歌謠) and was its editor from 1936 to 1937. Cao Da 曹达, “Wei Jianguo nianpu” (1996), 25.

28 Cao Da 曹达, “Wei Jianguo nianpu” (1996), 4.

29 Richter, Ursula, *Zweifel am Altertum. Gu Jiegang und die Diskussion über Chinas alte Geschichte als Konsequenz der “Neuen Kulturbewegung” ca. 1915–1923* (Münchener Ostasiatische Studien 60), Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1992, 182.

30 The term *guoxue* emerged in the early 1900s; its core denoted Chinese traditional studies or the study of Chinese (ancient) history and culture. Facing the fear of being overpowered by a seemingly more advanced Western culture, this branch of study also hoped that the studies of the past could lead China towards self-awareness and independence in the future. See Wilkinson, Endymion, *Chinese History: A New Manual* (2018), 68. and Schneider, Laurence A., *Ku Chieh-kang and China’s New History: Nationalism and the Quest for Alternative Traditions* (1971), 27. It hoped for a “revival of China’s intellectual heritage, comparable to the rediscovery of Greek thought in the European renaissance.” Kurtz, Joachim, *The Discovery of Chinese Logic*, Leiden / Boston: Brill, 2011, 294.

31 Schneider also summarizes how the *guocui pai* begun with anti-Manchu nationalism and anti-monarchism before 1911, then “pseudo-monarchical restorationism”, then anti-Westernization during World War I and opposition to the New Culture movement. See Schneider, Laurence A., *Ku Chieh-kang and China’s New History: Nationalism and the Quest for Alternative Traditions* (1971), 33.

32 According to Gao, “one of the most active participants of the Folklore Movements, cf. Gao, Jie, “Promoting “Low Culture”: The Origins of the Modern Chinese Folklore Movement”, in: *Canadian Journal of History* 50.1 (2015), 3–29, see 13.

Wei Jiāngōng and others formed the “Modern Chinese Folklore Movement”.<sup>33</sup> It emerged in 1918 at Peking University and is seen as a “branch” of the New Culture Movement”. Its members hoped to “use their academic training to save the nation by rediscovering traditions and enlightening the common people”. Their concept of folklore encompassed “popular songs, stories, beliefs, and customs”.<sup>34</sup>

For Wei Jiāngōng and the other language standardizers in the Republican era, folksongs were seen as a repository of the vernacular. Furthermore, Gu Jiēgāng and others believed that folk literature and folksongs could best represent the spirit or the character of the nation, that it revealed the glory of the past and could be used to save the nation.<sup>35</sup>

Gu Jiēgāng had collected 100 songs of the Suzhou 蘇州 region, which belong to the Wu dialect<sup>36</sup> group. This “First collection of songs of Wu” (*Wu ge jia ji* 吳歌甲集) was studied by Wei Jiāngōng<sup>37</sup> and Qian Xuāntōng under Gu’s auspices, and they made an effort “isolating and systematizing the tones and rhymes in the dialect of Soochow, and thereby initiating a new era in the study of Chinese phonetics.”<sup>38</sup> This makes Wei Jiāngōng part of the folk literary movement led by Gu Jiēgāng. Its motto was phrased by Harriet Zurndorfer as “Back to the people”.<sup>39</sup> This motto can be seen in the context of Wei Jiāngōng’s life in two ways: a sociopolitical and in a linguistic dimension. The sociopolitical dimension was to provide education to all members of society, as seen in his commoners education projects. The linguistic dimension was to include formerly marginalized dialects and folk literature in academic research. The study of historical phonology in particular was stimulated by dialectology, as illustrated by the groundbreaking work of Bernhard Karlgren.<sup>40</sup>

33 Gao, Jie, *Saving the Nation Through Culture: The Folklore Movement in Republican China*, Vancouver / Toronto: UBC Press, 2019, 55.

34 Gao, Jie, *Saving the Nation Through Culture: The Folklore Movement in Republican China* (2019), 3.

35 Hung, Chang-tai, *Going to the people: Chinese intellectuals and folk literature, 1918–1937*, Cambridge, Mass. Harvard Univ. Press, 1985, 17. This connection to nationalism can also be detected at the example of the Grimm brothers in Germany, see Hung, Chang-tai, *Going to the people: Chinese intellectuals and folk literature, 1918–1937* (1985), 14. I am thankful to Frank Kouwenhoven for suggesting this important read to me.

36 On the Wu dialect, see: You Rujie, “Wú 吳 Dialects”, in: *Encyclopedia of Chinese Language and Linguistics*, ed. by Sybesma, Rint, et al., Leiden / Boston: Brill, 2017, 602–607.

37 Wei Jiāngōng’s resulting publication is: Wei Jiāngōng 魏建功, “Wu ge shengyunlei” 吳歌聲韻類 [The rhyme categories of the folk songs of Wu], in: *Beijing daxue yanjiusuo guoxuemen zhoukan* 北京大學研究所國學週刊 [Weekly review of the Institute of Sinology of Peking University] vols. 1, 2, 10, 11, 12, 13 (1925–26).

38 Ku Chieh-kang, *The Autobiography of a Chinese Historian. Being the Preface to a Symposium on Ancient Chinese History (Ku Shih Pien)* (Sinica Leidensia 1), Leiden: Brill, 1931, 145.

39 Zurndorfer, Harriet T., *China Bibliography. A Research Guide to Reference Works about China Past and Present*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995, 23.

40 Trachsel, Yves, and Wolfgang Behr, “Karlgrén, Klas Bernhard Johannes (1889–1978)”, in: *Encyclopedia of Chinese Language and Linguistics*, ed. by Sybesma, Rint, et al., vol. 2, Leiden / Boston: Brill, 2017, 485–592.

One important effect that folklore<sup>41</sup> and dialect research had on Wei Jiangong was his awareness around the relation between spoken language and script. As early as 1920, he wrote to Gu Jiegang asking about the dialect words<sup>42</sup> in these folk songs.<sup>43</sup> The question of the relation between spoken word and script will be discussed further in part III in section 7.1.1 on page 194.

Did Wei Jiangong's own dialect identity play any role for his academic research? The Rugao dialect is a Mandarin dialect, usually referred to as one kind of Jiang-Huai Mandarin (*Jiang-Huai guanhua* 江淮官话 or Lower Yangzi Mandarin, *Xiajiang guanhua* 下江官话). However, the Wu dialect border runs through the southeast of Rugao.<sup>44</sup> Wei Jiangong must therefore have been familiar with the Wu dialects from his personal life. "The northern Wu region and the Southern Mandarin region, comprising the Wu and Jiang-Hwai Mandarin border, are historically closely inter-linked."<sup>45</sup> The Rugao dialect has several features that most Mandarin dialects, especially the Beijing dialect, no longer have, such as the entering tone (with a glottal stop, in this case), or the velar nasal initial<sup>46</sup> [ŋ].<sup>47</sup> These phonetic features will play a role below in the discussion of the "old" and "new" national pronunciation.

This personal dialect identity and scholarly experience of Wei Jiangong contributed to his role of "legitimizer" of a Beijing-dialect-based *guoyu*. He was well-versed with many of the different pronunciations in China and their history. His Rugao dialect was still a Mandarin dialect: it was related to what would later become the standard for *guoyu*. At the same time, the Rugao dialect has also retained so many characteristics of historic features, such as the entering tone, that

41 On Wei Jiangong and folk literature, see: Duan Baolin 段宝林, "Wei Jiangong xiansheng yu minjian wenxue - Jinian Wei Jiangong xiansheng bai nian huadan" 魏建功先生与民间文学——纪念魏建功先生百年华诞 [Wei Jiangong and folk literature - Commemorating Wei Jiangong's One Hundred's birthday], in: *Xi-Bei Minzu Yanjiu* 西北民族研究 [N. W. Minorities Research] 2 (Total No. 33) (2002), 107-118.

42 I here decided to translate *zi* 字 as "word", because Wei Jiangong is preoccupied with spoken entities of meaning in an oral tradition.

43 Wei Jiangong 魏建功, "Guanyu geyao zhong zheng su zi wenti gei Gu Jiegang xiansheng de yi feng xin" 關於歌謠中正俗字問題給顧頴剛先生的一封信 [Letter to Mr Gu Jiegang about the question of standard- and non-standard-characters in folk songs], in: *Wei Jiangong wenji* 魏建功文集, ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 马镇, vol. 3, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 1-3.

44 Jiangsu sheng difang zhi bianzuan weihuanhui 江苏省地方志编纂委员会 [Jiangsu province local gazetteer compilation committee] (ed.), *Jiangsu sheng zhi. Fangyan zhi* 江苏省志. 方言志 [Jiangsu province gazettee. Dialect gazettee], Nanjing 南京: Nanjing daxue chubanshe 南京大学出版社, 1998, map.

45 Simmons uses the Gwoyueu Romatzyh transcription. Simmons, Richard VanNess, *Chinese Dialect Classification. A comparative approach to Harnjow, Old Jintarn, and Common Northern Wu* (1999), ix.

46 Traditionally, the Chinese syllable (which is nearly always represented by one character) is analyzed in an initial and a final; the latter can be further analyzed into a medial and a rhyme, which again can be split into a nucleus and an ending. Walton, A. Ronald, *Tone, Segment, and Syllable in Chinese: A Polydimensional Approach to Surface Phonetic Structure*, Ithaca: China-Japan Program, Cornell Univ., 1983, 34. Example: *q-[i-a-ng]*.

47 Jiangsu sheng difang zhi bianzuan weihuanhui 江苏省地方志编纂委员会 [Jiangsu province local gazetteer compilation committee] (ed.), *Jiangsu sheng zhi. Fangyan zhi* (1998), 91-93.



are otherwise only present in non-Mandarin dialects. In this fashion, he was able to find suitable explanations that would convince the southerners.

### 3.1.3 The Theater Debate

Wei Jianguo was also an active participant in discussions that were not directly related to language. I will outline his contacts with Lu Xun<sup>48</sup> to illustrate Wei Jianguo's personal connection to important intellectuals of the May Fourth period, as well as his many activities and interests. In addition, these contacts also show how the magazines of the May Fourth period were the battleground of the time. From 1920 on, the famous writer Lu Xun lectured at Peking University about the history of Chinese fiction.<sup>49</sup> In the academic year beginning in 1922, Wei Jianguo was a second year student at the Department of Chinese language and literature at Peking University (Zhongwenxi) and started to attend Lu Xun's class. By that time, he had already read and was deeply influenced by several of Lu Xun's short stories, such as the "Diary of a madman" (*Kuangren riji* 狂人日記) or "How to be a father today" (Women xianzai zenyang zuo fuqin 我們現在怎樣做父親).<sup>50</sup>

Another noteworthy person was in Beijing and teaching Esperanto<sup>51</sup> at Peking University at that time: the blind Ukrainian poet and Esperantist Vasili Yakovlevich Eroshenko.<sup>52</sup> He lived at Lu Xun's and his brother Zhou Zuoren's house, and Lu Xun supported him and helped to make him known by translating Eroshenko's writings, mostly from Japanese.<sup>53</sup> A rather unpleasant correspondence between Wei Jianguo and Lu Xun, who wrote on behalf of Eroshenko, began after Wei Jianguo and the Peking University experimental drama group (Beida xiju shiyanshe 北大戲劇實驗社) staged Tolstoy's<sup>54</sup> "The Power of

48 I have to note that while it is important to outline Wei Jianguo's network and involvement with society, Chinese secondary literature often over-emphasizes his contacts with the well-known historical figures to legitimize him as their topic. So does, for example, his biographer, see Ma Si 马嘶, *Yidai zongshi Wei Jianguo* (2007), 253ff.

49 The lecture notes were subsequently published and formed the basis for his book as "A Brief History of Chinese Fiction" (*Zhongguo xiaoshuo shilue* 中國小說史略). Wang, John C. Y., "Lu Xun as a Scholar of Traditional Chinese Literature", in: *Lu Xun and His Legacy*, ed. by Lee, Leo Ou-Fan, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985, 90–103, see 92–93.

50 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, "Yi sanshi niandai de Lu Xun xiansheng" 憶三十年代的魯迅先生 [Remembering the Lu Xun of the 30s], in: *Wei Jianguo wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jianguo], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Xenzheng 马镇, vol. 5, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 540–64, see 540, first published in *Wenyi bao* 文藝報 10, 1956.

51 Esperanto was seen by some intellectuals, especially among enthusiasts of anarchism, as a solution for China's language problems. See Müller, Gotelind, *China, Kropotkin und der Anarchismus* (2001). and Munning, Mariana, "Concepts of Language in the Debate on Esperanto in the Early Twentieth Century", in: *Orientierungen* 24.2 (2012), 1–21.

52 Vasilij Jakovlevich Eroshenko Василий Яковлевич Ерошенко (1890–1952). Wei Jianguo knew about Esperanto; intellectuals like Qian Xuantong, who would become his teacher shortly thereafter, debated its applicability as a world language or even as a substitute of Chinese. However, it seems Wei Jianguo himself stayed silent upon the matter of Esperanto.

53 Müller, Gotelind, *China, Kropotkin und der Anarchismus* (2001), 493–94.

54 Lev Nikolaevič Tolstoj Лев Николаевич Толстой, 1828–1910; Chinese: Tuorsitai 托爾斯泰.

Darkness” (Heian de shili 黑暗的勢力) at the 24th, accidentally labelled 25th anniversary of the university on December 17, 1922.<sup>55</sup> Eroshenko attended the performance, and he also attended the performance of the female students of the Womens’ College of Yenching University (Yanjing nüxiao 燕京女校), who played Shakespeare’s “Much ado about nothing” (Wu feng qi lang 無風起浪).<sup>56</sup> While the Peking University group comprised only male students, the Womens’ College group was made up entirely of female students. Peking University accepted the first female student Wang Lan 王蘭 in 1920, but it appears the experimental drama group did not contain women.<sup>57</sup>

Lu Xun translated Eroshenko’s reaction to these plays and it was published in the “Supplement to the Morning Post” *Chenbao fukan* 晨報附刊. Eroshenko put forward the opinion that despite its long history, China did not have good theater. From all civilized countries, China was the only one in which men and women could not play together on one stage. While a man having several wives was not considered immoral, men and women acting together on stage was. With regard to the performance of the Peking University students, Eroshenko brought forward several points of critique: they did not seem to really engage with the story or really know what, who and where they were playing, and their expressions of emotions seemed artificial.<sup>58</sup>

Wei Jianguo was very hurt. On January 7, 1923 he formulated the polemic and furious reply “Bu gan mangcong” 不敢盲從 ([I] don’t dare to follow blindly), in which he sarcastically thanked Eroshenko for lecturing him, and said that reading his text gave him so much pain that he even shed tears. He defended the state of theater in China by saying that the field has only just started to develop and had already made significant progress.<sup>59</sup> To counter the allegation of bad acting, Wei Jianguo pondered how a blind person would have been able to “see” (*kan* 看) that.<sup>60</sup> Published in *Chenbao fukan* on January 13, 1923, “Bu gan mangcong” was accompanied by a note of the editors saying that they were aware of the incorrect attitude of the author but still wanted to preserve the original wording and asked the reader for forgiveness.<sup>61</sup>

Wei Jianguo’s article spurred a reaction by Lu Xun, who made clear that he translated Eroshenko’s words and did not mix his own opinion into the arti-

55 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Yi sanshi niandai de Lu Xun xiansheng” (2001), 542.

56 Ailuo xianke 愛羅先珂 [Eroshenko; translated by Lu Xun], “Guan Beijing daxue xuesheng yanju he Yanjing nüxiao xuesheng yanju de ji” 觀北京大學學生演劇和燕京女校學生演劇的記 [Notes on watching the acting of the students of Peking University and of Yenching Womens’ College], in: *Chenbao fukan* 晨報附刊 [Supplement to the Morning Post] (1923), 2, see 2. Today, “Much ado about nothing” is usually translated as “Wu shi sheng fei 無事生非” in Chinese.

57 Ma Si 馬嘶, *Yidai zongshi Wei Jianguo* (2007), 33.

58 Ailuo xianke 愛羅先珂 [Eroshenko; translated by Lu Xun], “Guan Beijing daxue xuesheng yanju he Yanjing nüxiao xuesheng yanju de ji” (1923), 2.

59 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Bu gan mangcong” 不敢盲從 [[I] don’t dare to follow blindly], in: *Wei Jianguo wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jianguo], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 馬鎮興, vol. 5, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江蘇教育出版社, 2001, 391–95, see 391.

60 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Bu gan mangcong” (2001), 393.

61 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Bu gan mangcong” (2001), 395.

cle. Lu Xun criticized Wei Jiāngōng's sharp sarcasm, while agreeing that young people already fought so hard to improve the situation of theater and the arts vis à vis the traditional culture.<sup>62</sup> Several reactions of other figures, including Zhou Zuoren (who wrote about the circumstances of Eroshenko's blindness) and members of the Peking University experimental drama group, were published in *Chenbao fukan*. Whether or not it was possible for men and women to act on the same stage was hotly debated, too. Several articles, maybe even the entire debate, were reprinted in *Wei Jiāngōng wenji* vol. 5. Gotelind Müller mentions the hostile reactions of the students towards Eroshenko's views on Chinese theater as one of many clashes which eventually made Eroshenko leave Beijing. Eroshenko had the impression that many Chinese young men viewed women merely as objects of sexual pleasure.<sup>63</sup>

Although this particular debate about the theater performance ended quickly, it was to resurface again during the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), when the communists held Lu Xun in especially high esteem.<sup>64</sup> Wei Jiāngōng was accused of “opposing” (*fandui* 反对) Lu Xun and severely criticized,<sup>65</sup> and labeled as an “opponent [in a debate] of Lu Xun” (Lu Xun *de lundì* 鲁迅的论敌).<sup>66</sup> As early as in the 1950s, Wei Jiāngōng already explained his position and his polemic article by saying that he felt that criticizing men disguised as women but not women disguised as men was unjust. He also apologized for his discrimination against a blind person.<sup>67</sup> After Wei Jiāngōng's death, his son Wei Zhi authored an article in which he defended his father and said that he was young, full of vigor, and that the entire event was a misunderstanding.<sup>68</sup>

During and after the debate, Wei Jiāngōng continued to attend Lu Xun's class on Chinese fiction. Sun Fuyuan 孫伏園 (1894–1966)<sup>69</sup> introduced the two personally,<sup>70</sup> and Wei Jiāngōng was a guest in Lu Xun's house on several occasions.<sup>71</sup> Lu Xun then was involved in one of Wei Jiāngōng's education projects. In 1925, Wei Jiāngōng took part in setting up the middle school Liming zhongxue 黎明中學 in

62 Lu Xun 鲁迅, “Kanle Wei Jiāngōng jun de “Bu gan mangcong” de ji ju shengming” 看了魏建功君的《不敢盲從》以後的幾句聲明 [Some sentences of clarification after reading Wei Jiāngōng's “[I] don't dare to follow blindly”], in: *Wei Jiāngōng wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jiāngōng], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 马镇, vol. 5, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 399–401, see 399–400.

63 Müller, Gotelind, *China, Kropotkin und der Anarchismus* (2001), 496.

64 Leese, Daniel, *Die chinesische Kulturrevolution 1966-1976*, München: C. H. Beck, 2016, 90.

65 Ma Si 马嘶, *Yidai zongshi Wei Jiāngōng* (2007), 253.

66 Wei Zhi 魏至, “Junzi yi guo xing yu de – Ji Wei Jiāngōng xiansheng de zhixue yu weiren” (2000), 800.

67 Wei Jiāngōng 魏建功, “Yi sanshi niandai de Lu Xun xiansheng” (2001), 542.

68 Wei Zhi 魏至, “Junzi yi guo xing yu de – Ji Wei Jiāngōng xiansheng de zhixue yu weiren” (2000), 800.

69 Sun Fuyuan 孙伏园 was another New Culture Movement intellectual standing in for Europeanization, founding member of the New Tide society (Xinchao she 新潮社), editor of *Yusi* 語絲 (“Thread of talk”, discussed below in section 3.3.3 on page 92) and other magazines; see Schwarcz, Vera, *The Chinese Enlightenment* (1986), 121. Weston, Timothy B., *The Power of Position: Beijing University, Intellectuals, and Chinese Political Culture, 1898-1929* (2004), 233. and Fung, Edmund S. K., *The Intellectual Foundations of Chinese Modernity* (2010), 38.

70 Ma Si 马嘶, *Yidai zongshi Wei Jiāngōng* (2007), 36.

71 Ma Si 马嘶, *Yidai zongshi Wei Jiāngōng* (2007), 60.

Beijing,<sup>72</sup> where he invited Lu Xun to teach, and Lu Xun did indeed teach there from September to December 1925.<sup>73</sup> Lu Xun was teaching at many institutions in Beijing at that time; the Beijing Women's Normal University (BWNU) will play a role in the debate outlined below that finally brings us to the question of the national language.

### 3.2 *Guoyu Zhoukan* 國語週刊 Fighting the “Tiger”

In 1925, Wei Jianguo published his first article about *guoyu* and formulated his core concepts about language. These times were difficult for the national language movement. The year 1925 was eventful and crucial for Wei Jianguo.

In 1925, before graduating from Peking University, Wei Jianguo was involved in editorial activities for the magazine *Guoyu zhoukan* (National Language Weekly). This weekly magazine was launched by Qian Xuantong and Li Jinxi in 1925.<sup>74</sup> The first volume was published in June 1925.<sup>75</sup> The duo were already publishing *Guoyu yuekan* 國語月刊 (National Language Monthly), in which they ad-

72 The address was Fengsheng hutong 豐盛胡同 in Beijing. The majority of its roughly 400 students came from the British-led Xinxueshuyuan 新學書院 in Tianjin (Tientsin Anglo-Chinese College) in the course of the anti-British and anti-foreign May Thirtieth movement (*wusa yundong* 五卅運動, 1925), see Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Yi sanshi niandai de Lu Xun xiansheng” (2001), 543. More on the *wusa yundong* can be found in footnote 87 on page 64. The 1926 overview of the school's regulations, personnel and teaching materials can be accessed online via the CrossAsia platform: Liming zhongxue jiaowuchu 黎明中学教务处, *Liming zhongxue gailan* 黎明中学概览 [Outline of Liming Middle School], Beijing: Liming zhongxue jiaowuchu 黎明中学教务处, 1926.

73 Ma Si 马嘶, *Yidai zongshi Wei Jianguo* (2007), 61.

74 Wei Jianguo's *nianpu* states that the magazine was established in January, 1925. Cao Da 曹达, “Wei Jianguo nianpu” (1996), 6. Qian Xuantong's diary entry on June 9, 1925, states that he and Li Jinxi (Shaoqi 劭西) invited the following persons for dinner and announced to them that the “National language weekly” matter was completed: Shao Piaoping 邵飘萍 (1886–1926), Sun Fuyuan, Hu Shizhi 胡適之 (= Hu Shi), Su Yaozu 蘇耀祖, Li Xiaofeng 李小峰, and Xiao Jialin 萧家霖. See Qian Xuantong 钱玄同, *Qian Xuantong riji* 钱玄同日记 [Qian Xuantong's diary], vol. 2 (1923–1933), Beijing: Peking University Press, 2014, 642. Su Yaozu is listed as a member of the “Chinese education improving institute” (*Zhonghua jiaoyu gaijin she* 中華教育改進社) and part of the Committee for the teaching and study of *guoyu*” (*Guoyu jiaoxue weiyuanhui* 國語教學委員會 with Hu Shi (= Hu Shi), Li Jinxi and Bai Dizhou 白滌洲, 1900–1934; according to this list, he worked at the Beijing Changdian Normal University (Beijing Changdian shifandaxue 北京廠甸師範大學, now Beijing Normal University (Beijing shifandaxue 北京師範大學)). He contributed a *guoyu* dialogue to Wang Pu's 王璞 (disciple of Wang Zhao 王照, 1859–1933) textbook that is entirely transcribed in Zhuyin. See *Zhonghua jiaoyu gaijin she* 中華教育改進社 (ed.), *Zhonghua jiaoyu gaijin she tongshelu* 中華教育改進社同社錄 (民國十三年七月) [Membership list of the China Education Improving Institute], s.l. 1924, 93, 121. See also Wang Pu 王璞, *Wang Pu de guoyu huihua* 王璞的國語會話 [Wang Pu's national language conversations], Shanghai 上海: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1921, 53. Xiao Jialin was a companion of Wei's in several language planning endeavors and committees and also participated in the *Xinhua zidian*, as will be illustrated below. Xiao apparently also authored a textbook titled *Guoyu luomazi rumen* 國語羅馬字入門 (Introduction to Gwoyeu Romatzyh) in or around the year 1930, which I was unfortunately not yet able to locate. Gao Tianru 高天如, *Zhongguo xiandai yuyan jihua de lilun he shixian* 中国现代语言计划的理论和实践 [The theory and practice of modern Chinese language planning], Shanghai 上海: Fudan daxue chubanshe 复旦大学出版社, 1993, 154.

75 Qian Xuantong 钱玄同, “Fakanci” 發刊辭 [Editorial], in: *Guoyu zhoukan* 國語週刊 [National language weekly] 1 (1925), 1–2.

vocated a “Chinese character revolution” (*hanzi geming* 漢字革命) in 1923<sup>76</sup> and in August of the same year, they published a “special number” on the “Chinese character reform” (*Hanzi gaige hao* 漢字改革號).<sup>77</sup> Although the question of a national standard language was intertwined with the question of script, everything related to the script will be discussed in part III beginning on page 193. Hence, Qian Xuantong was one of most influential teachers of Wei Jiangong, if not the most influential.<sup>78</sup> His teachings were formative for Wei’s concepts in phonology, as well as his career as a language planner. Qian also influenced Wei’s views on script reform.

### 3.2.1 Qian Xuantong’s Manifesto

This first volume of *Guoyu zhoukan* contained Qian Xuantong’s<sup>79</sup> editorial to “National language weekly”, dated June 12, 1925.<sup>80</sup> It was indeed written in *guoyu* or Modern Chinese. In the inaugural issue, he stated that he and Li Jinxi established this journal to talk about the national language and listed three points<sup>81</sup> to legitimize the national language movement (*guoyu yundong*).

First, he presented it as the “efficacious medicine” (*shengyao* 聖藥) to make “the Chinese nation rise from the dead” (*Zhonghua minzu qisi huisheng* 中華民族起死回生). Using *guoyu*, Chinese citizens would be able to communicate their innermost feelings (*qingsu* 情愫) to each other, education could be spread (or disseminated, popularized; *puji* 普及), and people could freely articulate their feelings and thoughts. Qian wrote that he and his fellow editors want to exter-

76 Qian Xuantong 錢玄同, “Hanzi geming!” 漢字革命! [Chinese character revolution], in: *Guoyu yuekan* 國語月刊 [National language monthly] 7.1 (1923), 5–25.

77 Wippermann, Dorothea, *Das Phonetische Alphabet Zhuyin Zimu – Entstehung und Verbreitung im Zuge der Nationalsprachlichen Bewegung in der Republik China 1912–1949* (1985), 149.

78 Ma Si 马嘶, *Yidai zongshi Wei Jiangong* (2007), 22.

79 More information about Qian Xuantong can be obtained in: Cao Shujing 曹述敬, *Qian Xuantong nianpu* 钱玄同年谱 [Chronological biography of Qian Xuantong], Jinan 济南: Qilu shushe 齐鲁书社, 1986. Zhou Zuoren describes how Qian’s views developed from “emulating antiquity” (*fugu* 復古), this translation stems from Richter, Ursula, “Historical Scepticism in the New Culture Era: Gu Jiegang and the ‘Debate on Ancient History’”, in: *Jindai Zhongguo shi yanjiu tongxun* 近代中國史研究通訊 [Newsletter for Modern Chinese History] 23, 355–388, see 360.) to “opposing emulating antiquity” (*fan fugu* 反復古) and how it also led him to start “doubting antiquity” (*yigu* 疑古, compare with Gu Jiegang). Since he realized that a lot of accepted evidence about ancient times must be doubted and that it was not possible to return to a prior state in history, paired with the political disappointment at Yuan Shikai’s 袁世凱 (1859–1916) restoration of monarchy, Qian wanted to do away with Confucian ethics and beliefs and abolish the Chinese script to achieve this. See: Zhou Zuoren 周作人, “Qian Xuantong de fugu yu fanfugu” 錢玄同的復古与反復古 [Qian Xuantong’s traditionalism and antitraditionalism], in: *Taobi chenlun: Mingren bixia de Zhou Zuoren, Zhou Zuoren bixia de mingren* 逃避沉沦: 名人笔下的周作人周作人笔下的名人 [Evading sinking: Famous persons write about Zhou Zuoren, Zhou Zuoren writes about famous persons], ed. by Liu Xuyuan 刘绪源: 1998, 366–383.

80 Also published in: Qian Xuantong 钱玄同, “*Guoyu zhoukan fakanci*” 《国語週刊》发刊辞 [‘National language weekly’ editorial], in: *Hanzi gaige yu guoyu yundong* 汉字改革与国語运动 [Chinese character reform and national language movement] (*Qian Xuantong wenji* 钱玄同文集 [Collected works of Qian Xuantong] 3), ed. by Liu Siyuan 刘思源, Feng Ying 冯英, Cui Shaoying 崔少英, Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe 中国人民大学出版社, 1999, 156–57.

81 They are enumerated in Zhuyin: ㄅ ㄆ ㄇ.

minate (*pumie* 撲滅) the “conspiracy” (*yinmou* 陰謀) of restoring (*fubi* 復辟) the “classical Chinese prose” (*guwen* 古文<sup>82</sup> and the “school textbook for the literary language” (*Xuexiao de wenyang keben* 學校的文言課本).<sup>83</sup>

Second, Qian Xuanton proposed that the living language (*huo yuyan* 活語言) of the people should form the basis for a “new national language” (*xin guoyu* 新國語).

Third, he put forward a metaphor that might have reminded the reader of Lu Xun’s famous foreword to “Call to Arms” (*Nahan* 吶喊, 1922).<sup>84</sup> Whether or not the Chinese nation (*minzu* 民族) would persist or perish depended on the people’s (*minzhong* 民眾) awakening, and to awaken (*huanxing* 喚醒)<sup>85</sup> the people was the only mission of the intellectual class (*zhishi jieji weiyi zhi shiming* 知識階級唯一之使命).<sup>86</sup> Otherwise, he implied, China might be on the verge of a catastrophe (*huo zhi zhi wu ri* 禍至之無日) foreshadowed by the “imperialists” (*diguo zhuyizhe* 帝國主義者) England and Japan having “massacred our students and workers” (*tusha le zanmen de xuesheng he gongren* 屠殺了咱們的學生和工人) in reaction to the May Thirtieth Movement (*wusa yundong*).<sup>87</sup> While awakening the people is not an easy task, it could only be done by using the people’s living

82 While *guwen* can also refer to the old text school in contrast to the new text school, the classical written language is intended here.

83 He means Zhang Shizhao’s *Zhongdeng guowendian* 中等國文典. It is a grammar for the classical Chinese language and attempts a first definition of the concept “word” which I discuss in section 6.1.2 on page 167.

84 In the foreword, Lu Xun compares the situation of the Chinese people to the situation of people sleeping in an iron house, and they will sooner or later suffocate in it. The question he asks is if it would be better to let them sleep so that they do not become aware of their own inevitable death? Or would it be preferable to shout and wake them up so that they have the opportunity to find a way out? However, as escaping the iron house is unlikely, waking them up might just make them aware of their suffering and lead to an even more gruesome death. Lu Xun 魯迅, *Nahan* 吶喊 [Call to Arms], Beijing 北京: Renmin wenzue chubanshe 人民文學出版社, 1976, 6–7.

85 Other *guoyu* activists used the same rhetorical figure, such as Du Tongli 杜同力 (Zijin 子勁, 1898–1955), who felt that political reforms were not enough. He believed only universal education would wake the people up and lead to a thought renovation. Du Tongli 杜同力, “Gaige sixiang he huanxing minzhong de gongju” 改革思想和喚醒民眾的工具 [A tool to reform the thinking and wake up the people], in: *Guoyu zhouban* 國語週刊 [National language weekly] 3 (1925), 4–7, see 4. Du graduated from the Chinese department of Beijing Normal University in 1925. He was to become active in the promotion of Gwoyue Romatzyh and a supporter of (and during the PRC, actively involved in) the script reform. He would later also participate in the compilation of the *Xinhua zidian*. Li Ming 李明, “Du Zijin” 杜子勁, in: *Zhongguo xiandai yuyanxuejia* 中国现代语言学家 [Modern Chinese linguists], ed. by *Zhongguo yuyanxuejia bianxiezhu* 《中国语言学家》编写组 [Modern Chinese linguists’ compilation group], vol. 4, Shijiazhuang 石家庄: Hebei renmin chubanshe 河北人民出版社, 1985, 51–56.

86 Qian Xuanton 錢玄同, “Fakanci” (1925).

87 The May Thirtieth Movement was prompted by a strike in a Japanese-owned textile factory in Shanghai 上海 that began in February 1925, in the course of which a Japanese guard shot a Chinese worker on strike. This led to a large-scale demonstration on 30th May, whose participants made their way into the British concessions, where the British police opened fire and killed 10 people, many were wounded or arrested. Müller furthermore describes how the movement spurred nationwide indignation and was instrumentalized by the Communist Party: Müller, Gotelind, *China, Kropotkin und der Anarchismus* (2001), 529. Wei Jiangong also reacted to the *wusa yundong* in Wei Jiangong 魏建功, “Jiuji bagong tongbao jinji choukuan banfa zhi jianyi” 救濟罷工同胞緊急籌款辦法之建議 [Proposal for finding a way to raise money to save our compatriots on strike], in: *Wei Jiangong wenji* 魏建功文集, ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春 and Rong Wenmin 戎文敏 and Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 马

language and art (*huo yuyan he wenyi* 活語言和文藝). Hence, this language’s and art’s essence (*zhensui* 真髓) needed to be collected and studied (*souji kaocha* 搜集考察) to build a new popular art (*xin de minzhong wenyi* 新的民眾文藝).<sup>88</sup>

This legitimization strategy of Qian Xuantong can be seen as representative of what many intellectuals of that time thought. This chapter will demonstrate that Wei Jianguo picked up many of these aspects. They can be subsumed under the general epitome of nationalism, where one main argument is directed inwards and the other outwards. Inward-directed nationalism meant that all citizens should be included and equal, that all should have access to education and be able to participate in a discourse in a language that is understood by everyone in the national community. Popular means of expression became the focus of language description<sup>89</sup> with the intention to use them as a basis for prescription, i.e. language planning. This stood in stark contrast to the former elitist focus on the classical language modeled after ancient classical texts. Modernization, re-birth and a certain notion of progress is added to this “democratic” argument of a universal education. This which leads to the second argument, which is directed outwards and could be labeled the Darwinist perspective. It refers to the assertion of China vis-à-vis other countries and the ability to compete with them.<sup>90</sup>

Qian Xuantong continued his editorial by enumerating the contributors to *Guoyu zhoukan*: Wu Zhihui, Hu Shizhi (= Hu Shi), Lin Yutang 林語堂 (1895–1976),<sup>91</sup> Zhou Kaiming 周凱明, Gu Jiegang, Wei Jianguo, Xiao Jialin, Du Tongli,

鎮, vol. 5, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 429–30. It was originally published in June 1925 in *Jingbao fukan* 京報副刊 84.

88 Qian Xuantong 錢玄同, “Fakanci” (1925).

89 The folk song research in which Wei Jianguo was also involved is described in section 3.1.2 on page 56.

90 Concepts of progress and evolution, especially from a social Darwinist viewpoint, were introduced in China in the late 19th century. They are discussed in section 7.1.2 on page 198. For a summary, see Yang Haiyan’s article, in which especially Yan Fu’s 嚴復 (1854–1921) important role as a translator is described: Yang, Haiyan, “Encountering Darwin and Creating Darwinism in China”, in: *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Darwin and Evolutionary Thought*, ed. by Ruse, Michael, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013, 252.

91 The scholar, writer, journalist, translator and linguist Lin Yutang was born to a Christian family in Zhangzhou 漳州, Fujian 福建 but eventually renounced Christianity. He studied at Harvard, in France, and in Leipzig, Germany, where he completed his PhD. Lin, Yü-t’ang, “Altchinesische Lautlehre”, PhD dissertation, Universität Leipzig, 1923. He was the first to propose tonal spelling, which was later realized in Gwoyueu Romatzyh (developed by Yuen Ren Chao). He also served as a secretary for Wu Zhihui, contributed to *Yusi* and other magazines and became a very productive author of English language books about China. Boorman, Howard L., “Lin Yü-t’ang”, in: *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, vol. 2, New York: Columbia University Press, 1970, 387–389.

Li Yu'an 李遇安,<sup>92</sup> Dong Weichuan 董渭川 (1901–1968),<sup>93</sup> Su Yaozu (the open enumeration ended with “.....”). He also mentioned Zhao Yuanren and Liu Ban-nong, who were abroad but expected to be back soon to contribute to the magazine.<sup>94</sup> Qian Xuantong encouraged anybody interested in *guoyu* to participate in the discussions about it and present their opinions. However he clearly and strongly rejected the “enemies” (*diren* 敵人) of the *guoyu* movement, namely those who opposed the vernacular (*baihua*) and wanted to maintain the classical language (*guwen* 古文).<sup>95</sup>

Who these “enemies” of the movement for a national language were and what “conspiracy” (see page 64) was meant will be explained in the sections 3.2.3 (page 69) and 3.2.4 (page 74). However, Wei Jiangong’s concept of language in that time period must first be described.

### 3.2.2 Wei Jiangong’s Concept of Language in 1925: Progress

Qian Xuantong’s fear that China might be annihilated was shared by many other intellectuals of that time, and Social Darwinism was a popular concept – not only in China. Qian and many thought that China needed to progress to survive. Wei Jiangong also believed in progress. However, he focused less on the Social Darwinist view and more on evolution itself. He created the concept that language and script were subjected to a progress-oriented evolution.

On June 26, Wei Jiangong wrote, and on August 26, 1925, he published “Arguing from the [general] tendency of the Chinese script that the Chinese characters – block characters – should be abolished” (Cong Zhongguo wenzi de qushi lun hanzi – fangkuaizi de yingai feichu 從中國文字的趨勢上論漢字——方塊字——的應該廢除) in *Guoyu zhoukan*, vol. 8.<sup>96</sup> As the title already suggests, this

---

92 Li Yu’an was a graduate of Beijing Normal University, teacher at the Pingmin yexiao 平民夜校 (Commoners night school, providing primary school education to adults), was employed at Zhongshan daxue 中山大學 (Sun Yat-sen University) in Guangdong 廣東. He was a frequent contributor to *Yusi*, a correspondent with Lu Xun and traveled to Europe. Li Yu’an 李遇安 [arranged by Wang Guiling 王桂玲], “Lu Xun xiansheng dui wo de jiaohui” 魯迅先生对我的教诲 [What Lu Xun taught me], in: *Wenyuan xieying* 文苑擷英 [Selected essence of the literary world], ed. by Beijing shi Zheng-Xie wenshi ziliao weiyuanhui 北京市政协文史资料委员会 [Beijing Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference committee for literature and history data], Beijing 北京: Beijing chubanshe 北京出版社, 2000, 110–113.

93 Given name Dong Zhun 董準. He graduated from the Chinese department of Beijing Normal University in 1925, held several teaching positions and joined the KMT. In the PRC, Dong held several committee and university positions, but fell victim to the Anti-Rightist Campaign (*fan-you yundong* 反右運動), but was reinstated as vice president of Beijing Normal University afterwards. Shandong sheng Zou xian difangshizhi bianzuan weiyuanhui bangongshi 山东省邹县地方史志编纂委员会办公室 [Shandong province Zou county local history gazetteer compilation committee bureau] (ed.), *Zou Xian jianzhi* 邹县简志 [Zou County brief gazettee] (*Zou xian difangshi congshu* 邹县地方史丛书 [Zou county local history series] 3): 1986, 371–372.

94 Qian Xuantong 錢玄同, “Fakanci” (1925), 1.

95 Qian Xuantong 錢玄同, “Fakanci” (1925), 2.

96 Wei Jiangong 魏建功, “Cong Zhongguo wenzi de qushi shang lun hanzi – fangkuaizi – de yingai feichu” 從中國文字的趨勢上論漢字——方塊字——的應該廢除 [Arguing from the [general] tendency of the Chinese script that the Chinese characters – block characters – should be abolished], in: *Guoyu zhoukan* 國語週刊 [National language weekly] 8 (1925), 1–4.



article concerns script reform and will be discussed in detail in the according chapter. I will now identify Wei Jiāngōng’s concepts of language and script at the core of his understanding of the role of language (written as well as spoken) for humanity. These were also decisive for his involvement in language planning throughout his life.

1. Humans can use symbols to express their will. These symbols include facial expression, gestures, utterances of all sort, and, of course, language.
2. When language finds a graphic expression, it is script, i.e. symbols with a certain shape. These shape-symbols are nothing but an equivalent of the oral expression. Script is the means to graphically record spoken language<sup>97</sup> In other words, it is a symbol of a symbol.
3. Symbols can be used in any way that is convenient: they can be altered to become simpler. The more symbols are used and altered, the more convenient they become.
4. Language and script evolve ceaselessly; preserving a specific form of language and script is obstructing natural evolution.
5. The Chinese script is already on its way to evolve into a phonetic script. While the earliest characters were pictographs, phono-semantic compound characters (*xingshengzi*) and subsequently loan characters (*jiajiezi* 假借字) arose and show this tendency.
6. A script reform, i.e. the abolition of the characters and the introduction of a phonetic script, would accelerate this natural, progressive development.<sup>98</sup>
7. A script reform would lead to a successful “thought revolution” (*sixiang geming* 思想革命) to attain freedom for the citizens. It would be a great step forward for the “people’s liberation movement” (Minzu jiefang yundong 民族解放運動).<sup>99</sup>

The core of Wei’s language concept remained unchanged throughout his life. Wei Jiāngōng had a utilitarian concept of language: he saw it as a tool that facilitated communication between people. If this tool did not meet its ends, it can be reformed. Language referred to the uttered word; the script came second and was only a graphic representation of spoken language. The idea that these would change and that language symbols were arbitrarily agreed on by the speaker community already appeared in the early debates about a possible abolition of

97 Here, Wei comes pretty close to today’s definition of script, compare Bussmann, Hadumod, “Writing (also script)”, in: *Routledge Dictionary of Language and Linguistics*, London / New York: Routledge, 1996, 1294.

98 Wei Jiāngōng would later advocate for the simplification of the characters, as will be explained in chapters 7 (page 193) and 8 (page 213) on the script reform.

99 Wei Jiāngōng 魏建功, “Cong Zhongguo wenzi de qushi lun hanzi (fangkuaizi) de yingai feichu” 從中國文字的趨勢上論漢字（方塊字）的應該廢除 [Arguing from the [general] tendency of the Chinese script that the Chinese characters (block characters) should be abolished], in: *Wei Jiāngōng wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jiāngōng], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 馬鎮, vol. 4, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江蘇教育出版社, 2001, 120–124. note the difference in punctuation between the *Guoyu zhoukan* and the *wenji* edition.

Chinese as a whole in the beginning of the 20th century and during the May Fourth period.<sup>100</sup>

This utilitarian concept can be juxtaposed with an idealistic concept put forward by conservatives and proponents of a “national essence”. They regarded the classical literary language as sacrosanct and the script as a key carrier of Chinese identity. Agents with these two different language concepts started a discourse already in early 20th century. One example is the debate about a possible introduction of Esperanto as official language.<sup>101</sup> Intellectuals with these two concurring mindsets were still debating in the 1920s, as will be demonstrated below.

### 3.2.3 The Adversary: The “Tiger” Zhang Shizhao

The debates of the New Culture Movement intellectuals needed an adversary. In journal articles and correspondences, in which they presented their iconoclastic ideas, they made reference to and then refuted others’ more traditional or disapproving opinions. If no opponent was to be found, they had to be made up, as Edmund S. K. Fung demonstrated at the example of the “radical” Qian Xuantong.<sup>102</sup> In 1919, he created an alter ego named Wang Yingxuan, “who attacked progressive thinkers in the voice of an old-style literatus.”<sup>103</sup> Qian’s friend Liu Bannong then took the role of arguing against this fictitious enemy. Quickly, others joined in, on both sides of the debate. Lin Shu 林紓 (1852–1924) readily stepped “into a discursive position already prepared for him and finds himself engaged in a losing battle on the enemy’s territory”.<sup>104</sup> Lin was “one of the last important prose writers in the Chinese classical style”. It was well-known fact that he was an outspoken opponent of the New Culture Movement and the new literature that it advocated.<sup>105</sup> The “debate escalated to the famous battle between the defenders of classical Chinese headed by Lin Shu and the *New Youth* [*Xin qingnian* 新青年] advocates of the modern vernacular language.”<sup>106</sup>

100 As was described in the beginning, the impression of a superior West, the reception of alphabetic scripts, and the study of Western linguistics led to the radical reorientation of language study and language planning. However, it could not be said that all newly formulated ideas were direct imports from abroad.

101 Müller, Gotelind, “Esperanto”, in: *Encyclopedia of Chinese Language and Linguistics*, ed. by Sybesma, Rint, et al., vol. 2, Leiden / Boston: Brill, 2017, 192–194.

102 In his book, Fung divides the Chinese intellectuals in three groups: Liberals, radicals, conservatives. See Fung, Edmund S. K., *The Intellectual Foundations of Chinese Modernity* (2010), 37–38.

103 Liu, Lydia H., *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity—China, 1900–1937*, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1995, 223.

104 Liu, Lydia H., *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity—China, 1900–1937* (1995), 223.

105 Lin wrote open letters and articles to and about Chen Duxiu, Hu Shi and Cai Yuanpei, criticizing them for discarding the classical language. He felt that they were destroying the Confucian tradition, which would lead to disaster and not save China from foreign domination and decay. Lin Shu was also “the first major Chinese translator of Western fiction” (despite not reading any foreign language himself) and translated about 180 works, among which were Aesop’s Fables, works by Dickens, Dumas, Shakespeare, Cervantes and Balzac. Boorman, Howard L., “Lin Shu”, in: *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1970, 382–386, see 382, 384.

106 Liu, Lydia H., *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity—China, 1900–1937* (1995), 223.

For the *guoyu* movement, a discursive counterpart was just as crucial. However, there was no need to fabricate one. While the *guoyu* movement had already achieved important successes, such as establishing the Preparatory Committee for the Unification of the National Language and introducing *guoyu* in the primary school curriculum, the late “Warlord Era” (1916–1928),<sup>107</sup> the year 1925 in particular, turned out to be very difficult for the promoters of a national language. Qian Xuantong, Wei Jiangong and their fellow campaigners had to defend their national language concepts against a powerful politician.

On April 14, 1925, Zhang Shizhao 章士釗 (1881–1973, style name: Xingyan 行嚴) was appointed minister of education by the provisional chief executive of the Republic of China, Duan Qirui 段祺瑞 (1865–1936).<sup>108</sup> At the time, Zhang Shizhao was disappointed by the failure of Western-style parliamentarianism and wanted to reintroduce traditional values and discipline the intellectuals and students.<sup>109</sup> He opposed the “congruence of speech and writing” (*yan wen yizhi*) and the “unification of the national language” (*guoyu tongyi* 國語統一).<sup>110</sup> He wanted to ban *guoyu* from the national curriculum and reintroduce the Confucian classics. Altogether, the *guoyu* movement suffered a blow; apart from very few activities, it was brought to a standstill. *Guoyu* was only revived in 1928 when China was reunited after the Northern Expedition.<sup>111</sup>

Who was Zhang Shizhao and why was he so hostile towards *guoyu* and *baihua*? Was he acting individually or did he have comrades-in-arms? And how do we know that he was the proclaimed enemy of the *guoyu* movement adherents? Zhang Shizhao was not only an influential political thinker, journalist and politician but also was someone who underwent a notable change of opinion.

As a young man living in the late Qing dynasty, Zhang Shizhao was an anti-Manchu revolutionary. He was even involved in assassination attempts in the early years of the 20th century. He was editor-in-chief of the magazine *Subao* 蘇報 (The Jiangsu Journal) and several other periodicals during his lifetime. Zhang Shizhao’s editorship of *Subao* in 1903 is especially noteworthy. He used the mag-

107 The Warlord Era is subject of considerable debate, since the designation of who is a “warlord” and when it actually began and ended are being discussed. It can be said that the central national government in Peking was unstable (see Sheridan, James E., “The warlord era: politics and militarism under the Peking government, 1916–28”, in: *The Cambridge History of China: Volume 12, Republican China, 1912–1949, Part 1*, ed. by Fairbank, John K., and Denis C. Twitchett, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, 284–321, see 307.) and that “a number of individual military commanders exercise[d] autonomous political power by virtue of the actual or threatened use of the military force under their personal control”, see Mccord, Edward A., *The Power of the Gun: The Emergence of Modern Chinese Warlordism*, Berkeley / Los Angeles / Oxford: University of California Press, 4. Many thanks to Clemens Büttner for suggesting literature.

108 Ye, Bin, “Searching for the Self: Zhang Shizhao and Chinese Narratives (1903–1927)”, PhD dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 2009, 190.

109 Wippermann, Dorothea, *Das Phonetische Alphabet Zhuyin Zimu – Entstehung und Verbreitung im Zuge der Nationalsprachlichen Bewegung in der Republik China 1912–1949* (1985), 49.

110 Yu Jin’en 于锦恩, *Minguo zhuyin zimu zhengce shilun* 民国注音字母政策史论 [Historical discussion of the Zhuyin zimu policies during the Republic], Beijing 北京: Zhonghua shuju 中华书局, 2007, 40.

111 Wippermann, Dorothea, *Das Phonetische Alphabet Zhuyin Zimu – Entstehung und Verbreitung im Zuge der Nationalsprachlichen Bewegung in der Republik China 1912–1949* (1985), 49.

azine to publish articles against the Manchu rulers, together with important figures like Zhang Binglin 章炳麟 (Taiyan 太炎, 1869–1936) and Wu Zhihui. The two Zhangs were close friends. Their anti-Qing-government articles in *Subao* led to persecution and imprisonment of Zhang Binglin. Wu Zhihui was suspected of selling Zhang Binglin out to the authorities.<sup>112</sup> Zhang Shizhao fled to Tokyo as a political refugee in 1905. Despite his revolutionary mindset, he refused to join the Revolutionary Alliance (Tongmenghui 同盟會). In Japan, he began to systematically acquire Western learning, and from 1908 until 1912, he studied in Edinburgh and became an enthusiast for English Liberalism and the two-party-system.<sup>113</sup> Back in China after the end of the dynasty, Zhang still refused to join the Revolutionary Alliance (now renamed and fused with other organizations to form the “Nationalist Party” Kuomintang [Guomindang] 國民黨, KMT). However, at the personal invitation of Sun Yat-sen (Sun Zhongshan 孫中山, 1866–1925), he became chief editor of the Alliance’s official publication *Minli bao* 民立報 (The people’s stand) in 1912. In this newspaper, he published sharp criticism of the KMT politics.<sup>114</sup>

During the early republic, Zhang Shizhao was deeply involved in government activities, arguing in favor of a cabinet system and not a presidential system. Despite his and others’ efforts, Yuan Shikai 袁世凱 (1859–1916) adopted a presidential system, centralizing more and more power in his hands, finally proclaiming himself emperor. Zhang Shizhao took part in the Second Revolution against Yuan Shikai in 1913. In 1914, after the revolution’s failure, Zhang Shizhao fled to Tokyo, where in May he founded a monthly periodical *Jiayin* 甲寅 – *The Tiger*.<sup>115</sup> The characters *jiayin* 甲寅 of the sexagenary cycle of heavenly stems and earthly branches as well as “tiger” refer to the year 1914, the year of its founding. While Yuan Shikai tried to win Zhang Shizhao back to be part of the political leadership in Beijing, Zhang started to severely criticize Yuan’s dictatorship in the magazine and promulgated liberal ideas.<sup>116</sup> Apart from Zhang himself, important contributors to *Jiayin Monthly* were Gao Yihan 高一涵 (1884–1968), Zhou Gengsheng 周鯁生 (1889–1971), Yang Ruiliu 楊瑞六 (1885–1966), Zhang Dongsun 張東蓀 (1886–1973), Li Dazhao 李大釗 (1889–1927) and Chen Duxiu (1879–1942, Li and Chen founded the Chinese Communist Party, CCP, in 1921).

Ironically, considering Zhang Shizhao’s later hostility towards the *guoyu* movement, this first *Jiayin* monthly periodical played an important role for the reformist and revolutionary thought of the May Fourth Era in its first period

112 The case against Zhang Binglin and the fellow contributors to *Subao* (in)famously came to be known as the “*Subao* case” and was tried in 1903. Cf. Lust, J., “The “Su-Pao” Case: An Episode in the Early Chinese Nationalist Movement”, in: *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 27.2 (1964), 408–429. Wang, Y. C., “The Su-Pao 蘇報 Case: A Study of Foreign Pressure, Intellectual Fermentation, and Dynastic Decline”, in: *Monumenta Serica* 24 (1965), 84–129.

113 Weston, Timothy B., “The Formation and Positioning of the New Culture Community, 1913–1917”, in: *Modern China* 24.3 (1998), 255–284, see 261.

114 See Weston, Timothy B., “The Formation and Positioning of the New Culture Community, 1913–1917” (1998), 261. and Weston, Timothy B., *The Power of Position: Beijing University, Intellectuals, and Chinese Political Culture, 1898–1929* (2004), 86.

115 Ye, Bin, “Searching for the Self: Zhang Shizhao and Chinese Narratives (1903–1927)” (2009), 138.

116 Ye, Bin, “Searching for the Self: Zhang Shizhao and Chinese Narratives (1903–1927)” (2009), 165.

of publication from 1914 to 1915. It might even be called formative for the New Culture Movement and assumed a role nearly as important as the famous “New Youth” (*Xin qingnian* 新青年 – *La Jeunesse*, established by Chen Duxiu in 1915).<sup>117</sup> It provided organizational and ideological preparation for the New Culture Movement and can be seen as its herald.<sup>118</sup> The monthly *Jiayin* has been called the “most influential political journal during the Yuan Shikai era”. Not only did many New Culture Movement participants have personal ties with the magazine, but it is also seen as antecedent of the Movement.<sup>119</sup>

When Yuan Shikai prohibited the publication of *The Tiger* in August 1915,<sup>120</sup> *Xin qingnian* filled that newly arisen void.<sup>121</sup> “The replacement on the intellectual scene of Zhang’s formerly dominant Tiger magazine with Chen Duxiu’s New Youth symbolizes for these scholars the shift in mainstream Chinese thought away from “political solutions” and toward literary and social reform, consciousness building, and socialism”.<sup>122</sup> The “literary reform” played a very strong role for Wei Jiangong and his Beida teacher generation.

After Yuan’s death in 1916, Zhang Shizhao re-entered politics and became a member of the senate.<sup>123</sup> In January 1917, Zhang revived his *Jiayin* publication the first time, this time as a daily newspaper. As a member of the parliament, Zhang Shizhao took part in important debates about the constitution. He employed the *Jiayin* paper as mouthpiece for constitutionalism, trying rather to reconcile the many voices in order to find a compromise. Simultaneously, Li Dazhao advocated Marxism in the very same journal. They clashed over whether China needed a reform or a revolution. This second version of *Jiayin* was short-lived: it was ordered to be shut down in June 1917 by the Qing loyalist Zhang Xun 張勳 (1854–1923).<sup>124</sup>

- 117 Weston, Timothy B., *The Power of Position: Beijing University, Intellectuals, and Chinese Political Culture, 1898-1929* (2004), 100.
- 118 Tong Longchao 童龙超 and Huang Xiurong 黄秀蓉, “‘Jiayin pai’ kaobian” “甲寅派” 考辨 [Study and differentiation of the “Jiayin school”], in: *Zhongguo xiandai wenxue yanjiu congkan* 中国现代文学研究丛刊 [Chinese modern literature research series] 6 (2007), 148–155, see 144–45.
- 119 Weston, Timothy B., “The Formation and Positioning of the New Culture Community, 1913-1917” (1998), 255-256.
- 120 Tong Longchao 童龙超 and Huang Xiurong 黄秀蓉, “‘Jiayin pai’ kaobian” (2007), 145.
- 121 Merlino Palermo, Annamaria, “La rivista Xin Qingnian (Nuova Gioventù) nel maggio 1918”, in: *Cina* 16 (1980), 229–263, see 231.
- 122 Jenco, Leigh K., “‘Rule by man’ and ‘rule by law’ in early Republican China: contributions to a theoretical debate”, in: *The Journal of Asian Studies* 69.1 (2010), 181–203, see 192. Compare also Jenco, Leigh K., *Making the Political – Founding and Action in the Political Theory of Zhang Shizhao*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 88.
- 123 Ye, Bin, “Searching for the Self: Zhang Shizhao and Chinese Narratives (1903–1927)” (2009), 171.
- 124 Tong Longchao 童龙超 and Huang Xiurong 黄秀蓉, “‘Jiayin pai’ kaobian” (2007), 145. Guo counts the daily newspaper into the early publication phase. Cf. Guo Shuanglin 郭双林, “Qian-hou ‘Jiayin pai’ kao” 前后 “甲寅派” 考 [Study of the early and late “Jiayin school”], in: *Jindaishi yanjiu* 近代史研究 [Modern Chinese History Studies] 3 (2008).

In 1922, Hu Shi<sup>125</sup> coined the term *Jiayin pai* 甲寅派 (*Jiayin school*) to describe Zhang Shizhao and the other intellectuals involved.<sup>126</sup> His description, however, referred to this early *Jiayin pai*, the trailblazers for the New Culture Movement. While this early *Jiayin* “faction” or “school” (*pai*) had a progressive, modernist image, it was not iconoclastic and still sought to find compromise or “accommodation” (*tiaohe* 調和).<sup>127</sup> Leigh Jenco explains how Zhang Shizhao’s concept of *tiaohe* sought to manage the tensions not only between the different political parties, but also between the old and the new.<sup>128</sup>

But how could a trailblazer for the New Culture Movement become the adversary of the *guoyu* movement? It was not only Zhang Shizhao who gradually transformed himself from a revolutionary to a cultural conservative; it was also the people around him that made his outlook seem increasingly reactionary. While other intellectuals of the “early Jiayin school” 前甲寅派 favored vernacular journalism and joined the New Culture Movement, Zhang Shizhao became “one of the most outspoken opponents of the vernacularization of written Chinese, insisted on using Yan Fu’s antiquarian terminology and upheld a classicist ideal of terse stylistic economy.”<sup>129</sup> This became to be called “logical style”<sup>130</sup> and was very popular in the late 1910s.<sup>131</sup>

After Yuan Shikai’s death, political chaos prevailed. In the course of the controversy about entering World War I, President Li Yuanhong 黎元洪 (1864–1928) dismissed Prime Minister Duan Qirui, who was backed by the northern military leaders, and the Warlord Era began.<sup>132</sup> Zhang Shizhao increasingly began to perceive China’s crisis as a crisis of the Chinese character and morality. After the 1919 May Fourth student movement, he “began to doubt the suitability of Western-style representative government for China, which at that time was primarily a preindustrial agricultural nation.”<sup>133</sup> He believed that China as a non-industrialized country based on agriculture should have its own special political

125 Hu was also a personal friend of Zhang Shizhao. Cf. Zou Xiaozhan 邹小站, *Zhang Shizhao zhuan* 章士钊传 [Biography of Zhang Shizhao], Zhengzhou 郑州: Henan wenyi chubanshe 河南文艺出版社, 1999, 218.

126 Tong Longchao 童龙超 and Huang Xiurong 黄秀蓉, “‘Jiayin pai’ kaobian” (2007), 146–47.

127 Guo Shuanglin 郭双林, “Lun qianqi ‘Jiayin pai’ zhengzhi tiaohede de yihan ji sixiang laiyuan” 论前期“甲寅派”政治调和的意涵及思想来源 [On the Political Compromise Implication and Thought Origin of Early Jia Yin Faction], in: *Jinyang xuekan* 晋阳学刊 [Jinyang academic journal] 1 (2012), 94–104. Jenco translates *tiaohe* with “accommodation”. Jenco, Leigh K., *Making the Political – Founding and Action in the Political Theory of Zhang Shizhao* (2010), 243.

128 Jenco, Leigh K., *Making the Political – Founding and Action in the Political Theory of Zhang Shizhao* (2010), 243.

129 Kurtz, Joachim, *The Discovery of Chinese Logic* (2011), 351.

130 Kurtz, Joachim, *The Discovery of Chinese Logic* (2011), 351.

131 Kurtz also discusses Zhang Shizhao’s particular approach to translation: He favored employing phonemic loans and coined the term *luoji* 邏輯 for Logic. See Kurtz, Joachim, *The Discovery of Chinese Logic* (2011), 270–73.

132 Ye, Bin, “Searching for the Self: Zhang Shizhao and Chinese Narratives (1903–1927)” (2009), 181.

133 Jenco, Leigh K., *Making the Political – Founding and Action in the Political Theory of Zhang Shizhao* (2010), 36–37.

system.<sup>134</sup> Zhang advocated “rural self-rule” (*nongcun zizhi* 農村自治)<sup>135</sup> to integrate the social and economic reality of peasants as main constituent of the country into modernization schemes.<sup>136</sup> He also favored the Confucian idea of cultivating the self to manage the family and the state. A “national learning”, *guoxue*, based on a “national essence” *guocui* 國粹,<sup>137</sup> would be able to guide the way. What should this “essence” contain? To answer this question, Zhang Shizhao went back to an idea Zhang Binglin had given him in 1906: Language, institutions, and the deeds of men. The two Zhangs emphasized that the Chinese written with Chinese characters would always be the preferred means of expression for the Chinese, since the characters contained social and historical information.<sup>138</sup>

When Duan Qirui appointed Zhang Shizhao minister of education in April 1925, Zhang Shizhao was completely disillusioned by parliamentarism. That China was still in chaos more than ten years after the establishment of the Republic disenchanted him from Western style democracy. He doubted that it could be a universal model. Zhang Shizhao connected the question of constitution to the language question. When Zhang Shizhao revived his *Jiayin* magazine as a weekly newspaper on July 18, 1925, he wanted to preserve the classical language. In the editorial, he wrote:

文字須求雅馴，白話恕不刊布。<sup>139</sup>

Writing needs to seek elegance; *baihua* will surely not be published.

This attitude gave the *later Jiayin school* (*hou Jiayin pai* 後甲寅派) the image of conservatism. This is the “tiger minister” (a popular nickname for Zhang in 1925)<sup>140</sup> to whom Wei Jiangong was opposed. Two years earlier, Zhang voiced his criticism of the New Culture Movement.<sup>141</sup>

Li Jinxi also covered this episode in his “History of the national language movement” (*Guoyu yundong shigang* 國語運動史綱), an important source for

134 Ye, Bin, “Searching for the Self: Zhang Shizhao and Chinese Narratives (1903–1927)” (2009), 181.

135 Originally “rural reconstruction” (*xiangcun jianshe* 鄉村建設) as proposed most prominently by Liang Shuming 梁漱溟 (1893–1988). Jenco, Leigh K., *Making the Political – Founding and Action in the Political Theory of Zhang Shizhao* (2010), 37.

136 Jenco, Leigh K., *Making the Political – Founding and Action in the Political Theory of Zhang Shizhao* (2010), 37.

137 Like many important concepts of the time, “national essence” was first mentioned in Japan in the late 19th century. I have linked the debate between promulgators of “national essence” versus modernizers or westernizers to the debate about the introduction of Esperanto and the abolition of Chinese. See Munning, Mariana, “Concepts of Language in the Debate on Esperanto in the Early Twentieth Century” (2012), 10.

138 Ye, Bin, “Searching for the Self: Zhang Shizhao and Chinese Narratives (1903–1927)” (2009), 67–68.

139 This motto is quoted by Wei Jiangong and other adversaries of Zhang in order to refute it. Zhang Shizhao 章士釗, “Ben kan qishi yi” 本刊啟事一 [First notice of this magazine], in: *Jiayin* 甲寅 [*The Tiger*] 1.3 (1925), Inside front cover.

140 Tong Longchao 童龍超 and Huang Xiurong 黃秀蓉, “‘Jiayin pai’ kaobian” (2007), 145.

141 Zhang’s article was first published in *Xinwenbao* 新聞報 in 1923. Zhang published it again, adding a paragraph, on September 12th, 1925 in his *Jiayin* weekly magazine. Xingyan 行嚴 [Zhang Shizhao 章士釗], “Ping xin wenhua yundong” 評新文化運動 [Criticizing the New Culture Movement], in: *Zhang Shizhao quanji* 章士釗全集 [Complete Works of Zhang Shizhao], ed. by Wang Junxi 王均熙, vol. 4, Shanghai 上海: Wenhui chubanshe 文匯出版社, 2000, 210–218, see 210.

the *guoyu* movement until the early 1930s. It includes first-hand accounts as well as official documents of the time. Apart from stating clearly that he and Qian Xuantong published *Guoyu zhoukan* in their own names and mentioning the contributors,<sup>142</sup> he referred to a certain “Tiger Attack” (*hu zhen* 虎陣), and described the one side promoting the “spoken” or “vernacular language” *kouyu* 口語, and the other advocating “classical prose” *guwen* 古文.<sup>143</sup>

### 3.2.4 Wei Jianguo Defending *Guoyu* 國語

Wei Jianguo’s first article explicitly dealing with *guoyu* was published on 30 August 1925 in *Guoyu zhoukan* and targets Zhang Shizhao as an adversary. It was entitled “Overthrow the stumbling blocks [literally: the tigers that block the way] of the national language movement” (Dadao *guoyu* yundong de lanlu-hu 打倒國語運動的攔路虎).<sup>144</sup> The metaphorical “road-blocking tiger” (*lanlu-hu*) is a pun referring to Zhang and his *The Tiger* (*Jiayin*) magazine. Wei Jianguo’s article is basically a polemic against *Jiayin*, evoking the tiger metaphor seven times.

Wei Jianguo was not the only one attacking a metaphorical tiger that obstructed the way. For example, Ye Shengtao 葉聖陶 (1894-1988)<sup>145</sup> wrote that young people who wanted to write a letter to their parents would “meet a tiger that blocked the road (*lanlu-hu*)”: namely, the literary language that the letter would have to use at that time. However, since it was completely different from the spoken language, ordinary people did not master it. Hence, a simple task as writing a letter to a close relation was impossible. To solve that problem, Ye Shengtao advocated replacing “composition” *zuowen* 作文 with “writing speech” *xiehua* 寫話 in the 1920s.<sup>146</sup>

In the article “Dadao *guoyu* yundong de lanlu-hu”, Wei Jianguo depicted the image of a tiger (*hu* 虎), which he described as “big worm” or “insect” (*dachong* 大蟲), that illegally occupied a place on top of a mountain and came down once a week to roar (*paoxiao* 咆哮) at “our national language movement” (*zanmen*

142 Li mentions, apart from himself, Qian Xuantong, Wei Jianguo, Xiao Jialin, Du Tongli, Bai Dizhou 白濂洲 (1900–1934, he was not mentioned in Qian’s editorial quoted on page 63), Su Yaozu, Dong Weichuan, Wu Jingheng (Wu Zhihui, also not mentioned by Qian), Hu Shizhi, Lin Yutang and Zhou Kaiming.

143 Li Jinxi 黎錦熙, *Guoyu yundong shigang*, vol. 2, (1990), 135.

144 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Dadao *guoyu* yundong de lanlu-hu” 打倒國語運動的攔路虎 [Overthrow the tigers that block the way of the national language movement], in: *Wei Jianguo wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jianguo], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 马镇, vol. 5, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 433–34.

145 Ye Shengtao (given name Shaojun 紹鈞) was an important author, vernacular enthusiast, and educator. A key figure in publishing, he played an important role in the compilation of the *Xinhua zidian* and was an important figure for Wei Jianguo. In the PRC in 1954, he was appointed vice minister of education. Boorman, Howard L., “Yeh Sheng-t’ao”, in: *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, vol. 4, New York: Columbia University Press, 1970, 33–35.

146 Zhou Youguang 周有光 [translated by Zhang Liqing 张立青], *Zhongguo yuwen de shidai yanjin* (2003), 42–43.



*de guoyu yundong* 咱們的國語運動).<sup>147</sup> This tiger in an illegally obtained high position alluded to Zhang Shizhao as minister of education; this tiger came down once a week when the *Jiayin* magazine was published. The recently launched *Guoyu zhoukan*, also a weekly magazine, was a direct equivalent. Wei Jianguo was not the only one referring to *The Tiger* as *dachong*; Qian Xuanton also used this mocking name in his diary on August 2, 1925.<sup>148</sup>

In this first article about *guoyu*, Wei Jianguo quoted directly from the *Jiayin* magazine to disprove Zhang Shizhao’s statements against *guoyu*. Wei Jianguo’s concepts can be isolated by analyzing what he argues against: Zhang Shizhao’s critique against the *guoyu* movement and the general views of cultural conservatives. Wei Jianguo’s views, always “spiced” with mockery of Zhang Shizhao, can be summarized below:

1. disapproval of a mystified, moralistic and elitist concept of language, literature and script which is mere chicanery and just a hypocrite cover-up for misanthropy
2. communication and its tools should be inclusive; the spoken language should be the basis for the written language
3. *guoyu* is legitimized by classical scholarship
4. the *guoyu* movement is a heroic endeavor motivated and legitimized by the reception of Buddhism

Wei Jianguo’s deliberations according to these four items are:

1. Wei Jianguo summarized Zhang Shizhao’s attitude as “emptily hanging” (*kong gua* 空掛 / 挂)<sup>149</sup> the sign “*wen yi zai dao* 文以載道”, i.e. “literature as a vehicle for the Way”<sup>150</sup> or “Literature is a vehicle of moral principles”.<sup>151</sup> This was a well-known catchphrase coined by the Neo-Confucian Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤 (1017–1073) in the Song 宋 dynasty (960–1279), hotly debated in the early 20th century. Zhou Dunyi argued that works of literature should carry or convey the “Way” (*Dao* 道) in a Confucian, moral sense. In this mindset, literature was seen as having a moral and didactic function.<sup>152</sup> This view was influential at least until the 20th century. It should be noted that Zhou Dunyi stated that beautiful liter-

147 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Dadao guoyu yundong de lanlu-hu” (2001), 433.

148 Qian Xuanton 钱玄同, *Qian Xuanton riji*, vol. 2 (1923–1933), (2014), 649.

149 The trope of the emptiness of the classical language and of upholding it as a standard was established before Wei Jianguo. For example, Lin Xie 林澣 (Lin Baishui 林白水, 1874–1926) launched a vernacular journal in 1903 by stating that studied people speak empty words and write some empty texts. See: Anonymous [Lin Xie 林澣 (Lin Baishui 林白水)], “*Zhongguo baihuabao fakanci*” 中國白話報發刊辭 [Editorial of ‘Chinese vernacular journal’], in: *Zhongguo baihuabao* 中國白話報 [Chinese vernacular journal] 1 (1903), 1–15, see 2. See also: Kaske, Elisabeth, “Mandarin, Vernacular and National Language – China’s Emerging Concept of a National Language In the Early Twentieth Century” (2004), 279. The role of vernacular journals already in the late Qing cannot be underestimated, I direct the reader to Kaske’s article for further information.

150 Pollard, David E., *A Chinese Look at Literature. The Literary Values of Chou-Tso-jen in Relation to the Tradition*, London: C. Hurst & Co., 1973, 1.

151 Chan, Wing-tsit [translated and compiled], *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969, 476.

152 Pohl, Karl-Heinz, *Ästhetik und Literaturtheorie in China – Von der Tradition bis zur Moderne* (Geschichte der chinesischen Literatur 5), München: K. G. Saur, 2006, 10; 247.

ary expressions without any moral substance are a “defect”.<sup>153</sup> Juxtaposed to this concept of literature was the equally famous concept of “poetry expresses intent (will or meaning, or both) with words” *shi yan zhi* 詩言志.<sup>154</sup>

The May Fourth Scholars were advocates of a new literature. Zhou Zuoren argued against the moralistic *wen-yi-zai-dao*-theory of literature. Zhou Zuoren was of the opinion that “the distinguishing characteristic of literature should be that it should have no aim”.<sup>155</sup> He believed that literature as a “‘vehicle for the Way’ [...] was not literature”.<sup>156</sup> Instead, he favored an expressive literary theory that saw literature as “an uttering of feeling, free from any direction or control”.<sup>157</sup> Lin Yutang had this twofold concept of literature<sup>158</sup> and clearly rejected the “official tradition” of “*wen yi zai dao*” literature and preferred to see literature as expressing intention (*yan zhi* 言志).<sup>159</sup> And of course, also Qian Xuantong mocked Zhang’s *wen-yi-zai-dao*-attitude.<sup>160</sup> (It is to be noted that, as briefly mentioned above, the intellectual world was nevertheless usually quite impressed by Zhang Shizhao’s style.)

Wei Jiangong was neither a fiction author nor a literary critic. However, as a linguist, he was of course interested in literature, and it played an important role in his teaching and research. Additionally, Wei Jiangong did not address literature in a narrow sense but rather the written word in a broad sense.

Wei Jiangong criticized Zhang Shizhao for mystifying the script by writing that the script’s origins are unknown (*bu zhi suo chu* 不知所出). The utilitarian linguist Wei Jiangong was clearly against putting the tool script on a pedestal.

One article in the *Tiger* magazine especially enraged Wei Jiangong, namely Zhang Shizhao’s (using the pen name Gutong 孤桐)<sup>161</sup> reply to a letter to the editors by Liang Shuming<sup>162</sup> about Eastern and Western culture and philosophy.<sup>163</sup> Wei makes fun of Zhang Shizhao, who decries the vernacular as “disorderly” (“dis-

- 
- 153 Chan, Wing-tsit [translated and compiled], *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (1969), 476.
- 154 Chow, Tse-Tsung, “Ancient Chinese Views on Literature, the Tao, and Their Relationship”, in: *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)* 1 (1979), 3–29, see 3.
- 155 Pollard, David E., *A Chinese Look at Literature* (1973), 2. Zhou, Zuoren 周作人, *Zhongguo xin wenxue de yuanliu* 中国新文学的源流 [The origins of China’s new literature], Shanghai 上海: Shanghai shudian 上海书店, 1988, 27.
- 156 Pollard, David E., *A Chinese Look at Literature* (1973), 1.
- 157 Pollard, David E., *A Chinese Look at Literature* (1973), 1.
- 158 Lee, Madalina Yuk-Ling, “The Intellectual Origins of Lin Yutang’s Cultural Internationalism, 1928–1938”, MA dissertation, University of Maryland, 2009, 88.
- 159 Müller, Gotelind, “Lin Yutang – Die Persönlichkeit im Spiegel des Werks”, in: *Drei Studien über Lin Yutang (1895–1976)* (Chinathemen 41), ed. by Martin, Helmut, and Lutz Bieg, Bochum: Brockmeyer, 1989, 5–144, see 42.
- 160 Qian Xuantong 錢玄同, “*Jiayin yu Shuihu*” 甲寅與水滸 [Jiayin and Water Margin], in: *Guoyu zhoukan* 國語週刊 [National language weekly] 7, 98–100, see 98–100.
- 161 “Lonely phoenix tree”, see Ye, Bin, “Searching for the Self: Zhang Shizhao and Chinese Narratives (1903–1927)” (2009), 195.
- 162 Liang Shuming is usually labeled as “traditionalist” or “cultural conservative”, see Alitto, Guy, *The Last Confucian: Liang Shu-ming and the Chinese Dilemma of Modernity*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986, 6.
- 163 Liang Shuming 梁漱溟 and Gutong 孤桐 [= Zhang Shizhao], “Dong-Xi wenhua ji qi zhexue” 東西文化及其哲學 [The culture of the East and the West and their philosophy], in: *Jiayin* 甲寅 [The Tiger] 1.3 (1925), 18–19.

orderly words of the vernacular” *baihua wu ci* 白話蕪詞, literally: overgrown with weeds).

He quotes Zhang’s sentence:

“近年士習日非，文詞鄙俚，國家未滅，文字先亡”，“梁任公獻媚小生，從風而靡，天下病之”。<sup>164</sup>

“Nowadays, the scholars’ practice worsens day by day; their language and wording is vulgar. The country has not perished yet, and the characters first disappear. Liang Rengong [= Liang Qichao 梁啟超, 1873–1929] is a coquettish *xiaosheng*:<sup>165</sup> he goes along with any trend, and the world is sick of him.”

Interestingly, it seems that Wei Jianguo was not the only one offended by this sentence. The “alternative biography” (*biezhuan*) of Zhang Shizhao states that Shen Jianshi<sup>166</sup> read that very phrase to his students, shaking his head, showing that he found it ridiculous.<sup>167</sup> Hu Shi also quotes this passage.<sup>168</sup> In Hu Shi’s case, however, he was on friendly terms with Zhang Shizhao. The two challenged each other in writing.<sup>169</sup>

Wei asks the rhetorical question of how this “script” or “written language” (*wen* 文) of Zhang can “carry the way” (*zai dao*) if it is employed in a destructive way?<sup>170</sup> What Zhang Shizhao does, according to Wei, is to badmouth female students (把純潔的女學生家架詞誣枉，說得人格全無).<sup>171</sup> Wei Jianguo goes

164 The punctuation follows Wei Jianguo’s quote in Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Dadao guoyu yundong de lanlu-hu” (2001), 433. Wei quotes Zhang’s reply to Liang: Liang Shuming 梁漱溟 and Gutong 孤桐 [ = Zhang Shizhao], “Dong-Xi wenhua ji qi zhexue” (1925), 19.

165 *Xiaosheng* 小生 can denote a Peking Opera character (*hangdang* 行當), usually a young, beardless and handsome intellectual. It can also refer to a young man (similar to *housheng* 後生) or can even be an insult for someone effeminate. See Huang Shang 黃裳, *Jiu xi xin tan* 旧戏新谈 [New talk on old-style drama], Beijing 北京: Beijing chubanshe 北京出版社, 2003, 40ff. and Zhang Qi 張琦, *Beijingren he Shanghai ren qutan* 北京人和上海人趣談 [Amusing remarks on Beijingers and Shanghaiers], Beijing 北京: Jincheng chubanshe 金城出版社, 2000, 97ff. I am very thankful to Wang Xiaoxin, Heidelberg, for her advice and literature recommendations on opera matters.

166 As mentioned above on page 54, Shen Jianshi was one of Wei Jianguo’s teachers and himself a student of Zhang Binglin. Shen Jianshi, Zhang Binglin and Shen’s older brother Shen Yinmo (with their third brother, they were the three Shens) studied in Japan. While his research interest covered graphemics (*wenzixue*) and semantics (*xunguxue*), he was also involved in anti-Manchu revolutionary activities. He held several academic positions at Peking University, Fu-Jen University (Furen daxue 輔仁大學), and others. See Weston, Timothy B., *The Power of Position: Beijing University, Intellectuals, and Chinese Political Culture, 1898-1929* (2004), 108, 111, 220. Ma Si 馬嘶, *Yidai zongshi Wei Jianguo* (2007), 23. and Boorman, Howard L., “Shen Yin-mo”, in: *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1970, 270–271, see 116.

167 Chen Shuliang 陳書良, *Jimo Qitong – Zhang Shizhao biezhuann* 寂寞秋桐——章士釗別傳 [Lonely Qitong [autumn phoenix tree] – Supplementary biography of Zhang Shizhao], Changchun 長春: Changchun chubanshe 長春出版社, 1999, 85.

168 Shi Zhi 適之 [= Hu Shi 胡適], “Lao Zhang you fanpan le” 老章又反叛了 [Old Zhang has revolted again], in: *Guoyu zhoukan* 國語週刊 [National language weekly] 12 (1925), 1–3, see 2.

169 Zhang Shizhao even wrote a *baihua* text dedicated to Hu on the back of a photograph of the two together after a dinner in Beijing in 1924. Shi Qie 士鍬, “Hu Shi yu Zhang Shizhao ‘fanchuan’” 胡適與章士釗“反串” [Hu Shi and Zhang Shizhao “swap roles”], in: *Jiang-Huai wenshi* 江淮文史 [Jiangsu and Anhui literature and history] (1993), 49. Also Hu’s text “Lao Zhang you fanpan le” must be interpreted in a slightly humorous way.

170 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Dadao guoyu yundong de lanlu-hu” (2001), 433.

171 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Dadao guoyu yundong de lanlu-hu” (2001), 433.

on a tirade, saying that the quality of student education is deteriorating because of Zhang's ban on all student movements (*xuesheng yundong* 學生運動). This is an allusion to the events taking place at the Women's Normal University. Wei's reaction to them will be discussed further in the following section beginning on page 82.

Wei Jianguo and other iconoclast intellectuals believed that Zhang's insistence on classical language is chicanery, that Zhang merely wants to show off his writing skills and that he twists both words and the law. Wei plays on the fact that Zhang Shizhao was indeed not only an essayist, but had also studied law. Wei characterizes Zhang's actions as "perverting law by lexical chicanery" or "engaging in word-mongering" (*wuwennongmo* 舞文弄墨).<sup>172</sup> Others satirized Zhang's formalism by calling him a member of a school of "stilted archaisms" (*zhi-hu-zhe-ye*-*pai* "之乎者也"派).<sup>173</sup> Wei expresses his rage with a rhetorical question, addressing not only Zhang's writing style but also his qualities as a jurist:

刀筆吏誣捏之詞，佞幸臣獻媚之語，那些東西算得雅嗎！算得文嗎！<sup>174</sup>  
 How can these words of a "pettifogger"<sup>175</sup> fabricating accusations and co-  
 quettish words of a court favorite be counted as "elegant" or "cultivated"!

Since it first appeared in the late 19th century, the language question was not only tied to an urge for national survival, but also to realize "a new social order".<sup>176</sup> Wei Jianguo's view reflects well that of Qiu Tingliang, the man who introduced the term *baihua* as a euphemism of what was formerly known as "vulgar

172 This idiom or tetragram (*chengyu* 成語, characterized by four characters) can have positive or negative connotations. I want to interpret it in a more positive way, since it describes Zhang Shizhao as someone who finds pleasure in using his literary skills. In a more negative way, it can denote either that Zhang is merely juggling around with words without attaining true literary quality, or that he is even deliberately twisting phrases and thus acting like a shyster. Cf. Liu Aifu 刘爱服 and Liu Dechao 刘德超 (ed.), *Han-Ying shuang jie changyong chengyu cidian* 汉英双解常用成语词典 [A Dictionary of Commonly Used Chinese Idioms with English Translation], Beijing 北京: Shanguo yinshuguan 商务印书馆, 2007, 672.

173 *Zhi-hu-zhe-ye* 之乎者也 is an enumeration of four commonly used particles in the classical language to mock an expression as overly finicky or archaic. Chen Shuliang 陈书良, *Jimo Qitong - Zhang Shizhao biezhu* (1999), 84.

174 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, "Dadao guoyu yundong de lanlu-hu" (2001), 434.

175 The term *daobili* 刀筆吏 also denotes a minor official who draws up indictments. It goes back to Chunqiu 春秋 (777-476 BCE) and Zhanguo 戰國 (Warring States, 475-221 BCE) times, when mistakes on bamboo slips had to be corrected by carving the faulty character off and writing it anew. Hence, a knife (*dao* 刀) and a brush (*bi* 筆) were needed and were important tools for a scholar or official. Furthermore, legal assistants who were familiar with the law were able to twist it with surgical precision, thus acquiring this nickname. Guo Canjin 郭灿金 and Zhang Zhaopeng 张召鹏, *Zhongguoren zui yi wujie de wenshi changshi* 中国人最易误解的文史常识 [Common knowledge from literature and history that the Chinese most easily misunderstand], Beijing 北京: Zhongguo shuji chubanshe 中国书籍出版社, 2006, 57-58. In the Qing era, the term came to denote "literary hacks who specialized in drawing up legal documents for a fee", which, at the example of Fujian Province in the 18th century, led the common people to waste their money in court. Macauley, Melissa A., "Civil and Uncivil Disputes in Southeast Coastal China, 1723-1820", in: *Civil Law in Qing and Republican China*, ed. by Bernhardt, Kathryn, and C. C. Huang Philip, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1994, 85-121, see 91.

176 Weng, Jeffrey, "What is Mandarin? The Social Project of Language Standardization in Early Republican China" (2018), 612.

speech” *suhua* 俗話.<sup>177</sup> Qiu was of the opinion that *baihua* could save society from the “evil influence” of the literary language. In his eyes, the classical language simply consisted of superficial beauty, authors mimicking each others’ styles and skills. Under this “excessive ornamentation” only vulgarity was to be found, and the “antiquity-loving gentlemen” would be “disgraced” if it was removed.<sup>178</sup> Weng argues along these lines that the “promulgation of a national standard language in the early twentieth century [...] represented an attempt to extend educational meritocracy from small segment of elites to all of society.”<sup>179</sup>

2. Wei Jianguo upholds the spoken language. In contrast to Zhang’s praise of the classical language, Wei is of the opinion that this “elegance” / “refinement” (*wenya* 文雅) that Zhang strives for<sup>180</sup> can only be obtained or represented by what real people (*zhengzheng ren* 真正人) actually say with their mouths. He emphasizes “speech” *hua* 話 in contrast to “writing” *wen*:

只有說真正人嘴裏講的“話”，寫真正人心裏要說的“話”，才配得上說“文雅”，才有“文雅”的意味。<sup>181</sup>

Only the “speech” that real people say with their mouths and writing the “speech” that real people feel with their hearts deserve to be called “refined”. It is only then it achieves the meaning “refined”.

3. The transcription Zhuyin zimu 注音字母 was an important part of the *guoyu* movement at the time. While Zhang Shizhao neither found it useful nor took the time to learn it, Wei Jianguo reminded him that it was actually based on the phonetic spelling scheme invented by his own “brother” Zhang Binglin (*wu xiong Taiyan* 吾兄太炎). Zhang Binglin developed phonetic symbols following the *Qieyun*-principle: initials *niuwen* 紐文 and finals *yunwen* 韻文.<sup>182</sup> For Wei, it was important to refute prejudices against the language reforms and enhance their standings. He tried to show that they are based on thorough philological research. Wei himself, just like the two Zhangs, was of course also trained in traditional Chinese philology. He was outraged: how can Zhang Shizhao even dare to speak of “*guoxue*” (national learning) if he did not know that Zhuyin zimu came out

177 The term *su* 俗 (vulgar, popular) will play a role in Wei Jianguo’s legitimization of *guoyu* in Taiwan and of the simplified characters in the PRC.

178 Qiu Tingliang, “Lun baihua wei weixin zhi ben”, after: Kaske, Elisabeth, *The Politics of Language in Chinese Education, 1895–1919* (2008), 106–7.

179 Weng, Jeffrey, “What is Mandarin? The Social Project of Language Standardization in Early Republican China” (2018), 612.

180 Zhang Shizhao 章士釗, “Ben kan qishi yi” 本刊啟事一 [First notice of this magazine], in: *Jiayin* 甲寅 [*The Tiger*] 1.3 (1925), Inside front cover.

181 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Dadao guoyu yundong de lanlu-hu” (2001), 434.

182 Some of the symbols already look similar to Zhuyin. He presents the symbols for the initials and finals according to the categories of the *Tangyun* 唐韻. See: [Zhang] Taiyan 太炎, “Bo Zhongguo yong wanguoxinyu shuo” 駁中國用萬國新語說 [Against the introduction of Esperanto in China], in: *Minbao* 民報 [People’s paper] 21 (1908), 49–72. Zhang Binglin proposed this spelling scheme in the framework of his debate with Wu Zhihui, Cai Yuanpei, Hua Nanguai 華南圭 (1875–1961) and others about the question of Chinese language reforms and a potential replacement of Chinese with Esperanto. Cf. Münnig, Mariana, “Concepts of Language in the Debate on Esperanto in the Early Twentieth Century” (2012).

of “*xiaoxue*” (philology, lit. minor studies) that again is a part of “*jingxue*” 經學 (study of the Confucian classics)?<sup>183</sup>

Wei Jiangong’s view that much of the newly developed Zhyuin zimu is actually based on traditional philological scholarship is well reflected and validated by secondary literature, especially Wippermann’s *Das Phonetische Alphabet Zhuyin Zimu*. She confirms that 15 of the 39 symbols were taken directly from Zhang Binglin’s draft.<sup>184</sup> Zhang presented this draft in the first debate about the introduction of Esperanto in 1908. It is conceptualized like the handed down *fanqie* 反切 spelling, in which the pronunciation of a character is indicated with two other characters, the first with the same initial, the second with the same final. Zhang’s innovation was to employ much simpler signs, also based on historical conventions to annotate the characters’ pronunciation.<sup>185</sup>

4. In addition to the philological legitimization of the *guoyu* movement, Wei Jiangong draws an interesting parallel between “our” *guoyu* movement and the Ming dynasty vernacular novel *Journey to the West* (*Xiyouji* 西遊記).<sup>186</sup> He calls the *guoyu* movement a “journey” (*xingcheng* 行程) in which suddenly a tiger appeared. He uses Buddhist rhetoric to sanction the national language movement and compares it to the travels of the monk Xuanzang 玄奘 to obtain the scriptures (*Tang Seng qu jing* 唐僧取經). The hardship and suffering (*mo nan* 磨難) that the movement suffers from is actually the suffering in Buddhism that brings out the ‘Dharma’ power (*fali* 法力), and that the monkey Sun Xingzhe 孫行者 (= Sun Wukong 孫悟空) is the one who protected Xuanzang, enabling him to bring the sacred scriptures to China. Wei Jiangong wishes that the comrades (*tongzhimen* 同志們) will protect the “knowledge acquired from a master” (*shi chuan* 師傳), which is *guoyu*. He evokes *guoyu* as something that will save the world. We can also see here that the image of going westwards to receive knowledge is a metaphor for the New Culture Movement, in which a lot of Western ideas are absorbed.

By alluding to *Xiyouji*, a Buddhist vernacular novel, Wei Jiangong implicitly alludes to how the import of Buddhism into China from India helped the development of the written vernacular. Mair describes how not only the Buddhist transformative texts (*bianwen* 變文) and *yulu* 語錄 from the Tang 唐 dynasty (618–907) were written in a form of vernacular language,<sup>187</sup> but also how a whole

---

183 Wei Jiangong 魏建功, “Dadao guoyu yundong de lanlu-hu” (2001), 433.

184 Wippermann, Dorothea, *Das Phonetische Alphabet Zhuyin Zimu – Entstehung und Verbreitung im Zuge der Nationalsprachlichen Bewegung in der Republik China 1912–1949* (1985), 18.

185 Wippermann, Dorothea, *Das Phonetische Alphabet Zhuyin Zimu – Entstehung und Verbreitung im Zuge der Nationalsprachlichen Bewegung in der Republik China 1912–1949* (1985), 14.

186 *Xiyouji* is usually attributed to Wu Cheng’en 吳承恩 (ca. 1500–1582). Its earliest attested publication can be dated to 1592. See Wilkinson, Endymion, *Chinese History: A New Manual*, Cambridge (Massachusetts) / London: Harvard University Press, 2013, 413.

187 Mair also points out the mixing and borrowing that took place between the Literary and Vernacular Sinitic (LS and VS) which means that clear-cut distinctions cannot always be made. However, he states that Buddhist texts are characterized by polysyllabic words and a distinct grammar. Mair, Victor H., “Buddhism and the Rise of the Written Vernacular in East Asia: The Making of National Languages”, in: *The Journal of Asian Studies* 53.3 (1994), 707–751, see 709.

new approach to language and linguistics,<sup>188</sup> and new social values accompanied the texts. Buddhism encompassed a non-hierarchical, more egalitarian social vision, which made its institutions even subversive in a hierarchy-oriented Chinese society infused with Confucian values. All this led to a greater focus on the spoken language and to an increase of the written rendering of the vernacular. Lu Xun, in his “Brief history of Chinese Fiction” (as has already been stated, Wei Jiangong attended his lectures), also emphasizes the connection between the influx of Buddhism with the rise of popular stories, especially ghost stories.<sup>189</sup> Lu also acknowledges vernacular Buddhist writings of the Tang dynasty and extensively studied *Xiyouji*.<sup>190</sup>

Referring to another vernacular novel, Wei asks who could be the hero, just like Wu Erlang 武二郎 from *Water Margin* (*Shuihu zhuan* 水滸傳),<sup>191</sup> who beats the ferocious tiger (*menghu* 猛虎) that threatens the *guoyu* movement. Wei Jiangong concludes with calling for Qian Xuantong to ask the “old general” (*lao jiang* 老將) Wu Zhihui to come forward to beat the tiger with his bare hands.<sup>192</sup>

Why did Wei Jiangong call for Wu Zhihui as the “old” or “veteran” “general” to beat the tiger? First of all, Wei borrows the image of a tiger-slaying, staff-swinging heroic “traveller” or “pilgrim” (*Xingzhe* 行者) from both *Shuihu zhuan* (Wu Song) and *Xiyouji* (Sun Wukong). Then, *jiang* 將 refers to the 108 *jiang* of *Shuihu zhuan*: They are 108 rebel heroes that are actually personified astral demons.<sup>193</sup> As a third aspect, Wu Zhihui can indeed be called a “veteran” of the language reform movement, since he was one of the first to advocate a radical Chinese language reform.<sup>194</sup> Lastly, there must have been personal animosities between Zhang Shizhao and Wu Zhihui: in the “*Subao* case”, Wu may have sold

- 188 It gave rise to the development of *fanqie* “pseudospelling”, the *dengyun* 等韻 classification methods of rhymes and the *sanshiliu zimu* 三十六字母 quasi-letters of Shouwen 守溫 (Buddhist monk of the late Tang dynasty). See Mair, Victor H., “Buddhism and the Rise of the Written Vernacular in East Asia: The Making of National Languages” (1994), 718. Mair also refers to the much earlier collection of articles by Watters of which several discuss the Indian and Buddhist influence on the Chinese language; especially: Watters, T., “The Influence of Buddhism on the Chinese Language”, in: Shanghai: Presbyterian Mission Press, 1889, 379–496.
- 189 Lu Hsun [Lu Xun; translated by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladis Yang], *A Brief History of Chinese Fiction*, Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1976, 61, *passim*.
- 190 Lu Xun also argues that Buddhism, Confucianism and Daoism are interwoven in *Xiyouji*; Lu Hsun [Lu Xun; translated by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladis Yang], *A Brief History of Chinese Fiction* (1976), 210.
- 191 The earliest extant dated edition is from 1589, some parts of which have been dated to 1550. *Water Margin* is conventionally attributed to Shi Nai’an 施耐庵. See Wilkinson, Endymion, *Chinese History: A New Manual* (2013), 413. Wu Erlang means “Wu the Second” and the character’s actual name is Wu Song 武松.
- 192 Wei Jiangong 魏建功, “Dadao guoyu yundong de lanlu-hu” (2001), 434.
- 193 Liu, Peng, “‘Conceal my Body so that I can Protect the State’: The Making of the Mysterious Woman in Daoism and *Water Margin*”, in: *Ming Studies* 74 (2016), 48–71. Meulenbeld, Mark, “Vernacular ‘Fiction’ and Celestial Script: A Daoist Manual for the Use of *Water Margin*”, in: *Religions* 10.518 (2019). Many thanks to Stanley Setiawan and Zhang Bosen for sharing their expertise.
- 194 On a later occasion, Wei calls Wu “veteran of the *guoyu* movement” (with a different term: *guoyu yundong yuanlao* 國語運動元老), see: Wei Jiangong 魏建功, “Guoyu tongxun shuduan” 國語通訊書端 [National language news editorial], in: *Wei Jiangong wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jiangong], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 马镇, vol. 4, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 304–5, see 304. Wu is also known as one of the “four elder statesmen” of the KMT. Boorman, Howard L., “Wu Chih-hui”,

Zhang Shizhao's close friend Zhang Binglin to the authorities to protect his own freedom (see above).<sup>195</sup>

The *guoyu* movement suffered a blow in that time period. Apart from some activities, it was brought to a standstill.<sup>196</sup> However, official activities were revived in 1928 when China was reunified after the Northern Expedition.

### 3.2.5 The “Tiger” at the Women’s University

Wei Jiangong did not miss a single opportunity to fulminate against the tiger minister Zhang Shizhao, and many New Culture intellectuals did the same. Another occasion in 1925 was the turmoil at Beijing Women’s Normal University (Beijing nüzi shifan daxue 北京女子師範大學, BWNU).<sup>197</sup>

Some of the exact details remain disputed, but I will use Saiyin Sun’s account. Several Peking University professors and May Fourth intellectuals, most prominently Lu Xun and his brother Zhou Zuoren, also taught at BWNU. When some students failed to come back in time after the summer vacation, the university’s principal, Yang Yinyu 楊蔭榆 (1884–1938)<sup>198</sup> expelled them, which led to protests of the students. Lu Xun, already in a relationship with one of the students, Xu Guangping 許廣平 (1898–1968), and Zhou Zuoren sided with the students and villainized Yang Yinyu, calling her incompetent and a widow obsessed with the relation between men and women.<sup>199</sup>

Zhang Shizhao, as minister of education, being of the opinion that the “students were too involved in leftist political activity”,<sup>200</sup> shut down the university to stop the turmoil. Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren, who were also professors of Peking University, also persuaded “Beida’s policy-making council to break off relations

---

in: *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, vol. 3, New York: Columbia University Press, 1970, 416–419, see 416.

195 Wei Jiangong’s call was heard. Wu Zhihui published the article “Zhang Shizhao – Chen Duxiu – Liang Qichao” (in baihua) to ridicule Zhang. Zhang Shizhao responded (in *wenyan*) with the article “Wu Jingheng – Liang Qichao – Chen Duxiu”. The intellectual battle is described by Jin Shupeng 靳树鹏, “Zhang Shizhao yu Wu Zhihui” 章士钊与吴稚晖 [Zhang Shizhao und Wu Zhihui], in: *Mingren (Ha’erbin) 名人 (哈尔滨)* [Famous persons (Harbin)] 6 (1995), 30–32. In the 1940s it also found mention in: Wen Zhe 文哲, “Wu Zhihui waku Zhang Shizhao” 吴稚晖挖苦章士钊 [Wu Zhihui ridicules Zhang Shizhao], in: *Haichao zhoubao* 海潮週報 [Tide weekly] 33 (1946), 2.

196 Wippermann, Dorothea, *Das Phonetische Alphabet Zhuyin Zimu – Entstehung und Verbreitung im Zuge der Nationalsprachlichen Bewegung in der Republik China 1912–1949* (1985), 49.

197 Sometimes also Women’s Normal College, or Women’s College of Education.

198 Yang Yinyu was one of the first female students to study in Japan and in the USA on official scholarships. Sun, Saiyin, *Beyond the Iron House: Lu Xun and the Modern Chinese Literary Field*, London / New York: Routledge, 2016, 65.

199 Sun, Saiyin, *Beyond the Iron House: Lu Xun and the Modern Chinese Literary Field* (2016), 65; Jie Gao claims that the reason for the protests was that Yang did not allow the students to partake in “memorial activities” for Sun Yat-sen. Gao, Jie, *Saving the Nation Through Culture: The Folklore Movement in Republican China* (2019), 86.

200 Weston, Timothy B., *The Power of Position: Beijing University, Intellectuals, and Chinese Political Culture, 1898–1929* (2004), 238.



with the Ministry of Education”, which led Zhang Shizhao to threaten to close Beida as well and to cut all government funding.<sup>201</sup>

Lu Xun was not only a teacher at both universities but was also a senior official at the Ministry of Education. As a consequence, Zhang Shizhao dismissed Lu Xun from his official position. Wei Jianguo “congratulated” Lu Xun for his dismissal in an open letter published in the journal “Vigorous progress” *Mengjin* 猛進<sup>202</sup> on August 21, 1925. In this letter, he questioned Zhang Shizhao’s legitimacy as a minister and said [we] “don’t know where he came from” (*bu zhi suo chu* 不知所出)<sup>203</sup> and that he held up the “banner” (*zhaopai* 招牌) of “Tiger” (*laohu* 老虎) – a clear reference to Zhang Shizhao’s magazine. He refers to the ministry as a “tiger cave” (*hu ku* 虎窟) that Lu Xun should be glad to leave.<sup>204</sup> He also clearly referred to Zhang Shizhao’s *Jiayin* magazine as an “insect” (*dachong* – or repulsive creature).<sup>205</sup>

Wei Jianguo continued to combat Zhang Shizhao in *Guoyu zhoukan*. In this seemingly political incident, he also found a linguistic argument. Wei Jianguo replied to Zhang Shizhao’s order to close down the university<sup>206</sup> on August 30, 1925 in *Guoyu zhoukan*.<sup>207</sup> In this polemic article, Wei Jianguo juxtaposed Zhang’s negative words about the female student activists at the Womens’ University with Zhang’s *Jiayin* magazine manifesto, in which ideas such as pureness and refinement are upheld.<sup>208</sup> Once again, Wei Jianguo sought, just like Qiu Tingliang, to expose the “essential vulgarity” hidden underneath the classical language. This argument goes hand in hand with Wei Jianguo’s idea that language

201 Weston, Timothy B., *The Power of Position: Beijing University, Intellectuals, and Chinese Political Culture, 1898-1929* (2004), 239.

202 *Mengjin* was edited by the Beida philosophy professor and founding father of modern archeology in China, Xu Bingchang 徐炳昶 (1888–1976), also known as Xu Xusheng 徐旭生. Xu wanted his journal *Mengjin* to bring about the “thought revolution” (*sixiang geming* 思想革命) that was advocated by the May Fourth intellectuals. *Mengjin*’s efforts should, according to Xu, be sided with the efforts of the journals *Yusi* and *Xiandai pinglun* 現代評論 (Contemporary review). Liao Jiuming 廖久明, *Zhongguo xiandai wenxue shiliao yanjiu ju yu: Lu Xun, Guo Moruo, Gao Zhanhong* 中國現代文學史料研究舉隅: 魯迅、郭沫若、高長虹 [Examples from modern Chinese literature historical documents research: Lu Xun, Guo Moruo, Gao Zhanhong], Taipei 臺北: Xinrui wen chuang 新銳文創, 2012, 23.

203 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “He Lu Xun xiansheng” 賀魯迅先生 [Congratulating Mr Lu Xun], in: *Wei Jianguo wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jianguo], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 马镇, vol. 5, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 431–32, see 431.

204 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “He Lu Xun xiansheng” (2001), 431–32.

205 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “He Lu Xun xiansheng” (2001), 432.

206 Zhang Shizhao 章士钊, “Tingban Beijing nüzi shifan daxue chengwen” 停办北京女子师范大学呈文 [Memorial to disband the Beijing Women’s Normal University], in: *Zhang Shizhao wenxuan* 章士钊文选 [Selected works of Zhang Shizhao], ed. by Li Miaogen 李妙根: Shanghai yuandong chubanshe 上海远东出版社, 1996, 385–387.

207 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Zhayiyi wenti yajie de jiaoyu zongzhang tingban Beijing nüzi shifan daxue chengwen” 摘譯文體雅潔的教育總長停辦北京女子師範大學呈文 [Translation of selected passages of the refined and pure memorial by the education minister Zhang to disband the Beijing Women’s Normal University], in: *Wei Jianguo wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jianguo], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 马镇兴, vol. 5, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版, 2001, 435–437.

208 The idea of elegance *ya* 雅 is also discussed. This leads to the question of *ya* vs. *su*, which is a reoccurring topic in Wei Jianguo’s texts.

should be universal and accessible for all. Zhang's words are hard to understand; therefore, Wei Jianguo translates them into *baihua* to expose their plainly mean content.<sup>209</sup>

What did Zhang Shizhao write to enrage Wei and others in this fashion? Zhang wrote in his submission to suspend the Women's University (directed to Duan Qirui, published in *Jiayin* on August 8, 1925), that after six students (among them Xu Guangping) were expelled and the students took over the school building with sticks and bricks and locked out principal Yang Yinyu,<sup>210</sup> men joined the female students in their protest inside and took pictures. Underaged women, who were usually gentle and respectful, have now ganged up with men (*xiaojun nansheng* 嘯聚男生), completely have their heads turned and despise their elders (*mieshi zhangshang* 蔑視長上). Zhang implied that the parents who sent their daughters to Beijing to study might be very worried, and that this whole affair shed a negative light on the education of women in general. He wrote that those supporting the female student protests and claiming that they respect (*zunzhong* 尊重) women actually humiliate women (*cuiru nüzi* 摧辱女子). With this, Zhang might implicitly allude to New Culture intellectuals like Lu Xun who supported the protests, and the female victims of these humiliations are not only the students occupying the university in, as viewed from a traditional standpoint, outrageous conditions, but also the principal Yang Yinyu, who was terribly slandered at the time by both the student activists and Lu Xun, Zhou Zuoren and others.<sup>211</sup>

Activists for women's rights also used the image of the "tiger that blocks the road". A writer with the pseudonym "Autumn sounds/voice" (Qiusheng 秋聲, alluding to a prose poem *fu* 賦 by Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修, 1007–1072) called on the female compatriots (*nü tongbao* 女同胞) to stand up (*qilai* 起來) to "overthrow the tiger that blocks the road of the women's liberation movement – Zhang Shizhao" (*dadao funü jiefang yundong de lanlu-hu* – Zhang Shizhao 打倒婦女解放運動的攔路虎——章士釗).<sup>212</sup> As well, the author also evoked the image of

209 See Wei Jianguo 魏建功, "Zhaiyi wenti yajie de jiaoyu zongzhang tingban Beijing nüzi shifan daxue chengwen" (2001). The translation of *wenyan* into *baihua* was an important issue for Wei Jianguo to demonstrate that there is nothing that cannot be said in an easily accessible language. See Wei Jianguo 魏建功, "Tan wen fan bai" 談文翻白 [About the translation of literary Chinese into the vernacular], in: *Wei Jianguo wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jianguo], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 马镇, vol. 5, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 277–284. and Wei Jianguo 魏建功, "Tan he rongyi wen fan bai" 談何容易文翻白 [About how easy it is to translate the literary Chinese into the vernacular], in: *Wei Jianguo wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jianguo], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 马镇, vol. 5, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 285–291.

210 Zhang Shizhao 章士釗, "Tingban Beijing nüzi shifan daxue chengwen" 停辦北京女子師範呈文 [Memorial to disband the Beijing Women's Normal University], in: *Zhang Shizhao quanji* 章士釗全集 [Complete works of Zhang Shizhao], ed. by Wang Junxi 王均熙, vol. 5, Shanghai 上海: Wenhui chubanshe 文匯出版社, 2000, 104–106, see 104.

211 Zhang Shizhao 章士釗, "Tingban Beijing nüzi shifan daxue chengwen" (2000), 105.

212 Qiusheng 秋聲, "Dadao funü jiefang yundong de lanlu-hu" 打倒婦女解放運動的攔路虎 [Overthrow the stumbling blocks [tiger that blocks the way] of the women's liberation movement], in: *Funü zhoukan* 婦女週刊 [Women weekly] (1925), 2.

a “people-eating moralistic education” (*chiren de lijiao* 吃人的禮教)<sup>213</sup> that was advocated by Zhang Shizhao. This trope resonates with Lu Xun’s famous *Diary of a madman* as a parable of Confucian society. Wei Jianguo also read the *Diary* and mentioned this “people-eating moralistic education” in relation to gender equality.<sup>214</sup> Zhang resigned from his post as minister of education in November, 1925.<sup>215</sup>

### 3.2.6 Wei Jianguo as a Communist

Since graduating from Peking University in the summer of 1925, Wei Jianguo continued to work as a linguist, educator and editor. In the spring of 1926, he was appointed teaching assistant (*zhujiao* 助教) at Peking University and worked with Liu Bannong in the phonetics laboratory. The laboratory’s equipment bore witness to increasing modernization and Westernization. For example, they worked with a kymograph, an instrument to record sound waves, mechanically written as waves on paper wrapped around a revolving drum.

Wei Jianguo additionally took on editing tasks that were part of New Culture intellectuals reorganizing Chinese heritage and viewing it with scrutiny and with what they believed to be scientific objectivity.<sup>216</sup> Lu Xun assigned him with the task of editing stories from the *Taiping guangji* 太平廣記<sup>217</sup> that were included in his “Collection of wonder tales of the Tang and Song dynasties” (*Tang Song chuanqi ji* 唐宋傳奇集).<sup>218</sup> Wei Jianguo also took over the editorship of the journal *Guoxue zhoukan* 國學週刊 (National learning weekly), which subse-

213 Qiusheng 秋聲, “Dadao funü jiefang yundong de lanlu-hu” (1925), 1.

214 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Zuzong jiruò” 祖宗積弱 [The long-standing weakness of the ancestors], in: *Wei Jianguo wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jianguo], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 马镇, vol. 5, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 285–291, see 477. In “Diary of a madman” (*Kuangren riji*), the protagonist is convinced that everyone wants to eat him, and that in between the lines of a history book filled with the words “Virtue and Morality” is written “eat people”. Young people in particular suffered from the constraints of traditional society that put children at the absolute command of their parents. The trope that filial piety involves going to extreme lengths, such as giving one’s own body as food to the parents, or wives having to devote their lives completely to their husbands, and if necessary, dying as chaste widows. Schoppa, R. Keith, *The Columbia Guide to Modern Chinese History*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2000, 63–64.

215 Sun, Saiyin, *Beyond the Iron House: Lu Xun and the Modern Chinese Literary Field* (2016), 67.

216 One example is the above-mentioned Gu Jiegang and his “Doubting Antiquity School”.

217 The title is translated as “Extended Accounts of the Reign of Grand Tranquility” by Kirkland, Russell, “A World in Balance: Holistic Synthesis in the T’ai-p’ing kuang-chi”, in: *Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies* 23 (1993), 43–70. Lu Xun’s interest in the magazine is not surprising, since the *Taiping Guangqi* is considered as the first compilation project that actively collected “fiction” (*xiaoshuo* 小說 were, see DeWoskin, Kenneth J, “The Six Dynasties Chih-kuai and the Birth of Fiction”, in: *Chinese Narrative: Critical and Theoretical Essays*, ed. by Plaks, Andrew H, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977, 21–52, see 48. namely *zhiguai* 志怪 and *chuanqi* 傳奇 (“wonder tales”), mostly dating from the Six Dynasties (*Liuchao* 六朝, 222–589), and Tang dynasty, respectively, see Wang Rutao 王汝涛, Qian Qinlai 钱勤来 et al. (ed.), *Taiping Guangqi xuan* 太平广记选 [Selected works of the *Taiping Guangqi*], vol. 1, Jinan 济南: Qilu shushe 齐鲁书社, 1980, 12. As mentioned above, in his *Zhongguo xiaoshuo shilüe*, Lu Xun carves out the role of popular ghost stories for the development of fiction in China.

218 Lu Xun 鲁迅 (ed.), *Tang Song chuanqi ji* 唐宋傳奇集 [Collection of wonder tales from the Tang and Song Dynasties], Beijing 北京: Wenxue guji kanxingshe 文学古籍刊行社, 1956, 11.

quently became a monthly periodical and was renamed *Guoxue yuekan* 國學月刊).<sup>219</sup>

In late 1925, on Fan Hongjie's 范鴻劫 (1897–1927)<sup>220</sup> recommendation, Wei Jiāngōng became a member of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), and he was assigned into the Sino-French University's small group (Zhong-Fa daxue xiaozu 中法大學小組), together with Chen Yi 陳毅 (1901–1972),<sup>221</sup> Wang Yueyu 王躍郁 et al. The Sino-French University (Université Franco-Chinoise) was founded in 1920 in Beijing by Li Shizeng 李石曾 (1881–1973), Wu Zhihui and Cai Yuanpei, together with the Chinese-French education society (Hua-Fa jiaoyuhui 華法教育會) in the context of the work-study movement (*qingong jianxue yundong* 勤工儉學運動) whose goal was sending students to study in Europe. In 1921, the partner institution "Institut Franco-Chinois" was founded in Lyon, France.<sup>222</sup>

Before long, Wei Jiāngōng worked in the "Chinese association to relieve distress" (Zhongguo Jinan hui 中國濟難會).<sup>223</sup> The Jinan hui was founded in September 1925, and while it was dominated by CCP members and de facto led by the Communist Youth League (Zhongguo gongchanzhuyi qingnian tuan 中國共產主義青年團), it was separate from the Party organization. It was one of the most important mass organizations and sought to provide economical help to revolutionaries or their families, including bail money, funeral costs or medical expenses. Fundraising was therefore an important task. Moreover, it served as a liaison to the CCP. Lu Xun, for example, was able to contact the party through the association in Shanghai in 1927.<sup>224</sup>

- 219 Recounting the multitude of tasks Wei Jiāngōng managed in his lifetime, from editorships to education projects, would go beyond the scope of this work. More information can be obtained from Cao Da's *nianpu*. Cao Da 曹达, "Wei Jiāngōng nianpu" (1996).
- 220 Fan Hongjie was a Marxist Peking University student who died a communist "martyr": he was executed along with Li Dazhao and others on Zhang Zuolin's 張作霖 (1873–1928) orders on April 28, 1927. See Feng Xiaowei 冯晓蔚, "Geming yinglie Fan Hongjie" 革命英烈范鸿劫 [Revolutionary martyr Fan Hongjie], in: *Dangshi wenhui* 党史文汇 [Materials from CPC History] 2.2 (2012).
- 221 Chen Yi studied in France and in Beijing at the Sino-French University. He was an early friend of Mao Zedong 毛澤東 (1893–1976) and became an important military leader in the 30s and 40s, mayor of Shanghai after 1949 and minister of foreign affairs in 1958. See Boorman, Howard L., "Ch'en Yi", in: *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, vol. 1, New York: Columbia University Press, 1970, 254–259. and Klein, Donald W., and Anne B. Clark, "Ch'en I", in: *Biographic Dictionary of Chinese Communism*, vol. 1, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1971, 104–113.
- 222 Müller, Gotelind, *China, Kropotkin und der Anarchismus* (2001), 346. See also He Yan, "Overseas Chinese in France and the World-Society: Culture, Business, State and Transnational Connections, 1906–1949", in: *State, Society and Governance in Republican China*, ed. by Leutner, Mechthild, and Izabella Goikhman, Münster: LIT, 2014, 49–63. During the Japanese occupation, the Sino-French University moved to Kunming 昆明 and became part of Xinan lianhe daxue. See Hayhoe, Ruth, "The Spirit of Modern China: Life Stories of Influential Educators", in: *Selected Essays on China's Education: Research and Review*, ed. by Ding, Gang, vol. 1, Leiden / Boston: Brill, 2019, 106–173, see 135. Wei Jiāngōng also worked there when it was evacuated to Yunnan 雲南. See Xu Zhimian 徐知免, "Huiyi Wei Jiāngōng xiansheng" 回忆魏建功先生 [Remembering Wei Jiāngōng], in: *Sanwen* 散文 [Prose] (1999).
- 223 See Cao Da 曹达, "Wei Jiāngōng nianpu" (1996), 7. and Wei Nai 魏乃, Wei Zhi 魏至 and Wei Chong 魏重, Short biography (1996), 4.
- 224 Stranahan, Patricia, *Underground: The Shanghai Communist Party and the Politics of Survival, 1927–1937*, Lanham et. al. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998, 99–100.

Wei Jiāngōng did not stay a party member for long. In February, 1926, Wei Jiāngōng had to go to the hospital because of pleurisy (*leimoyan* 肋膜炎), and while he was still hospitalized, the March 18 Massacre (*San yi ba can'an* 三一八慘案) took place. Demonstrations against unequal treaties, imperialism and the warlord government took place in front of Duan Qirui's house, led by Li Dazhao, who gave a speech. Duan Qirui ordered military police to disperse the protesters, who were mainly students. The situation then escalated, and more than 40 protesters were killed. The protests were organized by communist and Kuomintang adherents. In the aftermath, members of both groups/parties were persecuted by the warlord government. The universities were kept under surveillance.<sup>225</sup> Subsequently, many scholars and students “went south” (*nanxia* 南下), i.e. left Beijing.<sup>226</sup> When Wei Jiāngōng left the hospital in April, 1926, he withdrew his membership from the CCP. There is mention of his family compound being searched by government agents.<sup>227</sup> Wei Jiāngōng left Beijing and headed south to teach Chinese language and literature (*guowen*) at Jiangsu 3rd Women's Normal School (Jiangsu shengli di san nüzi shifan xuexiao 江蘇省立第三女子師範學校) in Xuzhou 徐州.<sup>228</sup> Contributions for the journal *Guoxue yuekan* were sent to him for editing.<sup>229</sup> After one semester at Jiangsu 3rd Women's Normal School, Wei Jiāngōng shortly returned to Beijing before leaving for Korea, as will be explained in the next section.

As explained in this section, Wei Jiāngōng was a May Fourth student. This can be characterized by his personal contacts (his teachers), his involvement in the discourse of the time (especially in magazines), his language concepts, and his advocacy of universal education. His key concepts of language, decisive for his career, posit that language is a tool for communication and that it can be reformed. Furthermore, everyone should be able to understand it and take part in communication. This inclusive approach is also mirrored in his involvement in folklore and dialect research. This part of his life is the starting point for Wei Jiāngōng's involvement in language planning. It was not institutionalized yet, since Wei Jiāngōng only acted as an individual with important ties. This status would change. The role of Wei Jiāngōng evolved from an agent in the discourse to an agent in policy making. His involvement in language planning would result in tangible results for the Chinese populace.

225 Weston, Timothy B., *The Power of Position: Beijing University, Intellectuals, and Chinese Political Culture, 1898-1929* (2004), 243.

226 It might be useful to mention here that many intellectuals and students in Beijing came from southern areas, such as the Jiangnan region. However, in 1926, Peking University was in such a difficult financial situation that many of the teaching personnel left to find better paid jobs in the South. See Lin, Xiaoqing Diana, *Peking University: Chinese Scholarship and Intellectuals 1898-1937* (2005), 44.

227 Cao Da 曹达, “Wei Jiāngōng nianpu” (1996), 7.

228 See Cao Da 曹达, “Wei Jiāngōng nianpu” (1996), 8. and Wei Nai 魏乃, Wei Zhi 魏至 and Wei Chong 魏重, Short biography (1996), 4.

229 Cao Da 曹达, “Wei Jiāngōng nianpu” (1996), 8.

### 3.3 On the First Language Mission: Teaching Chinese in Korea

While in Xuzhou, Wei Jiāngōng longed for Beijing and his leftist companions<sup>230</sup> and returned in December 1926. However, he was isolated in Beijing, since the communists were being persecuted, and he was not able to find employment.<sup>231</sup> At that time, the Faculty of Law and Letters (Fa-wen xuebu 法文學部) of Keijō Imperial University (Jingcheng diguo daxue 漢城的京城大學 = Kyōngsōng cheung taehak, Keijō Teikoku Daigaku)<sup>232</sup> in Seoul (Kyōngsōng 京城 at that time) was looking for a lecturer in Chinese. Keijō University was established by the Japanese who occupied Korea (1910–1945) in 1924. The Japanese headmaster of Keijō Imperial University, Hattori Unokichi 服部宇之吉 (1867–1939) asked a fellow Japanese scholar at Peking University at that time, namely Imamura Kandō 今村完道 (1884–1949),<sup>233</sup> to find a Chinese teacher to teach in Korea. Peking University was the obvious place to look for academic personnel, since many Peking University professors previously studied in Japan. The Chinese Language and Literature department’s professors Shen Yinmo, Zhang Fengju 張鳳舉 (1895–1986) and others recommended Wei Jiāngōng.<sup>234</sup>

Wei Jiāngōng left Beijing in late March, 1927, and started his teaching at Keijō Imperial University in April. In 1948, when he was already in Taiwan, Wei said that he felt his involvement with *guoyu* really started when he assumed the position of Chinese lecturer in Seoul.<sup>235</sup> His appointment also showed a change in attitude of the Japanese towards the teaching of Chinese. They did not require a teacher with a Beijing accent; instead, they sought someone who analytically understood the pronunciation of the characters and picked Wei because of his background in phonology.<sup>236</sup> Wei Jiāngōng taught spoken Chinese at the beginner level and taught his students Zhuyin fuhao. The students were familiar with

230 Wei Jiāngōng 魏建功, “Huai na guguai de quanzi” 懷那古怪的圈子 [Missing this odd circle of friends], in: *Wei Jiāngōng wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jiāngōng], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 马镇, vol. 5, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 466–67.

231 Ma Si 马嘶, *Yidai zongshi Wei Jiāngōng* (2007), 70.

232 I am very grateful for the help of Sangwook Lee, a fellow PhD student in Heidelberg, for helping me acquire information about Wei Jiāngōng’s stay in Korea.

233 Imamura was sent by the Japanese government to study in China for one year in 1926, and prolonged his stay for an additional year at his own expense. He returned to Japan in March, 1928. Later, he was appointed professor at Taihoku University in Taiwan. Cf. Zhang Wenchao 張文朝, “Jincun Wandao de ‘Zhoiyi’ guan ji qi dui Taiwan jingxue de yingxiang” 今村完道的《周易》觀及其對臺灣經學的影響 [Imamura Kandō’s view on the *Zhouyi* and his influence on the studies of the classics in Taiwan], in: *Xingda renwen xuebao* 興大人文學報 [*Chung Hsing Journal of The Humanities*] 59 (2017), 126–164, see 126. Many thanks to Egas Moniz-Bandeira for helping me find this resource.

234 Cao Da 曹达, “Wei Jiāngōng nianpu” (1996), 8. See also Wei Nai 魏乃, Wei Zhi 魏至 and Wei Chong 魏重, Short biography (1996), 4.

235 Wei Jiāngōng 魏建功, “Wenfaxue de lilun yu shiji” 文法學的理論與實際 [Theory and practice of grammar studies], in: *Wei Jiāngōng wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jiāngōng], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 马镇, vol. 4, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 400–402, see 400.

236 Wei Jiāngōng 魏建功, “Wenfaxue de lilun yu shiji” (2001), 400.

classical literary Chinese, so he used *wenyan* to explain. When that did not work, he tried his best to use English. Wei Jianguo used Liu E's 柳鄂 (Tieyun 鐵雲, 1857–1909) "The travels of Lao Can" (*Lao Can youji* 老殘遊記) as a textbook. This will be discussed below. While Wei's aim was to teach the "living language" (*huo yuyan*), the classes mainly comprised translation. Wei Jianguo was not able to really converse with the students: he compared their level of spoken Chinese to little babies just learning to speak.<sup>237</sup>

Although far from home, Wei Jianguo was nonetheless preoccupied with the fate of China. This is evident from his travelogue and the choice of *Lao Can youji* as a textbook. Addressing the language question also meant addressing China's future development. The Chinese nationalism of the time can be analyzed in two dimensions: one directed towards the outside of China, and one towards the inside, exemplified by Qian Xuantong's editorial above (page 63). The first dimension referred to the perception of the intellectuals that China faced an external threat from the imperialist powers; the second dimension referred to China's perceived flaws that – they felt – made it weak and backwards.

Wei Jianguo's nationalist endeavors in Korea were marked by questions of identity and preservation of the self or the nation. He researched and sought source material of the Ming loyalists who had fled Qing China for Korea. He was well aware that Korea was subjugated by Qing China as a tributary state and colonized by the Japanese. In addition, he busied himself with comparisons between China and Korea, becoming self-aware of his Chinese identity and scrutinized fellow Chinese living in Korea.

### 3.3.1 The Choice of *Lao Can Youji* 老殘遊記 as Textbook

Chinese secondary literature that highlight and overemphasize Wei Jianguo's role in the study of Chinese in Korea claim that there were not many textbooks for Chinese as a foreign language at that time. (This also ignores the existence of Western-authored Chinese textbooks<sup>238</sup>) and that the existing material was outdated.<sup>239</sup>

237 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, "Yingyin Huang Ming yimin zhuan ba" 影印皇明遺民傳跋 [Postface to the facsimile 'Biographies of Ming dynasty adherents'], in: *Wei Jianguo wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jianguo], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhaxing 马镇, vol. 5, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 360–361, see 360.

238 For example, Paul Sinclair describes how Thomas Francis Wade's (1818–1895) 1867 Chinese textbook series titled *Yü yen tsü êrh chi: a Progressive Course designed to assist the student of Colloquial Chinese, as spoken in the capital and the Metropolitan Department* was used by Japanese educators who previously paid less attention to the spoken language in Beijing. Sinclair, Paul, "Thomas Wade's 'Yü yen tsü êrh chi' and the Chinese Language Textbooks of Meiji-Era Japan", in: *Asia Major (Third Series)* 16.1 (2003), 147–174, see 148. The textbook is accessible online: Wade, Thomas Francis, *Yü yen tsü êrh chi: a Progressive Course designed to assist the student of Colloquial Chinese, as spoken in the capital and the Metropolitan Department*, London: Trübner, 1867. Accessed online (Feb. 8, 2022): <https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/en/view/bsb10495539?>

239 Such as: Zhao Jinming 赵金铭, "Wei Jianguo xiansheng zai Chaoxian jiao Hanyu he zai Taiwan tuiguang guoyu de gongxian" 魏建功先生在朝鲜教汉语和在台湾推广国语的贡献 [Wei Jianguo's achievements in teaching Chinese in Korea and promoting the national language in Taiwan], in: *Shijie*

However, the study of Chinese in Korea can be traced to the Three Kingdoms period (57 BCE–668 CE). In this time period, the focus was the written language and the Classics. In the Chosun dynasty (1392–1910), the study of the spoken language gained more weight.<sup>240</sup> Two important textbooks published in the 14th century were in use when Wei Jiāngōng traveled to Korea: *Lao Qida* 老乞大 (“Chinese Expert”, *Nogŏltae* in Korean)<sup>241</sup> and *Piao Tongshi* 朴通事 (“Park the interpreter”, *Pak T’ongsa*).<sup>242</sup> Both were reedited several times. They comprise dialogues from everyday life (especially the life of merchants) and are the oldest surviving textbooks for Chinese as a foreign language.<sup>243</sup>

Wei Jiāngōng himself stated that there was also no suitable grammar book available to him. In retrospect, he was very humble about his performance as a teacher, saying that he could hardly do his task any justice, and that he had neither enough knowledge nor the means to clearly and systematically explain the language structure *yuyan zuzhi* 語言組織<sup>244</sup> to his students.<sup>245</sup>

He used the novel *Lao Can youji* as textbook. Although this was an unconventional choice, Wei Jiāngōng felt some of its features made it interesting and suitable for class. Written at the turn of the 20th century, *Lao Can youji* is one of the classical *baihua* novels, i.e., it is written in the literary vernacular. Wei Jiāngōng, advocating the above-mentioned “congruency of writing and speech” (*yan wen yi zhi*) to overcome the perceived state of diglossia in China, was a supporter of *baihua* fiction. He also admired Lu Xun, whose “Diary of a Madman” is seen as

*Hanyu jiaoxue* 世界汉语教学 [Chinese Teaching in the World] 3 (2002). Chien Tuo 錢拓 [Qian Tuo], “Wei Jiāngōng yinxue shuping” (2013). or Ma Si 马嘶, *Yidai zongshi Wei Jiāngōng* (2007), 71.

240 Lee, Kwang Sook, “History of foreign language education in Korea”, in: *Foreign Language Education Research* 18 (2015), 37–52, see 37–38.

241 Wilkinson translates *lao* as “expert”, other translations can be found in which “old” is used. *Qida* refers to “Khitān” (or Qidan 契丹), a people that lived in north and northeast China and Mongolia that founded the Liao 遼 dynasty (916–1125). The term was used for northern China in general and found its way into European languages in Marco Polo’s (1254–1324) rendering as “Cathay”. Wilkinson, Endymion, *Chinese History: A New Manual* (2013), 786.

242 See, for example: Zhao Jinming 赵金铭, “Wei Jiāngōng xiansheng zai Chaoxian jiao Hanyu he zai Taiwan tuiguang guoyu de gongxian” (2002), 103. Ma Si 马嘶, *Yidai zongshi Wei Jiāngōng* (2007), 71. or Chien Tuo 錢拓 [Qian Tuo], “Wei Jiāngōng yinxue shuping” (2013), 4.

243 Wilkinson, Endymion, *Chinese History: A New Manual* (2013), 786. Before the Japanese occupation, the teachers were often “bannermen”, i.e. Manchu. Zhao Jinming 赵金铭, “Wei Jiāngōng xiansheng zai Chaoxian jiao Hanyu he zai Taiwan tuiguang guoyu de gongxian” (2002), 103. This is confirmed by Wu Zhihui 吴稚晖 in a 1909 article in the Paris anarchist journal *Xin shiji* 新世纪 (New century). Ran 燃 [Wu Zhihui 吴稚晖], “Shu Fuzhou Ribao ‘Dongxue Xi jian’ pian hou” 书《福州日报》《东学西渐》篇后 [After writing ‘Eastern learning penetrates the West’ in *Fuzhou Daily*], in: *Xinhai Geming qian shi nian shijian shilun xuanji* 辛亥革命前十年时间时论选集 [Selected works of public opinion of the ten years before the Xinhai Revolution], ed. by Zhang Zhan 张梅, Wang Renzhi 王忍之, vol. 3, Beijing: Shenghuo, dushu, zhishi san lian shudian 生活·读书·新知三联书店, 1977, 459–477, see 470. “Banner” were organizational units in the Qing dynasty that also reflected the clan structure. For more information, see: Elliott, Mark C., *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001. While secondary literature praises Wei Jiāngōng’s innovative spirit for not using conventional teaching material, it is to be noted that linguistically speaking, these books were not ill-suited for teaching *guoyu*. As will be shown below, Wei Jiāngōng would later explicitly trace the national pronunciation back to Yuan times.

244 Wei Jiāngōng uses this term on several occasions to refer to both syntax and morphology.

245 Wei Jiāngōng 魏建功, “Wenfaxue de lilun yu shiji” (2001), 400.



the first modern text. He later stated explicitly that “*baihua* is close to the spoken language” (*jiejin kouyu* 接近口語.<sup>246</sup> By using a *baihua* novel as a textbook, he was able to come comparatively close to the spoken language.

Qi Yongxiang has pointed out that the textbooks used previously and the *Lao Can youji* can be characterized by being “half vernacular, half classical” (*ban bai ban wen* 半白半文). If one considers the level of Chinese characters the Koreans mastered at that time, both were intelligible, but the pronunciation of the characters had to be learned.<sup>247</sup> In the *Lao Can youji*, the passages of landscape description, for example, are full of *wenyan*, while the direct speech can be characterized as *baihua*, very similar to the *Lao Qida* and the *Piao Tongshi*. These two textbooks originated when Early Modern Chinese, often equated with *baihua*, started to develop (see above page 43).

In addition to *Lao Can youji*'s linguistic functions, its content was also important to Wei Jianguo. Yan Fu (in 1897) and Liang Qichao (in 1902) already gave fiction an important role in society, viewing it “as an instrument for national reform”.<sup>248</sup> Since Wei Jianguo was very concerned with the well-being of China and its citizens, he might have chosen the “Travels of Lao Can” due to its depiction of social problems, especially in Confucian-influenced officialdom (such as corrupt officials). In *Zhongguo xiaoshuo shilue*, Lu Xun classified *Lao Can youji* as “novel of denunciation” (*qianze xiaoshuo* were 譴責小說).<sup>249</sup>

It is also possible that Wei Jianguo identified with the protagonist of the novel, and maybe even with the author Liu E. There is evidence that Lao Can is not just a protagonist but a veritable alter ego of Liu E.<sup>250</sup> Wei, just like Lao Can, was a traveller (in Korea). Wei also wrote travel reports; one report that will be discussed below illustrates how Wei Jianguo also wanted to expose problems of China and the Chinese, just like Liu E's alter ego Lao Can. I am rather sure Wei interpreted the book as criticizing China's situation at the time, and the hero as a humble clairvoyant who tried to improve the situation. Wei Jianguo would have liked to be such a hero.

Many points can be made about why the “most beloved of all Chinese novels produced during the last decade of the Ch'ing dynasty”<sup>251</sup> was chosen by Wei

246 Wei Jianguo 魏建功, “Guanyu *Zhonghua xinyun* – yi jiu si er nian qi yue zai Zhongyang daxue de jiangyan” 關於《中華新韻》——一九四二年七月在中央大學的講演 [About the *Zhonghua xinyun* – Talk at the National Central University in July, 1942], in: *Wei Jianguo wenji* 魏建功文集, ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 馬鎮, vol. 1, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 633–636, see 636.

247 Qi Yongxiang 漆永祥, “Wei Jianguo xiansheng Chaoxian shouke shilue” 魏建功先生朝鮮授課事略 [Brief account of events of Wei Jianguo teaching in Korea], in: *Yan Huang wenhua yanjiu* 炎黃文化研究 [Culture of the Hot and the Yellow emperor] 1 (2004), 271–277.

248 Hsia, C. T., “Yen Fu and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao as Advocates of New Fiction”, in: *C.T Hsia on Chinese Literature*, New York Chichester, West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2004, 183–201, see 183.

249 Lu Xun 魯迅, *Zhongguo xiaoshuo shilue* 中國小說史略 [Brief history of Chinese fiction], Hongkong 香港: Xin yi chubanshe 新藝出版社, 1970 [1923], 298–307.

250 Wong, Timothy C., “The Name “Lao Ts'an” in Liu E's Fiction”, in: *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 109.1 (1989), 103–106.

251 Hsia, C. T., “The Travels of Lao Ts'an: An Exploration of Its Art and Meaning”, in: *C.T Hsia on Chinese Literature*, New York Chichester, West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2004, 202–218, see 202.

Jiangong as a textbook (its popularity actually being also one of them). To conclude, the main reasons for this are probably its linguistic nature, its content, the circumstances of the novel's genesis and the biography of its author.

### 3.3.2 Collecting Ancient Books

In his free time, Wei Jiangong frequented book markets and collected or hand-copied old books. He was asked by the head of the Peking University Library, Yuan Tongli 袁同礼 (1895–1965), to find old books for the library.<sup>252</sup> Additionally, it appears that Wei's teaching duties did not fulfill or exhaust him, and perhaps he did not have many contacts he could talk to at a satisfactory level. Several books in his family's possession in Beijing bear a seal stating that Wei Jiangong obtained the book in Korea. An important find of Wei Jiangong's was the previously unknown *Huang Ming yimin zhuan* 皇明遺民傳 (Biographies of Ming dynasty adherents) about Ming loyalists in Qing period China, Korea and Japan.<sup>253</sup> Other discoveries are mentioned and discussed briefly by Qi Yongxiang.<sup>254</sup>

### 3.3.3 Travel Reports

Wei Jiangong also wrote travel reports that were published in the weekly magazine *Yusi* (Thread of talk) starting in 1926.<sup>255</sup> *Yusi* appeared for the first time on November 17, 1924, edited by Sun Fuyuan. In August 1926, Zhou Zuoren took over the editorship; in December 1927, Lu Xun; in December 1928, Rou Shi 柔石 (Zhao Pingfu 趙平福, 1902–1931). In September 1929, Li Xiaofeng took over. In March 1930, the publication of *Yusi* ceased.<sup>256</sup> This is the aftermath of the May Fourth Movement. The intellectuals still advocated a new culture, introduced Western ideas, and criticized tradition and imperialism. However, they were still very disappointed with the political situation in China, and the criticism of the government, warlords and corrupt politicians was even stronger. These quarreling ruling powers were perceived as an impediment to China's modernization and democratization by the intellectuals.<sup>257</sup> The warlord Zhang Zuolin gained control over Beijing and the government in 1926 and "terrorized" the press.<sup>258</sup> This meant that *Yusi* could no longer be published in Beijing. Instead, it moved to Shanghai, where Lu Xun became the chief editor.

---

252 Qi Yongxiang 漆永祥, "Wei Jiangong xiansheng Chaoxian shouke shilüe" (2004), 274.

253 Sun Weiguo 孫衛國, "Chaoxian 'Huang Ming yimin zhuan' de zuozhe ji qi chengshu" 朝鮮《皇明遺民傳》的作者及其成書 [The authorship and publication of 'Biographies of Ming dynasty adherents' from Korea], in: *Hanxue yanjiu* 漢學研究 [Sinological research] 20.1 (2002), 163–188, see 163.

254 Qi Yongxiang 漆永祥, "Wei Jiangong xiansheng Chaoxian shouke shilüe" (2004), 275.

255 Cao Da 曹达, "Wei Jiangong nianpu" (1996), 31.

256 Schneider, Elisabeth, "Skizze einer literarischen Zeitschrift: Die Anfänge der *Yu si* und ihre Zielsetzung", in: *Oriens Extremus* 26.1/2 (1979), 173–188, see 174.

257 Schneider, Elisabeth, "Skizze einer literarischen Zeitschrift: Die Anfänge der *Yu si* und ihre Zielsetzung" (1979), 173.

258 Schneider, Elisabeth, "Skizze einer literarischen Zeitschrift: Die Anfänge der *Yu si* und ihre Zielsetzung" (1979), 174.

While the literary society *Yusi she* 語絲社 formally stood behind the publication, neither the society nor the magazine openly pursued a definite agenda.<sup>259</sup> However, it can be said that *Yusi*, headed by Lu Xun, Zhou Zuoren, Sun Fuyuan, Qian Xuantong, Gu Jiegang, Liu Fu, Yu Dafu 郁達夫 (1896–1945) and Lin Yutang, “tended to consider itself the guardian of the May Fourth iconoclastic spirit”.<sup>260</sup> The preface of the first edition claimed that no political agenda was pursued. Instead, its aim was complete freedom of expression. While contributions from various literary by more than 600 authors<sup>261</sup> found their way into *Yusi*, including the majority of Lu Xun’s work at that time, the magazine’s content became more and more political. It stood in for the new Republic of China, fighting all tendencies or attempts of a restoration of the previous dynasty.<sup>262</sup>

The *Yusi* society did not have a clear-cut ideology or a homogeneous group of writers, as is often assumed of other literary societies. Miller rejects the view that there must be a political motivation behind the society’s “ideology”. Rather, he sees it as a group of people with individual motivations who are connected in a complex way.<sup>263</sup> The *Yusi* group was never really institutionalized.<sup>264</sup> However, it must be said that the authors shared an iconoclastic attitude and the New Culture spirit. Miller talks of a somewhat collective identity.<sup>265</sup>

A relatively large number of articles in *Yusi* are *zawen* 雜文 (miscellaneous essays), and the magazine played an important role in popularizing this kind of essay, which became influential in Chinese literature until today.<sup>266</sup> Many of the contributors were not only important intellectuals of the time but also were also teachers of Wei Jianguo or thinkers that had an influence on him. Among the contributors were Liu Bannong, Qian Xuantong, Lu Xun, Zhou Zuoren, Lin Yutang, Yu Pingbo 俞平伯 (1900–1990), Sun Fuyuan. There is also a noteworthy overlap with the contributors to *Xin Qingnian*. The founders were Sun Fuyuan, Zhou Zuoren, Lu Xun, Jiang Shaoyuan 江紹原 (1898–1983), Gu Jiegang, Qian Xuantong, Lin Yutang, et al.<sup>267</sup> Most of them were either Peking University professors or worked at another school in Beijing.<sup>268</sup>

The series of travel reports that Wei Jianguo published in *Yusi* from May 14, 1927, to March 5, 1928, is entitled “Trivial talk from my stay in Korea” (*Qiao*

259 Schneider, Elisabeth, “Skizze einer literarischen Zeitschrift: Die Anfänge der *Yu si* und ihre Zielsetzung” (1979), 174.

260 Weston, Timothy B., *The Power of Position: Beijing University, Intellectuals, and Chinese Political Culture, 1898-1929* (2004), 233.

261 Schneider, Elisabeth, “Skizze einer literarischen Zeitschrift: Die Anfänge der *Yu si* und ihre Zielsetzung” (1979), 176.

262 Schneider, Elisabeth, “Skizze einer literarischen Zeitschrift: Die Anfänge der *Yu si* und ihre Zielsetzung” (1979), 181.

263 Miller, Mark, “The Yusi Society”, in: *Literary Societies of Republican China*, ed. by Denton, Kirk A., and Michel Hockx, Lanham: Lexington Books, 2008, 171–206, see 172.

264 Miller, Mark, “The Yusi Society” (2008), 191.

265 Miller, Mark, “The Yusi Society” (2008), 192.

266 Miller, Mark, “The Yusi Society” (2008), 171.

267 Schneider, Elisabeth, “Skizze einer literarischen Zeitschrift: Die Anfänge der *Yu si* und ihre Zielsetzung” (1979), 175.

268 Miller, Mark, “The Yusi Society” (2008), 196.

Han suo tan 僑韓瑣談). It comprises 14 published episodes; episode number 15 remained unpublished.<sup>269</sup> In the series, Wei Jiāngōng reported all sorts of daily life occurrences, observations, culture, including music, performances, folk beliefs etc. It shed light on the research of Korean culture, history, Chinese-Korean relations and Chinese history of thought.<sup>270</sup>

The second episode, “Chinese high-class cuisine” hints at Wei Jiāngōng’s self-image as a Chinese teacher in Korea as well as his views on the nation. In this report, Wei Jiāngōng described how he walked into a Chinese restaurant in Seoul with an edition of *Yusi* in his hand. To Wei Jiāngōng, the waiter looks just like the people from Shandong 山東 he knows from Beijing. He notes down the entire dialogue, asking the waiter where he thinks Wei is from. The waiter replies that Wei Jiāngōng does not seem Chinese.<sup>271</sup> “How do you not believe that I’m Chinese?”<sup>272</sup> – “Ah! I hear you speak, how can there be so much I don’t understand. You must be a southerner?”<sup>273</sup>

Expressing his feelings, Wei exclaims: “I felt very embarrassed, speaking my own National Language,<sup>274</sup> I can’t even teach my own ‘compatriots’ to understand! Actually, his ㄍ | , ㄅ | , ㄆ | (*gi, ki, hi*) sounds like ㄐ | , ㄑ | , ㄒ | (*ji, qi, xi*) and ㄗ | , ㄘ | , ㄙ | (*zhi, chi, shi, ri*), no wonder he doesn’t understand.”<sup>275</sup>

Decades after Wei Jiāngōng’s travels to Korea, when he helped to simplify Chinese characters, Chen Mengjia 陳夢家 (1911–1966) noted the following about Wei’s and other language planners’ way of speaking:

Spreading the use of the standard vernacular really would be good for standardizing the Chinese language. In theory, that is easy, but it can be difficult in practice. People who advocate it have been studying rhymes for many years. The theory of rhymes is relatively lofty and profound, but with the exception of Mr. Luo Changpei, no one speaks the standard vernacular well. At the present time, Messrs. Li Jinxi, Lu Zhiwei [陸志韋, 1894–1970], Wei Jiāngōng, Lü Shuxiang [呂淑湘, 1904–1998] all still speak in their local dialects.<sup>276</sup>

269 Wei Jiāngōng 魏建功, “Qiao Han suo tan” 僑韓瑣談 [Trivial talk from my stay in Korea], in: *Wei Jiāngōng wenji* 魏建功文集 [Collected works of Wei Jiāngōng], ed. by Ye Xiaochun 叶笑春, Rong Wenmin 戎文敏, Zhou Fang 周方 and Ma Zhenxing 马镇, vol. 5, Nanjing 南京: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe 江苏教育出版社, 2001, 157–205, see 205.

270 Park Jae-woo 朴宰雨 [Piao Zaiyu], “1920 niandai Wei Jiāngōng youji ‘Qiao Han suo tan’ jiazhi de tansuo” 1920年代魏建功游记《侨韩琐谈》价值的探索 [Investigation about the value of Wei Jiāngōng’s travel report ‘Trivial talk from my stay in Korea’ of the 1920s], in: *Dangdai Hanguo* 当代韩国 [Contemporary Korea] 4 (2008), 61–68.

271 Wei Jiāngōng employs a historic term for Korea, “Gaoli” 高麗 (Korean: Koryō), which was the name of three dynasties throughout Korean history.

272 *Zhongguoren* 中國人.

273 Wei Jiāngōng 魏建功, “Qiao Han suo tan” (2001), 161.

274 He wrote this term in English!

275 Note that the Zhuyin orthography is different to that of today. See Wei Jiāngōng 魏建功, “Qiao Han suo tan” (2001), 161.

276 Chen, Mengjia [陳夢家], “On the Future of Chinese Writing”, in: *Language Reform in China*, ed. by Seybolt, Peter J., and Gregory Kuei-ke Chiang, New York: Sharpe, 1978, 148–158, see 152.

The travelogue “Trivial talk” encompasses an abundance of information going well beyond language teaching and shows how much Wei Jiāngōng was a scholar and researcher in all realms of the humanities.<sup>277</sup>

An important event in Wei Jiāngōng’s life also occurred during his stay in Korea: his marriage with Wang Bīshū. They had three children together; the fourth died directly after birth. She was the daughter of the Peking University mathematics professor Wang Shàngjī 王尚濟. The two met during Wei Jiāngōng’s summer vacation visit to Beijing in July 1927. In the spring of 1928, Wei Jiāngōng traveled again to Beijing to marry Wang Bīshū, and the two returned to Korea together. The pair then left Korea in August 1928 and returned to Beijing (“Beiping” 北平 at the time), where Wei Jiāngōng took up teaching positions at Sino-French University and at the College of Arts and Sciences for Women of Beiping University (Beiping daxue nǚzi wén-lǐ xuéyuán 北平大學女子文理學院).<sup>278</sup>

277 The period from 1910 to 1945 saw many Chinese travelers to Korea, some of whom acknowledged the progress brought by the Japanese. Others pitied the Koreans for their fate of being subdued and their ensuing economic disadvantage vis-à-vis the Japanese colonizers and suppression of Korean culture. Sun, Kezhi, “Chinese Understandings of Colonial Korea in Modern Times, 1910–1945”, in: *International Impact of Colonial Rule in Korea, 1910–1945*, ed. by Ha, Yong-Chool, Seattle, Washington: Center for Korea Studies, University of Washington, 2019, 239–257.

278 Cao Da 曹达, “Wei Jiāngōng nianpu” (1996), 8. Wei Jiāngōng’s children claim that Wei Jiāngōng left Korea before his teaching duty was formally over due to the Jinan 濟南 incident (Wusan Can’an 五三慘案) on May 3, 1928, when the Japanese army killed several thousand Chinese soldiers. Wei Nai 魏乃, Wei Zhi 魏至 and Wei Chong 魏重, *Short biography* (1996), 4. The incident “lead to substantial bitterness, a variety of protests, and a nation-wide boycott against the Japanese.” Schoppa, R. Keith, *Revolution and its Past*, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2006, 241. While the exact reasons for Wei’s departure cannot be determined now, secondary literature suggests that while the Japanese switched from a “military” to a less repressive “cultural rule” in 1920, there was still discrimination against Koreans and Chinese (Wei also speaks of prejudices in his travel reports). As well, they indicate that he spoke no Japanese or Korean and had to rely on colleagues to interpret for him, and that he was only teaching a handful of students. All these reasons may have prompted the newlyweds to return to China. See: Shin, Eun Kyong, “The Morphology of Resistance: Korean Resistance Networks 1895–1945”, PhD dissertation, Columbia University, 2015, 46. Zhao Jinming 趙金銘, “Wei Jiāngōng xiānshēng zài Chāoxiān jiāo Hányǔ hé zài Táiwan tuiguāng guóyǔ de gōngxiān” (2002), 104. Wei Jiāngōng 魏建功, “Qiao Han suo tan” (2001), 204–206. Qi Yongxiang 漆永祥, “Wei Jiāngōng xiānshēng Chāoxiān shouke shilüè” (2004), 272.

