A Critical-Historical Study of *Suiganlu* and its Status as a Subgenre

A Thesis

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Abstract

This thesis concerns *suiganlu* (translated here as “impromptu reflections”), which were brief topical essays featured in the Chinese literary magazine *New Youth*, associated with the New Culture Movement, from the years 1918 to 1922. While the importance of *suiganlu* as a predecessor to later developments in the essay form, such as *zawen* (*miscellaneous essays*), is widely recognized, comparatively little attention has been paid in the literature to the characteristics, or the significance, of *suiganlu* on their own terms. In this thesis, I present a close reading of the *suiganlu* writings from the period 1918 to 1919, which corresponds with the time of *New Youth* (*Xin qingnian*) after the foundation of its editorial committee but before the appearance of the related but distinct New Youth Association. Through this close reading and a consideration of the larger context of the time in which *suiganlu* were composed, I demonstrate that they served as a unique space in which the writers associated with *New Youth* carved out an identity for themselves as they strove to enter the literary field. This is evident in the various ways in which New Youth authors minimize their own internal disagreements, while simultaneously establishing a singular New Culture identity over and against prevailing contemporary schools of thought (e.g. the *Guocui* or ‘national essence’ school, among others). I reach the conclusion that *suiganlu* possess sufficient unique characteristics to be considered a subgenre of the essay in its own right, rather than a mere predecessor to later *zawen* writings.
Acknowledgement

This thesis has its beginnings in a final project for Professor Kirk Denton’s Lu Xun Seminar in fall 2014. Thanks to Professor Denton’s illuminating talks, great help in locating materials and insightful comments on my term paper, I was inspired and encouraged to extend my research on Lu Xun’s *suiganlu* to those of all the contributors and to eventually establish my research question. The judiciously chosen scholarly works discussed in the seminar and the wealth of critical studies pointed out by Professor Denton provided me opportunities to rethink the role of iconoclasts in New Culture movement and has largely formed the groundwork of this thesis. Finally, Professor Denton’s numerous emendations to the thesis draft have been absolutely essential to its final formation. As such, I would like to express my deep gratitude to Professor Denton, without whose patience and perspicuous editing this thesis could not have happened. I would also like to express my gratefulness to Professor Mark Bender, whose seminar in Ethnic Minority literature provided valuable opportunities to sharpen my critical skills from a multilingual and cross-cultural perspective. This background shed new light upon my interpretation of *suiganlu*. Professor Bender’s encouragement, insightful comments and inspiring talks also allowed me to rethink the greater implications of my thesis and pointed out possible directions for future research. Finally, I would like to acknowledge Frederick Bowman and Debbie Knicely for offering assuring words and abundant support during the process of writing and revision. All have been a part of bringing this thesis to completion.
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Introduction

Suiganlu (impromptu reflections) is the name for a column that first emerged in the journal New Youth (Xin qingnian) in 1918. It reached its peak during 1918-1919, along with the rise of the New Culture Movement, and continued to exist through 1922. During its peak, its main contributors were New Culture iconoclasts Chen Duxiu, Lu Xun, Qian Xuantong, Tao Menghe, Liu Bannong, and Zhou Zuoren. Suiganlu are a product of the New Culture Movement and indubitably a significant component of New Youth. The short topical essays associated with suiganlu were the first such essays in the history of modern Chinese literature and have been widely acclaimed as precursors to Lu Xun’s more famous zawen. Apart from being the name of a column, suiganlu is also the general name for all the short topical essays published under the column. Except for suiganlu no. 8 and no. 9, suiganlu prior to no. 56 do not have subtitles. During 1918-1922, a total of 133 suiganlu were published in New Youth. After its appearance as a column in New Youth, suiganlu also appeared in Weekly Review (Meizhou pinglun), a weekly magazine, and in Awareness (Juewu), the supplement of a newspaper in Shanghai called Republican Daily (Minguo Ribao). Similar columns in other publications at the time, such as zagan (random thoughts), luantan (random notes), and suibiantan (casual talk) etc. also seem to be generic outgrowths of suiganlu.
As we see above, suiganlu were produced in great numbers and have been shown to have exercise considerable influence on the formation of later genres of essay such as zawen. Recognizing these insights provided by previous scholarship, I consider the importance of suiganlu to New Youth and to the larger New Culture movement in general. Though suiganlu’s influence on later literary developments is firmly established, the question of its larger importance to the New Culture Movement has largely escaped the attention of scholars both in China and in the West. In Western scholarship, suiganlu still mostly remains, so to speak, virgin land. Among all the suiganlu published in New Youth, only Lu Xun’s have drawn scholarly attention, yet without being closely or fully analyzed. Leo Ou-fan Lee (Lee 1987) has a chapter on Lu Xun’s zawen, in which he traces Lu Xun’s earliest zawen back to his suiganlu published in New Youth during 1918-1919. Lee also points out that the most salient characteristic of Lu Xun’s early essay writings is their “metaphoric mode,” which he thinks distinguishes Lu Xun’s suiganlu from those of other suiganlu writers. But Lee’s analysis lacks detail, and his argument is demonstrated with just a few citations from Lu Xun’s suiganlu. David E. Pollard (Pollard 1985: 54-89) is the only scholar to have paid special attention to the rhetorical tactics and stylistic features in Lu Xun’s zawen, including suiganlu, and gives detailed analysis of those tactics and features. However, the content of Lu Xun’s suiganlu is largely absent from Pollard’s discussion. Gloria Davies’ Lu Xun’s Revolution: Writing in a Time of Violence focuses on Lu Xun’s zawen, but mainly those written during the last decade of his life (Davies 2013). Thus, existing
Western scholarship focusing on *suiganlu* is largely confined to the study of Lu Xun and his works, and do not treat the genre of *suiganlu* per se. In his anthology on Chinese essays, Pollard (Pollard 2000) briefly introduces short topical essays of the New Culture Movement in general but without explicitly mentioning *suiganlu*. Tse-Tsung Chow explicitly points out *suiganlui* as a “new essay form” written by a group of iconoclasts-writers, a form that is one of the most important products of the Literary Revolution and New Literature and “marks the beginning of a new kind of Chinese short essay which, usually with a sarcastic tone, becomes a devastating political weapon in later years” (Chow 1967, 278). Here, Chow acknowledges *suiganlu* in general as the early stage of *zawen* writing by giving credit not only to Lu Xun but to other writers who contributed to the form.

One of the main reasons that Western scholars do not write much about *suiganlu* is that the essay in general, compared with fiction, is to a great extent marginalized in the literary history of modern Chinese literature especially in the West. The term “essay” applied here refers to *sanwen* in modern Chinese, an umbrella term referring to all prose writing.¹ As Martin Woesler (Woesler 2000:15-24) points out, “the literary-historical narrative told by anthologies and collections of the 20th century such as [those of] C.T. Hsia, Prusek and Anderson has drawn an incomplete picture of Chinese literature,” and the genre of essay is “overshadowed by its elder brother, fiction.” It is

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¹ In traditional Chinese, *sanwen* is a more “inclusive term . . . referring to all writing lacking pattern” (Huters 1987: 85), which differs from its modern implication.
not an exaggeration to say that up to the present, Western studies of modern Chinese essays can be counted on the fingers of one hand. Except Charles Laughlin’s two illuminating monographs on Chinese reportage (Laughlin 2002) and modern *xiaopin wen* (little prose pieces) (Laughlin 2008), there is a near absence of such studies.

Given the essay’s significant role in modern Chinese literature and even in China’s modernization, its comparatively undervalued position as a genre in literary history is not deserved. In fact, the significance of essay as a genre can be traced back to traditional Chinese literature. As Lee points out, “the total literary heritage of China’s past prose essays of various kinds claimed a much larger share than poetry and fiction combined” (Lee 1987: 110). Various essay forms in traditional Chinese include *pianwen* (parallel prose), *guwen* (classical prose), *fu* (rhyme prose), *zhuan* (biography), and *biji* (reading notes) etc. *Xiaopin wen* (the small essay) were popular in the late Ming and then enjoyed a revival in 1920s and 1930s that was promoted by, among others, Zhou Zuoren (Pollard 2000). Even the notorious *bagu wen* (eight legged essay), the essay form that dominated the civil service examination and was widely criticized as the murderer of literary creation in traditional China, was, according to Zhou Zuoren, as “appealing and intoxicating as the ‘pleasure of doing opium’ ” (Woesler 2000: 20). Moreover, as Huters suggests, the resurgence of *guwen* in late 18th century active under the dominating position of the empirical school and “the growth in the status of *wen* (prose) also offers indispensable clues to the reasons the new concept of *wenxue*
(literature) came to play such a vital role in Chinese discourse after 1895” (Huters 1987: 53-54).

Indeed, as Woesler also points out, essay is “the genre of the modernizing society of the early 20th century” (Woesler 2000: 20). Compared with fiction and poetry, the essay was able to embody writers’ thoughts on such subjects as education and aspirations toward a national “awakening” in a more direct and immediate way. As Chow suggests, compared with opponents of New Literature, New Youth iconoclasts were all “excellent essayists,” in both classical Chinese and the vernacular (baihua) (Chow 1967: 63). Through essays published in New Youth, the iconoclast-writers introduced new thoughts from the West, expressed their opinions on social, cultural, and political issues in an attempt to transform people’s minds, and promoted what they thought best serves society. Their essays in baihua reached a relatively wide readership (Chow 1967: 74) and had an especially profound impact on the youth, some of whom “later became politically and intellectually important in modern China.” Mao Zedong, for instance, once recalled that he himself especially admired Hu Shi’s and Chen Duxiu’s essays when he read New Youth as a student (Chow 1967: 74-75). In the whole literary field, almost all the important and influential debates, or so called bizhan (battles of the pen), related to social and cultural issues in the early 20th century were largely carried out through the medium of the essay, such as the debate over the relative merits of Chinese and Western civilizations during the 1910s or that between science and metaphysics in the 1920s. As Woesler suggests, the volume of essay production in
this period considerably exceeded that of fiction. “Essay columns” containing zagan and suibi (jottings), which I mentioned above, were particularly abundant and were featured in various publications (Woesler 2000: 17).

Though Chinese scholars pay comparatively more attention to the genre of essay, scholarship on suiganlu is still largely centered on Lu Xun’s works and his zawen. Zheng Minhong (2014) writes about suiganlu as a transitional form between Liang Qichao’s New Style prose form and Lu Xun’s zagan. In her thesis, Zheng claims that suiganlu in New Youth can only be considered as a column but not a sub-genre; only Lu Xun’s suiganlu can be considered as a new form of essay—namely, zawen—whereas the works of other suiganlu writers such as Chen Duxiu and Qian Xuantong’s do not differ generically much from the “commentaries” (shiping) in newspapers at the time. Dong Wenjun (2009) acknowledges suiganlu as a prototype of zawen and demonstrates how it differs from the existing “commentaries” and in what ways it contributes to the formation and development of later zawen. Unlike Zheng, however, who stresses Lu Xun’s unique contribution, Dong gives credit to all the suiganlu writers. Nevertheless, both Zheng and Dong approach suiganlu more as a transitional form that would see its culmination in later zawen through drawing comparisons with “commentaries” and zawen. This zawen-oriented study is in all probability caused by the canonization of Lu Xun and his zawen in the history of modern Chinese literature, especially in China.

The collective neglect of the study of suiganlu per se in both China and the West is very likely brought about by two factors. The first possible reason is the main
contributors’ understatements about *suiganlu*. Among all the *suiganlu* writers in *New Youth*, Lu Xun (LX 1989: 1: 291-294) was the only one who specifically commented on his *suiganlu*. However, Lu Xun trivializes them as mere “comments on some insignificant issues”; he is unable to recall, he says, his motivations for writing most of them, and thus he summarizes them as no more than “some general comments” (*ji tiao fanlun*). Another main contributor of *suiganlu*, Chen Duxiu (Chen 1965), does not specifically comment on his *suiganlu*, though he downplays the significance of his essays, including *suiganlu*, written during New Culture Movement; he claims them to be “merely straightforward expressions of all sorts of instinct” with no literary value or solid argumentation (Chen 1965). The impression left by both Lu Xun and Chen Duxiu is that *suiganlu* is constituted by insignificant subject matter and random thoughts prompted by miscellaneous issues completely irrelevant to each other. Given that Lu Xun and Chen Duxiu are the two most important contributors of *suiganlu* in *New Youth*, and that the former was canonized as a literary god, it might not be too surprising if their comments have misled scholars to perceive *suiganlu* as unworthy of study. These facts also explain that scholars who write about *suiganlu* are usually not drawn by the *suiganlu* itself, but by its connection with some canonically sanctioned cause, such as Lu Xun or *zawen*.

Second, such undervaluation also happens when scholars interpret *suiganlu* separately from their publication in *New Youth* as well as from the whole historical context of the New Culture movement. Michel Hockx argues, “A journal issue arrives
in the hands of the reader as finished product, as a text, rather than a context” and “[A] journal issue, at least in the material sense and possibly in other senses as well, possesses a certain measure of unity” (Hockx 2011: 124). Thus, when scholars approach texts first published in journals, they should not divorce them from the original context of their publication; Hockx sees value in examining a journal issue as a text itself, a unity from cover to cover. A “horizontal reading” takes into consideration the relationship of a text to the material context of the journal issue itself and “emphasize[s] the spatial relation between texts published in the same issue of the same journal” (Hockx 2011: 118).

Much indebted to Hockx’s original conception of “horizontal reading,” I extend the scope of what can be considered as the unity of a single issue to several issues that share consistent and coherent format and ideological standpoints and are thus able to be considered as a text, a unity. From this perspective, suiganlu is undoubtedly a part of the text and is to the greatest extent shaped by the dominant discourse in New Youth framed by the New Culture Movement. Thus, instead of approaching the suiganlu of 1918-1919 as random thoughts about insignificant issues, as both Lu Xun and Chen Duxiu characterized them, a sense that is also conveyed through the misleading literal meaning of the name suigan, I approach it from the perspective that it is both part of a New Culture text and part of larger ideological unity.

In this thesis, I question the marginalization of suiganlu and attempt to restore its importance to the discourse of the New Culture Movement and to the history of
modern Chinese literature. Instead of considering it a mere transitional form that leads to the later zawen, I would like to argue that suiganlu itself constitutes a sub-genre of essay writing in China. If the definition of a genre is, in Laughlin’s words (Laughlin 2008:14), “a specific literary form with identifiable features accompanied by a normative discourse governing its creation and development,” suiganlu then, compared with other essay forms at the time, is distinguishable as such a specific form and can legitimately be claimed as a sub-genre of the essay.

In order to identify its features as a sub-genre, one needs to first situate it in the magazine where it originally appeared. Founded by Chen Duxiu in 1915, Youth Magazine (Qingnian zazhi) changed its name to New Youth (Xin qingnian) in 1916. During the first two years after the establishment of the journal, two abortive monarchical restorations (Yuan Shikai in 1915-1916; Zhang Xun in 1917) took place and freedom of the press was very limited. Though Chen stressed in its inaugural issue that political criticism was not the focus of New Youth, he himself more than once explicitly discusses political issues and criticized political problems, especially after Yuan’s death and the subsequent easing of censorship (Wang 1999: 4). Chen’s intention in the establishment of New Youth was as a “…third weapon in the struggle, coming after politics and military action,” to borrow Wang Xiaoming’s words (Wang 1999:3), not as a purely academic or literary magazine. In fact, having seen the failure of the second revolution and monarchical restorations under the so-called republican polity at the time, Chen realized the necessity and urgency of enlightenment to the process of
China’s modernization and to social and political reforms. Enlightenment was the main goal of New Youth, especially during the New Culture Movement (Chow 1967: 44). It is crucial to recognize that such enlightenment was never separable from national salvation in the New Culture iconoclasts’ discourse.

When suiganlu as a column first emerged in New Youth in vol. 4, no. 4 in April 1918, an editorial committee had already formed. (Before vol. 4, no.1, Chen Duxiu was the only editor of New Youth.) Apart from Chen, the committee members included Qian Xuantong, Hu Shi, Li Dazhao, Liu Bannong, and Shen Yinmo. (In vol. 6, Gao Yihan replaced Liu Bannong.) Starting with vol. 4, no. 1, the magazine “was edited in turn each month by one of the members of the committee. A discussion meeting was held each month.” Editors and the major contributors such as Lu Xun (LX did not join New Youth until vol. 4, no. 5) and Zhou Zuoren, et al., all attended the meetings (Chow 1967: 44). Given that it was also from vol. 4, no.1 that, except for its “Correspondence” column, New Youth no longer accepted contributions from people who were not committee members or established contributors, it is clear that starting from vol. 4, New Youth became a tongren zazhi (collegial magazine, or journal of the like-minded). That is to say, New Youth began from this time to be both more exclusive and more exclusionary, as its content was overwhelmingly produced by the same inner circle of New Culture iconoclasts. Wang Xiaoming also points out this quality of New Youth at the time: “in general, no writing was published that was contrary to the general purposes of the editors” (Wang 1999: 9).
Figure 1. The Suiganlu column first appeared in New Youth vol. 4, no. 4
Figure 2. The Suiganlu column in New Youth vol. 6, no. 5
New Youth was the major publication through which New Culture Movement ideas—the promotion of “New Culture” from the West and the denunciation of Chinese tradition, in particular Confucianism—were expressed. As Chow points out, the designation of “New Culture Movement” only gained prevalence after May 4, 1919. The same is true of the Literary Revolution and the conspicuous use of baihua. Starting from the launch of the Literary Revolution in 1917 and continuing through the early part of 1919, before May Fourth, the “New Culture Movement” was widely accepted by the new intellectuals at the time as “dealing with science, religion, morality, literature, music, the arts and the like and . . . not including practical social or political actions” (Chow 1967: 195).

Suiganlu as a column was established soon after the formation of the editorial committee and continued to exist until the last issue of the monthly New Youth in 1922. The committee was disbanded, according to Chow, after the summer of 1920, just before New Youth took a radical political turn. Wang Xiaoming, however, suggests that the editorial committee was actually disbanded as early as the autumn of 1919. Regardless of the exact date, by vol. 7 New Youth clearly entered “a turning point where the journal moved from an emphasis on scholarship to a focus on politics,” in Wang Xiaoming’s words (Wang 1999: 8). Therefore, in this thesis, I focus on the suiganlu published in New Youth during 1918-1919, when the journal was run by the editorial
committee, whose members were the major contributors to the journal in general and the *suiganlu* column in particular.

Now, let us go back to the “identifiable features” of *suiganlu* as a sub-genre. In terms of its generic features, *suiganlu* are usually short in length. Most of the *suiganlu* are within one thousand words. Some shorter ones, such as most of Chen Duxiu’s, are frequently only one short paragraph long. The longer ones, such as Qian Xuantong’s *suiganlu* no. 8, Liu Bannong’s no. 9, Zhou Zuoren’s no. 24 and Lu Xun’s no. 33 are more than one thousand words, though this is mostly due to their extensive citations. In terms of language, as *suiganlu* is the product of New Literature, most *suiganlu* are written in *baihua*, such as the ones by Lu Xun, Qian Xuantong and Zhou Zuoren. Though Chen Duxiu’s first thirteen *suiganlu* published in 1918 are mostly in New Style prose (a vernacularized form of classical Chinese developed by Liang Qichao), he changed his register to *baihua* in his *suiganlu* published from 1919 on, clearly under the influence of the national *baihua* movement that he had himself helped to launched two years earlier. Change in register from New Style to *baihua* also occurred with other contributors such as Tao Menghe and Liu Bannong. Though a sub-genre with some common features, each writer certainly has his distinctive style, a point that is also mentioned by Zheng and Dong. For instance, as Zheng notes, Lu Xun commented on and praised Chen Duxiu’s *suiganlu* as *shuangkuai* (straightforward and crisp). He also described Qian Xuantong’s *suiganlu* as being unbounded (*wangyang*), crystal clear
(lanzhiliaoran, wusuoyihuo), and not in the least bit muddled (shao hanxu). As for Liu Banong’s, Lu Xun praised them as simple but fresh (Zheng 2014: 37).

In examining the generic features of suiganlu, one might not be able to easily conclude that suiganlu is distinguishable from other short essay forms at the time, such as commentaries, zagan, and the like. However, what really defines suiganlu in New Youth as a sub-genre, I would argue, are not its generic features but its governing “normative discourse”—the system of New Culture values promoted by New Youth iconoclasts-writers during 1918-1919.

In other words, the greatest difference between suiganlu and other essay forms, such as zagan, commentaries, or later zawen lies in the fact that suiganlu were published in a particular publication as a column and written by a particular group of people who shared a particular standpoint. I have already mentioned the exclusivity of New Youth during the 1918-1919 period that resulted from decisions made by its editors and main contributors who were all professors at Beijing University or affiliated with the university at the time. Zhou Zuoren, Liu Bannon, Tao Menghe, and Qian Xuantong were all professors at the university. Chen Duxiu was the Dean of the Humanities. Though Lu Xun did not start teaching there until 1920, he had been working in the Ministry of Education since 1912 where Cai Yuanpei, the president of Beijing University at the time, was the minister (Chow 1967: 53-54). Suiganlu writers were all adept at composition, both in classical Chinese and baihua. They had experienced both traditional Chinese and Western style education, and most of them already had
experiences studying abroad. Pollard particularly mentions that the “most flexible and reliable resource [of Lu Xun], however, was a more or less total command of the Chinese language, classical and modern: the ability to mix and switch register was used very effectively to mock and shock” (Pollard 2000: 110). Though there is no doubt Lu Xun was especially skillful in rhetorical strategies and had an especially strong grasp of both classical and baihua and at least one foreign language, these qualities were generally shared by all the suiganlu writers in New Youth. However, not all of the main contributors of suiganlu were professional writers like Lu Xun, Zhou Zuoren and Liu Bannong. Chen Duxiu was mainly a revolutionary; Qian Xuantong was mainly a historical phonologist and linguist; and Tao Menghe was a sociologist. Though they were all excellent essayists, as Chow remarks, their different social roles gave rise to their distinctive approaches and perspectives when they dealt with social and political issues in their writing.

Written by a particular group of writers who share the same identity as New Culture iconoclasts-writers at the time, suiganlu is conspicuously framed by New Culture values. Therefore, compared with other essay forms such as zagan or luantan or even those prominent in the newspapers and magazines before and after the emergence of suiganlu in New Youth, no matter how similar the literal meaning of those column names are, the content of suiganlu is nothing like its name, neither casual nor just a collection of random thoughts. Rather, suiganlu embody a coherent value system and should be treated as a significant part of New Youth as a New Culture text. In this regard,
suiganlu is also particularly different from xiaopin wen (little prose pieces, literature of leisure) derived from the English familiar essay and that focus on the everyday and the trifling.

Apart from its comparatively short length, suiganlu is also differentiated from long polemical essays published in New Youth written by almost the same group of people. Unlike the long polemical essays, which usually establish a solid argument with a complete line of reasoning, suiganlu are short topical essays, “commonly polemical in tone” in the words of Pollard (Pollard 2000: 19), but not aimed to present a thorough argumentation of the principles they espouse, but rather to inspire an immediate response to the cultural, social, and political issues of the day. Since it does not take as much time to produce a suiganlu as to produce a long polemical essay, suiganlu writers are able to be more prolific and thus transmit their enlightened educational discourses more quickly and efficiently.

As I have argued above, what specially defines suiganlu from other essay forms, such as commentaries, zagan, later zawen, or even xiaopin wen, is that suiganlu were published in a particular journal as a column and were written by a particular group of writers who shared a particular standpoint as like-minded allies rather than individual “warriors.” In this thesis, I look especially into the suiganlu published in New Youth during 1918-1919 as a case study because suiganlu in New Youth is a prototype for later suiganlu in other publications. At the crux of how exactly suiganlu in New Youth is as distinctive as a sub-genre is (1) a shared identity among iconoclasts-writers, and (2) a
common set of New Culture values. In the main body of my thesis, I look at suiganlu from two main perspectives. In the first chapter, I examine the role of suiganlu in carving out a space for the iconoclasts who were trying to enter the literary field and thus to define themselves relative to other positions. In this chapter, I have been influenced by Michel Hockx’s appropriation of Pierre Bourdieu’s sociology of the literary field. In the second chapter, I focus on certain recurring themes and topics in the suiganlu to demonstrate how they played an important part in the construction of a New Culture identity. In this chapter, drawing on Eileen Cheng’s approach in her Literary Remains on the attachment to tradition and the past reflected in Lu Xun’s writing, I reveal how, in contrast to the stereotype of their totalistic anti-traditionalism (Yu-sheng Lin 1979), New Culture iconoclasts’ held onto Chinese tradition in some of their suiganlu. In this thesis, I would like to do justice to suiganlu in the history of modern Chinese literature, or in Kirk Denton’s words, “to liberate modernity from its own discourses and reveal it in a more historically complex ways” (Denton 1998: 7).
Chapter 1: Shaping Literary Identities through Multiple Ruptures

In the authorial preface to *Hot Wind*, when Lu Xun tries to recall some backstories surrounding the *suiganlu* collected in the volume, he notably points out that *New Youth* was severely attacked back then from all sides of society and that *suiganlu* were written mostly in response to the criticism (LX 1989: 1: 291-294). Lu Xun to some extent understates the significance of his *suiganlu* by saying that they deal with just “some minor issues” and might also have left a wrong impression that they are mostly retorts targeting the rivals of *New Youth* and the New Culture Movement; in fact, they constitute more iconoclasm prompted by particular social phenomena, hearsay, or publications (LX 1989: 1: 295-369). He proceeds to make two points about his *suiganlu*: first, all the publications associated with *New Youth*, especially *suiganlu* due to its “immediacy and intimacy” (Hockx 2011: 127) are weapons chosen by New Culture iconoclasts when they try to carve out a space in the literary field and the field of social reform. Second, the writers-iconoclasts work as allies, instead of as individuals, because they express a shared standpoint advocated and promoted by *New Youth* and the New Culture Movement. Their writings in this regard, therefore, serve their shared interests and concerns better than providing an accurate portrait of the various writers who wrote in the genre as individuals.
One of the most salient characteristics of the suiganlu form is its social and political critique. Among all the suiganlu published in New Youth during 1918 and 1919, the majority are motivated by iconoclasm and are retorts directed at the rivals of New Youth and the New Culture Movement and leading to “the multiple ruptures.” In his Questions of Style, Hockx uses Bourdieu’s “the double rupture” (Bourdieu 1996: 79)—the discourse “people oppose X as much as they oppose the opposite of X” usually produced by people when they are “involved in defining a new position in the literary field”—to explain the situation of the founders of the Literary Association, in which they claimed to detest both “traditional literature and commercial fiction” (Hockx 2011: 55). The point here, nevertheless, is the discourse that New Culture iconoclasts produced when they tried to enter the literary field during 1918-1919 is much more complicated than the notion of “double rupture” can capture; I would rather call it “multiple ruptures,” and suiganlu is where these multiple ruptures largely manifested themselves.

The Guocui (National essence) school is the first and foremost group targeted by New Culture iconoclasts right after suiganlu appeared as a column in New Youth. In suiganlu no.1, Chen Duxiu takes a stand explicitly against three kinds of scholars whom he places in the “national quintessence” school: those “who blindly degrade European culture and praise Chinese ones, who believe Chinese studies should be given priority in learning even if European culture is also valuable, and who believe what exists in current European culture can always find prototypes in Chinese back to Confucius’
time” (Chen 1954a: 341-342). “European culture” (Ouxue) here is basically interchangeable with a more general term “Western culture” (suxue). The reason Chen uses ouxue instead of xixue might just be due to his personal experience of studying abroad in Japan where he especially studied French and other European cultures. The reason why Chen targeted the Guocui school, also summarized in no.1, is that they always blindly “follow the icons (especially Confucius), the old and the guo (literally: nation)” (Chen 1954a: 341-342) as their main principles in academics. Chen quotes a line from Guocui Xuebao (National Quintessence Academic Journal) to ridicule those who always consider guo as the principal in academics (341). More explicitly, in suiganlu no.16, Qian Xuantong recounts, in baihua, hearsay about “an old scholar whose specialty is in guxue/jixue (literally: ancient study)” (Qian 1999c: 11-12). In the definition of the Guocui school, Guxue is another word for guoxue (literally: study of a nation’s own civilization) as opposed to xinxue (literally: new knowledge), except the guo here does not refer to nation or China but specifically to ethnic Han culture and xin here does not simply refers to “new” but to knowledge from other countries, especially Europe, North America, and Japan (Fan 1982a). Qian does not openly name this “old scholar,” so one cannot be sure whether he is criticizing Zhang Taiyan, one of the representative figures of the Guocui school and Qian’s former mentor during his early Japan years. Though according to the quotation and Qian’s interpretation, the “old scholar” is more an amalgamation of Zhang and another leading figure in the Guocui school, Deng Shi, who specifically distinguished between junxue (useless knowledge
that serves politics) and guoxue (useful knowledge that can bring prosperity to the country) (Fan 1982a).

An academic journal though Guocui xuebao is, its agenda is irrefutably political just like New Youth, though with a different agenda. However, Chen and Qian did not do justice to Guocui school in their suiganlu: both dismiss the revolutionary aspect of Guocui’s proponents and fail to point out that their promotion of guocui is largely aimed at evoking people’s patriotism, though a particularly Han ethnic form of patriotism (Fan 1982a), at a time when China was faced with severe crisis provoked by external threats to its sovereignty. And their ultimate goal does not stop at the promotion of “the icon, the old or the ‘nation’ whatever its definition is” in the academic field, but extends to eventually uniting people and making them act against imperialism (Fan 1982a).

Unlike Chen and Qian, Lu Xun, another main contributor of suiganlu and also a former student of Zhang Taiyan, never explicitly denounces the Guocui school in his suiganlu though he did repeatedly show his firm disapproval to “preserving guocui.” And even when he did implicitly involve Guocui school or their ideas in his writings such as suiganlu no. 35, no. 36 and no. 38, his focus obviously lies elsewhere, not in actually targeting them, which I discuss in detail in the next chapter. It is true that when Lu Xun started to write suiganlu, the main rival of New Youth and the New Culture Movement had already shifted from the Guocui school to the so-called “eclectics” (we will consider who exactly these “eclectics” are later) as the debate on Chinese and
Western civilizations between New Youth and The Eastern Miscellany had already taken place, which I discuss later. Despite that, it is still worth pointing out another possible reason that Lu Xun did not choose the Guocui school as his main target: it might have something to do with his life long respect for his former mentor, Zhang Taiyan, and his deep compassion towards Zhang and his contribution to the revolutionary movement, a sentiment that can be seen in his commemorative essay “Two or Three Things about Zhang Taiyan” (Zhang Taiyan xiansheng ersan shi), written in October 1936, shortly after Zhang’s death in June and just before Lu Xun’s own death (LX 2006: 6:565-571). This subtle difference in attitude toward the Guocui school among Chen, Qian, and Lu Xun, however, is glossed over by the suiganlu authors and thus are not a salient feature of suiganlu themselves; Lu Xun apparently never explicitly addressed this difference in his suiganlu or other New Youth writings.

Hence, in suiganlu, the differences among the New Culture iconoclasts are not pronounced, whereas the differences between the New Culture iconoclasts and other groups are accentuated. That is one of the most important reasons that brings about “the multiple ruptures” as New Culture iconoclasts tried to distinguish and further define themselves when they tried to enter the literary field. We have so far focused on the single rupture between the New Culture iconoclasts and the Guocui school; we will now look at how they distanced themselves from other contemporary schools of thought.

The same principles also applied when they write about the “eclectics.” “The eclectics” is not a term Liu Bannong used himself in suiganlu no. 7; I use this umbrella
term to capture Liu’s idea that these intellectuals encouraged eclecticism, which Liu defined as “the integration of Chinese and Western cultures and the deliberation of the ‘old’ and the ‘new’” (ronghui zhongxi, zhenzhuo gujin) (Liu 1954a: 347). I will address them this way for expediency. If the Guocui school is a group of intellectuals who, according to the New Culture iconoclasts, only appreciate Han culture, believing that it surpasses Western culture, and should be given the priority in learning, then the eclectics can be considered the opposite of Guocui school in this regard because they are supposedly well exposed to both Chinese and Western culture and make use of both of them. The citation from the eclectics quoted in no. 7, “the integration of Chinese and Western cultures and the deliberation of the ‘old’ and the ‘new’” (ronghui zhongxi, zhenzhuo gujin), showcases a standpoint that is quite the opposite of the promotion of the ancient Han culture represented by the Guocui school. However, this seemingly impartial, integrated, and inclusive cultural attitude also did not earn the approval of the New Culture iconoclasts. While the iconoclasts were busy denigrating the Guocui school, on the one hand, they also denounced the eclectics and the overseas students, on the other hand.

In No. 7, prompted by some opinions he might have heard or read by the eclectics through the media in Shanghai, Liu Bannong points out three of their abhorrent characteristics. First, Liu mocks what he takes to be their uncritical approach to both Western and Chinese cultures and degrades them as a group of people who claim themselves as executors of cultural puji (popularization), which to Liu is clearly
just a façade that glosses over their own incompetence in either Chinese or Western culture. Based on that, Liu further points out that the eclectics, along with two other groups of people—yang hanlin (literally means “members of the Imperial Academy” educated abroad, here means students who had studied abroad) and “money makers” (yanghuo, foreign products) whom Liu addresses with perceptible contempt—always keep changing their stance because they have no idea what they truly stand for and what purposes will be served by their stances. Additionally, Liu points out sardonically toward the end of this suiganlu that the eclectics, yanghanlin and “money makers” only rely on foreign people’s opinions in making decisions on what should considered Chinese national treasures. To sum up, what Liu really detests here seems to be not people who actually have the knowledge and intellectual ability to “integrate Chinese and Western cultures and deliberate on the ‘old’ and the ‘new,’” but those who falsely claim to be able to do so.

Considering that most of Xueheng members had not yet finished their study abroad when suiganlu No. 7 was published in 1918 and Guomin (Citizen), a monthly magazine that once advocated the eclecticism of Chinese and Western cultures did not start publishing in Beijing until 1919 (Ding, ed. 1958: 63), the only influential publication in Shanghai that may have been a target was The Eastern Miscellany (Dongfang Zazhi), of which Du Yaquan was chief editor from 1911 to 1919 (Wang 2012: 51-57). In his early years, Du introduced and translated massive amounts of Western scholarship and the latest achievements in the hard sciences into Chinese and
compiled a substantial amount of textbooks. Going back as far as 1900, Du’s *Yaquan Magazine* in Shanghai also aimed to transmit Western knowledge on hard science (Fan 1982b). Hence, it is fair to say that in his early years Du was mainly devoted to the spread of Western knowledge in the sciences, though it may not be fair to suggest that he was the one criticized by Liu for his poor skills in both Chinese and Western languages. Around 1912 to 1913, Du started publishing essays in *The Eastern Miscellany* using the pen names Gao Lao and later Cang Fu, that advocated eclecticism of Chinese and Western cultures, and he gradually became a representative of eclecticism, along with Qian Zhixiu, another prominent figure at that time (Wang 2012: 147-155).

In 1918, when No. 7 was published, a prelude to the important debate on Chinese and Western civilizations had already started about three years previously and the whole thing started to turn intense (Wang 2012: 187). Though not until half year after no. 7 was published did the main battles take place between *New Youth* and *The Eastern Miscellany*, *suiganlu* No. 7 can be considered the first salvo launched by the *New Youth* iconoclasts against the eclectics, without openly naming the rival.

In fact, the discourses of eclecticism on *The Eastern Miscellany* can be traced back to some of its early issues in 1904 (He 1983, 3:98-99). Some of the articles published on *The Eastern Miscellany* already produced some discourses that are perceived as something close to eclecticism at a time when there were variations on how to treat ethnic Han culture and cultures from other countries among the Guocui
school. These articles described the unsatisfactory situations in which guocui was despised, discarded, and mistreated while Western cultures was misunderstood. Hence, they wanted to correct the situation and hoped that people could adopt a non-partisan (bupianbuyi) attitude toward both Chinese and Western cultures. However, some articles published in The Eastern Miscellany still more or less choose to emphasize the negative side of learning Western culture and the bright side of “preserving guocui.” Therefore, though they suggest being objective and detached from either side, their views are clear, and this tendency does not fade away even after Du Yaquan becomes chief editor of the magazine in 1911 (Wang 2012, 189-190).

One example in suiganlu would be no. 23 written by Chen Duxiu published in 1918 (Chen 1954i: 157), in which Chen quotes a line from “Critique of Chinese and Western Civilizations” (Zhongxi Wenming zhi pingpan), a translated (from Japanese) essay published in The Eastern Miscellany. The standpoint taken by Du Yaquan and The Eastern Miscellany in the debate was supposed to favor eclecticism (i.e., the best of both Chinese and Western civilizations) compared with radical Westernization supported by the New Culture iconoclasts. That essay, however, first published in a Japanese magazine, The Light of East Asia (Tōa no hikari), includes extensive quotations from Gu Hongming (Wang 2012: 178-179), who is well known for his conservativism and his stance against the New Culture Movement.

In the quotation cited by Chen, an Indian monk is admonishing a German woman who wants to convert to Buddhism by saying she should stick to Christianity
because one becomes culturally confused after abandoning one’s national religion. Here the negative implication of accepting a belief from another culture is overt, echoing the points in an essay written by Du himself published in the same year, “Morality in a Bewildering Modernity” (Miluan Xiandai Zhi Renxin). Unsurprisingly, based on the quotation, Chen keenly builds up a connection between that Indian monk and someone who “preserves guocui” and makes it serve his own discourse. However, irrespective of Chen’s utilization of the citation, we can see that though Du Yaquan seemed to embrace an impartial stance between Chinese and Western Cultures, Du and the publications on The Eastern Miscellany actually have an undisguised inclination towards Chinese culture.

It is also more or less true that the contents of The Eastern Miscellany do not present as consistent and unified a standpoint as that in New Youth. Luo Jialun, a student of Beijing University and one of the chief editors of New Tide (Xin Chao), ridiculed The Eastern Miscellany as “a mess school” (zaluan pai) by criticizing its lack of a firm standpoint (Wang 2012: 203).

Indeed, The Eastern Miscellany was very inclusive, sometimes embraced incompatible opinions like a “patchwork,” and underwent several remarkable adjustments of its major standpoint along with the changes in the social and political environment (He 1983: 178). One of its major adjustments occurred after the May Fourth Movement in 1919, when it changed its standpoint from advocating eclecticism,
including Chinese culture, to its embrace of New Culture Movement ideals (Wang 2012: 212).

Nevertheless, the point is, though a large part of the opinions published in *The Eastern Miscellany* undeniably departed from the standpoints held by *New Youth* and New Culture iconoclasts, there is overlap, particularly in its critiques of superstitions and religion (He 1983: 203) and Du’s promotion of individualism; even in its eclecticism, one can find traces of *New Youth* ideas (Wang 2012: 144-194; Zheng 1994: 44-51). But just as with the New Culture iconoclasts’ discourse on the Guocui school, the similarities between the two distinct publications were negated in later discourse and the differences exaggerated and sharpened.

Interestingly, although most of the New Culture iconoclasts, except Liu Bannong, who went to England and France only in the 1920s, already had by then experiences of studying abroad, the New Culture writers—including Liu Bannong (no. 7), Tao Menghe (no. 5), and Qian Xuantong (no. 17)—did not give overseas students a pass either, even at the risk of opening themselves to charges of hypocrisy. In addition to Liu Bannong (no. 7), Tao Menghe (no. 5) and Qian Xuantong (no. 17) also wrote about *liuxuesheng*.

Prompted by the popularization of the word *liuxuesheng*, in *suiganlu* no. 5 (Tao 1954b: 345-346), Tao questions the coinage of the word by pointing out the possible gap between its literal meaning, people’s expectation toward it, and the reality behind it. In Tao’s eyes, *liuxuesheng* is just a word to describe people who have been abroad,
regardless of what they actually did abroad. However, according to Tao, there is a tendency to overvalue *liuxuesheng* in Chinese society and the term, therefore, becomes an expedient label people adopt as part of their identity when they seek fame and official position.

Indeed, in Liu’s, Tao’s and Qian’s *suiganlu*, the images of *liuxuesheng* are awfully negative. In their narrations, *liuxuesheng* are no more than a group of people who only pick up superficial stereotypical life styles from their experiences of living abroad, such as wearing suits (Qian 1999c), eating Western-style food, dancing in ballrooms, etc.; they have poor knowledge of Western culture, and their Chinese studies are also weak.

On the one hand, these negative images provide us a glimpse of what *liuxuesheng* looked like from the New Culture iconoclasts’ perspective; on the other hand, we can also see how the iconoclasts defined and positioned themselves through a denial of and dissociation from people outside their “group” but who were in one way or another similar to them. Most of the New Culture iconoclasts had a similar educational background and could also have easily been seen by society at large as *liuxuesheng* themselves. Therefore, it was necessary for the iconoclasts to first question the nature of this widely shared identity and then to suggest it is not an identity that everyone deserves. Instead, in their redefinition, a definition especially tailored for themselves, a *liuxuesheng* should be used exclusively for people who can actually live up to the name—to be more specific, people who have a comprehensive mastery of both
Chinese and Western studies and know firmly what they stand for in terms of better serving society.

In another words, if their rupture with Guocui school constitutes a break with the deep rooted “tradition” so as to set out a general direction for their tenets, their rupture with the eclectics and with the liuxuesheng could be perceived as their next strategic move by which they seek to position themselves more precisely among those who, compared with the Guocui school, seem to share more resemblance with them in terms of what to promote. However, if the ruptures between New Culture iconoclasts and other groups were limited to these few the term “multiple ruptures” might not seem appropriate because the ruptures I have been discussing generally fit into the “double rupture” category.

The fact is the “double rupture” we have now is somewhat problematic because it is based on the idea that there is no overlap between what New Culture iconoclasts advocate and what they are opposed to. But as I’ve suggested earlier, these occasional overlaps between the New Culture iconoclasts and their opponents—the Guocui scool and the eclectics—are given little recognition by the New Culture authors in the course of composing their suiganlu. Even when the attitudes of New Culture authors and those of their opponents on the subject of Chinese or Han culture are more alike than either party would care to admit, it is always the conflicts between these other groups and the New Culture “group” that are examined, highlighted and sometimes overstated. The similarities between these other factions and New Culture “group,” however, as well as
the potential deviations in opinion among New Culture iconoclasts are largely neglected, given less priority in the *suiganlu*, or simply left unspoken.

The truth is, New Culture group has more in common than we might have expected with the groups they oppose in terms of their approaches to the promotion of the New Culture Movement. If we may recall, the major critique New Culture iconoclasts have toward the Guocui school is their blind promotion, as Chen Duxiu put it, of “the icon, the old, and Han culture.” But if we look through the *suiganlu*, it does take long before we notice the keynote established by New Culture iconoclasts: a nearly absolute promotion of “Western icons, the new, and Western cultures.” This keynote was especially reinforced when they opposed the eclectics during the debate on Chinese and Western civilizations. While pursuing this line of opposition against the Guocui school, consciously or subconsciously they partly negate what they once opposed – the adulation of “icons” - and contradict themselves by simply adopting another “icon.” While New Culture iconoclasts object to the Tongcheng school and their motif, “writing as a vehicle for conveying Confucius morals” (Chow 1967: 269-276), they themselves are trying convey their own new moral system through writings and publications in *New Youth*.

In *suiganlu*, Lu Xun and Qian Xuantong are the ones who directly touch upon the topic of syncretism of Chinese and Western cultures and both of them seem to explicitly endorse complete Westernization. In *suiganlu* 46, Lu Xun openly states that rather than worship Chinese icons such as Confucius, Guan Gong, or the God of
Pestilence, one should worship Western ones such as Darwin, Ibsen, or Apollo. In *New Youth*, there was also a special issue dedicated to Ibsen (LX 1989: 1: 332-334).

Prompted by the popularity of Han Shichang, a famous performer of Kun opera and his audience’s comments “here comes the Renaissance of Chinese drama,” Qian Xuantong wrote in *suiganlu* no. 18 (Qian 1999c: 13) that this was “daydreaming” (*meng hua*). Then he draws a series of analogies between traditional Chinese drama and traditional Chinese literature and further points out that, even if the artistic achievements of Kun opera is comparable to the *Wenxuan (The Anthology of Literature)*, a landmark in the history of traditional Chinese literature (Pollard 2000: 5), there is no place for it anymore. In order to further stress his stance, Qian even quotes from one of his friends, “if we want real drama to happen in China, we need to close all the *xiguan* (traditional theatre) first.” To Qian, “real drama” apparently can only refer to Western-style realist drama; traditional Chinese drama is just “masked drama” (*lianpu xi*), in which people are dressed up like “inhuman human” (*buxiang ren de ren*) and speak “unreasonable words” (*buxiang hua de hua*).

Here, self-denigration takes an extreme form: Qian decisively labels his own culture “inhuman,” a trope not uncommon in many May Fourth writings. What is notable here is the dramatic reversal of the stereotypical designation of Western people and Chinese people in ethnic Han people’s eyes. For a very long time, Western people had been labeled “barbaric” by the Han, whereas the Han had considered themselves as people from the Middle Kingdom, the center of the world, but in the May Fourth
iconoclasts’ discourses, all of a sudden only Western people can be called as real “humans,” whereas the Chinese are downgraded as “inhuman.” In suiganlu, this role reversal appeared in Qian’s writing, more often in Lu Xun’s writing, and more or less in other iconoclasts’ writings when promoting overall Westernization. I discuss the mentality behind this attitude in the next chapter.

In no. 18, Qian’s comments on traditional drama to some extent echo the concern on the development of Chinese drama in one of Li Dazhao’s essay, “The Tragedy of No Freedom” (Buziyou de beiju) published in Jiayin magazine in 1917 (Tong 2013: 87-88), about a year before the publication of no. 18. In that essay, Li Dazhao appeals to the entertainment industry and literature field for the modification of a new play, Freedom Thesaurus (Ziyou Baojian)\(^2\), so that it does not convey the thoughts of the old loyalist class or restate the authority of traditional ethics and norms. Both Li’s essay and Qian’s suiganlu no.18 are actually responses to Chen’s essay “On Literary Revolution” and the Literary Revolution launched by New Youth in 1917 (Chen 1965:135-140). Though by paralleling the overthrow of traditional Chinese drama with the overthrow of elite literature and monarchy, Qian uses Kun opera as a starting point from which he extends the call for the specific abolishment of Chinese drama to the

\(^2\) Freedom Thesaurus (Ziyou Baojian) is a ‘modern’ Peking Opera (by ‘modern’, I mean it treated contemporary materials but use the canonical form of Peking Opera) produced by the performers of Guangde lou (Guangde traditional theater) in Beijing around 1918. Available accounts do not provide authorship. The play is about two star-crossed lovers who eloped after their parents objected their relationship. Following considerable tribulation, they die but not before repenting of their choice to pursue free love. This repentance is the point of contention among critics.
general, and more politicized, abolition of Chinese tradition; the battlefield of the Literary Revolution extends way beyond literature into aspects of social and political reform.

Along with Chen’s appeal, Lu Xun in suiganlu no. 48 and no. 54 wrote against “dual thinking” (erchong sixiang) to express his disagreement with the eclectics and his support for Qian and more generally the stance taken by New Youth and the New Culture Movement. In no. 54 (LX 1989: 1: 344-346), Lu Xun approaches the topic from three perspectives. He starts from describing, with concrete examples from material culture to morality, the syncretic condition of Chinese society in the present, a weird time and space in which it seems “as if dozens of centuries had been squeezed together.” Lu Xun creates a binary, at one end of which is, of course, the “barbaric” and “primitive” Chinese society and at the other end the “advanced” and “well-developed” Western modernity. Then, he quotes a passage whose author argues that the failure of Chinese social reform is a direct consequence of Chinese people’s “dual thinking” (for example, the simultaneous use of lunar and solar calendars or the continued usage of monarchical year names [nianhao] despite the recent transition to a republican form of government) as well as their incompetence at bringing about a thorough and complete reform. He then further illustrates the point made in the cited passage with actual events that had occurred in Chinese social reforms, such as e.g. the attempt to simultaneously embrace Confucian orthodoxy as a national religion along with newly imported ideals of religious freedom. After this triple reinforcement of the
topic, he arrives at his main point at the end with a poetic aphorism— “Though the world is not small, there is no place in it for a race in wandering.”

In no. 48 (LX 1989: 1: 336-337), through a skillful use of rhetorical tactics such as metaphor and metonymy, Lu Xun argues that it is impossible to split ti (essence/goal) and yong (external manifestation/means) in social practice. Hence, the only way to achieve modernity is to unify ti and yong through the adoption of complete Westernization, which the New Culture iconoclasts promoted to rid China of its “old” and “backward” culture. To strengthen his point, Lu Xun quotes a line from Ibsen— “All or nothing”—as his closing remarks.

The ti-yong formula has long been a core issue in the discussions of how to treat Chinese and Western cultures since reformer-scholars in late imperial time proposed their slogan “Chinese learning as the essence, Western learning as the means (to keep that essence)” (zhongxue wei ti, xixue wei yong). Unlike Qian, who puts his point straightforwardly based on the prerequisite that the “old” and the “new” are intrinsically incompatible, Lu Xun pinpoints the crux in the disputes between Chinese and Western cultures, the inseparability of ti and yong, and directs the problem right at people’s mindset. The nature of “dual-thinking,” therefore, is the disconnection between ti and yong. As Schvarcz has pointed out, the acknowledgment of the “inseparability of means and ends” provided a new way for the reformers to revive China (Schvarcz 1986: 5). What she does not point out is the fact that the New Culture “group” and other
groups might have different attitudes toward the “old” and the “new,” which might be an important factor in their differentiations on the *ti-yong* formula.

If we may recall, *jiuxue* (old learning) and *xinxue* (new learning) are two terms designated by the Guocui school and later popularized among scholars. According to the definition, the “old” and “new” in these two terms refer, respectively, to China and modernized countries. If scholars understand the “old” and the “new” along with this line, they are not likely to perceive Chinese and Western culture in a linear way but more likely a flat way, because to them the “old” and the “new” can coexist in any given time and space. The “old” is domestic, knowledge achieved over a very long time, whereas the “new” is exotic, knowledge they are not yet aware of but may want to absorb into their old knowledge system to broaden it horizontally.

By contrast, when New Culture iconoclasts perceive these two terms, *jiuxue* and *xinxue*, they see the “old” and the “new” in terms of a linear evolution, influenced as they were by Darwinism and historical determinism, as well as by the prerequisite that *jiuxue* refers to “Chinese” culture and *xinxue* “Western” culture. The “old” and the “new” are incompatible, and the new always replaces the old. In labeling themselves as bearers of the “new”—Western culture—it indicates that they are expecting the termination of the “old”—Chinese culture. Hence, the New Culture “group” perceives the “old” and the “new” from a different perspective than that of other groups, for example the eclectics, who consider *ti* to be an “essence” that comes from both Chinese
and Western cultures. The New Culture “group” sees the new “essence” as merely Western culture.

Yet, when Lu Xun lament how Chinese people live in a state of self-contradictory “dual-thinking” and appeals for a thorough reform starting from people’s mentality, he does not seem to be aware of the contradictions within the New Culture iconoclasts’ position itself. It is true that whenever New Culture iconoclasts make a choice in their discourse between Chinese culture and Western culture, they always choose the latter, the “new.” This might have led people to believe that what the New Culture iconoclasts stood for is the opposite of that of the Guocui school or the eclectics—namely, a total Westernization, “All or nothing,” or in Wang Xiaoming’s words (Wang 1999: 12) “everything from traditional China is bad, and everything from modern West is good.” To be more accurate, however, I would like to argue that this understanding is overly simplistic.

Instead of an totalistic Westernization, what May Fourth iconoclasts actually promoted was more of a selective Westernization that involved preference for certain cultural and political aspects over others. In another words, when in their desire for a unification of ti and yong, ti does not refer to thinking the same as Western people but rather selectively promoting Western knowledge, cultures, etc. Therefore, as I suggested earlier, the New Culture “group” might have more in common with groups they apparently oppose than is normally thought: like the eclectics, for instance, the iconoclasts promote what they think valuable from Western culture and meanwhile
leave out what they think useless for the pragmatic purpose of better serving society. Examples also include Qian Xuantong’s judgements on traditional Chinese idioms and Hu Shi’s on the acceptable use of classical allusions, which I discuss in greater detail in the next chapter.

Prompted by the comments about the establishment of Yuan opera as a major in Beijing University published in a newspaper in Shanghai, Chen Duxiu in *suiganlu* no. 3 (Chen 1954c: 343) criticizes journalists for their lack of common sense. According to the journalist, Yuan opera should not be taught in school because it is totally useless and is “the tune presaging the fall of a nation” (*wangguo zhi yin*). Chen refutes this attitude by saying that it is perfectly acceptable to teach Yuan opera at Chinese universities because almost all the universities in Europe, North America, and Japan have theatre majors. Moreover, since some of those foreign universities also teach Latin and Ancient Greek, whether the subject has a practical use for contemporary society should not be the criterion for whether or not it is taught in school.

Ironically, Chen proposed in the inaugural issue of *New Youth* that Chinese youth should pursue “utilitarianism” (Chow 1967: 46), and the review by that journalist cited in Chen’s essay is actually pretty consistent with the discourses of the New Culture Movement as embodied in, for example, Qian’s *suiganlu* on the complete abolishment of Chinese traditional drama discussed earlier, or Lu Xun’s critique in *suiganlu* no. 37 against the teaching of martial arts in Chinese schools because it has no practical use in “saving the country” (LX 1989: 1: 309-310).
Chen’s position as Dean of Humanities at Beijing University might be the reason why he was a bit furious upon reading the newspaper reviews and so eagerly to retort; in that sense, it might not be fully representative of New Culture discourse as embodied in the suiganlu as this appears to contradict the overall New Culture discourse—that is, the request for an overall Westernization, not just a selective one.

If New Culture iconoclasts really believed everything from the “modern West” is good, then, theoretically, they should not prohibit “preserving the national essence” or eclecticism, because in the real “modern West” traditions were valued and different cultures weighed and assimilated. But the May Fourth version of the West is a selective one: it is the iconoclasts’ call to decide what to promote and what can be considered “modern West” and what not. That is why religion—in particular Christianity—is dismissed by the May Fourth as a superstition and left out of their vision of the modern West. Western imperialism is, of course, also the target of critiques in suiganlu, a topic I discuss in the next chapter.

This modified total Westernization and the potential overlap between the New Culture “group” and other groups they publicly oppose do not weaken the argument of “multiple ruptures.” Rather, it draws us to such a characterization of the formation of New Culture identity. That is, the New Culture “group” first opposed the Guocui school as “X.” They then proceed to oppose the opposite of “X,” the eclectics. At the same time, however, they also (at least to some extent) opposed an overall Westernization, which could also be considered the opposite of the position taken by the
eclectics. They thus do not only oppose X; they also oppose the opposite of X, and even
the opposite of the-opposite-of-X, yet this does not itself entail an endorsement of the
‘X’ that they first opposed. Thus the loop of “the multiple ruptures” is completed. It is
the “multiple ruptures” that actually define New Culture “group” and help them carve
out a space in the literary field. Through denying and opposing what they are not, they
established what they are.

One of the important reasons that enables “the multiple ruptures” to happen is
the New Culture iconoclasts’ peculiar definition of the “old” and the “new,” and
especially how their understanding of “new,” their “new,” is determined by their
utilitarian criterion—namely, better serving society. But another main reason, I argue,
is the competition the New Culture iconoclasts found as they entered a crowded literary
field and sought to establish their own name. As a result, they have to emphasize their
ruptures with those more established groups and with similar voices so as to carve out a
distinctive space for themselves but at the same time appealing to readers.

Prompted by the books published about ten years earlier, Liu Bannong in
suiganlu no. 15 (Liu 1954c: 77) laments the “retrogression” of book publications at his
current time. In Liu’s narration, people who wrote or translated ten years ago
introduced “useful” knowledge from the “modern West” and Japan. But the books
published today are either commercial fiction, such as romance, same sex love stories,
“black curtain” stories (heimu xiaoshuo), or reprints of “useless” books published in the
Song or Yuan dynasties. Liu establishes a criterion for what a “useful” book is: not
surprisingly, “new” and “progressive” knowledge from the “modern West” is useful; whereas “backward” entertainment commercial writing and traditional Chinese studies are useless.

It is ironic that when the New Culture “group” discourages literature being used as a tool to convey morals, Liu is actually suggesting that a book has to convey certain “useful” Western knowledge that can benefit society in solving social and political problems. But from another perspective, Liu’s can also be interpreted as an expression of anxiety. In the Chinese publishing world of the time, there was a large market for commercial writing and for Chinese traditional culture, but not much room for “new” thought. In other words, Liu expresses the possible difficulties the New Culture “group” might have experienced in trying to enter the literary field, because of the competition and the relative lack of readership for New Culture enlightenment writing.

Lu Xun expresses a similar anxiety in his suiganlu writing. In suiganlu no. 49 (LX 1989, 1:338-339), he denounces the fact that in China older people use up all the resources, meanwhile forcing the young to carry them on their back all the time and leaving them no space and air to thrive and grow, which according to Lu Xun is a violation of the natural process of evolution.

This suiganlu can be interpreted as a representation of Lu Xun’s Darwinist thoughts at that time, but from the perspective of linear evolution and the survival of the fittest, Lu Xun is also concerned about the threat and competition he and other New Culture iconoclasts faced from more established or more conservative groups. As
Schwarcz has pointed out, unlike their students who perceived the “new” as an inevitability, to the New Culture iconoclasts, “the New had been a vague entity, a hope of emancipation from old culture” (Schwarcz 1986: 62)

Another important factor bringing about “the multiple ruptures” is that, as I have discussed throughout the chapter, New Culture iconoclasts worked as allies. Criticism toward one of their leading representatives was the same as criticizing the whole group and what they represented. Therefore, when Lu Xun mentioned in his preface to *Hot Wind* that he helped *New Youth* confront some attacks from society, it means he not only opposed other groups and their ideologies, but also expressed his support through *suiganlu* for New Culture “group” members when they were attacked. As a matter of fact, the several *suiganlu* he wrote about the caricature newspaper *Shanghai Puck* (*Shanghai Poke*), a Chinese version of the famous British satirical magazine *Punch*, were first prompted by its attacks on Qian Xuantong.

In *suiganlu* no. 46 (LX 1989: 1: 332-333), for instance, Lu Xun recalls he saw a cartoon at his friend’s place in the supplement of one of the newspapers in Shanghai satirizing a person who proposes the abolishment of Chinese characters as someone with a “foreign dog’s heart” and barking like a “foreign dog.” The person abused by the *Puck* artist is Qian Xuantong, who had written the essay, “On the Future of the Chinese Writing System” (*Zhongguo jinhou zhi wenzi wenti*), published in *New Youth* in 1918 (Qian 1999b)
In no. 43 (LX 1989, 1:330-331), Lu Xun mocks the *Shanghai Puck* artist as the leader of the *Citizen Group* (*Gongmin tuan*), a gang of thugs hired by Yuan Shikai to force politicians to elect him President. In making a link between the *Puck* artist and Yuan Shikai’s *Citizen Group*, Lu Xun clearly suggests that *Puck* and its artist is reactionary. His remarks influenced many future scholars and readers for a very long time to examine *Puck* and its artist that way. But the truth is, Lu Xun’s remarks are much exaggerated. The artist, Shen Bochen, chief editor of two publications both called *Puck* and a famous caricaturist around May Fourth period, created quite a few works that are actually revolutionary in terms of opposing imperialism and the rule warlords. But as his aim was to counter an apparent attack and support a fellow New Culture “group” member, Lu Xun probably did not look into the background of that artist before he wrote his *suiganlu*, or he may known about Shen’s background but caricatured him anyway to demonstrate support.

To some extent, what Lu Xun did to Shen Bochen does not differentiate much from what Shen did to Qian. It might be true that Lu Xun does not picture Shen as a “lower animal,” but linking him with Yuan Shikai and the restoration of the monarchy is an attack much more cruel and political threatening at that time. Besides, as a caricaturist, Shen was probably just expressing his individual opinions on some social issues, whereas Lu Xun was promoting his group’s interests, which in his mind he no doubt felt was in the best interest of society.
In addition, as I have argued above, the New Culture “group” and New Culture ideologies are inseparable. When Lu Xun saw a personal attack on Qian from the artist, he immediately generalized it as an attack on the whole New Culture ideology. Hence, in his critique, Lu Xun directly pinpoints the *Puck* artist’s disconnection in the *ti-yong* formula—that is, the artist uses a Western artistic style to criticize Western or “new” thoughts and transmit “old” thoughts.

In addition, Lu Xun also makes a request to all artists to be enlightened (*jinbude*). He explains what “enlightened” is—“having progressive thoughts” and “being the prophets who can lead the way in social reforms.” This request to artists is more like a self-projection of New Culture iconoclasts themselves; Shen himself cannot be considered a “new” artist because he attacked one of the New Culture “group” members and one of its proposals. Thus, it seems that the only way for artists to be “enlightened” is to be exactly on the same side as the New Culture Movement and to agree with everything they propose—in other words, to turn themselves into New Culture iconoclasts. New Culture iconoclasts are basically projecting themselves as “enlightened” prophets in China who lead the way to the “light of humanity.” Once again, this is another example of defining themselves through the criticism they make of others and the support they give to their like-minded fellows.

The image of prophet, or “light bearer,” in Shih’s words (Shih 2001, 75), explicitly appears in *suiganlu* no. 41 (LX 1989: 1:324-326). In that essay, Lu Xun writes: “if there is no torch: I can be the light. If there is a torch or the Sun, for sure we
will disappear willingly. We will feel no discontent, in fact we will admire the torch or the Sun because he lights up human beings, including me.” As Shih has analyzed this particular image of Lu Xun, I won’t elaborate her, though I analyze this suiganlu from the perspective of national character in the next chapter. What I would like to point out here is that no. 41 is also a suiganlu that Lu Xun wrote as a response to a reader of New Youth who attacked Qian Xuantong for his proposal to get rid of the Chinese writing system. Lu Xun points out in the essay that most failures of social reforms in China are largely due to people’s “cold sarcasm” (lengchao), which allows for little tolerance toward those who oppose traditional norms.

From this discourse, it can be perceived that Lu Xun might be aware of the fact that what New Culture iconoclasts were trying to promote—especially Qian Xuantong’s proposal for the abolishment of Chinese characters—was totally avant-garde and experimental. What Lu Xun suggests in his suiganlu is not that he fully supports the proposal, but that even the wildest reform idea deserves a chance; if people never even consider such ideas, old thought will never give way to new thought and social reforms will never be possible.

Hence, it is true that some of the discourses of New Culture ideologies and New Culture iconoclasts’ definition of the disconnection and the unification of ti-yong formula present a kind of “absolute thinking,” as Wang Xiaoming argues. He also suggests that sometimes New Culture iconoclasts might be “saying one thing and thinking another” or their “mind and mouth [are] not in accord,” but this is not the
whole story, because at other times, New Culture iconoclasts perceive the issues in an absolute manner (Wang 1999: 13-14).

In this chapter, I have been arguing that with their “multiple ruptures,” the New Culture iconoclasts were motivated by shared pragmatic interests, more than some real thoughts. That is to say, as Lu Xun himself remarked about his days as a writer for *New Youth*, the discourses of New Culture iconoclasts in *suiganlu* are more a consequence of “obeying the General’s order” (*ting jiangling*) (LX 1989, 1:419) than of their individual ideas or personal interests. As I mentioned earlier, the introduction of *suiganlu* in *New Youth* took place after the formation of an editorial committee; only the works of members of that committee were accepted to be published in the *suiganlu* column. The differentiations between the New Youth “group” members are very much downplayed while they were trying to enter the literary field through *New Youth* and the New Culture Movement. Hence, the reason the discourses in the *suiganlu* seem extremely consistent during 1918 to 1919 is probably not that the iconoclasts all held to absolutely identical principles in all respects—and indeed we have above explored several cases in which they did not—but that their discourses were all to some extent shaped by the New Culture ideologies they promoted, and that commitment to this ideology overrode such personal differences.

Besides, if we go over their other writings published in other publications, especially prefaces for their essay collections, we might derive a totally different impression of them; these other writings are generally milder in tone and contain more
modesty, uncertainty, self-consciousness, and sometimes even pessimism than in the "suiganlu" in *New Youth*. In one of the forewords to the *Essay Collection of Qian Xuantong*, Chen Shumin mentions that even Qian Xuantong himself admitted that his proposals occasionally leaned to extremes and often exaggerated things. It also that case that Qian’s discourse in *New Youth* sometimes does not truly match his behavior in his daily life. For example, on the one hand, he proposed the abolishment of Chinese characters; on the other hand, he was especially fond of writing one traditional style of Chinese characters called the “style used by people in the Tang dynasty to write sutras” (*tangren xiejing ti*). In addition, although he wrote against using traditional “allusions” in his "suiganlu" along with Chen Duxiu, Hu Shi, and other proponents of the Literary Revolution, Qian himself frequently used modern “allusions” when he wrote letters and essays (Chen 1999, 2:16), as did Lu Xun.

Even if we recognize that New Culture iconoclasts did to some extent believe in the discourses they promoted, they were mostly motivated by the potential outcomes of their discourses—that is, to “save the country” and to serve society better. As discussed earlier, it is very possible that Lu Xun and other iconoclasts were all very aware of the fact that what they were doing was extremely radical and not easy to implement successfully. We have also discussed that some of them in their "suiganlu" even expressed their concerns that social reforms might be hard to carry out due to the pressure and objections from conservative parties. Therefore, contrary to the claim of Wang Xiaoming (1999: 14-15), it would not be likely for them to take extreme
positions because they could not suppress their enthusiasm as “salvationists” and wanted to “achieve quick results” to fulfill their own satisfaction as effective leaders. Instead, as Chow has suggested about Lu Xun, which I think can be applied to other iconoclasts as well, even their absolute discourses are mostly motivated by their sincere desire to make change (Chow 1967, 309); this then necessitated that they carve out a space in the literary field from which they could speak with a consistent voice to promote these desired change. And their eagerness and enthusiasm might actually indicate their deep awareness of crisis, uncertainty, and even pessimism about the possibility of realizing social reforms.

If the *suiganlu* were to contain no shocking or eye-catching discourse, it might not stimulate public discussion or draw people’s attention to *New Youth* or the ideals of the New Culture Movement. In his preface to *Call for Arms*, Lu Xun recalls that Qian Xuantong came to ask him for writings to publish in *New Youth*, he felt that they might have been a little “lonely” (LX 1989: 1: 419). In its early years, the circulation of *New Youth* was not as large as it would become in May Fourth period (Chow 1967: 74). When *New Youth* first launched the Literary Revolution, it failed to draw reader’s attention and their rivals resisted it passively with no explicit response. However, by saying that, I am not suggesting that New Culture iconoclasts did not come across any opposition when they tried to enter the literary field. On the contrary, the silence might actually indicate a more stable and established status held by their rivals at that time. In order to stimulate attention to their proposals for literary reform, Qian Xuantong wrote a
fake letter from a reader in which he imitated their opponents’ standpoints (Chow 1967: 66). Therefore, to some extent, the New Culture iconoclasts needed this kind of abuse from their rivals to draw in people’s attentions to their real social concerns.

Ironically, though the New Youth Association was not established until mid-1919 and scholars like Tse-Tsung Chow (1967: 174) stress the importance of it in terms of connecting the New Culture “group,” its predecessor, the comparatively loose New Youth editorial committee established in 1918, seemed to confer greater unity on the group than the actual establishment of the Association. Not long after the establishment of the New Youth Association, the members of the New Culture “group” started to go on different paths and eventually disbanded the committee. In another words, the New Culture “group” was rather more unified before the establishment of the New Youth Association than after it. Their greater unity in this pre-Association period, as we have seen above, was a product of their common wish to make the country survive the crisis, the difficulties they came across when they tried to enter the literary field, and the numerous attacks they received from other groups. When they all eventually became their readers’ icons and New Culture ideology started to be widely accepted after the May 4th 1919, their common identities were well established in the literary field, and even in aspects of social reforms. As such, they no longer needed to take any orders from the General.
Chapter 2: Diversity in Unity

In the essay “Our Answer to the Charges against the Magazine” (*Benzhi zuian zhi dabianshu*) (Chen 1954k: 10-11) published in *New Youth* in January 1919, Chen Duxiu summarizes the main tenets of New Culture as supporting “the two gentlemen, Mr. Democracy and Mr. Science.” Accordingly, in order to advocate “Mr. Democracy,” the New Culturalists oppose Confucianism and its associated rituals, traditional ethics, and autocratic form of government. Similarly, to promote “Mr. Science,” they advocate the abandonment of traditional arts and traditional religion (ghosts and gods). Furthermore, Chen points out in particular that their opposition to *guocui* and traditional literature is to advocate both “gentlemen.”

It is generally true that, as Schwarcz has argued, “Mr. Democracy” and “Mr. Science” as promoted by New Culture iconoclasts are more “slogans that connote all-encompassing alternatives to the Confucian tradition” (Schwarcz 1986: 107) than more specific terms, as Confucian tradition is frequently intertwined with traditional ethics, arts, and political forms, etc., that the iconoclasts oppose. Nevertheless, in Chen’s original wording, the ethics, politics, arts, religion, and literature that iconoclasts feel obliged to firmly oppose are all described as “old” (*jiu*), a term that is set up as opposite of the “new” of New Culture. As I suggested in the previous chapter, New Culture iconoclasts’ common identity is based on their distinctive definition of “old” and “new”
and “traditional China” and the “modern West.” Hence, I would like to complicate the situation by looking closely into the New Culture identity constructed in *suiganlu* and thus investigate what part of “traditional China” and exactly what alternatives to the “modern West” are at issue. Though New Culture iconoclasts may be aware of the experimental nature of some of their viewpoints, what they promoted is certainly not “anything-but-Confucianism”; nor is what they opposed simply the obstinate clinging on to Confucian traditions.

In the previous chapter, I examined the role of *suiganlu* in helping New Culture iconoclasts shape a common identity as they entered the literary field and defined themselves in terms of (1) being a site where iconoclasts distance themselves from more established groups through “the multiple ruptures,” and (2) a weapon to rebut their rivals. In this chapter, I demonstrate how *suiganlu* play an important part in the construction of a more exact New Culture identity. The main topics treated in *suiganlu* can be divided into four categories: (1) *wenyan* (classical Chinese) and *baihua*, (2) *jiu zhengzhi* (outdated political forms) and democracy, (3) *jiu zongjiao* (traditional religion) and science and (4) *guocui* and national characteristics. This categorization is primarily for the expediency of the discussion, and I am not suggesting that these topics are so neatly differentiated in New Culture discourse. On the contrary, they are frequently woven together and work jointly to forge the New Culture identity. Meanwhile, beneath the common identity the divergence among the New Culture iconoclasts is also revealed through their variant approaches to the topics.
Wenyan (classical Chinese) and baihua

The Literary Revolution is, of course, a critical part of the larger New Culture Movement. As scholars have repeatedly pointed out, the definition of “new literature” is clearly stated in Hu Shi’s “Some Modest Proposals for the Reform of Chinese Literature” (Wenxue gailiang chuyi) (Hu 1998, 3:17-28) and “On Constructive Literary Revolution” (Jianshede wenxue geming lun) (Hu 1998, 3: 59-75), and Chen Duxiu’s “On Literary Revolution” (Chen 1965, 1:135-140) and other supporting publications in New Youth. In the previous chapter, I mentioned the New Culture iconoclasts’ criteria in Liu Bannong’s suiganlu no. 15 for determining what a useful book is. Not only traditional-style writing, but also entertaining commercial fiction is excluded from iconoclasts “new literature.” Instead of focusing on “new literature” in general, my analysis in this chapter is specifically narrowed down to the conflict between wenyan and baihua, a topic that is discussed in suiganlu by several iconoclast-writers, though I cannot of course escape “new literature” viewpoints entirely.

The standpoints presented in these suiganlu are generally consonant with the enthusiastic contemporary promotion of baihua, as we can particularly see in Hu Shi’s suggestions that authors “not use [classical] allusions” (bu yong dian) and “not imitate the ancients” (bu mofang guren). Nevertheless, it is not impossible to find examples indicating that New Culture iconoclasts’ attitude toward wenyan, especially in specific points of usage such as idioms, is certainly not an absolute condemnation of its use.
For instance, as a development of one of Hu Shi’s points in his “Modest Proposals” that idioms are not to be considered as classical allusions, Qian Xuantong in no. 45 (Qian 1999: 20) further specifies what idioms should and should not be preserved. Those that should be preserved are traditional ones but still largely used in spoken language such as “keep the glittering casket and give back the pearls to the sellers” (*maiduhuanzhu*, lack of judgment/choosing the wrong thing), “wait for windfalls” (*shouzhudai*), and “attend to trifles but neglect the essentials” (*shebenzhumo*) and new coinage with colloquial words such as “coffins comes out of the city wall” (*chengtoushang chu guancai*, take a roundabout way) including those newly invented by *New Youth* writers such as “if there is a hole, there has to be a plant growing in it” (*zaokongxuzai*), a coinage of Wu Zhihui. Idioms that Qian determines should not be preserved are those particularly exemplifying traditional customs and norms and thus deemed too irrelevant or dangerous to modern life. Examples include “kowtow” (*dunshou*), “burn the midnight oil to fight” (*tiaodengyezhan*), “walk slowly with golden lotus” (*lianbushanshan*), and “take off traditional Chinese style hats” (*mianguan*).

Though Qian Xuantong once proposed the abolishment of the Chinese writing system to show his steadfast opposition to Confucianism, he actually shows more circumspection when treating more specific issues of linguistic usage. It is clear that instead of proposing to jettison *wenyan* completely, New Culture iconoclasts developed their own criteria for what kind of *wenyan* is worth preserving. Clearly, the criteria for
Chinese idioms are, just like other criteria developed by iconoclasts for the purpose of evaluation or re-evaluation, aimed to promote New Culture. To be more specific, Qian’s criteria for idioms suggest the abandonment of idioms associated with Confucian traditions and the unconditional inclusion of New Culture coinages. Ironically, some of the idioms considered literally too “ancient” by Qian, such as tiaodeng yezhan and mianguan, are not infrequently used by speakers even today, though their meanings are not the same as in their classical contexts. However, those coined by New Youth writers in response to their current affairs, such as Wu Zhihui’s zaokong xuzai, have actually become “classical allusions” to most contemporary readers, and one could surmise that they never attained widespread usage among the common people even at that time, but rather circulated within intellectual circles as “contemporary allusions.”

In addition to Qian Xuantong’s suiganlu specifically dealing with Chinese idioms, Qian and Lu Xun also wrote about “avoiding the use of classical allusions” in general. Prompted by an advertisement about teaching classical allusions through correspondence published in Shanghai Times (Shanghai Shibao), Qian argues in suiganlu no. 44 (Qian 1999c: 19) that classical allusions are not worth learning. Starting with “I need to call attention to youth: you are all ‘human beings’ living in the twentieth century, not ‘chatterboxes’ (huaxiazi) imitating ancient people,” his following argument can be summarized into three points. First, writing should reflect its author’s individuality and personality; it should not distance itself from speech. Second, classical allusions are alien to modern life. Thus, they are either irrelevant, lifeless, or at odds
with the reality of contemporary life. As a consequence, it is a waste of time and energy to remember all of them and to painstakingly apply them to represent life and thought in contemporary times. To better approach his readers and convince them of the correctness of his suggestions, Qian shifts his tone from that of a magisterial “torchbearer” to that of a “peer.” Toward the end of the essay, he sounds even more approachable by putting himself in youth’s shoes and closes his argument with, “It is you [youth] that I think about when I say that it [learning classical allusions] is really not worthwhile”.

Published in the next issue, Lu Xun’s suiganlu no. 47 (LX 1989, 1:335) was very likely written as a response to and to support Qian’s essay. With a deft employment of metaphor and analogy, Lu Xun demonstrates his points with vivid examples instead of straightforward reasoning. Drawing on the example of a microscopic version of “Preface to the Poems Collected from the Orchid Pavilion” (Lantingji xu) carved on a tiny piece of ivory, which he uses as an analogy for classical allusions, Lu Xun compares people who read “Lantingji xu” with a microscope to those who decode classical allusions with a minute knowledge of classical texts. He thus concludes that it is unnecessary and too demanding to write and read classical allusions, especially when people at present are able to communicate plainly without them.

Though Qian Xuantong and Lu Xun approach the issue with different methods, their basic standpoints are very much alike. Both of them suggest that classical allusions are merely helpful in understanding the past; hence, it is no longer suitable or necessary
to depict the present with classical allusions because they only embody outdated facts. As a result, Qian Xauntong and Lu Xun suggest that, instead of trying hard to convey one’s thoughts with antiquated and confusing allusions, people should rather get rid of classical allusions and express themselves with everyday speech, the language of the day, which, though not explicitly stated in previous suiganlu, is undoubtedly baihua. Thus, what Qian and Lu Xun promote reaches beyond the mere avoidance of classical allusions to the promotion of an alternative written register, namely the colloquial, to replace wenyan.

Whereas both Qian Xuantong and Lu Xun shared their general standpoint with Hu Shi in promoting the avoidance of classical allusions, their previous arguments were based on perspectives different than those of Hu Shi in “Modest Proposals.” Hu Shi discourages the use of classical allusions mainly because most people at the time were unable to use classical allusions correctly. To be more specific, what Hu Shi mainly criticizes were either those who mechanically used classical allusions regardless of context or those who relied on excessive classical allusions to gloss over their inarticulateness, thus losing the meaning they originally tried to convey. Moreover, Hu Shi never makes much of the “outdatedness” of classical allusions. When he illustrates whose use of classical allusions were skillful, Hu Shi not only uses examples from Su Shi (1037-1011) but also from Wang Guowei (1877-1927). Therefore, though Hu Shi primarily discourages the use of classical allusions, he still allows it occasionally if
people did it skillfully. For Hu Shi, classical allusions still have a place in contemporary discourse so long as they are properly used.

Qian and Lu Xun, however, choose to stress the outdatedness of classical allusions and how demanding and unrewarding it is for contemporary writers to learn and correctly use those allusions. The difference between Hu Shi’s viewpoint and those of Qian and Lu Xun, I would argue, is more likely a consequence of their different target readers rather than any substantial disagreement on the issue. When Hu Shi wrote his “Modest Proposals” and started the Literary Revolution in 1917, in order to draw people’s attention nationwide, his target readership was “all the citizens” (woguoren). Hence, he not only criticized present scholars who used clichés, but also youth who “wrote as if they were sick and sad when they were not” (wubingshenyin). The same target readership is also observable in Qian’s “Opposition to the Use of Allusions and Others” (Fandui yongdian ji qita) (Qian 1999a) published in 1917. In “Opposition,” Qian’s standpoint on the use of classical allusions differs slightly from that in his suiganlu but is closer to Hu Shi’s in terms of criticizing people for the way they use classical allusions. In 1918, when Qian and Lu Xun’s previous suiganlu were published, however, the Literary Revolution had entered a constructive stage. Hu in his “On Constructive Literary Revolution” is also more focused on how to carry out the replacement of wenyan with baihua in writing. Thus, the main readership that Qian and Lu Xun had in mind would predictably become the youth, because it was the youth that New Culture iconoclasts sought to win over. Indeed, it was the support of youth that
they counted on to actually carry out the respective projects of the Literary Revolution and New Culture in general.

Therefore, what Qian and Lu Xun in their previous suiganlu attempted to do was to lead youth to rethink the necessity of learning classical allusions or even the relevance of classical Chinese in contemporary times, given that the use of classical allusions was an important feature of wenyan writing. Predictably, they carefully avoided direct criticism of youth, because they did not want to risk mistakenly directing youth to improve their skill in using classical allusions properly and appropriately through more readings in classical Chinese.

In addition, Lu Xun, Qian Xuantong, and Zhou Zuoren all wrote, from different angles, for the promotion of baihua in their suiganlu. In suiganlu no. 57 (LX 1989, 1:350), subtitled “The Butchers of Today” (Xianzai de tushazhe), Lu Xun appeals to the break between the past and the present by adding another dimension, the future, into the discussion. He mocks people who denigrate baihua as vulgar, shallow, and worthless but who spoke it daily. Associating those who prefer the “dead language” (jiangsi de yuyan) with “decadent” (fuxiude) Confucianism, he underlines the dead end of the past, the “old,” and criticizes those people for being the butchers of “today,” the “new.” In an attempt to underline his dire warning, he further points out that the consequence of being the butchers of “today” was, in fact, to butcher their offspring’s “tomorrow.” This is a demonstration of Lu Xun’s adherence to the principles of linear evolution and historical determinism.
Compared with Lu Xun, Qian Xuantong and Zhou Zuoren emphasize the “genuineness” (zhen) of baihua in literary creation and translation in suiganlu no. 55 (Qian 1999c) and no. 24 (Zhou 1954, 6:286-190), respectively. Prompted by a ci (lyric meter poem) written by Huang Kan (1868-1935), Zhang Taiyan’s favorite student who had known Qian since their early Japan years, Qian made use of the ci as a counterexample to illustrate the genuineness of baihua. Huang Kan was well known as a master of the Wenxuan school and an opponent of baihua at the time (Wang 2006, 34-38). Qian starts his argument with a common misunderstanding among readers, including himself, that based on the literal meaning of the ci the writer must be an old loyalist (yilao) or young loyalist (yishao) who longed for monarchical restoration.

As Qian knew Huang very well, he then was able to assure readers by using examples from his other writings that Huang was not yilao or yishao but a revolutionist. Thus, faced with the mystery that a revolutionist wrote a ci indicating contradictory beliefs, Qian solved it by discussing Huang’s verse preface (tici) to his ci. Apparently, Huang was visiting an ancient bridge and he wrote it with the same rhyme words used in a ci by Wu Mengchuang (1207-1269) (Zhou 2002: 17) in which he described a visit to Xianxian tang (Xianxian Hall), an ancient hall near Xihu (the West Lake). Qian thus suggests that the reason Huang used expressions associated with the yilao and yishao was only to make his ci resonate with the one written by Wu, arguably one of the most preeminent ci writers of the Southern Song (Zhou 2013,100). In other words, it was the classical canon and the norms of writing in wenyan that constrained Huang, forcing him
to use expressions against his will. Therefore, Qian arrives at his point: compared with *wenyan* writing valuing “resemblance” to masterpieces in the past, New Literature values “genuineness” in expressing individuality.

Given that the works of the Mengchuang school were targeted by New Culture iconoclasts during the Literary Revolution along with the works of the Tongcheng school, the Wenxuan school, etc., it is not surprising that Huang’s *ci* was singled out and criticized by Qian. However, Qian manipulated some facts in the process promoting *baihua* and New Literature in general. First, though Qian was not a part of Wenxuan school as Huang was, it is very unlikely that he was unable, as he claimed, to interpret Huang’s *ci* correctly after his first reading of it. It is yet more unlikely that he would have been unaware of the existence of Huang’s illustration, the key to the *ci*’s interpretation, when he first read it. By constructing this rhetorical presentation of his experience of Huang’s *ci*, Qian furthers his goal of promoting *baihua* as a medium of literature.

Moreover, it is probably true that Huang’s expressions in his *ci* are to some extent constrained by the rhyme pattern and tune pattern he used, though it is not necessarily true that Huang must have realized he was using expressions associating with *yilao* or *yishao* when he wrote the poem. It seems that people at the time had a stereotypical view about whether or not a person was a *yilao* or *yishao*, not based on the person’s actual political stance but on the expressions he used in his writing, without taking into account the context in which it was written or the texts it drew from and
referred to. As Lin Zhihong suggests, *yilao* or *yishao* is not only a self-identification but also an identity shaped by society and imposed on some (Lin 2014, 25-26). Qian was guilty of imposing that identity on the Mengchuang school and people who imitated their style.

Additionally, Qian claimed that traditional literature was more imitative than creative. However, the “genuineness” stressed by New Literature was not entirely an invention by New Culture iconoclasts. Back to late 16th century, the Gongan school in the late Ming also championed “genuineness” in literary works in order to express their contempt of the conventional writing prevailing among the literati class (Pollard 2000, 11). One could thus argue that Qian in his suiganlu intentionally glossed over the diversity and creativity of traditional literature to emphasize the difference between traditional literature and New Literature and thus to praise the latter.

Different from Qian’s approach, Zhou Zuoren in suiganlu no. 24 demonstrates the “genuineness” of baihua in literary translation with examples from *Nine out of Ten* (*Shizhijiu*), a collection of six Hans Christian Andersen’s fairy tales translated into classical Chinese by Chen Jialin and Chen Dadeng and published in January 1918. Without naming them, Zhou criticizes the translators for clinging to traditional thought (*jiu sixiang*) and turning Andersen’s fairy tales into “Confucian and Mencian didactic essays” (*Kong Meng wenzhang*). He first introduces the academic and literary values of Andersen’s (and Grimm’s) fairy tales with reviews and translated citations from Western scholarship in folklore, especially that of Edmund Gosse, based on which he
summarizes two of its characteristics: their use of children’s expressions and their innocent uncultivated thought. Unlike Qian, who illustrates the difference between traditional literature and New Literature without baihua examples, Zhou compares the translations of several passages in both baihua and wenyan and thus tries to convince readers why the baihua version is indeed better. Apparently, the translators occasionally cut off Andersen’s childish expressions in an attempt to make their translation neater and more concise, qualities that certainly conform to the aesthetic ideals of wenyan writing. Moreover, translators also altered a number of plots to make stories less brutal and more in accordance with social ethics and norms. Thus, Zhou suggests that compared with using baihua, translation in wenyan tends to distort the original text and fails to faithfully capture the attributes of the original work.

Zhou Zuoren highly appreciated Andersen’s fairy tales and worked earnestly to enlarge their influence in China. As early as 1914, Zhou had already started to publish articles introducing Andersen (Zhang 2005, 222). In suiganlu no. 24, Zhou even identifies himself as a member of China’s “Andersen Party” (An Dang). The reasons Zhou paid special attention to Andersen are very likely the two characteristics of Andersen’s fairy tales mentioned above. These two characteristics, in fact, are also highly consistent with what New Culture iconoclasts promoted at the time. In his suiganlu, Zhou particularly stressed that the written language in Andersen’s fairy tales is extremely faithful to children’s spoken language in daily life. Evidently, what Zhou appreciated was not only Andersen’s genuine use of children’s expressions to narrate
stories for children in particular but also the general principle espoused by both Andersen and the New Literature authors that a writer should “use spoken language to write” (yong shuohua yiyang de yanyu zhushi) (Zhou 1954, 6:286-190). Additionally, in order to demonstrate the significance of the innocent uncultivated thought in Andersen’s fairy tales, Zhou cites a passage by Gosse, in which Gosse points out that Andersen was never a hypocrite teaching moral lessons but rather a rebel resisting textbook-style moral education through his own writing. This characteristic was also in tune with the main principles of New Literature that writers should not imitate and convey traditional morality but rather express themselves without concern for convention. Andersen’s fairy tales thus held a comparable significance to the works of other Western iconoclast writers, such as Ibsen, promoted by New Culture at the time.

Zhou Zuoren’s promotion of baihua and New Literature is not only revealed in his argument that literary translation in baihua is better than that in wenyan but, more important, in his particular choice of promoting Andersen’s fairy tales among others. As C. T. Hsia has also suggested, Zhou Zuoren “then, was as much as dedicated to the task of reforming Chinese society, though not quite in the same fashion, as his fellow intellectuals” (Hsia 1961, 21).

_Jiu zhengzhi_ (outdated political forms) and democracy

In this part, I especially address what _jiu zhengzhi_ (old politics) is in the New Culture iconoclasts’ point of view. Rather than a more inclusive concept of “politics”
addressed in Chen’s essay “Today’s Political Issues in China” (Jinri zhongguo zhi zhengzhi wenti) (Chen 1954: 1-4), I narrow the definition of “politics” to a comparatively circumscribed perspective. I mainly analyze Chen Duxiu, Qian Xuantong, and Tao Menghe’s suiganlu in this section. It can be perceived that the jiu zhengzhi opposed by New Culture iconoclasts is clearly more than monarchy and associated Confucian political traditions.

In fact, Qian is the only one among the three whose writing clearly addresses the dichotomy between Republican China and the “four-thousand-year monarchy” of traditional China. He explicitly advocates a republican form of governance, with France and the United States as exemplars, and upholds a concomitant rejection of guocui, here mainly referring to Confucian thought related to the monarchy. Moreover, in suiganlu no. 28 (Qian 1999c: 14), Qian especially emphasizes what a citizen and an official should be in a republican polity. Notably, he underlines that a good official is a civil servant who should never try to be “benevolent and loving to the people” (renmin aimin) and that citizens of a nation should never accept such benevolence from their officials either. To illustrate what the prototype of a benevolent and loving official is, he draws an analogy in which a person with a cat buys fishy food to feed his cat everyday. “Being benevolent and loving” is a widely accepted political ideal and ultimate goal of officials and governors in Confucianism, whereas in a republic, people are supposed to observe the rule of law instead the rule of man; in a republican system, being benevolent or loving is no longer most relevant to a governor. By comparing a benevolent official
with the master and citizens who accept his benevolence with his pet cat, clearly Qian is trying to expose the feudal nature of this deep-rooted mentality and the seemingly desirable relation in which citizens are actually subordinate to the officials, who bestow their benevolence on those beneath them.

Starting with “several words that I need to inform our citizens,” Qian once again sounds like a “torchbearer,” one who foregrounds a complete break between the newborn “Republican China established in the twentieth century” and the “four-thousand-year monarchy” and corrects people’s outdated mentality that undergirds a system of inordinately obedient subjects and (maybe) doting masters, quite out of place in a republic. Similar to Qian’s discourse of correcting false mentalities, Chen Duxiu writes to correct people’s unreasonable criticism of the Congress in suiganlu no. 2 (Chen 1954b: 343). Prompted by people’s complaints that the Congress is useless in bringing about any actual benefits to the people and only causes troubles for the current government, Chen explains with examples from the former Congress that its responsibility is nothing but to supervise government policies. He argues that these inefficiencies lamented by some are only a part of the process of governmental oversight and should not be met with disappointment.

Though both Qian’s and Chen’s suiganlu serve the purpose of correcting a false mentality of the people on political issues, explicitly or implicitly they approach the “correction” from different perspectives. In no. 28, the standpoint of Qian is to urge people to discard “guocui.” no. 28 was published in the same issue as Qian’s no. 29,
which focusses on opposing “preserving guocui.” In no. 28, Qian also advocates discarding guocui and relates it to the “four-thousand-year-monarchy,” which is consistent with his definition of guocui in no. 29 (Chen 1999, 2:15-16). Besides, unlike Chen, who corrects people through a plain clarification of what the role of the Congress is, Qian constructs ideal images of citizens and civil servants in Republican China through highlighting that they should be the opposite of the established images of citizens and civil servants in the imperial system. He stresses, for instance, that the main body of the nation is not officials or the President, but the citizens; the President should not be called “the head of the nation” (yuanshou) because he is the citizens’ civil servant; officials should not be benevolent and loving and the citizens should not value traditional ethics, such as “loyal, filial piety, chastity, and righteousness” (zhong, xiao, jie, yi) but the values of individual equality and humanity. Given the way that Qian establishes “correct” notions of what citizens and officials should be, it is safe to say that his focus in no. 28 is to oppose guocui, which is equated with Confucianism. Moreover, as I suggested earlier, suiganlu often meld together various topics in a single essay.

Chen Duxiu’s standpoint in no. 2, however, is presumably associated with the political situation at the time. After Zhang Xun’s unsuccessful attempt to restore the monarchy in 1917, warlord Duan Qirui took over the power of the central government in Beijing and was the leader of Anfu Clique established on March 1918 (Chow 1967, 10). Financially supported by the Japanese, the Anfu Clique bought the support of a
majority of congressmen so as to manipulate the election of the new Congress in the fall of 1918 (Chow 1967, 78). Suiganlu no. 2 was published in New Youth in April 1918 right after the Anfu Clique was established. Through justifying and acknowledging the administration of the former Congress (dismissed by Zhangxun in 1917), it is very possible that Chen was alluding to Anfu congressmen at the present and implicitly criticizing them for not fulfilling their duties and for being submissive to Duan Qirui out of personal interests.

By the same token of correcting false mentality, in suiganlu no. 4 (Tao 1954a), Tao Menghe chooses to criticize a popular board game, Promotion Map (Shengguan tu) for transmitting to children misleading views on the meaning of taking official positions. Tao’s style contrasts with Qian’s and Chen’s forthright manner and their lack of explanation for their motivations in writing. At the beginning of the piece, he explicitly acknowledges the importance of game play in general, particularly its educational purposes and importance in shaping the minds of children. He then illustrates with three points the negative influence Promotion Map could bring to children through its ideological assumptions. First, he questions the game rule that players achieve promotions effortlessly through the rolling of dice, because it encourages players, especially children, to believe in the primacy of chance and destiny instead of real efforts; in his view, belief in chance and destiny are more representative of traditional Chinese society than contemporary reality. Second, he disagrees with its one-sided presentation of striving for power without showing the responsibilities that come with
power. Third, he compares the game negatively against Western ball games and points out that the rules of the game do not instill a sense of cooperation, which is in reality necessary for official positions.

By emphasizing the educational purposes of games and providing an assessment of the value of a game, Tao, just as other iconoclasts sought for literature or art, was trying to regulate games into an educational tool with which to transform people’s mindset toward the New Culture value system.

Though his discourse does serve the purpose of educating people about how to understand the meaning of promotion and taking official positions in a republican system, it also indicates his implicit criticism of officials for their continued adherence to bureaucratic ideals. When Tao illustrates his second point, instead of giving a concrete example from the game itself, he uses examples from current social phenomena. By pointing out people’s longstanding veneration of bureaucrats in Chinese history and officials’ incomplete understanding of taking official positions—namely, their sole interest in the personal benefits they can receive and disregard for the responsibilities they also need to take on—Tao suggests that present-day people, especially officials, are negatively influenced by traditional values. Tao’s discourse, on the one hand, can be seen as a supplementary discourse to Qian’s appeal for ideal citizens and officials in a republican polity and his rejection of guocui because he provides justification for his claims through his depiction of substandard officials in reality. On the other hand, Tao also differs from Qian in that he attributes the veneration
of bureaucrats to a cumulative effect brought about by various aspects of society, not necessarily confined to Confucianism or the monarchy.

Moreover, if Tao’s criticism of warlord government expressed in no. 4 is still largely implicit in his opposition to the worship of bureaucratism, it is presented rather more transparently in suiganlu no. 6 (Tao 1954c: 347). Without adding any comments, he transcribes a narration from a friend who just came back from Suiyuan (part of today’s Inner Mongolia) where soldiers and bandits were relentlessly disrupting people’s lives, and the poor were often forced to join the army or bandits to survive. As local officials were mostly from the southern part of China hoping for promotions to posts in other areas, they handled the chaos with inaction. The narration realistically documents the disorder suffered by rural areas throughout the nation at that time, disorder caused by “civil wars, calamity and the collapse of the rural economy” and that eventually contributed to the growth of warlodism (Chow 1967, 9). Published in the same issue with no. 4, suiganlu no. 6 is also an example based on real events of officials who cared only about their personal interests and disregarded their responsibilities.

Among the New Culture iconoclasts, Chen Duxiu was particularly outspoken in his accusations against militarism and imperialism. In making a parallel between what the warlords and the Japanese government did in China at the time and what the German government did during World War I, Chen exposes the militarism with a sarcastic and contemptuous tone in suiganlu no. 11 (Chen 1954d: 75). Prompted by a speech published in Xinghua Magazine delivered by the bishop of The Methodist
Episcopal Mission\(^3\) (*Meiyimei hui*), Chen charges all the citizens of the Allied Powers with hypocrisy in *suiganlu* no. 22 (Chen 1954h: 156-157). He points out the contradiction between the bishop’s condemnation of German militarism and imperialism in World War I and “the direct or indirect assistance” the Allied Powers provided to the militarist and imperialist powers in China. Given the parallel he makes in no. 11, Chen is most probably alluding in both essays to the semi-transparent negotiation of the Sino-Japanese Military Mutual Assistance Conventions during the spring of 1918 between the warlord government and the Japanese government.\(^4\) There is no doubt that the purpose of these two *suiganlu* is to appeal for “freedom” and “justice.”

Furthermore, in no. 22, Chen does not exclude the influence of the church from the Allied Powers’ imperialistic force in China. Instead, his criticism is based precisely on the fact that the Methodist Episcopal Church was a part of the imperialistic mechanism. Regardless of whether or not the Church did engage in imperialistic activities at the time, Chen generalizes his criticism to all the citizens of Allied nations because Christianity was the dominating religion in these countries. By denigrating

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\(^3\) The Methodist Episcopal Mission (abbr.: M.E.M.) is the missionary society established by the north Methodist Episcopal Church (1844-1939) in the United States. The first M.E.M arrived in China in Fujian in 1847. It was the most influential missionary society in China during late imperial and Republican times.

\(^4\) The content of the conventions one-sidedly leaned to the interests of the Japanese government, particularly the expansion of its illicit military power in China. The only half-transparent negotiation was furiously protested by Chinese students abroad and provoked a mass exodus of Chinese students in Japan back to China. Some of the returning students established the Youth China Association (*Shaonian jiguoxiexi hui*) in Beijing and Chen Duxiu seemed to be acquainted with some of its members. See more in Chow 1967: 77-83.
them as “hypocritical Christian citizens” (*weishan zhi jidujiao guomin*), Chen openly criticizes the hypocritical nature of Christianity as part of his protest against militarism and imperialism. His opposition to Christianity is generally in accord with the New Culture iconoclasts’ common standpoint on religion seen in other *suiganlu* writings to be discussed later. However, Chen himself shows an obvious change in his attitude toward Christianity in his writing. His viewpoint presented in early *suiganlu* contradicts the point in his 1922 essay “Christianity and the Christian Church” (*Jidujiao yu jidujiaohui*), in which he distinguishes between Christianity and the Christian Church by arguing that the activities of the Church should be treated separately from the essence of Christianity, which is universal love and sacrifice. I discuss Chen’s attitude toward Christianity in greater detail in the next section.

To sum up, though they certainly had common ground, the New Culture iconoclasts approached the topic of *jiu zhengzhi* from distinctive perspectives. Qian Xuantong opposes the monarchy from the standpoint of discarding *guocui*. Tao Menghe criticizes warlord officials in terms of their traditional bureaucratic mindset and irresponsible administration in rural areas. Chen Duxiu denounces warlords and the Japanese government for their manipulation of the Congress and the implementation of militarism and imperialism in China. Chen is the only one who criticizes the Allied Powers in *suiganlu* for their imperialist actions in China and Christianity for its complicity in imperialist hegemony.
To New Culture iconoclasts, the “new” political forms opposed to the “outdated” ones were, as suggestion in Qian’s and Tao’s writings, the republican ideals of France or the United States. In their view, the nominally republican polity under the warlord government was no more than an empty name or a twisted system that concealed political machinations. More often than not, the New Culture iconoclasts do not explicitly articulate definitions of democracy or the “new” political form; rather, these ideals are couched in more generalized terms such as “freedom” and “justice.”

_Jiu zongjiao_ (traditional religion) and science

In this section, I examine New Culture iconoclasts’ definition of _jiu zongjiao_ (old religion) in various _suiganlu_. Though Kang Youwei and other proponents of monarchical restoration once sought to elevate Confucianism to China’s national religion, thus provoking the ire of the New Culture iconoclasts, I do not intend to include the disputes on whether or not Confucianism was a religion into this section. Rather, my main focus is on the iconoclasts’ opposition to “superstitions,” which mainly include religious practices associated with Taoism, Christianity, and Buddhism.

I separate Taoism from the other two religions because though Taoism was, and indeed still is, treated by some people as one of China’s national religions along with Confucianism, it was never established as a religion originally but rather was a school of philosophical thoughts regardless of people’s interpretations and manipulations in later generations, as Chow also suggested (Chow 1967: 320). More important, it was
treated separately from “the most advanced” form of religion such as Christianity and Buddhism in the iconoclasts’ discourses. In addition, except in Qian Xuantong’s no. 8 (Qian 1999c), Taoism was not the iconoclasts’ main target to the extent Confucianism was. Thus, here I Taoism as an umbrella term to describe various superstitions, such as spiritualism and the Yin-Yang school, which the iconoclasts opposed.

*Suiganlu* no. 8 by Qian Xauntong and no. 9 by Liu Bannong (Liu 1954b), both subtitled “Denouncement on *Magazine for Spiritualism*” (*Chi Lingxue Congzhi*), were written in response to the publication of *Magazine for Spiritualism* and to the practice of *fuji* (planchette writing), a kind of divination practiced at the Shengde Altar (*Shengde tan*) in Shanghai organized by the Society of Spiritualism (*Lingxue hui*). These two *suiganlu* were published in the same issue in *New Youth* as two long polemical essays on the same topic. One was Chen Daqi’s “Denouncement of ‘Spiritualism’” (*Pi ‘lingxue’*), in which he criticizes spiritualism in general from a psychological perspective, and the other one was Chen Duxiu’s “Query on the Existence of Ghosts” (*Youguilun zhiyi*) (Chen 1954l), in which Chen Duxiu questions the existence of ghosts through eight specific points.

Unlike Chen Daqi’s and Chen Duxiu’s general approaches, Qian and Liu specifically question the reliability of the content in *Magazine for Spiritualism* and point out its absurdity through their refutations of its main points. As Qian specialized in Chinese historical phonology, his refutations focus on the discussion of Chinese phonology in the *Magazine for Spiritualism*. To supplement Qian’s refutations, Liu
offers a more broadly based critique of the *Magazine for Spiritualism*. Notably, Qian groups people of the Society of Spiritualism with the Boxers, who once spread the superstitious belief that practicing certain martial arts could protect people and make them, literally, bullet proof. Lu Xun’s opposition to teaching Chinese martial arts in schools in no. 37 is very likely influenced by the superstitious impression left by the Boxers in addition to Lu Xun’s assessment of teaching and learning Chinese martial arts as useless to national salvation.

Besides, both Qian and Liu relate the superstitious activities of the Society of Spiritualism to a previously widespread but misleading speech on the significance of *dantian* (the lower part of abdomen), where, according to Taoist belief, people store up their *qi* (spirits). In fact, *dantian* was also a key concept in Traditional Chinese Medicine, which was criticized in *suiganlu* by Qian Xuantong (no. 51 and no. 52) (Chen 1999, 2:22-23) and Chen Duxiu (no.3) (Chen1954, b) in an attempt to promote Western medicine. In both Qian’s and Chen’s discourses, Traditional Chinese Medicine was rooted in imaginative fancy with no scientific evidence. In no. 52, Qian writes about the absurdity of the terminology, including *dantian*, in Traditional Chinese Medicine in a way that suggests that Qian identified Traditional Chinese Medicine with superstition.

Notably, Qian was also the one who most explicitly and severely criticized Taoism in the *suiganlu*. In no. 8, he designates Taoism as “heresy” (*xiejiao*) and openly denigrates its practices as barbaric and derived from “the worship of genitalia”
(shengzhiqi chongbai), which no “human,” he says, should ever believe in. In order to convince people to resist Taoism, Qian cites lines from Chen Duxiu’s “Constitution and Confucianism” (Xianfa yu kongjiao) (Chen 1965,1:103-112), in which Chen appeals for science to replace all forms of religion. Qian argues further that even “the most advanced” religions such as Christianity and Buddhism amount to superstition, let alone the most barbaric “heresy” of Taoism. At the end of his suiganlu, Qian once again becomes a “torchbearer” and directly addresses youth—“Young people! If you still want to be a human in the twentieth century…[I] urge you, with your courage and perseverance, to immediately annihilate this most barbaric heresy and this group of people who talk nonsense (hushuobadao), encourage demons, and cause troubles (xingyaozuoguai)!”

Instead of denouncing Taoism generally, as Qian does in no. 8, Chen Duxiu specifically targets the Yin-Yang school (Yinyangjia) in suiganlu no.14 (Chen 1954f: 76-77). The Yin-Yang school, according to Chen, includes necromancers and Taoist priests. To specify exactly what the Yin-Yang school is, Chen lists a variety of activities such as “fuji, alchemy, geomancy, fortunetelling, praying for rain, welcoming gods, talk of ghosts etc.” and blames them for making Chinese academics backward and the people ignorant.

What is remarkable, however, is that Chen Duxiu compares the Confucian school and the Yin-Yang school in his no.14 and points out that the latter was most harmful to Chinese society. From Chen’s point of view, although Confucianism
promoted an outdated ethics and social norms that were no longer suitable for modern society, the Yin-Yang school was simply full of nonsense—Confucian values such as loyalty and filial piety were at least reasonable and understandable. On Confucianism, Chen comments: “although it is not a good social system for today, it is not a terrible crime either (suí féi shanzhi, yì féi e’xing).” This point of view was also reflected in Chen’s other long polemical essays on Confucianism (kongjiao) published in New Youth earlier. In fact, Qian shared a similar viewpoint with Chen; in no. 8, Qian points out that though Confucianism was employed by the ruling class to perpetuate the ignorance of those they ruled, Taoism actually caused the ignorance and demoralization of people.

In terms of the iconoclasts’ attitude toward religion manifested in suiganlu, except for Qian Xuantong in no. 8 openly endorsing an overall replacement of religion with science, only Chen Duxiu wrote in particular against Christianity. Other iconoclasts never explicitly took a side on religion in their suiganlu, but we might say that Chen’s attitude toward Christianity represented the New Culture iconoclasts’ general standpoint on religion during 1918-1919, which was atheism.

In the previous section, I mentioned that there was an obvious change in Chen’s attitude toward Christianity in his writing before and after 1919. In his essays published in the 1920s, such as “Christianity and the Chinese” (Jidujiao yu Zhongguoren), Chen explicitly and honestly “admired the personality of Jesus,” though, as also suggested by Chow (1967: 321), Chen was generally against religion. Wang Xiaoming mentions that
Chen converted to Christianity after 1919 (Wang 1999, 15), whereas Chow suggests that he was merely touched by the personality of Jesus as a person and the universal love expressed in the teachings of Christianity without truly regarding Jesus as a God. Yang Jianlong gives a more detailed account of the complexity of Chen’s attitude toward Christianity, and his viewpoint leans toward that of Chow (Yang 2012, 115-135).

Whether Chen converted to Christianity or not is debatable, but what is certain is that he did suddenly display much more sympathy toward Christianity in his writing after 1919. Yang Jianlong mentions that according to Hu Shi, Chen must have spent a lot of time reading the Bible while he was in jail in 1919 because was the only book available to him. However, as Yang has also argued, though Chen showed a fresh attitude toward Christianity in his writing after 1919, that does not necessarily mean that there is no continuity in his thought about Christianity.

Here, I would like to highlight that even in Chen’s suiganlu in 1918, it is already apparent that Chen has a complex attitude toward Christianity rather than total antipathy. In suiganlu no.14 (Chen 1954f: 76-77) published in 1918, Chen firmly expresses his atheism through a belief in the omnipotence of science. Chen first points out that the long perseverance and prevalence of religion is due to the fact that people believe there are God(s) invisibly in charge of everything. Then, he illustrates with extremely short, one-sentence summaries of what astronomers, geologists, biologists, anthropologists, and anatomists do, respectively, and then arrives at his conclusion that science can explain everything. His reasoning is that if God(s) existed, then they certainly would not
have allowed science to develop into the omnipotent force it has become. In order to stress his firm belief in science, he even declares at the end of his suiganlu—“[I wonder] whether anyone who is a theist has anything to say to me!”

It seems that Chen’s overly optimistic view about science was soon challenged. In suiganlu no. 20 (Chen 1954g: 156), published in the next issue of New Youth, Chen records two conversations he had on attitudes toward Christianity. The first conversation was between Chen and an unnamed friend. Without including his own response, Chen records his friend’s words: “though we might not agree with Christianity, wouldn’t it be better if Chinese people believed in Christianity instead of ghosts and animals?” The other conversation is between Chen and Li Shiceng. Chen records Li’s response after he relates the comments by his friend in the first conversation: “Rather let Chinese people believe in ghosts and animals than in Christianity because it is easier to convince people not to believe in something as superficial as ghosts and animals’ than in Christianity. We should use science to replace superstitions rather than another superstition, Christianity.” Whereas Li’s response seems to be a convincing answer to the friend’s initial comment, what is noteworthy here is the lack of Chen’s own response in the two conversations, especially in the first one. In fact, Chen only comments after Li’s response, saying he was unable to challenge what Li said.

The difference in Chen’s attitude in the two suiganlu is clear. In the first one, Chen is completely confident in the omnipotence of science and even boldly challenges
his readers to try to contest his view. In the second one, ironically, Chen seems to be challenged by his friend and is unable to provide a satisfactory answer; he thus has to ask a third person and borrow that person’s answer as a standard response. Though his friend shares a basic standpoint with Chen against Christianity, he challenges Chen in terms of seeing a potential utility for Christianity in China. If Chen was indeed as confident about science or as firmly resistant to religion as shown in the first suiganlu, he should have been able to respond to his friend just as Li does in the second suiganlu. The fact that Chen fails to give a satisfactory response himself indicates a complex attitude toward Christianity: on the one hand, he does not seem to be religious himself; on the other hand, he seems to continuously seek a potential utilization of Christianity, or religion, in transforming people’s mind.

Here I would like to briefly discuss the iconoclasts’ attitude toward Buddhism in their suiganlu. The iconoclasts never wrote specifically about Buddhism in the suiganlu during 1918-1919. The reason is probably the same as why they did not write as much about Christianity as Confucianism—Christianity was not, as Liu Bannong suggested, as widespread as Confucianism in China (Chow 1967, 321). As their main purpose was iconoclasm, they certainly needed to choose their battles and focus on the most urgent issues. Nevertheless, there was no denying that Buddhism was highly influential in China, and even saw a resurgence of interest among late Qing and early Republican intellectuals, including a younger Chen Duxiu. However, as Chow suggests, Buddhism was never been treated as seriously as it was in India after it was transmitted into China.
Though Qian Xuantong in his no. 8 does mention that Buddhism, along with Christianity, was a form of superstition, other writers’ stances are rather more obscure. Even so, Chen Duxiu and Lu Xun do mention Buddhism in their *suiganlu*. In no. 1, when Chen says that scholars should not only promote knowledge within their own country, he uses Buddhism as an example; he laments the fact that because of the relative ambivalence of ruling elites towards Buddhism (as opposed to Confucian orthodoxy), many important Buddhist texts were not transmitted into China. Apparently, Chen is making a parallel between Buddhism in traditional China and Western knowledge in the present. Similarly, Lu Xun in *suiganlu* no. 33 also uses Buddhism as an example of foreign thought that was ostracized in China, especially from the Six Dynasties (222-589) to the Tang (618-907). Hence, it seems that the iconoclasts never really seriously criticized Buddhism; rather, they express a regret that people couldn’t learn more about Buddhism because of the mistaken attitudes of the past. The birthplace of Buddhism, India, also appears in *suiganlu* such as Chen’s no. 23, in which India becomes a typical example of national backwardness and a cautionary tale for China to promote social reforms as soon as possible. The iconoclasts’ different attitudes toward Buddhism and Christianity were probably because of the long history of Buddhism in China and the looming suspicious connections between Christianity and Western imperialism at the time.

In looking at these essays on *jiu zongjiao* as a whole, the iconoclasts each approach the topic from a specific perspective, such as spiritualism, Yin-Yang school,
Taoism, Christianity, etc. and arrive at a criticism of either superstitions or religion and a conclusion for the need to promote science. In suiganlu no. 33, Lu Xun also criticizes jiu zongjiao, but from a different perspective—that is, all the guihua (nonsense) in opposition to science. As a result, Lu Xun not only criticizes the “dross (zaopo) in Confucianism, Taoism, and Christianity” but also the widespread “nonsense” in attitudes toward Western medicine, in contradicting science with morality, or in claiming that the import of Western culture marked the demoralization in Chinese society. He also criticizes the nonsense published in Magazine for Spiritualism in Shanghai and Interactions with Hades (Xiangan liming lu) in Beijing, etc. Moreover, what Lu Xun criticizes is not merely the content of this “nonsense,” but also the producers of it who pretend to be scientific but are in reality maliciously misleading the common people by spreading their nonsense. The solution suggested by Lu Xun can only be science, not “superficial” (pimaode) science but real science. Though Lu Xun does not explain the difference between superficial science and real science, he mentions that there had been no real science in China since the Hundred Days’ Reform (bairi weixing). Given Lu Xun’s understanding of the unity of ti and yong as discussed in the previous chapter, it is predictable that for him superficial science would constitute a disconnection between ti and yong, whereas real science entailed unity of ti and yong, by which New Culture iconoclasts were trying to construct a new order through social reforms. Thus, science in Lu Xun’s writing was no longer merely the opposite of superstitions; it expressed a moral value system and a worldview.
As I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, *guocui* is an important concept in the discourse of *suiganlu* because from the iconoclasts’ standpoint, *guocui* stands at the polar opposite to both “Mr. Democracy” and “Mr. Science.” Chen Duxiu divides his essay “Today’s Political Issues in China” into three major parts, one of which concerns the choice between being conservative—namely, “preserving *guicui*”—and carrying out complete social reforms. Apparently, a critique of *guocui* constitutes a necessary part of social and political reform. Furthermore, Lu Xun discussed *guocui* in conjunction with science and national character in his no. 38 (LX 1989,1:311-316). Since scholars who have written on Lu Xun and his *zawen* have all more or less touched upon his *suiganlu* (Hsia 1961, Lee 1987, Pollard 1985 etc.), especially on the topics of *guocui* and *guominxing* treated in them, here I only address several points that have not been adequately discussed.

First, both Lu Xun and Qian Xuantong wrote against preserving *guocui* in *suiganlu* but from different perspectives due to their different definitions of *guocui*. Lu Xun sarcastically defines *guicui* in *suiganlu* no. 35 (LX 1989,1: 305) as something unique to one nation regardless of whether or not it is actually beneficial to the society—for example, a tumor growing on a person’s face. Hence, Lu Xun especially opposed “preserving *guicui*” because he believed *guocui* had no practical use in “saving the country” and could only obstruct China’s modernization. This concern is clearly

*Guocui* (national essence) and *guominxing* (national characters)
shown in *suiganlu* no. 36, in which Lu Xun opens with the lines “many people have a great fear. I too have a great fear.” He then expresses his “fear” that Chinese people would cease to exist as a nation in the future and would become like the diasporic Jews because guocui made them too peculiar to be assimilated into other people in the world. To him, national salvation obviously overrides “preserving guocui” as a priority.

Qian suggests in *suiganlu* no. 29 that his definition of guocui (everything existing in China before 1912, the establishment of the Republic of China) was closely related to his opposition to yilao, yishao and thousand-year monarchy. Whether or not guocui is indeed peculiar to Chinese culture, playing poker and smoking opium are also considered guocui in Qian’s definition. In *suiganlu* no. 31, Qian sets out to promote the solar calendar and discard the lunar calendar including traditional holidays such as the Dragon Boat Festival and the Mid-Autumn Festival. Qian argues that it is totally absurd to waste time to celebrate these holidays as traditions and customs, which were nothing but “crazy and irrational” (fengzi hunao) and thus probably even superstitious to some extent. Since Qian opposed almost everything from traditional China, it is not surprising that he considers norms and rituals, such as the lunar calendar and traditional holidays, totally worthless in “modern China”.

Therefore, the difference between Qian’s and Lu Xun’s definition of guocui lies in the fact that Qian stresses a clear demarcation line between traditional China before 1912 and “modern China” after it, whereas Lu Xun is more concerned about what was or was not useful in the urgent cause of national salvation.
Second, there is no doubt that, of the *suiganlu* writers, Lu Xun (LX 1989, 1:295-370) explicitly connected *guocui* with the Chinese national character, which can be clearly seen in *suiganlu* no. 38 and no. 42, in which Lu Xun pinpoint the reasons Chinese people were keen on preserving *guocui* in the Chinese national character of “collective complacency” (*hequn de zida*) and “always clinging to the past” (*haogu*). Apart from these essays, Lu Xun also wrote several pieces specifically about the Chinese national character, which can be summarized as: (1) low tolerance toward innovations and reforms (no. 41) and unwillingness to accept new thoughts (no. 56, no. 58 and no. 59); (2) “collective complacency” (no. 61 and no. 62); and (3) collective indifference and taking pleasures in other’s misfortune (no. 65). In fact, Lu Xun was not the only one to touch on national characteristics among *suiganlu* writers. Tao Menghe in no. 4 points out the Chinese national characteristic of venerating the bureaucrats. Qian Xuantong in no. 30 and no. 50 also points to the Chinese people’s complacency in believing that everything from Western culture “has existed since ancient times in China” (*guyiyouzhi*). Even so, I would still argue that Lu Xun made the discourse concerning the Chinese national character most explicit and overt. He also made the connection between Chinese national characteristics and prevalent social problems at the time, including people’s fervor about preserving *guocui*. As to what exactly brought about the Chinese national character as he saw it, Lu Xun never really clearly specifies in his writing, though in no. 65, Lu Xun seems to suggest it was monarchical governance that brought about “collective indifference.” Also, in *suiganlu* no. 58, Lu
Xun cites passages from traditional Chinese history books to illustrate his point that “Chinese people’s mindset at the present does not differ much from people in traditional China (renxin hengu).” Thus, it is not impossible that Lu Xun is suggesting that Chinese national characteristics were to some extent derived from traditional ideology transmitted through traditional books from generation to generation. The influence of Lu Xun’s attention to the Chinese national character is also observable in suiganlu by other authors. Fu Sinian, a student of Beijing University at the time also wrote about Chinese national characteristics in his suiganlu. In no. 60 (Fu 1954, 6:635-637), by making a parallel between Chinese dogs and Chinese people, Fu draws attention to one Chinese national characteristic—that is, the lack of responsibility and lack of altruism on a nation-wide scale—which he attributes it to thousand-year monarchy. In no. 60, Lu Xun’s influence on Fu is obvious and more than just an inspiration for the topic itself. As Pollard suggested, Lu Xun was “noted for using analogues from the animal kingdom to carry part or whole of his message.” It is not be mere a coincidence, then, that Fu in no. 60 also draws an analogy from the animal kingdom to illustrate his point, to say nothing of his use of an allusion to Lu Xun’s no. 48 or no. 49.

Third, in the previous chapter, I mentioned there is a tendency for New Culture iconoclasts to make a dramatic reversal of stereotypical designations of Western people and Chinese people. Lu Xun summarizes it sarcastically in his no. 48: “Chinese people only have two ways to address the ‘other,’ either ‘beast’ (qinshou) or ‘your majesty’ (shengshang), but never ‘my friend’.”
Though New Culture iconoclasts did not go so far as to worship the Westerner as *shengshang*, they undoubtedly tread the road of cultural self-denigration, accompanied, predictably, by a corresponding elevation of the West. As I discussed earlier, Qian Xuantong addressed traditional Chinese drama as “inhuman” and Taoism as “the most barbaric heresy.” By contrast, Western drama is “human” and Christianity, even though opposed by Qian, was addressed as one of “the most advanced” religions. In no. 15, Liu Banong addresses people who transmit “useful” Western knowledge as those who wanted to be “human” rather than “lower animals.” Fu Sinian identifies Chinese people with “lower animals.” Lu Xun in his *suiganlu* more than once identifies Chinese people with the “barbaric” or primitive peoples (no. 42 and no. 58) and once with “apelike humans” (no. 41). Lu Xun seems to have had a comparatively negative and low opinion about ethnic minority groups or indigenous people. Regardless, in no. 62, Lu Xun suggests that compared with German soldiers during World War I, Chinese display greater inhumanity, even in their treatment of their compatriots.

The mentality behind this self-denigration, might partially be out of “a sense of national humiliation,” as suggested by C. T. Hsia: “Perhaps in their younger days they had been proud of China, but this pride had turned into a frankly masochistic admission of what they saw as inferiority in every department of endeavor” (Hsia 1961: 11). Here I would like to suggest it might also arise out of a sense of self-examination, as shown especially in Lu Xun’s *suiganlu*. As we can see, Lu Xun mainly criticizes Chinese people for their complacency. In no. 61, he underlines that self-criticism and a sense of
dissatisfaction can help a people progress. Moreover, in those self-denigrating discourses or especially in writings concerning the Chinese national character, the iconoclasts, most particularly Lu Xun, usually did not act as “torchbearers” but more often than not included themselves in the scope of criticism with the use of such expressions as “we Chinese” or “our China” to emphasize their deep concerns. Hence, self-denigration in the iconoclasts’ discourses was more likely a consequence of self-criticism and an overcorrection due to a deep sense of crisis about China’s future. As Lydia Liu also suggests, the discourse of guominxing and self-denigration was more likely a tool applied and manipulated by Lu Xun and other New Culture iconoclasts to realize their pedagogical discourse on enlightenment (Liu 1995). In other words, I suggest it is not their attempt to differentiate themselves from the masses or, to use Pollard’s words, to perceive themselves as “torchbearers” or “savior” and the enemy as the Chinese (Pollard 1985: 60)

Now, I recapitulate the main points in this chapter. In wenyan and baihua, what iconoclasts are generally against is the use of classical allusions and what they promote is the “genuineness” of baihua and New Literature, but they also favor the selective use of Chinese idioms developed from the Confucian era. In jiuzhengzhi, what iconoclasts oppose are monarchy but also warlord governance, militarism, and imperialism in any given political form. What iconoclasts promote is the republican polity or some other political forms embodying “freedom” and “justice.” In jiuzongjiao, what iconoclasts are mainly against is Taoism, including Spiritualism and the Yin-Yang school,
Traditional Chinese Medicine, the Boxers, and religions, especially Christianity. What they promote is science or a new morality. In guocui and national characteristics, what iconoclasts are against is cultural particulars that are useless to national salvation, any Chinese traditions closely related to monarchy, and Chinese national characteristics that are not necessarily derived from Confucian traditions.

Although suiganlu is merely a part of New Youth publication—and I would need to examine longer polemical essays in New Youth before I can be completely sure about the exact “New Culture” identity—they are the only battlefield in New Youth where iconoclasts’ short polemical essays are, so to speak, crystallized.

Therefore, from what we have analyzed above, it is safe to conclude that the consensus embodied in the words of Schwarcz that what New Culture iconoclasts promote are “slogans that connote all-encompassing alternatives to the Confucian tradition” or “everything from traditional China is bad and everything from Modern West is good,” in the words of Wang Xiaoming, constitutes an oversimplification of the facts. As we have seen, the New Youth “iconoclasts” did in fact argue for the selective retention of certain “icons” when that suited their purposes—consider, for example, Qian Xuantong’s approval of suitably used classical idioms, Chen Duxiu’s changing attitude towards Christianity (as opposed to the Christian Church) and what he came to regard as its revolutionary potential, and even the somewhat positive valuation of Confucian tradition when viewed in contradistinction to what was regarded as the rank superstition of Taoism and the Yin-Yang school. All of these examples work against a
characterization of the *New Youth* authors as uniformly embracing an absolute, exceptionless junking of old traditions. Nevertheless, though New Culture iconoclasts showed a divergence in their individual approaches, distinctive styles in reasoning and constructing arguments, and which “icons” they considered more acceptable than others, it is clear that they still share a common ground in their basic arguments that allow one to continue to group them together as a single coherent group of New Culture iconoclasts.
Conclusion

This thesis started with the research question of whether or not suiganlu is a sub-genre of essay. Through close analysis of the texts of suiganlu published in New Youth during 1918-1919, it can be perceived that suiganlu, written by the main contributors and the major members of the editorial committee of New Youth during the New Culture Movement in 1918-1919, is a particular tool for the promotion of New Culture Movement, more specifically, New Culture identity promoted by New Culture iconoclasts. We have seen this in two ways: first, it is the ‘weapon’ chosen by New Culture iconoclasts when they needed to form a common New Culture identity, and especially to carve out space in the literary field by distancing themselves from other more established literary groups at the time. Second, suiganlu is also the only essay column in the New Youth where all the short topical or polemical essays of iconoclasts are brought together. Due to its great amount, immediacy and intimacy, and its distinction from the long polemical essays also featured in New Youth, suiganlu was the site where New Culture iconoclasts give most immediate and specific expression to their New Culture identity. These long polemical essays, as I have argued in the introduction, were aimed rather at providing extensive argumentation for New Culture principles, rather than their immediate expression as was the case with suiganlu. Based on these two “normative” features, along with suiganlu’s generic features, I would like
to conclude that *suiganlu* is a sub-genre compared with other essay forms at the time; that is, *suiganlu* is written by a group of like-minded people, published in a particular magazine as a column that represent their common identity and shared standpoints.

The scope of the present study has unfortunately not allowed me to consider this question as thoroughly as I would ideally like to, and there is room for further work. As we have seen, *suiganlu* as a column in *New Youth* has given rise to the appearance of identically named columns in other publications such as *Weekly Review* or *Awareness*. Due to the scope of my thesis, I have not been able to compare *suiganlu* in *New Youth* with those in other publications, which could affect my conclusion. Besides, there were also many similar columns scattered in various newspapers and magazines at the time, and I was unable to have a look of each of these and thus to be sure that they are truly distinctive from *suiganlu* in terms of their content. Furthermore, though I do believe that governing “normative discourse” is the one criterion that truly distinguishes *suiganlu* from other essay forms and defines it as a sub-genre, I was unable to probe more into *suiganlu*’s generic features and include them in the main discussion in my thesis. In addition, as *suiganlu* were written under a particular social historical environment in which China was undergoing its modernization and a series of crises due to its semi-colonial situation and the influence from militarism and imperialism, it would be advantageous if I would be able to bring in more historical complexity into the discussion. As *suiganlu* is a column in *New Youth*, I also would like to take a more extensive and close look into other publications in *New Youth*, including the longer
polemical essays featured in that publication, so as to more firmly and accurately grasp
the essence of the magazine and the New Culture Movement.

Hence, as a very preliminary work on suiganlu itself, I would like to draw
attention from scholars in modern Chinese literature, particularly those specializing in
the New Culture Movement to revisit and re-evaluate suiganlu as a significant
component in constructing the collective identity of that movement. I hope that this
study will also serve as a starting point to consider the characteristics of suiganlu as a
potential sub-genre of essay compared with other contemporary essay forms. At the
very least, I hope this thesis is able to shed light upon the study on the content of
suiganlu in its own right, rather than as an ancillary field of of Lu Xun or zawen studies.
Glossary

An Dang
Anfu
Bagu wen
Baihua
Bairi weixing
Biji
Bizhan
Bu mofang guren
Bupianbuyi
Buxiang hua de hua
Buxiang ren de ren
Bu yongdian
Buziyou de beiju
Cang Fu
Chengtoushang chu guancai
Chi Lingxue Congzhi
Ci
Dantian
Deng Shi
Duan Qirui
Dunshou
Du Yaquan
Erchong sixiang
Fengzi hunao
Fu
Fuji
Fuxiude
Gao Lao
Gao Yihan
Gongan
Gongmin tuan
Guangde lou

安党
安福
八股文
白话
百日维新
笔记
笔战
不模仿古人
不偏不倚
不像话的话
不像人的人
不用典
不自由的悲剧
伧父
城头上出棺材
斥灵学丛志
词
丹田
邓实
段祺瑞
顿首
杜亚泉
二重思想
疯子胡闹
赋
扶乩
腐朽的
高劳
高一涵
公安
公民团
广德楼


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