LITERARY PROBLEMS DURING THE WAR OF RESISTANCE
AS VIEWED FROM YAN'AN:
A STUDY OF THE LITERATURE PAGE OF LIBERATION DAILY -
MAY 16, 1941 TO AUGUST 31, 1942

by

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Chinese writers since May Fourth, 1919, have encountered many problems in their writing, some of which have been universal, some of which have been particular to China. The War of Resistance against Japan (1937-1945) presented further, more particular dilemmas for all modern Chinese writers regardless of political affiliation or geographic location. Urban writers sympathetic to the revolutionary cause of the Chinese Communist Party who went to the wartime capital of Yan'an met additional difficulties. While many of these problems were shared by writers in other areas, some arose from the unique geographical, political, and social environment of the base regions, i.e., the areas under Communist control.

This thesis is a study of the problems for writers in Yan'an as reflected in literary issues and debates raised in the literature supplement "Wen Yi" of Liberation Daily (Jiefang Ribao), the CCP organ published in Yan'an from May 16, 1941 to March 27, 1947. The literary issues are examined over a period of fifteen months, from May, 1941 until August, 1942. They are viewed as backdrop and aftermath to the "Talks at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art" delivered by Mao Zedong in May of 1942. The "Talks" have functioned as the official CCP policy on literature and art since 1942. A detailed examination of the atmosphere in the Yan'an literary world leading up to May as well as a look at immediate reaction in the press to the literary directives will enhance our understanding of the "Talks" and help place them in proper historical context. It is hoped in the end that this thesis may show that many of the problems for writers discussed in the "Talks" in
1942 had already existed for over twenty years prior to the May Forum. Therefore, one cannot merely blame CCP literary policies for the lack of outstanding literary creativity in modern China.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

There are certain general problems which have plagued the Chinese literary world ever since the birth of twentieth century modern Chinese literature in the May Fourth era. The swiftly changing political and social milieu in China has necessitated a parallel literary evolution, an evolution which has every step of the way been influenced by dynamic political factors as well as native literary tradition. Such factors of influence in China have created a number of difficulties for modern writers, dilemmas which were to become the focus of much debate in the twenties, thirties, and forties, before the establishment of the People's Republic of China. After 1949, the debates continued, but the manner in which they were discussed altered greatly in light of the Communist victory. In this introduction I hope to direct attention to the historical basis of the issues which will be examined in this thesis, particularly in view of the particular problems of Chinese literature that developed in the 1930's, the decade preceding the years which will be the specific focus of this study.

There are those who blame the lack of great modern Chinese works of literature on political suppression, be it Communist, Nationalist, or Japanese. If we recognize the fact that in this century problems with literary creativity have existed in all parts of China, whether it be in Communist, Nationalist, or Japanese-occupied areas, it becomes obvious that lack of creative freedom due to political suppression could not possibly have been the sole obstacle to the creation of good literature. Besides
having to wrestle with the universal choices of source material, creative method, and approach to subject matter, Chinese writers have also had to deal with the moral and political choice of how much foreign influence to incorporate into their work, although such a choice did not take place on a wholly conscious level until the 1940's. During the twenties, literary factions based their guiding principles on the different prevailing attitudes towards such vital artistic issues. Early in the decade, two opposing tendencies emerged. One, represented by the Society for Literary Research (Wenxue Yanjiu Hui 文学研究会) preached realism and the use of literature for social reform. The second group, represented by the Creation Society (Chuangzao She 創造社) advocated romanticism and "art-for-art's sake."

But political events soon led to a shift from debates over the function of literature in society to discussions of how literature could best serve as a means of political and social reform. The May Thirtieth Incident of 1925 awakened the sympathies of many people to immediate national concerns and thus provided a basis for the recognition of anti-imperialist leftist literature. The failure of the Great Revolution of 1927 and the large-scale massacre in Shanghai of Communists by Jiang Jieshi (蔣介石) revealed to all Chinese the fragile structure of united front policy and the cruel realities of domestic oppression. Such political turmoil gave birth to the recognition of revolutionary literature (the next stage after literary revolution propagated in the teens). Yet from 1928-1930 factionalism among leftists emerged with the controversy over the definition of revolutionary or "proletarian" literature, and disunity became most pronounced,
while literary creation was almost at a standstill. It seemed that there was little hope for the effective production of revolutionary literature until the establishment of the League of Left-wing Writers (Zuoyi Zuojia Lianmeng 左翼作家联盟) in March, 1930 which provided a political base on which all leftists writers could agree. The League unified leftist-oriented literary groups towards a realist "literature for life" attitude in light of the real threats of foreign aggression and domestic capitulation.

Working from an organized base sponsored by the Communist Party, writers now had to face both old and new problems. The new difficulties were an outgrowth of historical circumstance. Although the members of the League of Left-wing Writers agreed in principle to an anti-feudal, anti-bourgeois literature and to the production of proletarian art (Li Helin 1939:253-54), they nevertheless still had to cope with problems resulting from matching theory to practice in attempting to attain their desired social goals. Inherent contradictions arose when mainly petty-bourgeois writers tried to create a working class literature. The relationship between the revolutionary writer and the society which he hoped to change had been a source of tension since the late twenties. In his speech given at the inaugural meeting of the League of Left-wing Writers in 1930, Lu Xun had warned, "...it is certainly not the duty of the working class to give poets or writers any preferential treatment...The fact is that no workers...feel any special respect for intellectuals." (Lu Xun 1930:238-39/English:95) Said to have been an outgrowth of the distance between writers and existing reality, the overdog-
matic application of Marxist-Leninist principles to literature was a phenomenon recognized by revolutionary writers themselves in the thirties. By the early 1940's, such a trend was blamed on doctrinaire interpretations of political theory stemming from an emphasis on abstract study rather than real life experience. (OuYang Shan, JFRB, 1941; Zhou Yang, JFRB, 1941; Mao Zedong, 1942 A and C; Zhou Libo, JFRB, 1942). Thus we can see that literary problems in Yan'an had long roots.

With the call for a proletarian literature came the discovery of the need for the popularization of literature through a new language in a style comprehensible to the masses at large. In 1932, Qu Qiubai had already anticipated the demands of a new era in literature. By the official outbreak of the National War of Resistance against Japan in 1937, the call to popularize literature became a much more pressing and real issue. The realities of war demanded an even more specific role for literature as a vehicle for quick and effective dissemination of war propaganda to the largest possible number of people. The League of Left-wing Writers dissolved in spring of 1936, (Tagore, 1967: 170) and an attempt at a united front with non-leftists writers resulted in a battle among leftists over "national defense literature" (guofang wenxue 国防文学) advocated by Zhou Yang and the United Association of Chinese writers (Zhongguo Wenyijia Xiehui 中國文藝家協會), established in June, 1936, and "mass literature of the national revolutionary struggle" (minzu geming zhanzheng de da zhong wenzue 民族革命战争 的大众文学) promoted by Lu Xun, Hu Feng, and the Proclamation of Chinese Literary Workers (Zhongguo Wenyi
Gongzuozhe Xuanyan (Li Helin, 1939:413 and 572) Yet at last, right before the death of Lu Xun in October of 1936, disagreements were laid to rest with the signing of the Manifesto of the Literary Assembly for United Defense and Freedom of Speech (Wenyijie Tongren Weituanjie Yuwu yu·Yanlun·Ziyou Xuanyan 文艺界同人為团结御侮 與言论自由宣言). The goal was to unite together all schools of writers regardless of different views and writing styles, in order to "resist Japan and save the nation." (Li Helin, 1939:573) On March 27, 1938, the final unification among writers paralleling the political united front between the Communist and Nationalist Parties, was consolidated. The All-China Writers' Anti-aggression Association (Zhonghua Quanguo Wenyijie Kangdi Xiehui 中華全國文艺界抗日协会) was formed in Hankou, headed by Lao She. The organization's statement of purpose was clear:

We must unite together the dispersed strength of our comrades-in-arms and use our pens as officers and men on the battlefront use their guns - to mobilize the masses, defend our country, smash the enemy bandits, and strive for victory. The destiny of the nation is also the destiny of literature. (Lan Hai, 1947:41)

The All-China Writers' Anti-aggression Association attempted to contribute to the popularization of literature through the establishment of local branches (fenhui 分会) in all major populated areas of the country. Under the slogan "let writers go to the villages, let writers serve the armed forces" (wen-zhang xiaxiang, wenzhang ruwu 文章下乡, 文章入伍) (Wang Yao, 1953; II:9), the main association would organize
writers in trips to the front and behind enemy lines, and to return and write based on personal observation. Ding Ling, among others, had led such groups from the Northwest of China. (Nym Wales, 1939:278-9) Encouraged forms of writing, some based on already existing popular forms, and some newly invented during the war included reportage (baogao wenxue 报告文学) including writing about particular events (texie 特写), sketches (suxie 速写) and non-professional news reports (tongxun 通 讯); "living newspapers" (huobao 活报); outdoor "street" and "wall" poetry (jietou or qiangtou shi 街头, 牆頭詩); wall fiction (qiangtou xiaoshuo 牆頭小說); street theatre (jietou ju 街頭劇); and poetry recited aloud (langsong shi 朗誦詩). All contained patriotic, anti-Japanese content.

Not a few Chinese commentators on this period allude to the undesirable yet unavoidable literary tendencies created by wartime needs in the hands of both amateur and professional writers. If leftists writers could not accurately portray the working class, all writers had difficulty giving expression to wartime topics and forms. This, as we will see, was the case in Yan'an, but certainly was not limited to Communist-occupied areas. As Zhou Yang so accurately observed in July, 1941:

After the outbreak of the War of Resistance, many writers ran into this impasse: write about the War of Resistance, but we're not familiar with it; write about the past, but now is not the time. (Zhou Yang, JFRB, 1941, July 19)

Phrases circulating at the time were "stereotyped War of Resistance writing" (kangzhan bagu 抗战八股) (Lan Hai, 1947: 149) and "all (literary works) about the same" (chabuduo zhuyi
The attempt to popularize the war message was not successful, and according to critics often resulted in artistically inferior works which, more important, were ineffective politically as well. The major reason offered by Communist critics looking back was that many writers lacked the desire and/or the opportunity to go to the front, the villages, or behind enemy lines. They were requested to describe the war and did so, but often based their writing on second and third-hand stories. Subject matter, too, became too narrow. The writer Ouyang Shan wrote, "The same reader can't stand to read ten similar descriptions of one air-raid alert." (Lin Huanping, 1939:8) Mao Dun, among others, noted the tendency in writing to focus on certain heroic events rather than individuals. (Lin Huanping:58) All agreed that artistically inferior sloganist literature decreased the efficacy of art as a weapon against the enemy. The dilemma of how to produce a nationalistic wartime literature in a medium readily understood by the masses while able to stir them to action, remained a problem throughout the war. Again, such a problem presented itself to all writers in China at this time, regardless of geographical location or political affiliation.

One aspect of creative writing in particular which came to be a major topic of debate during the war was the effect of foreign literary techniques and forms on Chinese literature. The desirability of Western influence on Chinese works of literature was an issue brought up for discussion by Qu Qiubai as early as the mid-twenties (P. Pickowicz, 1977:363), but special circumstances created by the war in the mid-thirties only served to
intensify the significance of the matter. In the early 1930's, Qu Qiubai criticized the May Fourth writers for blindly adopting foreign techniques and language. He encouraged them to use native traditional forms, "things the people are accustomed to reading and viewing." (Qu Qiubai, 1932:37/English:50) Now that the war had come and foreign aggression was at its height, Europeanized elitist literature of the May Fourth genre denounced by Qu seemed least adaptable for mass propaganda purposes.

Western influence in literary creation no longer played the role it had previously enjoyed, and was in fact castigated for its negative impact on Chinese literature through the creation of "foreign stereotyped writing" (yangbagu 洋八股). What was to replace May Fourth forms? In theory, "national forms" (minzu xingshi 民族形式). In Mao Zedong's speech of October 1938, "The Role of the Chinese Communist Party in the National War", he addressed the need for distinctly Chinese forms:

Hence to apply Marxism concretely in China so that its every manifestation has an indubitably Chinese character, i.e., to apply Marxism in the light of China's specific characteristics, becomes a problem which it is urgent for the whole Party to understand and solve. Foreign stereotypes must be abolished, there must be less singing of empty, abstract tunes, and dogmatism must be laid to rest. They must be replaced by the fresh, lively, Chinese style and spirit which the common people of China love. To separate internationalist content from national form is the practice of those who do not understand the first thing about internationalism. (Mao Zedong, 1938:261/English:209)

A Chinese critic has traced the origins of the concept of national form as it was generally applied (i.e., not just to the field of literature and art) to Stalin's idea that "the promotion of
revolutionary enterprises in any country must depend on the fusion of the general principles of Marxism-Leninism with the national characteristics of that country." Thus Mao's pronouncement was the product of previous domestic concern as well as Soviet inspiration.

Marian Galik, in his article "Main Issues in the Discussion on 'National Forms' in Modern Chinese Literature" notes that the term yangbagu had already been used "at least once in 1923" by a Chinese Communist Yun Daiying (恽代英) who was condemning avant-garde literary-isms which "would not help to advance the course of national liberation and the democratic-revolutionary movement." That same year, in fact, Qu Qiubai had also made reference to "foreign classicism" (waigudian wenxue 外古典文学) by which, according to Pickowicz, Qu meant "the tendency of modern writers to imitate stylish Western bourgeois literary models, life-style, and language." (Pickowicz:363)

Mao no doubt also objected to Western bourgeois literary influence for ideological reasons, but in 1938 it was not quite so clear what he was referring to by "foreign stereotyped writing." Nonetheless, his criticism of foreign things carried more weight than that by Qu or Yun in 1923. By 1938, the time was ripe, the call was coming from a man with considerable political authority, and (unlike Yun but similar to Qu), an alternative to Western-influenced literary forms was offered.

Taking off from Mao's order for the adoption of national form, the 1939-40 discussion over the meaning of the term began. Here I believe that the timing of the debate - proceeding 1941-42, the years which will be the object of my study, and then
picking up again directly after Mao's "Talks at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art", warrants a more detailed examination of the major views on the subject offered by the participants in the initial stage of the controversy.

As mentioned above, the use of traditional forms (the fundamental meaning of "national forms") as a means to popularize literature had been suggested before the war. One of the participants of the debate, Ai Siqi, noted that the issue had been raised on a theoretical level before the war, but that theory was not actually put into practice until the war demanded it so. (Ai Siqi, 1939:740).

There were two extremes of opinion on the definition of national form. One critic, Xiang Linbing, saw the central source of national forms as folk forms (minjian xingshi 民間形式) not related to the May Fourth tradition of modern Chinese literature. Another, Ge Yihong, advocated the use of new forms created since May Fourth, in hopes of protecting the accomplishments of the literary revolution. (Xiang Linbing, 1940; Ge Yihong, 1940 ?)

Looking back on this period in 1949, Mao Dun perceptively remarked:

After the outbreak of the War of Resistance against Japan, although literary popularization became a problem of general concern, people's concerns then were mostly limited to the problem of literary form. It seemed as if once War of Resistance content was decided upon there would no longer be problems with writers' standpoint, point of view, and attitude. 'Europeanized' literary forms were suspect, but the problem of how writers would establish a true mass point of view did not receive attention, and it resulted in producing the 1940 debate over the 'national form' problem. Of the many kinds of thoughts expressed in this debate, some people simplified the popularization problem to that of using 'old folk forms'
(so-called 'new wine in an old bottle'), completely overlooking all of the new literary forms since May Fourth; some, under the pretext of protecting new literary forms, resolutely defended the small and limited literary world of the petty-bourgeois class. They protected 'form' when in fact they deeply feared that the content hidden in this sort of form would suffer loss... because the problem of literary popularization is in the end not merely a problem of form, only discussing form from the point of form always made it hard to avoid the tendency of falling into the conservatism of old forms, and so there was also an inability to ideologically conquer the petty-bourgeois ideology and its literary forms which were the most serious obstacles to literary popularization. (Mao Dun, 1949:58)

The fact that form is actually inseparable from content must be kept in mind when reviewing the arguments of the participants in this debate. Although they are all discussing form in Chinese literature and the word content seems to occupy a position of secondary importance, their arguments still reveal the primary significance of content, which in some cases seems to ultimately determine the choice of adaptable and suitable old forms. In 1942, a few years after the initial debate, the writer Zhou Libo was to unknowingly express this contradiction in an article he wrote on the subject in Yan'an. Reacting against the attention given to form during May Fourth (as Zhou Yang notes below this was attention given in the search for new medium to express new content), he asserted that the sole criteria for judging an artistic work is content, not beauty of form. The paradox is that having stated this, he then proceeded to ignore the subject of content and ascribed great importance to distinctly Chinese forms, blaming Western writing techniques such as symbolism, impressionism, and stream-of-consciousness for obscuring
native Chinese forms by causing the production in China of works divorced from reality. Hence although Zhou believed that content was everything, he labeled Western form the villain, and native Chinese form the model at this time. (Zhou Libo, JFRB, 1942, June 12) The issue, then, was not merely form alone.

Chen Boda strongly felt that national form was a matter of old forms being used imaginatively with new content, giving way to new forms created and evolved from the old. Inappropriate components of the old would be discarded, while suitable new ingredients would be added, the end result being the creation of new forms. (Chen Boda, 1939) The wholesale use of old forms without stressing reform and transition to the new, was, to Chen, like "using your sword to hit your shield." He was by no means advocating this type of "formulism", but instead was interested in evolving new forms from the old. (Chen Boda, JFRB, 1942B) Addressing those like Ge Yihong, he wrote, "To take advantage (or employ) old forms does not mean a refusal to acknowledge the results attained by the new literary movement, but, to the contrary, is an unavoidable result of the development of the new literary movement. It is, in fact, a new stage in the new literary movement." (Chen Boda, 1939:727)

As examples of national forms, he cited San Guo Yan Yi (三国演义), Hong Lou Meng (红楼梦), Shui Hu Zhuan (水浒传), and Ru Lin Wai Shi (儒林外史) because anyone anywhere in China with a little education could read and understand such works. He encouraged writers to pay attention to local forms such as song, theatre, and dance, and named street theatre as a positive example of a new form developed during the
Galik is very upset that Chen Boda and others failed to give credit to the influence of foreign literature on Chinese literary forms. For instance, when praising the high value of Lu Xun's writing, Galik notes that Chen ignored the effect of outside influence on this great Chinese writer's works. However, Chen did rationalize this influence so that it fit into his scheme of Chinese literary forms developing through a process of self-evolution. Speaking about the language which affected the forms, he said that Europeanized Chinese formed a new language "in its basis a reflection of the development of the reality of the new life of the Chinese nation and thus at the same time, a product of the development of the reality of the new life of the Chinese nation, and so to simply negate Europeanized things is incorrect." (Chen Boda, 1939:729)

Zhou Yang too advocated the use of old forms with the goal of developing them into new forms. (Zhou Yang, 1940) Back in the 1930's, he had defended their use against the attacks of Su Wen (蘇汶) who did not agree that such forms could be used as the stepping stone to an ultimately higher-level art. (Zhou Yang, 1932:106) Zhou Yang suggested the spread of popularized new forms such as street theatre and reportage and old forms with new content. Back in 1932, Qu Qiubai had also envisioned the evolution of new forms based on old, hoping that revolutionary popular literature and art would rely on "fiction of the storytelling variety", "things the people are accustomed to reading or viewing", until "...the people themselves will be able to create new forms," (Qu Qiubai, 1932:37 and 38/English:50 and 51) Thus Qu Qiubai, Chen
Boda, and Zhou Yang were all well aware of the limitations of a wholesale adoption of old forms and stressed their selective utilization as a means of furthering the progressive development of a new art.

Unlike Chen Boda, Zhou Yang devoted considerable discussion to the influence of European forms on Chinese literature. He saw content as determining form, (a very important point), and the new literary forms around May Fourth as a reflection of the new economy and politics of that period - new democratic morals and feelings affected content which in turn required new mediums of expression. Hence he rationalized, not unlike Chen Boda, that new Chinese literature had been positively affected by Western influence, but Western elements such as vocabulary, writing technique, and style had only been accepted when they could be appropriately assimilated and transformed into something totally Chinese. (Zhou Yang, 1940:734)

Again, expressing the qualified adoption of native forms, Zhou Yang admitted the artistic limitations of old forms. While it was unfair to demand of them a higher artistic level than they were able to offer, it was also a kind of "cheap optimism and self-intoxication" to consider their artistic level as being high merely on the basis of the masses' support of them. (Zhou Yang, 1940:739)

Hu Feng wrote quite a lot on the subject of national form. (Hu Feng, 1941, 1947) According to Galik, Hu came closest to the extreme view put forth by Ge Yihong that old forms are outdated and May Fourth literature is a legitimate development of the old. Hu Feng, to Galik's satisfaction, saw the new literature owing
its debt not so much to traditional native literature as to European influence in form and content. Lu Xun, Mao Dun, and Guo Moruo owed their writing style more to the traditions of world literature than old Chinese literature. (Galik, 1974:105-6) In 1940, Ba Ren also defended May Fourth forms as follows:

The new forms since May Fourth are reflections of city life. They have also become national forms in our literary history. Even though the masses haven't accepted these forms, they are still progressive forms. Although they've departed from the simply constructed forms of mass practical language, they are already capable of expressing relatively concise thoughts and feelings. (Ba Ren, 1940:1389)

Thus we can see the different measuring sticks employed to arrive at the "true" definition of national forms.

According to Galik, Mao Dun presented the most balanced assessment that the new Chinese literature was a product of both the influence of old Chinese literature as well as world literature. Folk forms could be used in the creation of national forms but, feudal in nature, could not be utilized as the central source. (Mao Dun, 1940)

Though the national form debate remained unresolved, it pointed to the difficulties facing Chinese writers as to literary models to follow under rapidly changing political and social conditions in China. The debate ceased to be a major issue on paper after 1940, though Galik notes that it started up again in Yan'an in 1944. From my survey of the literature page ("Wen Yi" 文艺) of the Yan'an Communist Party organ daily, Jiefang Ribao (解放日报), besides the remarks by Zhou Libo mentioned above, I found only one other major reference to this subject - on July 3,
1942, a criticism by Chen Boda of Wang Shiwei's "Short Discourse on National Forms in Literature" (Wenyi de Minzu Xingshi Duanlun 文艺的民族形式短論). This piece will be discussed in the appendix to this thesis.

To sum up, the question of national form was intimately connected with the problem of popularization and the raising of standards. Popularization centered around what forms would be most conducive to promulgating a nationalistic content. Answers reflected the reevaluation of the effectiveness of traditional and foreign influences on contemporary literature. Responses also indicated varying opinions on the assimilation of certain literary forms and language of which sector of society constituted a justification for calling those forms "national". It strikes me that defenses based on the rationalization that foreign influence had only positively affected Chinese literature since only those elements which could be well assimilated and transformed into something Chinese had been accepted, were somewhat weak. This happy case was not the common occurrence. It would surely depend on assimilation by whom and by how many. Some foreign elements were no doubt absorbed by urban intellectuals in a rather short amount of time, but it is certainly difficult to assess when the majority of Chinese people had wholly adjusted to imported elements into their language and literature.

The numerous problems surrounding the writer's choice of subject matter, technique, and still the writer's position vis-à-vis the society he hoped to depict, were largely ignored during the debate on national form. But even after the basic assumption that literature should reflect national concerns, and should be
conveyed in a medium understood by more people, putting theory into practice brought to light some of the more fundamental issues that would require even more immediate solution.

Some of the problems of creative and critical writing in the wartime Communist capital of Yan'an in Shaanxi Province were common to all parts of China in the twentieth century. As briefly outlined above, the choice of source material, creative method and technique vis-à-vis Western influence, and the writer's relationship to society had troubled writers since May Fourth. More specifically, in the decade preceding the forties in Yan'an, the question of the application of Marxism-Leninism to literature with the resulting tendency towards formulism, as well as the writer's position in society created particular problems. Added to these were the topics of popularization and the reevaluation of foreign-influenced literary trends resulting in the debate over the sources of national forms which became central issues of concern to those in the literary world. During the war, most of the problems above were not limited to Liberated Areas alone. Writers in Nationalist China had found no better means of solving them. But there were some concerns which could be said to have specifically evolved from the historical, geographical, and political factors affecting the areas under Communist control.

With the end of the Long March towards 1936, the Communists had reached the first really sizable area to come under their jurisdiction since their formation in 1921. No longer under Guomindang censorship in their own border territories, writers and artists sympathetic to the revolutionary cause nevertheless had to deal with other considerations. Most of the writers came
from Shanghai and other major urban cultural centers. Coming to the barren, mountainous landscape surrounding Yan'an, to new types of people and to a new relatively spartan way of life, they inevitably had difficulties adjusting. Surrounded by Japanese troops to the East and Guomindang blockade to the South, adverse material conditions even affected the availability of writing and art supplies. Reading material, paper and ink were all in great demand but sources were limited. Thus all of these factors contributed to the contradictions resulting from, as Mao Zedong termed it, the "converging of two torrents"\(^8\), the needs and expectations of Shanghai writers faced with the objective circumstances of Yan'an itself. There were, too, the new political realities to deal with. With the leadership of the Communist Party stabilized after various inner-Party struggles in the early thirties, and with a government essentially recognized by even its Nationalist enemies, a Party literary establishment began to emerge, and with it, the attempt to unify writers under the new circumstances in which they found themselves in Yan'an. Not unexpectedly, disunity had arisen among leftist writers, but it should be stressed that such disagreements were the result of long-time dilemmas facing modern Chinese literature as well as specific difficulties arising from the new demands made on literature in Communist-occupied regions, and especially, in Yan'an during the war.

Therefore we can not be satisfied with the answer given by many commentators that lack of creative freedom was the fundamental stumbling block for writers in Yan'an. Although C.T. Hsia admits that bad literature was being produced in Nationalist
Areas as well as Communist, he fails to carry out this realization to its obvious conclusion, which is that Communist political censorship resulting in a lack of creative freedom in the Western democratic sense (a phenomenon so abhorrent to our Western liberal sensibilities towards which Hsia is more than sympathetic) was not the one and only issue at stake. Thus, while anti-communist literary historians like to blame the Communist regime for the problems with literature produced in Liberated Areas, Communist literary commentators too connect writing deficiencies in the White Areas to Guomindang political suppression. In 1949, Mao Dun retrospectively partly attributed the lack of good literature emerging from Nationalist Areas to the government there not allowing its writers to get close to the masses. (Mao Dun, 1949:50) Yet even in Yan'an, where writers were openly encouraged to go to the front and behind enemy lines to live with the masses of peasants and soldiers, literary problems had by no means been easily resolved. What I hope to show is that the traditional scheme of "Writers versus Communist Party" ascribed to this time period in Yan'an is in fact a gross oversimplification of then-existing realities.

What we will be dealing with, then, are the issues of concern which had troubled modern Chinese writers since May Fourth in the form in which they presented themselves to writers in Yan'an in the late thirties and early forties, together with the new contradictions arising from specific historical, geographical, and political conditions in Yan'an at this time. The following chapters will examine these dilemmas, the disunity resulting from disagreements over interpretations of such issues,
and the development of the ensuing debates and reaction to them in the Communist Party official organ daily *Jiefang Ribao*. 
NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1 On May 30, 1925, Chinese workers and students were killed by British police while demonstrating against the killing of a Chinese worker by Japanese factory guards.

2 For the mass literature (dazhong wenyi 大衆文艺) and language reform movement see Li Helin (1939), chapter three.

3 Qu Qiubai called for an end to Europeanized elitist literature and a return to traditional native forms in Qu Qiubai (1932).

4 For information on the All-China Writers' Anti-aggression Association see the preface to the collection of Kangzhan Wenyi (抗战文艺), the official organ of the association, reprinted by the Center for Chinese Research Materials, Washington D.C., 1974.

5 Both Lan Hai and Lin Huangping discuss these forms in various places throughout their books. See also Wang Yao, Part Two:11, and for specific discussion of reportage, Part Two: 182-191.


7 Galik (1974). Our discussion of this debate will loosely follow the structure of Professor Galik's in this article. His piece is to my knowledge the only definitive article on the national form debate in English. It should be noted that not only does he not mention Qu Qiubai's support for a return to Chinese traditional forms in 1932, he also fails to point out that Yun Daiying's article of 1923, though commencing with a brief denouncement of foreign stereotyped writing, was in the main an indictment of secondary educational problems. Protesting the
system by which Chinese students were forced to learn English in school, he only brings up stereotyped foreign writing as a means to pinpointing the main subject of his essay:

It's strange enough to happily promote foreign stereotyped literature after having abolished the eight-legged essay, yet stranger still to widely and determinedly promote foreign stereotyped education after having abolished eight-legged education. (Yun Daiying, 1923: 193)

8 Zhou Yang (JFRB, 1941, July 19). I have not been able to trace this to any of Mao's speeches available in print.
CHAPTER TWO: MAY 16, 1941 TO FEBRUARY 1, 1942

We will show how Communist political restrictions were not the sole factor responsible for the general lack of literary creativity in Yan'an. Here we can begin to go further into the specific sources of the problem in the CCP capital. Writers' frustrations and their resulting inability to create worthy literary works were aired in the press in late spring of 1941. In the Communist Party organ Liberation Daily (Jiefang Ribao), the writer Ouyang Shan on May 19 was the first to wonder why it was that no one was writing. Zhou Yang, occupying a very high position in the Party cultural hierarchy, raised the same query in July. Then in October, the successful writer Mao Dun lamented that "in the last two or three years many problems have been raised and all have been solved in principle, but in fact after points of principle were solved, not a trace has been reflected in creative practice." (Mao Dun, JFRB, 1941, October 7)

Short stories and poetry were not altogether lacking in the newspaper after its inception on May 16, but even with the creation on September 16 of a separate literary section "Wen Yi" at the time of the expansion of the paper from two to four pages, one can still observe the want of outstanding creative contributions. What were the reasons for this? A factor underlying everything else was no doubt the "converging of two torrents" previously mentioned. In this chapter I hope to examine the conflicts that resulted from urban writers living in the Border Areas, the problems for writers and literature stemming from these difficulties, and the disunity arising from these
issues as revealed in the press.

In 1978, Zhou Yang recounted the difficulties for writers coming to Yan'an during the war. According to him, most of the writers and cultural workers came from Shanghai. He himself had arrived in Yan'an in autumn of 1937 at the summon of Yan'an leaders in need of cultural workers. The concept of getting close to the workers, peasants, and soldiers was very abstract to them when in the large city, and most had never even laid eyes on a peasant or Red soldier before coming to Yan'an. Most had occupied garrets in the foreign concessions of Shanghai, living the lives of underground revolutionary intellectuals, so when they arrived to the Border Regions it is not surprising that most felt superior to and alienated from the masses isolated in the mountains of Northwest China. Material conditions, cultural and social life were vastly inferior to levels they had been accustomed to in the cities. Ouyang Shan remarked that there were no dance halls, theatres, or coffeehouses, and new clothes, let alone fashionable clothes that would be acceptable in Hong Kong, were hard to come by. (Ouyang Shan, JFRB, 1941, November 3) Although they did have dances every Saturday night (Qi Su, JFRB, 1942, April 7), people often alluded to the lack of social life and lack of friends. (Yan Wenjing, JFRB, 1941, October 17) The want of meat and vitamin C for physical nourishment, and paper, ink, and reading materials for creative and intellectual outlet contributed as well to the "culture shock" experienced by writers who were newcomers to the Liberated Areas. Although most of these people had been active leftists for years, even Communist Party members, they still did not know the first thing about "getting down to the masses."
Zhou Yang, in retrospect in 1978 admitted to the same problem himself. After living in Yan'an or at the front for awhile, young people were easily prone to disillusion and shock upon witnessing the ugly realities of war. It should be noted, however, that life under such circumstances was rough for everyone. Although those with romantic illusions about revolution were inevitably disappointed with one thing or another, even those without such preconceptions were nonetheless presented with dilemmas created by life in Yan'an which probably fell short of expectation. Hence this "converging of two torrents" produced problems of a new nature for modern Chinese writers who had already been battling with the perplexities of literary creation for more than two decades.

Beyond this, however, puzzles over the choice of source material and creative methods of apprehending and portraying subject matter, application of Marxism-Leninism to literature, popularization and the raising of standards, and treatment of and attitudes towards writers in society all played a large role in presenting difficulties to writers in CCP areas. Below we will examine these particular issues in light of their specific development in Yan'an centering around the key problem of the "converging of two torrents."

A. Source Material

Choice of source material in writing was a serious concern to those promoting the depiction of wartime life. Zhou Yang perceptively observed that writers did not know about what to
write. Although they wanted to portray new themes, they weren't familiar with topics concerning war. (Zhou Yang, JFRB, 1941, July 19) In September Ding Ling devoted a whole article to the problem of source material. She noticed that even writers who went to the front to "throw themselves into life" did not necessarily understand that life. It angered her to see them pick on certain themes only and sensationalize them. Writers, she wrote, desperately searching for subject matter, ended up choosing material on the basis of its market value, its ability to attract a reader rather than for its potential as fine creative matter. Popular but misunderstood themes included Manchuria, Japanese army life, and women. A most favorite subject exemplifying the tendency towards sensationalism was women raped by the Japanese. Ding Ling considered this kind of writing on a par with sensational trash coming out of Shanghai. She felt this material was the stuff of news reports and popular novels, but not of serious writing. Source material, she wrote, is everywhere, but if you "pick up every drop of birdseed around you like a hungry chicken," the consequences for your writing will be disastrous. After all "among 100,000 grains of sand, only one or two can be turned into gold." (Ding Ling, JFRB, 1941, September 29)

Mao Dun wrote one of the very few articles in JFRB to discuss the depiction of class in creative writing, before Mao Zedong's "Talks at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art" in May of 1942. About a week after Ding Ling talked about subject matter without mentioning social class, the author of Midnight (子夜) complained that writers as they always had, were only portraying people of their own class. (Mao Dun, JFRB, 1941, October 7)
Since there were very few writers of true "peasant origin" (that is, those who came from households who tilled the land themselves), accurate descriptions of peasants were rare. To his mind, the only decent portrayal of a peasant in modern literature was the immortal Ah Q. It is interesting that he classified Lu Xun's anti-hero as a peasant character, since by the above definition offered by Mao Dun himself, Ah Q would not fit into this group. Mao Dun also cited Shui Hu as being the only source for model peasant characters in traditional fiction. Again, by the definition above of "one who tills his own land", none of the bandit characters in Shui Hu could be labeled a peasant. It seems, then, that by peasant, the writer was referring to a particular mentality rather than a particular occupation. In fact, he talks about the "consciousness of the peasant" which he defines as encompassing such traits as "narrow vision, only caring about immediate benefits, stinginess, absolute unwillingness to give things to others for no special reason, strong private desires, extreme worship of the leadership." All of these, he wrote, "still rarely receive profound description," and because writers could not surpass their rich peasant or small landlord backgrounds, their depth of understanding was too limited to be able to portray real peasants or handicraft workers without making them all look like intellectuals. This inability to write about members of other classes, he showed, went back to traditional fiction and the novels written at the end of the Qing dynasty, whose "poor and disappointed scholars have their counterparts in today's wandering intellectuals, who are, if not wandering, struggling with hunger."
Today's literature, though, according to Mao Dun, did satisfactorily deal with women, from "old grandmothers to young granddaughters, from the 'slaves' of the 'three obediences and four virtues' to the 'rebellious females'", as the traditional literature had not, but he did not cite any specific examples of positive female characters. It was, at least, he felt, a vast improvement over the abnormal women depicted in Jin Ping Mei (金瓶梅) and the kind of women who "sold their bodies for money" described in the "narrow and depraved novels" at the end of the Qing, the latter of whom were well described but unrepresentative of ordinary women.

Mao Dun proposed that theorists and critics engage in work which they would no doubt find petty:

Take each type of 'character' from among the most outstanding new literary works and group them according to type. First arrange them on a chart and then do a comparative study of how the 'characters' from the same social class take on different 'appearances' under the pens of different writers; then indicate which ones are appropriate to their status, and match them to every small detail, which emphasize non-characteristic aspect and ignore characteristic ones, which are pulled and dragged and turned into forms deviant from any familiar norm or standard.

This exercise, he insisted, would render theoretical criticism useful and would aid writers in the creation of more effective works by indicating the importance of creating accurate characters based on real life. Empty writing full of principles was totally useless, and only careful judgements based on concrete examples would be meaningful to the reader and the writer, to the latter by helping him to really assimilate the theory which served as
basis for writing. Searching for concrete examples, he wrote, was a matter of not wanting to see only from afar, without lowering oneself to "personal trifles."

Mao Dun was the only one in JFRB to discuss source material in a broader sense, from the point of view of traditional fiction up to the past few years. He could not cite more specific examples of new works and characters which he felt were worthy of praise because there were next to none. Recognizing the immediate difficulty arising from the lack of writers of peasant origin, he was the only major voice in the paper to predate all of the similar formulations which appeared only after Mao's "Talks at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art". By that time, this contradiction was more officially recognized as an extremely profound problem. His concluding attack against writings full of abstract talk, and the complaint that there was no reflection in creative works of even the points of principle which had already been resolved in the past few years, confirmed previous observations made by Zhou Yang and others.

The problem of source material carried well into the following year in JFRB. In February, 1942, a Jiang Hua complained of the love for bizarre themes. He saw writing as "a contest to see who could depict the most grotesque." He also, interestingly enough, like Ding Ling, admonished writers for trying too hard to please their readers through the use of sensational themes. (JFRB, 1942, February 11) It is noteworthy that nowhere else do we come across the official recognition that some element of the readership demanded other than salutary revolutionary war tales. The general audience in the Border Areas was portrayed by the Party as a group
of people unified in national, political, and social goals as well as artistic tastes, yet it is perhaps not surprising in any country during wartime to discover a desire for escapist literature even among those with sincere patriotic fervor.

Like Zhou Yang, Jiang Hua warned against storytelling, that is, using second and third-hand stories as primary material in creative writing. He wrote that themes often used to attract the reader included the traditional "scholar meets beauty" (caizi jia-ren 才子佳人), "mountain deities and earth gods" (shanshen tudi 山神土地), and "miraculous deeds of the underworld" (jianghu qizia 江湖奇侠), thinly disguised through the surface themes of "war", "hatred towards the enemy", "knives", "heroes", and "sacrifices."

In April, 1942, Xiao Ying was still finding fault with a careless adoption of source material and sloppy writing which she saw as stemming from an overly casual attitude on the part of the writer towards his art and readership. (JFRB, 1942, April 2)

> Some writers... go on nonsensically and without basis for over ten thousand words, and then print the work without editing or revision. In the end, how much literary value do works such as these possess? Even the most unqualified reader could probably identify the excessive detail, annoying insertion of interludes, verbiose scenery description, and numerous and inappropriate 'terminology'!

After lauding Pushkin, Flaubert, Jack London, and Mao Dun for the amount of patience and care given to the research and writing of their works, she asked,

> And what about our writers? They merely sit in their caves and forge reality, trumping up stories and plots. No wonder their works lack any flavor
of the Border Area, their plot developments become formulas, and their characters lose vitality.

The lack of coffee and vitamin C, she wrote, could not be used as an excuse for this quick writing. Since basic food, clothing, and shelter were no problem, poverty could not excuse the lack of real creativity. The phenomenon of poor writers putting out manuscripts in quick succession so as to earn money to buy the next meal, said Xiao Ying, had no basis for existence in Yan'an.

Zhou Yang had, in July, identified the major problems with the selection of thematic material when he warned writers against a merely abstract knowledge of writing material, looking for the unusual rather than the ordinary, and adopting cheap short-cuts to finding source matter. These, then, were the most significant mistakes committed by writers when searching for creative sources.

These articles and others were surely a reaction to the apparently large amount of low-quality writing produced since the outbreak of the war. Since many writers did not have a deep understanding of war in the countryside or at the front, they had to rely on less than first-hand, first-rate information, and produced unsuccessful works. One of the focuses of the rectification movement to be launched in February, 1942 was precisely this off-hand way of producing literature without prior study or preparation in the form of actual personal experience and contact with subject matter. (Mao Zedong, 1942 B) The answer, offered by Zhou Yang long before the official commencement of the rectification movement, was to get closer to real life by experiencing the source material from inside, in other words, to go down to the
masses. (Zhou Yang, JFRB, 1941, July 19) The inability on the part of writers to blend in with the new environment around them was exemplified by a neat pun coined to describe armchair writers who rarely left their caves. Such people were called "those who excel at sitting" (zuo jia 家). (Sai Ke, JFRB, 1942, May 23) Yet Zhou Yang himself admitted that "just because there is life, there is not necessarily literature", and that a naive and dogmatic faith in the concept of going into real life resulted in a tendency to overlook the fact that blending in with the masses could not solve all creative problems. There were still other factors preventing writers from creating good literature. (Zhou Yang, JFRB, 1941, July 17)

B. Creative Approach to Subject Matter

Once writers settled on worthy source material, an entirely separate problem of how to actually treat such subject matter ensued. The relationship between writer and subject, then, should be discussed as a separate problem, although we need to keep in mind that it is very much related to searching for and choosing source material.

Zhou Yang devoted much attention to explaining the finer points of why writers should go to the masses in order to find creative inspiration, what they should do once they got there, and how they should process their learning experience into creative material. He was the only one to go into such detail.

On July 17, in Part One of his essay "Talks on Literature and Life", he approached the creative process as "the process of
the writer's hand-to-hand struggle with life." Throughout his
discussion he never once alluded to Marxism or collectivism as
it applied to this creative process. Instead, he addressed the
writer as an individual struggling with artistic form, in need
of a "specialized skill and knowledge." He despised literary
amateurs and the naive belief that good literature could be
automatically created without hard study, or only through "ex­
periencing life", as the popular slogan went. Although Zhou Yang,
called a "front-lineist", was clearly an advocate of writers
mixing with workers, peasants, and soldiers, his article hoped to
qualify the idea by pointing to the approach necessary to truly
benefit from living among the masses. He quoted from both tradi­
tional Chinese literary-philosophical theory as well as Western
poetics to state his point. Alluding to Wang Guowei (王國維)
who maintained that intimate knowledge of an object must be cou­
pled with a certain philosophical distance from it in order to
render it faithfully on paper, Zhou warned against both "not
seeing the forest for the trees" (JFRB, 1941, July 17) and
"only seeing the forest and not the trees." (1941, July 18) He
spoke of the necessity to view life from "a set intellectual level",
but seemed to be referring to a philosophical and intellectual
rather than political ideology.

Not unlike most of his intellectual contemporaries in the
literary world, Zhou Yang quoted from a foreign source to support
his argument. Schiller's praise for Homer and Shakespeare as
"naive" poets in "On Naive and Sentimental Poetry" helped to
affirm and clarify the significance of the relationship between
writer and subject (and life in general) to literary creativity.
The "naive poet", said Schiller, because of his harmony with objects of nature, is able to treat his subject with "dry truth" resembling insensitivity, when in fact it is his very unity with subject matter that produces this distance. A balance in this delicate relationship between subjectivity and objectivity was the key to creation, in Zhou's view. By approaching life as an insider, through gaining a more intimate understanding of subject matter without discarding an even, calm distance from it, a positive distance based on ideological understanding, writers could begin to grasp the real meaning of creation.

Zhou Yang was not in favor of portraying only the dark side of life in Yan'an (baolu heian 暴露黑暗), that is, in criticizing one's own camp, although it is obvious that he was well aware of the existence of points worthy of criticism. By encouraging a resolute conquering of disenchantment and disallusionment ensuing from inadequacies of Yan'an life, he was requesting writers to not only accept existing circumstances, but to actually build their own creative lives upon such realities. So while "dark spots in the sun" often made life uncomfortable and prevented writers from only praising the positive aspects even when it was their original intention to do so, Zhou requested them to overlook minor sore points for the sake of the common cause. He did not doubt the sincerity of most writers, for they had a "blood relationship with revolution." To alleviate their stress, he urged them to accept their practical work, accept the masses, and if need be, temporarily abandon creative writing so as not to be distracted from potentially satisfying work, ultimately useful to the Party and to their own writing. The Party, on the other hand,
should "sincerely welcome criticism" and not think "that just because some writer makes one or two bad remarks about Yan'an (moreover, not even talking about all of Yan'an) that he is opposing us." (JFRB, 1941, July 19)

It is apparent that Zhou Yang very much played the role of mediator at this time, interpreting writers' complaints for the Party, while clarifying the Party's stand to the literary world. Privy to the difficulties encountered by writers with creativity in general and while working under difficult conditions in Yan'an in particular, he was at the same time expressing his concern from the standpoint of a high-ranking Party cultural worker who was sincerely devoted to the long-range Communist revolutionary cause, attempting to unite writers under this banner. From Zhou Yang's July essay we can see that at this time, speaking from both directions did not necessarily indicate a contradictory stand in the eyes of the Party. Later we will observe that when criticism by writers crossed the level of Party tolerance, no more public sympathy for writers from cultural officials appeared in the press, and an ambiguous position on the part of an official like Zhou Yang would have resulted in problems.

In 1979, Zhou Yang justifiably sought to exonerate himself from criticism received during the Cultural Revolution for advocating the exposure of darkness in the revolutionary camp in the early forties. He then made reference to an article he had written expressly asking writers not to expose darkness (no doubt the article discussed above), as well as to a letter of protest he then received signed by Manchurian writers Xiao Jun, Luo Feng, and others, opposing his opinion on this. I believe that
this letter was entitled "In the sun too there are dark spots" (taiyang limian ye you heidian 太陽裡面也有黑點). It will be seen later that the authors of this letter were very much in favor of exposing the dark aspects of Yan'an, and so their letter of protest to Zhou Yang would reenforce the authenticity of his disapproval of their critical attitude towards the portrayal of subject matter.

The whole debate over whether to expose the dark or extol the bright (gesong guangming 歌頌光明) will be dealt with more thoroughly in later chapters. There is no question that such a problem concerned more than mere choice of subject material, but also reflected the writers' relationship with and attitudes towards life in the Communist base, and the conflicts arising over visions of what life could be like and what it was like.

Besides the theoretical advice offered by Zhou Yang in July, and the October piece by Mao Dun, there appeared next to no theoretical observations and advice on literary creativity in JFRB. When general criticisms of the literature column come to light in March, 1942, it will be noted that a dearth of worthwhile theoretical and critical writing in the paper was one of its most serious shortpoints, and I think it is safe to extend this phenomenon to Yan'an in general and probably to most of China too. (Anonymous, JFRB, 1941, B, September 12; Quyang Shan, 1942, March 12) If writers were having difficulties in deciding on proper themes, approaches, and effective methods, they were not aided in any way by the attention of many perceptive critics or theorists willing to devote serious study to problems of literary creativity.
If, as Zhou Yang and Mao Dun observed, intellectual writers were not able to successfully portray workers, peasants, and soldiers, if some were not even willing to depict these elements of life with which they were not familiar, through what modes of expression were they capable of communicating their thoughts and feelings? Here is where discussion of approach to subject matter relates to adoption of form. Writers unable to express themselves through fiction or poetry did opt for one particular form which was most conducive to their critical attitude towards Yan'an life. That form was \textit{za wen} (雜文), the personal essay which was to serve as an outlet for those intellectually frustrated writers unable to unite with their environment. The creation of \textit{za wen} in the style of Lu Xun demanded a distant standpoint on the part of the writer, for the characteristic tone of the essay itself since the time of Lu Xun (who made it famous) was one of great sarcasm. Satirical, sardonic attacks against political, social, and cultural trends provided the backbone for \textit{za wen}. Its appearance in Yan'an was most certainly a reaction to disallusionment and tension which arose from the play between the real and the ideal in the minds of writers attempting to live in harmony with their surroundings. If Zhou Yang advised an internal approach to this tension, that is, a decision to accept and work with existing realities, then creators of \textit{za wen} could be said to have taken an opposite approach. Unable to describe Yan'an life on its own terms, some writers, making full use of their alienation, chose the critical approach of outsiders. Their \textit{za wen} exposed the darkness in the revolutionary camp, and for this reason Zhou Yang and the CCP did not approve of the use of the
essay form.\textsuperscript{9}

In Chapter Three we will see za wen at its peak of popularity in Yan'an. However, as will be observed soon below, the form was employed long before March, 1942. The Manchurian writer Luo Feng used it as early as August of 1941 in a harsh attack against critics, and then again, in September, aimed against lazy elements within the Party. These isolated appearances along with Ding Ling's October call for the official adoption of za wen as a weapon against darkness, were to presage its short flourishing in spring of the following year.

For some writers, then, the use of za wen solved the dilemma of how to treat life around them, of how to process that which they perceived. A critical stance allowed such writers to capitalize on the distance between themselves and their new life, a life which some were incapable of accepting uncritically, or deal with at all on its own terms. This contention with conditions in Yan'an served as roots for the encouragement of the satiric essay among certain elements of writers. As for the discussion of the content of particular za wen, we will treat each essay as it arises within the context of the broader thematic outline of this thesis.

C. Application of Marxism-Leninism to Literature: Formulism

The next issue which I wish to bring attention to is the application of revolutionary theory to literature and the tendency towards formulism during this time. Although this problem is related to the difficulty of creativity above, I choose to deal
with it separately due to its tremendous importance as subject of debate in the rectification movement in literature initiated in February, 1942.

In May of 1941, Ouyang Shan wrote that formulism, or slogan literature, as well as the complaints of young writers of how they were being hindered in their creativity, were due to an overly dogmatic interpretation of Marxism-Leninism on their part. He argued that writers narrowly defined Party dogma and forced abstract doctrines into their work because of a lack of real life experience and proper study methods. \( \text{(JFRB, 1941, May 19) } \) In this sense he was repeating exactly the concern issued by Mao Zedong that same month in "Reform our Study", where Mao lamented that Communist Party members had only a superficial and abstract book knowledge of ideology with no practical experience to back it up. \( \text{(Mao Zedong, 1941, May) } \) Ouyang Shan identified this tendency in the literary world (only three days after the initial publication of \text{JFRB}) and others soon followed suit. In October, Mao Dun attributed empty, meaningless literature to the same problem:

\[
\text{This is because the love for speaking about principles and rules has already become the vogue. Naturally we need principles. Who would dare say that rules are of no use? But our new literature is still at a young age, and there is too much abstract talk which is useless. (JFRB, 1941, October 7)}
\]

Here, Mao Dun objected to the tendency in writing to merely fill up pages, a consequence of failing to investigate concrete reality to support written theory. But it is unlikely that formulistic literature was solely due to an incorrect assimilation of revolutionary theory, and in fact Ouyang Shan (and as we saw,
Zhou Yang too) reminded writers that after gaining a deeper understanding of ideology through the study of reality, they would also have to "master creative technique and the art of creative form." (Ouyang Shan, JFRB) Thus the problem "is not as simple as we had imagined." (Zhou Yang, JFRB, 1941, July 17)

Later, after the formal call for literary rectification, attacks on formulistic writing grew even more bitter. In April, 1942, Xiao Ying wrote,

There are still other people, who, from the beginning extremely alienated from the villages in the Border Area, usually lack a spirit of investigating the life and character of the peasant. Yet a political slogan always stirs up their fervent creative impulse. To rely on a political slogan to establish a theme and then proceed to write according to this abstract notion before having experienced life, is to go down a dangerous creative path. (JFRB, 1942, April 2)

Literary formulism, then, was also the product of an inability to understand characters outside the writers' familiar experience as well as they could comprehend theory and principle.

Formulism evidently existed among critics as well, though it took on another shape. The Manchurian writer Luo Feng, advocate and often creator of za wen, attacked political formulism among critics of literature. In August, 1941, he wrote bitterly,

The critic only wishes to place all writers under his political mask, consciously or unconsciously allowing the value of art to turn into sediments in the sea, while allowing the 'political mask' to float on the surface of the water like an oily pearl... Formulism often turns an objective assessment into a narrow and erroneous one. The main reason is that the critic can not clearly and simply apply the science of dialectical materialism to artistic problems.
He added sarcastically,

Naturally writers are not interested in abstract scientific thought and it is detestable that they should reveal their own shallow and unknowledgable criticism of that stereotyped learning. (JFRB, 1941, August 19)

The harsh and sardonic tone of this attack was representative of the medium (za wen) favored by Luo Feng, but in no way reflected the general and more official denouncements of formulism. Formulism among critics was not raised as an official object of condemnation, but would obviously receive bitter treatment from writers whose works had been victims of shoddy criticism. It seems, however, that Luo Feng and another apparent victim of perhaps less than scholarly criticism, Ai Qing,\textsuperscript{10} were not aiming at exactly the same source of formulism in creative works. They were instead suggesting a conscious deceit on the part of biased critics, a deceit for which young writers guilty of formulism were never blamed. The phenomenon of formulism, for whatever motives, owed its existence to, as Luo Feng indicated, the inability to "apply the science of dialectical materialism to artistic problems."

The failure was not attributed to the incorrectness of a dialectical materialist approach to art, but to an inappropriate manner of application which resulted from an insufficient or dogmatic interpretation of Marxist doctrine, coupled with an insufficient knowledge of artistic theory.

Similar problems with criticism of art were also revealed in an essay called "Art Critics and Artists", written by an artist reacting against unfair judgement of a recent display of woodcuts.\textsuperscript{11} The author, one of the artists from the show, object-
ed to the critic's superficial assessment of the art displayed. The critic Hu Man had labeled the artistic themes overly concerned with "customs" rather then "politics." But one couldn't, wrote the wood carver, expect every artist to be able to depict the New Fourth Army Incident or the Hundred Regiments Campaign (baituan tazhan 百團大战), just as Lu Xun was not castigated for not writing about workers' strikes in his creative works. The artist believed in having first-hand experience with life, but saw the necessity of giving artistic form to that which was in his own capabilities of portraying because of his own particular interest in the subject. It was wrong, he wrote, for the critic to only emphasize the artist's politics, and not first look at his creative method, technique, content, and own life itself. Without artistic skill, he insisted, there would be no art to serve politics at all. Oddly enough the artist wrote that these problems had already been solved in the literary world, which indicated the backwardness of the fine arts.

In Chapter Three we will examine the official Party campaign against formulistic literature in the context of the rectification movement.

D. Popularization and the Raising of Standards

The question of popularization (puji 普及) and the raising of standards (tigao 提高) to be based on a mass literature offered particular problems for literature during the war and Mao Zedong considered it a matter of profound significance in his May "Talks." Yet in JFRB I discovered only one article focusing
exclusively on the topic of mass literature (in this case, literature created by the masses themselves) before May, 1942. In June, 1941, Liu Xuewei discussed the "refinement of literature". He noted that there were people who feared that once the literature of the masses entered the "temple" (i.e., once it passed through the hands of the ruling class for refinement) it would lose its original vitality and simplicity. Liu believed, however, that such literature did need polishing, since although it was refreshing and full of life, it was still overly coarse and awkwardly direct. He was assured that when the revolutionary class succeeded in becoming the ruling class, this would at last give them the access to leisure time to raise the standards of their literature which could then become both "revolutionary and artistic." He defined revolutionary literature as the artistically polished literature of the proletarian class. Although he admitted that proletarian literature was still incomplete, its "crude and uncivilized qualities" could nevertheless be used to oppose the "pallid refinement" of the decadent bourgeois class. And in the not so distant future, there would be opportunity for the proletarian class to revive its own literature. (Liu Xuewei, JFRB, 1941, June 2)

Liu's solution to the creation of a successful mass-based literature was of course over simplistic. It overlooked the fact that the revolutionary rulers who would be in charge of "polishing" proletarian literature after revolutionary victory would not immediately be of proletarian origin themselves. There would most certainly be disagreement over degrees of refinement. Artistically advanced proletarian literature could not be created merely as
the result of leisure time and ruling political position, and it would not automatically give way to "class literature" just because its origins were "folk." Nonetheless, Liu Xuewei offered the only discussion of literature actually created by the masses in light of the role it would play after revolutionary victory. Rarely did others raise the topic of folk literature. National forms, as creations of the people, had been spoken of earlier and then again after Mao's "Talks", but Liu Xuewei was concerned with the overall "crude and uncivilized qualities" of folk literature, and not form in particular. He did, however, overlook the vast contradiction existing in the present, that writers of proletarian origin were too few and that so-called literature for the masses was being produced by writers incapable of directing their art to a mass audience. Moreover, he also failed to take into consideration the time factor involved in creating a whole new era of literature (his "revolutionary and artistic" literature) after the attainment of political power by the proletarian class.

But the very fact that no one besides Liu in JFRB had devoted much effort to the definition of revolutionary mass-origin literature would lend credence to Mao's later observations that writers in Yan'an were more worried about literature of their own making than with helping the masses develop their own art, or raising artistic standards based on already existing mass art.

E. The Writer in Society

The last major issue to be examined will be treatment of and attitudes towards writers in society. Under the first large-scale
experiment of revolutionary government in the history of China, the handling of writers and artists was naturally a delicate topic of concern for the Communist Party as well as the cultural world. Again, tension arose from the "converging of two torrents." Writers were accustomed to a certain position and role in the revolutionary underground in Shanghai, but once in Yan'an the demands of them shifted, and so did their status.

Zhou Yang did not "approve of writers considering themselves more special than other people," yet he added in the same breath, "Yan'an must become the type of place where writers are especially understood and respected." (Zhou Yang, JFRB, 1941, July 19) The government did not hide its need of intellectuals devoted to the revolutionary cause and it seems that materially, at least, the more popular writers and skilled researchers and translators were somewhat better-off than others in Yan'an, (as were non-Party skilled people).12 Less than a month after Zhou Yang's remarks on attitudes towards writers, a front page editorial read, "The expansion of the literary movement and the welcome and special treatment towards writers is the direction of endeavor prescribed in the Outline of the Border Regional Government." Yet the "special treatment of writers" was then listed under the group of problems yet to be solved. (Anonymous, JFRB, 1941, A)

In any event, material treatment wasn't the real issue here. On January 1, 1942, Xiao San wrote an article entitled "'Professional Literary People' and 'Amateur Literary People'".13 In it he castigated writers for their self-righteous attitudes of superiority. Taking them to task for viewing their profession as "sacred, honest, and clean" as opposed to politics which is dis-
honest and corrupt, he sought to remind them that since today's politics were clean, they need no longer think themselves above it. The roots of their aversion to politics, he said, lay in the past when people had more respect for those who aspired to gain wealth through officialdom, than for artists. Yet today writers should participate in the new politics by forgetting about being full-time artists and taking up some practical work which would contribute to the war effort, and also improve their writing in the long-run. Xiao urged writers to stop complaining about the practical work which prevented them from devoting time to writing. This was in essence the same advice Zhou Yang had offered, but did not reveal the same amount of sympathy. At the time, Mao's future biographer felt that it was incorrect for writers to think "there is no alternative but to temporarily sacrifice literature while participating in the war", or "writing for the practical needs of the war is an unavoidable way of lowering the value of literature." Instead, he urged the growth of amateur writers: "The writer does not have a patent on literature. Every working member has the right to write." Yet he admitted that "the time of saying 'everyone is a writer' is very far off."

Hence, although Xiao San himself recognized the importance of creating good, effective literature during the war, he did not want writers to devote all of their time to creativity since there was so much other urgent work to attend to as well. The Party's attitude towards writers and literature in general was molded by the traditional Communist attempt "to insure that literature and art fit well into the whole revolutionary machine as a component part." (Mao Zedong, 1942 C:112/English: 70) The
artist's role was not to be any more or less important than that of the political activist, whose task the artist too was fulfilling through the inherent political function of his art. The focus of attack on professional writers, then, was on an attitude supposedly carried over from the past when writers divorced themselves from political matters. However, we should keep in mind that Xiao was exaggerating an attitude for the sake of attacking it. It is doubtful that writers in traditional China ever did totally cut themselves off from political matters. As for the immediate past for writers in Shanghai, very few if any could have supported themselves through writing alone, and many had already participated in underground political work. Therefore it would be unfair to portray the new arrivals to Yan'an as artists divorced from the vast political activity going on around them. Such writers would not have come to Yan'an in the first place. Xiao San was, I believe, aiming to put a check on a tendency which we will see below had definite roots in the literary world—pleas for more respect and understanding of writers on the part of the Party and the public in general. Such pleas were based on Chinese writers' notion of themselves as a separate moral force in society, not of being divorced from political and social trends, but to the contrary, of contributing to, motivating, and often influencing political and social movements. By considering themselves the sensitive elements of society, they felt better equipped to comment on and influence the broad scope of events around them. Here will lay the roots of Wang Shiwei's attitude which will be discussed in later chapters.

Within two months of Xiao San's article, the poet Ai Qing
who had arrived in Yan'an in 1941 wrote two essays upholding the special position of writers in society. The first, written on February 12, was to set the groundwork for the second essay which was given much attention due to its recriticism during the anti-rightist campaign in 1958. In the earlier piece, the poet defined the value of literature as a driving force in society, but not like an object of purely utilitarian worth. The greatest source of personal comfort and pleasure for the writer would be the completion of a creative work, and an immortal work would raise man's spirit from the narrow to the noble. A writer was special in that his good work contained something entrusted to its author as a spokesman for his age.

One month later Ai Qing repeated the same injunction for society to recognize the vital significance of the writer's role in reforming humanity, only this time he was more explicit. The writer, he stated, was the spiritual spokesman of a race or class. Although literature did not share the utilitarian function of food, clothing, or medicine, humanity was in need of it to answer existential questions arising from loneliness and suffering. The emotional and spiritual aspect of man (and here he made no distinction of class) wonders "Why do we live?", and only literature could offer spiritual solutions to such queries. Here the poet was clearly attempting to stress the particular qualities of literature which would set it apart from other components of the revolutionary machine. He wrote that a fine work of art or artists should mean more to a nation than its political or material gain in war. An artist could be the finest asset to a nation and its best representative. But, he felt, to
create works worthy of such esteem, a writer must be true to his own feelings and can only write on the basis of his own view of the world. Creative people, then, had the right to demand only one special privilege, that of creative freedom. Only when literature is free and independent of politics can it be effective in social reform.

The poet then called on everyone to emulate the ancients' love for writers. He quoted a line from Li Bo's letter to Han Chaozong (韩朝宗) in which the Tang poet flattered the famous official of Jing Zhou. (Han Jingzhou Shu 韩荆州書) The meaning of the line quoted was that Li Bo felt he needn't be a high official if only he could meet the famous connoisseur of literary talent. Han Chaozong was well-known as a patron of young literary talent and all aspiring scholars hoped to meet him. Li Bo compared the official to a true connoisseur of valuable swords and jade, and envisioned himself as a literary treasure waiting to be recognized and promoted by such a one who would understand him. Ai Qing was asking the critics to be as understanding a judge of his works as would be Han Chaozong.

The further implications of these two essays by Ai Qing and later Party response to his ideas will be treated in Chapter Three and Four. The plea for a deeper understanding and respect for writers, for which Ai Qing was spokesman, represented a reaction to the different treatment afforded to writers and artists in the new society. It was also a reaction to the low level of scholarly and objective literary criticism known to be a real problem at this time. As will be seen later, Mao would consider differential attitudes towards writers as a secondary matter when such
writers were still so alienated from the masses.

F. Signs of Disunity

The specific contradictions present in discussion of the above major focuses of concern in JFRB were all, to a greater or lesser degree, the end products of urban writers clashing with the historical, geographical, and political conditions of the Communist base. It was only natural, then, that disunity should arise from different interpretations of such problems. The climax of the disunity will serve as the nucleus of the next chapter. By showing its roots through early signs and expressions of bitter disagreement among writers and between writers and the Party, it is to be hoped that we can gain insight into what by spring of 1942 would explode into harsh recognitions of profound discord in Yan'an.

As early as September 11, 1941, as editor of the literature section of JFRB, Ding Ling summoned a meeting of fifty people in the literary world to discuss the literature column - the past three to four months, the present, and its future direction. Speeches were made, but the paper did not specifically record who had said what. JFRB did report that they spoke on unifying the literary world at Yan'an, on enhancing a democratic style, establishing creative criticism, raising the level of literary theory and creation, and opening the anti-formulism, anti-subjectivism movement on the literary front. The mention of these items is not surprising. Disunity was already visible in the paper by this time. Below we will witness the call that same month for
the use of more democratic methods in treating those with different views, and we have already heard complaints of writers over the lack of worthwhile creative criticism and literary theory. Reactions to formulism had come early (Ouyang Shan, JFRB, 1941, May 19), while "subjectivism" had also been revealed.\textsuperscript{18}

The most popular medium for expression of disagreement with other writers and critics and with the Party at this time was \underline{za wen}. We saw that Luo Feng had used it as early as August 19 against critics. A month later he employed it again in the earliest specific attack against certain elements within the CCP by a writer to appear in JFRB. His essay had nothing to do with literature, as neither did many of the later spring, 1942 pieces, and in this sense such dissident articles should be treated separately from the problem of disunity over literary issues. The two phenomena are probably confused because of the fact that much of the dissent against particular trends in the Party came from people who because they were writers were most capable of articulating general concerns. Writers, too, because of their work were particularly sensitive to political affairs which would affect them, but we can not assume that their dissent was based on purely narrow personal motives which did not also represent other elements of society.

The present discussion of dissent voiced through \underline{za wen} can only be justified here because of the form which this protest took, and in this sense the topic of \underline{za wen} and specific analyses of its content is not completely divorced from the subject of literary activity in Yan'an.

On September 22, 1941, Luo Feng sarcastically reproached the
kind of people who pretended to be content with the present situation for the sake of Party loyalty, when such loyalty was actually useless to the revolution. Likening criticism of the current situation to shooting an arrow at a target towards which one "needn't harbor loving feelings", Luo Feng aimed his attack against the people in the Party who allowed remnants of the old society to remain unscathed due to lazyness and passivity. The thrust of his blow was against fatalists in the CCP who suffered their visions of a more progressive society in silence without taking action. He was to treat this same theme again later in March, 1942. Vehemently against shoddy work, the odd title "An Essay Not Basted Together" refers to an essay (presumably his own) which is carefully put together with sincerity and emotion, as opposed to most which were thrown together casually and never made an impact on their reader, nor on the revolution. Unified, concerted action for the sake of progress was, he felt, being sacrificed for passive acceptance of the status quo. Disunity was an enormous obstacle to revolutionary progress: "Having surface peace and unity with no basis in reality is like building a foundation on top of sand..."

In October, Ding Ling announced her public support of the use of za wen and echoed many of Luo Feng's bitter observations on hindrances to real change and progress within the Party. She wrote that there were people who hoped to voice an opinion but since their ideas differed from those prevalent, they were intimidated and kept from speaking out. This lack of democratic methods among some in the Party was, she asserted, actually a step backward for those in power. Following the example of Lu Xun,
the great writer officially sanctioned as such by the Communist Party as well as all revolutionary writers, she encouraged the use of \textit{za wen} to locate and destroy the darkness which still existed even in Yan'an. \textit{(JFRB, 1941, October 23)} Ding Ling wrote a short story, "In the Hospital", published sometime around late fall, 1941, which is the most well-known expression in fictionalized form of complaints lodged in later \textit{za wen} of March, 1942.\textsuperscript{19} Reactions to it exemplified the disunity in the literary world over the issue of whether or not to expose darkness in the CCP camp.

"In the Hospital" is the story of Lu Ping, a young ex-Shanghai obsetrician student who fulfilled her father's wishes through the study of medicine rather than pursue her own literary interests. After the Japanese invasion of Shanghai, she wrote for the war effort and then went to Kangri (抗日) University in Yan'an with visions of becoming a political worker. After entering the CCP one year later, she was sent against her will to work in a newly established hospital forty \textit{li} from Yan'an. She discovered only disillusionment upon arrival. The staff members of the hospital were almost all inexperienced and devoid of human sympathy. Bad sanitation habits among the nurses, lack of decent equipment, and a generally cold reception quickly fade Lu Ping's enthusiasm and illusions about revolutionary work. Her "idealism clashes with the narrow-mindedness of those around her" (Fokkema, 1965:12), and her frustrated attempt at reforming the inadequacies of the system caused her physical illness. Her request to leave was finally granted.

During her harrowing experience, she had met only a few
people from whom she could gain sympathy and comfort, one of whom had his feet needlessly amputated as the result of a sloppy medical decision. She departed from the material and spiritual desolation of the hospital on the cautiously optimistic note that "man is born from suffering", and only after going through such trials will our lives be of use.

An obvious exposure of the dark aspects of Yan'an, the story predated za wen concerned with the same theme by about four months. Interesting was the criticism which followed in the press which reflected the divergence of opinion which had developed over the issues brought up by the story.

On December 5, Liu Xuewei introduced the story after it had just appeared in the first issue of the new journal Gu Yu (后雨). Written before the height of the rectification movement and the appearance of other voices of discontent over the same problems, Liu wrote:

What becomes the special feature of the work is the exposure of some shadowy aspects of the new society. These parts are very real and need purging not only through the realm of political theory and work, but also through literary works. Our writers living in the new society here are still not doing enough in relation to this task, perhaps because they lack the ability to grasp it. Therefore this special feature is even more significant. However, the important thing here is that questions have been raised, but not satisfactorily dealt with.

By June, however, "In the Hospital" was treated in a much more critical manner. On June 10, Wang Liaoying praised Ding Ling's mature technique and skill in describing her protagonist. However, he blamed the author for writing about a unique case
and portraying it as a typical one, for being incapable of accurately depicting any but her own class, and for "unconsciously propagating individualism." The critic maintained that with new realism, the fate of the individual can not be separated from the fate of the collective. Since Ding Ling offered future hope and progress to her protagonist but not to the environment she was fighting to reform, she had not yet grasped the essence of new realism. Wang felt that Ding Ling should have described Lu Ping's transformation from the non-proletarian class to the ranks of the proletariat, and he could not help but criticize the author's passive attitude towards Lu Ping's deficiencies of character.

It is interesting that in December of 1941 Ding Ling's story was praised for the very tone for which it would be criticized in June, 1942, after the exposure of darkness in Yan'an had been officially condemned by Mao in his May "Talks." Liu was a Party critic, therefore it is evident that there was some solid support for this kind of literature and general trend from critics since the appearance of "In the Hospital". The June criticism was relatively mild compared to treatment the story was to receive later in 1958. By that time, the same critic would be blaming Ding Ling for consciously propagating individualism in line with the anti-rightist attacks against her.

Although grievances with life in Yan'an had already appeared in fiction before Ding Ling's short story (e.g., Yan Wenjing, JFRB, 1941, October 17), "In the Hospital", due to the more profound nature of the condemnation, as well as to its author's name and position, received much attention. Following Ding Ling's
October call to raise za wên as a weapon against darkness, the story helped to authorize the new course to be taken by writers discontent with the environment. As editor of the literature page and Communist Party member, Ding Ling's official sanction of this new direction did not go unnoticed, nor did it lack response. In the next chapter we will examine this response and the ensuing impact it had on literary policies.
NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1 Jiefang Ribao will from here on be referred to as JRFB. This official Party daily, published from May 16, 1941 to March 27, 1947, had supplanted two other Party organs, Xin ZhongHua Bao (新中華報) and Jiefang (解放). The former, published from February 7, 1939 to May 15, 1941, appeared only every three days. According to Zhou Erfu (1939:682), Xin ZhongHua Bao contained a literary supplement "Dong Yuan" (動員) which did not consistently appear every issue. Jiefang, published from April 24, 1937 to June 15, 1941 was a weekly publication. By 1941, due to the growing intensity of the war - the New Fourth Army Incident or Anhui Incident (皖南事變) in which Red Army troops suffered heavy loss at the hands of Nationalist government troops during their withdraw from their base south of the Yangzi), increasing Nationalist blockading and Japanese terrorism, Mao ordered the creation of a more complete Party newspaper to supplant the two insufficient organs. Thus JRFB served as the CCP mouthpiece in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region and surrounding areas, while Xinhua Ribao (新華報) spoke for the Communist Party in Chongqing. The latter, unavailable to my knowledge, was published from January 11, 1938 to March 1, 1947 when it was closed down by the Guomindang government. See Zhang Jinglu, editor, Zhongguo Xiandai Chuban Shiliao, volume four.

2 See interview with Zhou Yang in Seventies magazine, 104 (September 1978):26-33, as well as the first note to my translation of Zhou's July, 1941 article appended to this thesis.

3 The author herself treated the fictional portrayal of women raped by the Japanese (see Ding Ling, 1956, Yan'an Ji), so rather than labeling the subject itself taboo, she was only criticizing its unfair and insensitive treatment.

4 Rich peasants by definition till their own land albeit with outside help. Therefore there is a contradiction in the writer's reasoning here.
This was no doubt one of the causes for labeling this article a "poisonous weed" during the Cultural Revolution. 'Gang of Four' criticism in 1973 labeled it an "anti-Party dark essay" which "viciously attacked the Party leadership and Yan'an's red political power." See Xuexi Mao Zhuxi Wenyi Lunzhu: Fudao Cailiao: 6.


The July piece was the only article written by Zhou Yang in JFRB concerning the subject at this time, although it is conceivable that related remarks could have appeared in one of the literary journals circulating around Yan'an.

In the recriticism of this time period during the anti-rightist campaign of 1957-8, there was a reference to a piece by this title as jointly published by Xiao Jun, Luo Feng, and others, instigated by Ding Ling. See Lin Mohan, 1958:3. The only other reference to this title was found later in Ding Youguang, 1966, 2:91, where it was listed together with the spring, 1942 better-known za wen which will be examined in Chapter Three of this thesis.

Za wen was by no means limited to Yan'an. Writers in other parts of China utilized the form to make veiled attacks against Japanese and Guomindang political and social oppression. For a discussion of magazines and sections of newspapers devoted to za wen see Wang Yao, 1953, Part Two:191-196.

On February 12, 1942 in JFRB, the poet Ai Qing also viciously attacked critics for being unobjective and deceitful. He wrote that there were very few literary historians; most were only specialists in historical anecdotes or legends who didn't use literary works as basis for historical material. He felt that critics were incapable of interpreting a writer to the
readers in a faithful and comprehensible manner. These outraged attacks on critics may have been exaggerated and unfair in some cases but point to the resentment by certain writers at critics for their failure to take a professional attitude toward literary criticism.

11 Li Qun's (力群) "Meishu piping jia yu meishu chuangzuo zhe" (美术批评家与美术创作者), JFRB, 1941, September 22, p. 4 was written in response to Hu Man's (胡ắm) "Muqian meishu shang de chuangzuo wenti" (目前美术上的创作问题), JFRB, 1941, August 28-9, p.2. See also Ai Qing's "Di Yi Ri" (第一日), JFRB, 1941, August 18, p. 2 for a generally favorable review of the same exhibition.

12 From Wang Shiwei, JFRB, 1942, March 13 and 23, we know that the prolific translator of Marxist works merited 'cadre clothes' and 'private kitchen.' As for non-Party people, it was official policy to treat them in a special manner precisely because of their non-Party status as participants in the national struggle and part of the united front.

13 Xiao San was also known as Emi Siao, Mao Zedong's official biographer, author of Mao Zedong Tongzhi de Qingshao Nian Shidai (毛泽东同志的青少年时代), Beijing: Renmin Chuban She, 1951.

14 Both of Ai Qing's articles will be treated again in the next chapter. His March 11 piece was reprinted in Wenyi Bao, 1958, 2:23-25.

15 This letter can be found in Li Taibo Quan Ji (李太白全集) 4 volumes (36 juan). Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1957, volume three (juan 26:17b-19a)

16 See Anonymous, JFRB, 1941 B. On September 11 it was announced that the paper would be expanding from two to four pages as of September 16 and from that day on, the literature
section was known as "Wen Yi." Numbered by issue, it always appeared on page four, until April 1, 1942 when it was discontinued as a separate section. At the meeting called by Ding Ling, people discussed the "various editorial problems anticipated by the coming expansion of the paper" and how it would affect the area under her control. Listed as present were Bai Lang (白朗), Shu Qun (舒群), Liu Baiyu (刘白羽), Chen Huangmei (陈荒煤), Luo Feng (罗烽), Xiao San (萧三), Jiang Feng (江丰), Ai Qing (艾青), Wu Xiru (吴英如), Wei Dongming (魏东明), Liu Xuewei (刘雪苇), Ai Siqi (艾思奇), Zhou Yang, Cao Baohua (曹葆华), Ouyang Shan (欧阳山), Cao Ming (草明). Those who gave speeches were Ai Qing, Xiao San, Wei Dongming, Zhou Yang, Chen Huangmei, and Ai Siqi.

17 The rectification movement against "formulism" and "subjectivism" was not formally launched until February, 1942, but references to these problems were made in Mao Zedong's "Reform Our Study" in May of 1941 and subsequent page-one editorials in JFRB.

18 In "Reform Our Study", Mao defined the subjectivist attitude as studying Marxist-Leninist theory "in the abstract and without any aim... to study theory purely for theory's sake...", to work "by sheer subjective enthusiasm" rather than making a "systematic and thorough study of the environment." (Mao Zedong, 1941:920/English:21)

19 "Zai Yiyuan Zhong Shi" (在医院中时) was originally published in the now lost Yan'an journal Gu Yu (后雨), first issue. A revised version of the story appeared in the Chongqing journal Wenyi Zhendi, August 25, 1942, as "Zai Yiyuan Zhong", the title changed by the author. It seems that the revision was not drastic according to the lack of difference in details described by criticisms of the original and revised versions. The story has been reprinted in Wenyi Bao, 1958, 2: 11-16, according to the revised text.
The critic here introduced readers to pieces from three new literary journals - Gu Yu, put out by the Yan'an Branch of the All-China Writers' Anti-Aggression Association, Cao Ye (草葉), put out by the Cao Ye Society of the Lu Xun Academy of Arts, and Shi Kan (詩刊), organ of the Shi Kan Society. Liu Xuewei commented that although the journals were very thin, still they offered more literary reading material than had previously existed in Yan'an. Ding Ling confirmed the lack of literary journals up until the publication of these three new organs. On March 12, 1942, in JFRB, she wrote that one year before her writing, i.e., March, 1941, the only literary magazine existing in Yan'an was Wenyi Yuebao (文艺月报). It seems that there were other magazines before this time, but that they had stopped publication, e.g., Dashong Wenyi (大眾文艺), the revised version of Wenyi Tuji (文艺突发事件), published from around 1938 until January, 1941, and Zhongguo Wenhua (中国文化), published from February 15, 1940 until (?).

There is a contradiction in the reasoning of this criticism. Although Ding Ling was blamed for focusing on the unique rather than the typical situation, the critic at the same time cautioned her that she was writing about a CCP member, "not just an ordinary person", a CCP enterprise, and not just any enterprise.

There is evidence that the tendency to support the exposure of darkness in Borden Region life was indirectly condoned as early as 1939 and directly endorsed by the CCP as late as February, 1942. In Wenyi Zhendi, a leading literary magazine edited by Mao Dun in Chongqing a Huang Sheng wrote this before commenting on short stories by Shu Qun and Ding Ling which treated dark themes:

When describing a victorious battle, literary and art workers might as well indicate the battle's real and possible failures in strategy and in political work; when describing a hero of the national liberation struggle, they might as well indicate the bad points and backwardness that he really has and might have;
moreover they should direct their line of vision to places of darkness, enter desolate streets and mean alleys and take a look at the pallidness and suffering of flickering ghost shadows and hanging corpses; they should depict pictures of the cruelty and darkness of the war period in order to make people take guard... The satirization and exposure of dark aspects can accelerate the reform of weak-points in the military and political areas, advance attention given to the improvement of the people's livelihood, and correct the shallow illusions of the optimists who see the white but never the black; this kind of literature and art work has rich educational significance, and the situation at present demands the full development of literature and art of an educational nature, therefore it ought to receive high appraisal. (Huang Sheng, 1939:707)

Direct endorsements from the Party to expose "dark spots" in Yan'an life were rare but as late as February 21, 1942, Mao himself openly supported such exposure. On that day, JFRB reported of Mao's praise for a satirical cartoon exhibition held in Yan'an from February 15 to 17. The exhibition was sponsored by the Art Association (Meishu Xiehui) and featured works which satirized bureaucratism, among other undesirable tendencies leftover from the old society. Mao was reported to have endorsed the exhibition, and the press printed many pieces which praised the critical spirit of the artists and expressed the need for further exposure of the dark aspects of Border Region life.

Thus it is probable that the authors of the critical essays, most of which appeared in JFRB in mid-March, believed at the time of writing that they had the support of Mao Zedong himself in their attack against dark elements in the Communist base. (See David Holm, 1978, p. 3-4)

23 In 1957, Wang Liaoying was unmerciful. See Wenyi Bao, 1957, 25. For other criticisms of the story see Zhang Guangnian (張光年) Wenyi Bao, 1958, 2:9-16; Yao Wenyuan (姚文元), Wenyi Yuebao, 1958, 3:79-83.
M. Goldman, (1967:23) writes that there were meetings held to criticize this story but she offers no source for her information, and I have been unable to locate a reference to such meetings.
A. The Rectification Call

On February 1, 1942, in "Rectify the Party's Style of Work" (整頓學風, 党風, 文風) Mao Zedong delineated the three fronts which were to be the formal object of Party rectification in the following few years. He asked for the elimination of "subjectivism" (主观主義) in style of study, "sectarianism" (宗派主義) in style of Party relations, and "stereotyped Party writing" (八股) in style of writing. By subjectivism, he meant the tendency to adopt abstract Marxist theory without knowing how to concretely apply it to China's specific problems. Attacking students returned from abroad with book knowledge of revolutionary theory, but with no idea of how to apply it to local historical problems and conditions of which they were ignorant, he was condemning the Wang Ming (王明) clique returned from the Soviet Union in the early thirties, with whom Mao had clashed and emerged victorious. By sectarianism, he referred to "independence" (獨立性) within the Party, and admonished those Party members who tended to alienate non-Party people, as well as those who adhered to cliquish leanings within the Party. Such leanings were evident from conflicts between veterans of the Long March and new urban intellectuals, and also between local cadres and the outsiders from the cities.

On February 8, Mao elaborated on what he meant by "stereotyped Party writing" in "Oppose Stereotyped Party Writing" (反
He explained that although the May Fourth Movement successfully exposed the old stereotyped writing and old dogma, foreign stereotyped writing and dogma rose up in its place, so that some people in the Party were guilty of perpetuating formulistic writing albeit in a new style based on foreign models. This analysis, it should be noted, had been offered by Qu Qiubai ten years earlier (Qu Qiubai, 1932). But Mao here was directing his argument against Party essay writing, while Qu had focused on creative writing. Mao, too, gave much more credit to the significant victories of the May Fourth Movement, while Qu almost refused to recognize the positive accomplishments of that period, concentrating rather on its harmful aftereffects.

Mao then defined eight points of dissatisfaction with Party writing, which we will briefly outline in light of their simultaneous application to creative and critical writing which interests us here.

The first indictment was that Party writing was long-winded and empty, and that excessively long articles would alienate the masses. It should be remembered that although we saw the same criticism of creative writing in JFRB, nowhere was the negative effect of alienating the masses from reading such works specifically cited as a strike against them. Long-winded writing with no content was labeled dull and ineffective, but there did not seem to be an explicit concern that it would prevent the masses from understanding it. A more accurate reading of the word "masses" used by Mao here would be "cadres-masses" (the so-called advanced elements of the masses), since it is doubtful that the ordinary people were actually capable of reading political arti-
cles at this time, nor for that matter creative and critical writing found in the general newspapers and magazines. \(^3\)

The second indictment was directed against relying on pretentiousness to intimidate others when writing articles and making speeches. Terms such as "ruthless struggle" and "merciless blows" should only be used against the enemy, but never against those in the Communist camp. \(^4\) Notice here the official recognition and denunciation of criticism within the ranks, one month before the appearance in JFRB of the infamous "dissident" essays authored by literary personalities, although as we will see below, it is possible that here Mao was not necessarily denouncing such "dissident" voices at all.

The third indictment was against Party writing and speeches which did not take the level of understanding of the audience into consideration. Here Mao was again concerned with the lack of investigation into the needs of a mass audience. The definitive lack of attention given to the same point in the literary world would justify his worry.

The fourth indictment was against the use of drab, monotonous language which bored the masses. Mao requested the absorption of language from three sources: First he asked intellectuals to study the lively language of the masses and incorporate it into their writing and speeches. Second, he allowed for the assimilation of "what is good and suits our needs" from foreign languages. Here he had in mind political, scientific, and artistic modern expressions which had no roots in the Chinese language. Third, he demanded "full and proper use of what is still alive in the classical Chinese language." Qu Qiubai had advocated the
same mixture of sources, although he was more wary of adopting anything from the classical language.

The fifth indictment, applicable to only political essays, was against the formulistic arrangement of items in an essay which aimed to be scientific and methodical, but in reality made little sense and only served to confuse the reader. Headings making use of big and small Chinese numerals, the ten celestial stems and twelve earthly branches, capital and small ABCD, and then Arabic numerals, were in need of simplification.

The sixth indictment was against irresponsible writing. This represented an attitude which we saw was prevalent in creative writing as well. Mao wrote that many people dashed off essays in a casual manner, without prior study or preparation, and then sent them off to be published without careful rereading.

All of these mistakes, he warned, were the result of immaturity and/or irresponsibility, and would "poison the whole Party and jeopardize the revolution" (this was the seventh indictment), while their spread would "wreck the country and ruin the people." (this was the eighth) By quoting Lu Xun's reply to the magazine The Dipper (《大衆》) in which the respected writer outlined similar words of advice to writers, it was obvious that Mao was after all extending his criticism to all writing by Party members, and not only to political essays and speeches. Lastly, he felt the need to cite from his 1938 speech calling for the use of national forms and the abolition of foreign stereotypes and dogmatism, indicating that these instructions of four years earlier had not yet been put into practice.

We saw that indictments one, two, three, four, and six
applied equally as well to creative writing as to purely political literature. Yet only the first, long-winded empty writing, and the sixth, irresponsible writing, had been criticized severely among writers themselves. There seemed to be a conspicuous lack of concern over adapting their writing style and language to a level the "masses" (even the local cadres) would understand. Thus we do not find it surprising that there was friction among the ranks, or as Mao termed it, "sectarianism", as there was little mutual understanding between the urban intellectual culture workers and writers and the locally appointed "advanced elements of the masses", i.e. the cadres.

Mao's injunction not to intimidate those in one's own camp was most significant in that it left open to interpretation the precise focus of the criticism which the Party had in mind. Although Ding Ling seems to have been addressing one and the same problem on October 23, i.e., the need for tolerance and patience towards those of different viewpoints within the CCP, it will become apparent that by late March, the Party will no longer agree with Ding Ling's idea of what elements should be the aim of zheng feng reforms. She and her "dissident" colleagues felt that they were worthy members of the CCP camp, and as such, had the right to criticize their own ranks for the sake of advancing the revolutionary cause. When Ding Ling spoke of criticism in October, she was addressing it from two angles. First, she was requesting an end to Party criticism of those (such as herself) who opinions diverged from the majority, and second, she hoped to justify the need for criticism of the inner ranks for the sake of an ultimately more unified and progressive Party.
When Mao spoke of criticism in its more extreme form as "intimidation" in February, it seems that he too could have been ordering an end to intolerance on the part of certain elements within the CCP to those (such as Ding Ling) with different opinions, thereby sanctioning criticism within the ranks. Yet at the same time, his words could also be interpreted as a signal for writers such as Ding Ling and Luo Feng (see note 4 above) not to criticize those who "occasionally make mistakes", the latter being the lazy elements referred to by Luo Feng, i.e., the "old cadres" cited by David Holm. Thus in February it was ambiguous which group was considered by Mao deserving of criticism. By the end of March, however, we will see that Mao was no longer in favor of allowing criticism on the part of intellectuals against the CCP camp, and that it will be the writers, not the "lazy", "intolerant" "old cadres" who will be castigated for trespassing the bounds of zheng feng criticism, and who will actually become the target of rectification themselves.  

B. Writers' Response

How were the writers to respond to Mao's February first and eighth speeches suggesting official support for radical changes in the political, academic, and literary worlds? With the encouragement of Ding Ling through her column "Wen Yi", people in the literary world spoke out on political, social, and only sometimes literary relations, and there is no question that their aim was to stir up lively discussion within the Communist ranks, discussion which they hoped would be inspired by the reform movement.
Their comments were sincere, bitter, and at times unsparingly critical. All sought to get to the bottom of some of the real sources of contention at hand, even if to the detriment of Party solidarity. Sixteen years later, as part of the anti-rightist campaign, the authors of these essays would be denounced for just this last point - that is, for failing to keep in mind the importance of Party solidarity at this time, and even for consciously attempting to undermine it.

The five most studied "dissident" essays are as follows: "Thoughts on March Eighth" ("三八節有感") by Ding Ling printed on March 9; "Understand Writers, Respect Writers" ("瞭解作家, 尊重作家") by Ai Qing, March 11; "Still the Age of Za Wen" ("還是雜文的時代") by Luo Feng, March 12; "Wild Lily" ("野百合花") by Wang Shiwei, March 13 and 23; and "On 'Love' and 'Patience' among Comrades" ("論同志的'愛'與'耐'") by Xiao Jun, April 8. These pieces are no doubt more famous than others which will be examined below due to the systematic reprinting and recriticism of them during the anti-rightist movement in 1958. Since Wenyi Bao, 1958, 2, devoted most of one issue to discussion of these five articles, secondary works in English and Chinese have tended to stick to comments on these pieces alone due to their accessibility. Below we will look into these five essays as well as others which were never singled out for criticism, either in 1942 or in 1958.7

On February 12, the poet Ai Qing, as we discussed earlier, had defined the special qualities of literature in an essay which served as a kind of preface to his March article. (JFRB, 1942 A) Here it is relevant to add that he also wrote that preaching in
literature was unnatural, affected, and hypocritical, and that a writer could not produce a good work without pure feelings. Any artist with a conscience, he said, could distinguish between pure, real works of art, and hypocritical manufactured products. He advocated simplicity in writing - an innocent nakedness as opposed to false ornamentation. The poet blasted the critics as we saw earlier and reasoned that bad literature was allowed on the market because writers, critics, and editors were not satisfactorily fulfilling their duties by recognizing and sifting out the good from the bad. His last point was delivered with the intent of exposing "formulism" among critics - a tendency to judge works by narrow political standards which only served to reflect the lack of more deeply and concretely applied political and artistic standards on the part of the critic:

The superior theorist will not judge a work by the difference in class adopted as thematic material, but will rather judge it by the truth of each class reflected in the work and the level of contradiction [in the writing] which exists between these classes.

His attack on "preaching" and "hypocritical" writing, and lastly, on criteria for literary criticism, smacked of a brutal distaste for what were becoming common standards of literary creativity and criticism. Since he was terribly defensive of the writer's individual need to be faithful to his own expression, one might at first glance place Ai Qing as an advocate of the "expressive" tendency of writing, "poetry expressing the heart's wishes" (詩言志, ) rather than the "pragmatic" tendency, "literature as a vehicle for the Way" (文以載道), the latter of whose everpresent "preaching" he would consider
hypocritical and unnatural in a piece of literature. If we carry this assumption further, it would seem that he'd be against the use of literature as a tool for war propaganda. Yet in his March essay he will state very explicitly that literature does have a role in social reform and can be effectively used as a psychological force against the enemy. In fact, his extremely emotional poems written at this time were full of war message. The writer's desire for honest self-expression, then, did not necessarily come into conflict with the Party's call for war propaganda, and this is an important point to keep in mind when reading Western-oriented interpretations of Ai Qing's (and others') plea for freedom of individual artistic expression. What Ai Qing was demanding was the freedom to create wartime revolutionary literature (or poetry in his case) in his own style, faithful to his own visions. He did not regard his own vision as being automatically in conflict with that of the Party.

In March he defined the purpose of literature as the following: "The purpose of a poem, a piece of fiction, or a play, is either to make a race or class scrutinize itself, or to raise its self-respect, or to increase its psychological strength against the enemy." (JFRB, 1942 B) This was an accepted assumption among Communist revolutionaries, but then he went on to qualify the special role of literature as a spiritual solution to man's existential questions, as we observed earlier. This was a blatant step outside the realm of Marxist doctrine which would consider such metaphysical queries as interconnected with man's economic needs. Since man himself is capable of solving these latter more fundamental requirements of life, the solution
to such existential questions as "Why do we live?" would not be viewed by Marxists as lying beyond the scope of Marxist ideology.

Ai Qing did not offer a resolution to the contradiction between his belief in both the materialist and spiritual functions of literature. Because of this, his views have been prone to misinterpretation. Both Professors Fokkema and Goldman have inaccurately interpreted the poet's ideas as conforming to an "art above politics" or "art versus politics" framework, when in fact Ai Qing strongly affirmed the political nature of literature by his very definition of its social value. His writing was very much inspired by revolutionary politics and thus can not be taken separately from it. Again, being true to one's own feelings does not necessarily imply a division from politics, which in China, is not perceived as a separate entity, from literature, but rather the basis for it.

In the remainder of Ai Qing's March essay, he praised the writer as a dear possession to be cherished by his nation as its literary spokesman, maintained that literary works were supposed to stir lively criticism, and addressed the same issue as had Luo Feng and Ding Ling, namely that darkness still existed in Yan'an and that the situation was hopeless unless people would be willing to face up to the "disease" which needed curing:

He who hopes writers can, through writing, transform ringworm into flowers and boils into flowerbuds, is he who has the least promise - because he doesn't even have the courage to look at his own ugliness, how all the harder to get him to change.

On March 9, Ding Ling exposed the hidden darkness still prevailing in attitudes towards women in Yan'an. Written in
honor of International Women's Day, "Thoughts on March Eighth" had nothing to do with literature, but was a serious indictment of the discrepancy between theory and practice in the treatment of women in the Red Bases on the part of both men and other women. (JFRB, 1942 A) Her essay was very much in line with her October call for the use of za wen as well as her short story "In the Hospital" written a few months after that call. T.A. Hsia wrote that her article "saw no hope for women in so-called Liberated Areas unless men would agree to reform themselves." (T.A. Hsia, 1968:251) However, the problem lay equally to blame on women as she saw it: "Moreover, all kinds of women comrades are often the target of deserved criticism. In my view these reproaches are serious and justifiable...I hope that men, especially those in top positions, and women themselves will consider the mistakes women commit in their social context... But we must also hope for a little more from our women comrades, especially those in Yan'an."

It should also be noted that she was not without hope:

Happiness is to take up the struggle in the midst of the raging storm and not to pluck the lute in the moonlight or recite poetry among the blossoms... Those who have aims and ambitions for the benefit not of the individual but of mankind as a whole can perservere to the end.

These are hardly the words of a pessimist, as her later critics labeled her. As to the significance of such an exposure, Hsia wrote that the essay "is only a plea from the weak to the strong." (T.A. Hsia, 1968:281) This, I believe, is assuming too much naivety on the part of the author. Ding Ling was, afterall, editor of "Wen Yi"; "She made an outstanding name for herself in
Yan'an... for her propaganda and organizational activities. Her words carried great weight in many circles and she was described by those who met her at this time as a person of natural command and leadership." (M. Goldman, 1967:22) Such a condemnation of the dark aspects of Yan'an on the part of a Party member, literary editor of JFRB, and well-respected active cultural worker, was not taken lightly. Ding Ling would soon be forced to step down from her position as editor of "Wen Yi", no doubt because of the tremendous influence she and her literature page exerted over young readers and writers.

Ding Ling's za wen was printed only two days before the 100th anniversary of "Wenyi" in JFRB. From March 11 to 13 three special editions of the literature section were devoted to commemoration of the column's 100th issue, and Ding Ling took advantage of such an occasion to request contributors to assess the progress of the column since its birth and comment on the literary scene in general. The occasion, in effect, afforded the opportunity for writers to forcefully speak out on issues previously hidden from the view of the readership. These three days, in fact, formed the culmination of dissent in Yan'an in 1942, and on the basis of the timing and choice of published articles, Ding Ling as editor was later accused of consciously organizing her colleagues to strike in unison against the inner ranks of the Party. The za wen which appeared during these days (of which only Ai Qing's really concerned literature) formed the spearhead of more isolated attempts already made earlier by Luo Feng (September) and Ding Ling (October) to expose some of the more unpleasant realities underlying external peace in Yan'an. Besides za
wen, other comments appeared in these three special issues, remarks which dealt more specifically with the literature column and the disunity in the literary world. All seemed to express the honest concerns of people in the cultural world hoping to at last get to the core of the matter in the spirit of the comment made by Luo Feng back in September that "Having surface peace and unity with no basis in reality is like building a foundation on top of sand."^16

On March 11 Ai Qing had made his plea for the rights of the artist while urging for the recognition of the need to reform still-existing ills in Yan'an. The next day, in much the same tone and abstruse style of his September za wen, Luo Feng, in "Still the Age of Za Wen" described two types of people in Yan'an who reveled in the "claim that the old-fashioned ideas and forms of behavior handed down across the millenia are not easy to uproot at one go." Referring to government leaders and cadres he wrote:

Certain clever gentlemen exploit the gap opened up by this theory as a bolt-hole in which to indulge themselves, happily wallowing and submerging like pigs in a stinking pool of mud. Since they themselves are not afraid of getting dirty, they see nothing wrong with smearing passers-by... Then there is the other sort of person who, although he hides in the same hole, is always bandying phrases around and making dazzlingly brilliant speeches. It would never occur to natural intelligence that inside that lustrous and armoured shell there hides a lump of boneless, sluggardly, timorous flesh!17

Luo Feng urged that the obstacles to progress be brought out into the open and stated bluntly that the "thick fog" capable of ob-
scurring one's vision appeared not only in Chongqing, but in Yan'an as well. He accused revolutionaries of not practicing what they preached, but of hanging round their necks signs of "vigilance" which were useless when they were heading the wrong way and only served to misguide those following behind them. The Manchurian writer reasserted Ding Ling's plea of October for the revival of za wen, but felt that her own attempt through the literature column lacked force. He ended on the hope that "the column will be transformed into a dagger to make men tremble with fear, and at the same time gladden them."

"Still the Age of Za Wen" struck deeper and higher up than "An Essay Not Basted Together". As in the latter essay, Luo Feng viciously opposed hypocracy and surface unity. In September, it was a false and pointless show of "loyalty" which offended him so, in March it was a misdirected display of "vigilance" which was equally as deplorable and ineffective. Perhaps the most outstanding difference in the two articles was the later's unhidden verbal abuse of Yan'an leaders to whom he plead"... please have some consideration for those who are following you!" According to Luo Feng, these were the revolutionaries who did not pay heed to their own principles. He admitted that Yan'an was the place "with the highest level of political awareness' but if you constantly wear the same elegant clothes, and are too lazy to wash them, sooner or later they are bound to get dirty."^{18}

The next day, March 13, the first sections of the now infamous essay "Wily Lily" composed by the translator Wang Shiwei made its appearance in the paper. Since several analyses of the article have already been offered elsewhere,^{19} here it will suf-
fice to sum up the essay's main points only. Like Ding Ling, Luo Feng, and Ai Qing, the author of "Wild Lily" treated the darkness of Yan'an as a disease remaining from the old society in need of a medicinal cure, in this case, of the bitter bulbs of the wild lily growing around Yan'an. Disillusioned young people were painted as willing-to-struggle, innocent sources of light, misunderstood and mistreated by Party bureaucrats who were corrupt, arrogant, and incapable of human sympathy. Wang, like Luo Feng, deplored attitudes of passivity and laziness stemming from a fatalistic pessimism which was responsible for the lack of progress within the Party. He specifically denounced the rank system, a blind acceptance and imitation of everything from the Soviet Union, and the general lack of concern on the part of Yan'an leaders for those below them. Ending his za wen on a challenging note, he wrote, "But perhaps it is a 'petty-bourgeois emotion' to always be talking about 'love' and 'warmth'? I await your verdict." 20

From his defense of youth we can see why Wang was particularly popular among young people busy wrestling with their frustrations with life in the revolutionary base. Party response to "Wild Lily" came swiftly, as the support for his ideas apparently presented a serious threat to solidarity within the ranks. He was to be labeled an "extreme egalitarian" by the Party on March 31, 21 and later (as we will see in the appendix to this thesis), a Trotskyite, based on articles printed elsewhere by Wang at this time. None of the other authors of za wen were to be dealt with in such a severe manner, but none had struck so hard, and none were accused of Trotskyite leanings, let alone previous connec-
tions with the followers of the abhorred rival of Stalin.

Besides the za wèn above which focused on political, social, and ethical issues, equally jolting in tone and impact were a handful of other essays appearing on the same few days, all penned by authors in anticipation of a time of reckoning in the literary world as well. On March 12, Ouyang Shan, after praising the literature column for its contribution towards revolution and art, for expanding the influence of the literature movement, for raising the cultural level and improving the spiritual lives of the people in the Border Areas, and for discovering a whole new batch of artistic talent, wrote the following:

In the ten months since initial publication, the literature column has brought forth and analyzed some problems in the realm of theory but unfortunately it has not solved those problems... Looking back we can say: we've discussed the relationship between literature and life, the role of ideology in literature, the creative method of Gogol, the class relations of Chinese fiction writers and their creative tendencies; we've also seen criticisms of and introductions to actual literary works, plays, music, fine arts exhibitions, and musical performances... This is very good work, but it is only the first step. So many problems still lie before us.

(Ouyang Shan, JFRB, 1942)

He then asked, "Why (I needn't avoid mentioning this) can't 'tiny quarrels' in the literary world rely on democratic methods to find appropriate solution?" He criticized "Wen Yi" for not devoting more time to literary theory and asked why literary activity among youth and the masses was growing more indifferent by the day. He even went so far as to comment that literary activity in the Border Areas, where lived China's best and most active writers, dramatists, and artists, was inferior to literary activity in the
Rear (i.e. Nationalist Areas). He wrote,

These shortcomings of the literature column are not the responsibility of any certain individuals. No, in fact they reflect the stagnation and atrophy of literary theoretical and critical activities in the whole Border Area.

Also worthy of everyone's effort, he felt, and even more important, was "the direction of the new democratic literary movement, reasons for the unliveliness of literary creativity, the problem of literary popularization, the establishment and development of national form in all branches of art, enlightened theoretical work, and the lack of concrete criticism of literary works, etc."

These were strong accusations, for rather than laying blame on Ding Ling and her co-editor Chen Qixia for their choice and arrangement of material in the paper, Ouyang Shan identified the broader nature of the problem by directly pointing to the unresolved issues of immense significance for writers and literary creativity. His observation of the lack of substantial work being carried out in literary theory and criticism would tend to confirm the complaints of other writers that high-level objective criticism was the exception rather than the rule. Ouyang Shan, like Luo Feng, went as far as to compare Yan'an to Chongqing without praising the progressive nature of the former in light of the latter's darkness. (That the situation in general was much brighter in Yan'an than in the Nationalist provisional capital was a general assumption upheld by most revolutionaries who had come to Yan'an, as well of course by the CCP.) This was paramount to exposing the darkness in the CCP literary camp, yet the writer from Hubei was never, to my knowledge, taken to task for this frank
criticism at this time. Such an assessment of the literary picture in the Border Areas, though somewhat dreary and pessimistic, nonetheless offers us a more realistic glimpse into the actual scene during this time period than can be ascertained from other sources.

The reason why Ouyang Shan was not singled out for criticism for his remarks may lie in the fact that he limited himself to the field of literature and unlike Ding Ling, Luo Feng, Wang Shiwei, and Xiao Jun, did not address broader social concerns. He also made no veiled or open attacks against the leadership of the CCP, and for this reason was probably considered less of a threat to Party solidarity. The lack of action on the part of the Party against another writer, Wu Xiru, who offered even more blatant criticism against the backwardness of the literary world, would lend credence to this possible explanation as to why some writers escaped reproach for their frank statements and others did not. It seems to have depended on the content of their essays, and the nature of their complaints with one exception - Xiao Jun, whom we will deal with in Chapter Four.

That same day Wu Xiru (吴兴龙) also brought to light a desire to unmask the sources of discontent and disunity in the literary world. "From the standpoint of a contributor and a reader" he wrote,

In these one hundred issues I regret not having seen any serious and heated debates which should arise from the many kinds of literary problems existing.

If news is the soul of a newspaper, then debate should be the essence of a literary supplement. This is why "Ziyou Tan" and "Dong Xiang" were able to attract
their writers and readers like a magnet.

On the surface the Yan'an literary world almost appears to be the most peaceful of worlds, yet friends often slander and attack each other behind backs like village women. Each thinks he is correct and permanently imprints mutual contempt for the other in his mind. Obviously there are many problems waiting to be solved, such as the explanation of literary theory, viewpoint in creative works, proper relations among writers, etc. Why can't everyone straightforwardly and legitimately raise debates and fight them out before the vast readership?

This is obviously a kind of hypocritical and deceitful disease. (Wu Xiru, JFRB, 1942, March 12)

He ends on the hope that the literature column will become a sounding board for writers in Yan'an.

From this severe appraisal of the contentions underlying external unity among writers in Yan'an, one can sense the intensity of resentment among at least some elements in the literary world. The unresolved problems facing literature had been voiced by Ouyang Shan as well; the term "disease" had been used before in the context of identifying areas in need of reform, and the hope that "Wen Yi" would be utilized as a means of incitement to change had long taken roots in the heart of its editor, with the public support of Luo Feng. It is interesting to note what appears to have been an assumption on the part of many writers that the literary supplement of the official Party daily could operate independently from the CCP Central Committee of which the publisher of JFRB, Bo Gu, was a member. The abrupt end to "Wen Yi" as of April 1 and the firing of Ding Ling would bear witness to the potential power of the column as an independent forum for the airing of discontents lodged against the Communist Party, other
writers and critics, and the situation in the revolutionary base in general.

On March 12, Ding Ling herself summed up the goals of the column, both fulfilled and unfulfilled from her standpoint as editor during this period. (JFRB, 1942 B) She reaffirmed the importance of "Wen Yi", as writers who came to Yan'an in the past had lacked a place to publish their works, since last year at this time the only literary publication was Wenyi Yuebao. The Border Area, she wrote, had lacked literary life and thus the literature column took on the task of uniting famous writers, wholeheartedly nurturing and promoting young writers, reflecting life in the Border Areas and the anti-Japanese bases as well as the brave struggles of the Eighth Route and New Fourth Route Armies, and raising the literary level of the Border Areas.

After bringing up the complaints of some readers that many of the longer articles in the column were not lively, she mentioned the practical problems responsible for this phenomenon. For one thing, writers in Yan'an were used to writing long continuous articles for magazines, and weren't yet accustomed to writing for a newspaper. Another problem was that due to transportation inefficiencies, shorter reportage pieces could not reach Yan'an and so there was a dearth of such pieces in the paper. She then clarified the new direction to be taken:

This unliveliness and inability to raise the readers' interest often disturbs the editors. Therefore, in using all our efforts to conform to readers' interests, we have thought of ways to revise the literature column. Moreover, we are willing to decrease our attitude of 'acting cautiously and carefully' (慎重) and adopt a sharper style. In October of last year I summoned everyone to write za wen and requested
short critical essays on society and literature itself. We have done our utmost to print more works concerning drama, the fine arts, and music, and greatly decrease the amount of space occupied by fiction.

She then outlined the strongpoints and shortpoints of the literature column. The main strongpoint was the introduction of new talent. According to Ding Ling, over thirty of the "Wen Yi" contributors were new writers, and several really had good command of their material and means of expression. She thanked the support of the readers and the already established writers for making this possible.

As for deficiencies, there was a longer list. She first apologized for not having collected more sketches of life at the Front which seemed to enjoy such popularity among readers. Then, she continued,

We have not thought of ways to open up discussion of debates on literary problems which have been raised such as 'writers and life', petty-bourgeois writers, and the use of language in literature, etc. Yan'an has not been enthusiastic towards free discussion of the literary movement, yet the literature column should take on this task. Although we have had intentions to do so, we haven't yet reached that goal. We should especially oppose the elimination of literary theory and creative work by a sectarianism closed both to outside and inside influence which operates via subjectivism, formulism, and foreign stereotyped writing. Although it is said that it is our theoreticians who should shoulder this responsibility, it is undesirable that a literature column of a Party newspaper be silent.

She then informs us for the first time that she will soon be leaving the newspaper before she's even worked with it very long, but will not cut off her ties from it completely. If people have
problems, they can send them to her at her temporary address, the Writers' Anti-Aggression Association.

There seems little doubt that Ding Ling was asked to leave the newspaper by the Party; she did not resign of her own accord. This we can conclude by the tone of her parting words, and, in retrospect, by the criticism she soon received for allowing the printing of the caustic za wan. She had probably been asked to leave because of the general direction she was advocating in the column, topped off by her own March 9th za wan. What was obvious was that her printing of za wan together with such candid remarks about the literature column and the more pessimistic side of the literary world in general was a conscious attempt on her part to stop "acting cautiously and carefully" and begin to liven up the literary stage by bringing to light previously hidden issues of discord.

If we compare Ding Ling's March 12 remarks with her previous October call for the use of za wan, we find that in both cases her hope was to open free discussion on previously tabooed subjects via her literature column. It is significant that even after Mao's February rectification speeches, i.e., in March, her concern for livening up "Wen Yi" continued. In fact, by comparing her analysis of the problems with the literature page to Mao's February 8 contentions with Party writing, it is clear that her requests for change actually conformed to the February injunctions. Reacting to Mao's dissatisfaction with empty and monotonous writing which did not interest the readers, the editor of "Wen Yi" in March expressed her hope to put an end to this trend. Ceasing to "act cautiously and carefully" was evidently her method of
"opposing the elimination of literary theory and creative work by a sectarianism closed both to outside and inside influence which operates via subjectivism, formalism, and foreign stereotyped writing." (Ding Ling, JFRB, March 12) We should keep in mind, then, that it is very possible that Ding Ling, and perhaps all of the other writers we have discussed, were reacting to the rectification call in a manner which at the time did conform to CCP guidelines, insofar as they were made clear.27

One day later, there was an interesting article, concerned not with the topic of dissent or rectification but with the editorial post of "Wen Yi". Because it offers support for Ding Ling, it should be mentioned. A writer from Manchuria, Shu Qun (舒群), in a piece called "Written for the Editor(s)", offered a sympathetic description of the difficult tasks of an editor. (Shu Qun, JFRB, 1942, March 13) Since he made a curious reference at the end to his taking over Ding Ling's position as editor,28 it seems he wrote this to express his understanding of the job ahead, as well as in deference to Ding Ling's accomplishments. Editors, he observed, must humble themselves when requesting manuscripts from writers. Even though most editors were also writers at the same time, their job was to objectively assess the value of works produced through the blood and sweat of other writers, and choose and arrange such material on the page so as to show each contributor in his best light. Editors had to exercise the utmost control over their emotions and accept good or bad verdicts of readers and writers, down to "the off-handed remarks of the man who picks up litter on the streets." In fact, they had to be artists as well as readers and critics, and only those with a multi-
faceted talent could live up to the position. Being a writer and also an editor, he wrote, was a matter of "piling one difficulty on top of another."

Shu Qun's appreciation for the conflicting position in which Ding Ling had possibly found herself (and which he himself would soon experience?) seemed to serve as a defense for any shortcomings that might have befallen the literature column. His description of the handicaps under which editors in China at this time were forced to work, furnishes us with a rare account of the inside responsibilities of the editors of a literary supplement as then observed by one in proximity to the position. It seems, too, that Shu Qun had a great deal of respect for Ding Ling and did not necessarily support the decision to fire her, even if it did mean a new position for himself. There were no doubt others who sympathized with his feeling at this time.

The last piece of interest appearing on the third and final day of the special 100th anniversary edition of "Wen Yi" was written by the writer Chen Huangmei, and rather sarcastically entitled "My Congratulatory Message." (Chen Huangmei, JFRB, 1942, March 13) This terribly critical assessment of the state of the literary world differed from the other remarks discussed above in one important aspect. Whereas Ouyang Shan, Wu Xiru, and Ding Ling all pointed out the failings of literary creativity and the literature column in much their own terms, Chen Huangmei explicitly fit his criticism into the context of the rectification movement in literature. In other words, his exposure of creative deficiencies were analyzed entirely within the framework of Mao's February 8th speech "Oppose Stereotyped Party Writing", while the other writers
(except for Ding Ling on March 12) had not even employed the current rectification political terminology in their discussions of literary problems, nor made any direct reference to the zheng feng movement. Chen wrote,

Recently Yan'an has again raised a new call, of which one point is to rectify the style of writing, oppose stereotyped Party writing. Since I am a writer, I can't but give this my attention. They, i.e. the Party are already screaming for help; if we continue to not heed the call, we couldn't avoid being too insensitive. In saying a few words in commemoration of the 100th issue of "Wen Yi", I can't but come around to this point.

He then commended the literature column for the considerable quantity of material it had printed, both good and bad, but warned against self-complacency at this stage. Addressing one major problem which none of the other writers had pointed out in criticisms of the column, he advised,

In sum, in order to improve the literature column and attract more readers, you shouldn't only gear your column to a fraction of Yan'an youth who love literature. (emphasis mine) I feel that the literature column should respond to the call to 'rectify the style of writing.' I hope that the editor(s) will hold up this shield, for whether writers be famous or unknown, any of their works which impedes the literary rectification movement should be thoroughly checked. Then writers can use this (as a means) for self-examination.

He then attacked literary works whose "empty words" and "drab language" could not help but fall into "the muddy ponds of formalism (形式主義)" and formulism (公式化). Writing styles were growing narrow and obscure, and "a few enthusiastic fools" were alienating the vast readership by creating an unrecognizable
monster out of literature. Not having read all one hundred issues of "Wen Yi", he was still willing to venture that the column itself had not been guilty of printing such kind of writing. Ending on the dismal hope that bad writing would never lead to the point where it would be better not to read at all if one wanted to heed the call for help in rectification, Chen concluded, "This is the congratulatory message I give to 'Wen Yi'. Perhaps it's not terribly proper, but to be a bit humble never hurt." It is doubtful that he had not actually included "Wen Yi" in his accusations; his politeness smacked of sarcasm.

The demand on the part of a writer for "Wen Yi" to gear itself to a broader audience in an effort to shift away from elitist literary tendencies was unprecedented. Chen was at this point the only writer in JFRB to request reforms of this nature, thus in line with the February 8th proclamation concerning writing style. Rather than focusing on the existence of sources of discord in the literary world, Chen criticized literary tendencies entirely within the realm of the official rectification procedure. He did not go as far as Ouyang Shan and Wu Xiru to portray a rather bleak picture of inadequacies in the literary world other than the problem of "stereotyped Party writing." He made it very clear that he had aligned himself with the Party on this matter.

Ouyang Shan, Wu Xiru, and Chen Huangmei all restricted themselves to the realm of literature. Therefore, their articles should be viewed separately from those of Ai Qing, Luo Feng, etc. However, Chen Huangmei's remarks differed from those of Ouyang Shan and Wu Xiru in that first, he couched his criticism in current zheng feng terminology, and second, he alone addressed the problem
of elite versus mass audience. At first glance we might conclude that this is proof that Chen stayed within the bounds of Party reforms, while the others were not complying to CCP rules. But whether or not the writers employed zheng feng phrases or identified the problem of audience seems unimportant. It is probably that all believed that their candid remarks contributed favorably to the reform movement, although Chen perhaps differed from them by attempting to guide the critical responses of writers through more clearly sanctioned channels. Writers who overstepped the bounds of the officially-sanctioned rectification drive did not necessarily do so intentionally, but more likely did so in an attempt to establish a definition of those bounds, a definition of which it is probable the Party leaders themselves were not then aware. As is postulated by D. Holm, the precise aim of the reforms did in fact change between February and late March. (from "old cadres" to "intellectuals") Therefore it is likely that the writers were not organized with the intent of undermining the revolutionary effort.

Ding Ling continued to print articles which uncovered the negative aspects of Yan'an social and literary life, even after she knew she'd be leaving her editorial post. Perhaps she printed the following two pieces by Xiao Jun because she knew she would soon be powerless to do so. On March 25 another essay criticizing the plight of women in Yan'an appeared. Xiao Jun's "On Marriage" (Xiao Jun, JFRB, 1942A) dealt with the same problems with social attitudes towards women, marriage, and divorce as had Ding Ling's "Thoughts on March Eighth." The Manchurian author also made a plea for the rights of all for "survival, spread of progeny [that
is for the conditions conducive to producing offspring, development, and freedom." There are those, he wrote, who laugh at these reasons for marriage and divorce, while he felt that they were the most basic human needs which everyone had the right to demand. "Those who are willing to gladly sacrifice material comforts and live a life are still exceptional after all. This merely proves that I am still a 'relative' (相对的) 'fundamentalist'".

On March 30, what was to be the last day of "Wen Yi" in JFRB, Xiao Jun offered a rather romantic portrayal of the road to creation. In "'Pitfalls' Before Writers", (Xiao Jun, JFRB, 1942B) he described an invisible "pitfall" which all writers had to eventually cross and which those with the spirit of true artists would not fear and run away from. Xiao somewhat cryptically wrote,

> What pitfall is this? It probably is certainly not the pitfall of 'what to write', but should be the pitfall of 'how to write'...
> Speaking from an artistic point of view...
> only those who dare climb to the land of Buddha and fall into hell, who dare face this 'pitfall' and continue walking... are beautiful.

In a hypothetical dispute with a poet friend, he imagined his own dying remarks as "To be frank, all of my works were failures! For in front of me, all the way down to the horizon line, all I see are pitfalls... pitfalls..."

The point of Xiao's article here is difficult to ascertain. The tone is romantic and impassioned, and the use of religious rather than Marxist terminology is not unlike what we will find in his essay "On 'Love' and 'Patience' among Comrades" printed a week later. In any event, we can conclude that Xiao was describing a
very personal and arduous path to literary creation, a path whose
main obstacle was not "what to write about", but "how to write",
that is, creative method. After Mao's "Talks" in May, creative
method would no longer officially or even unofficially exist as
a problem - the method of "realism" would serve to help writers
across any such "pitfalls" they would encounter, at least accord­ing
to official sources, and romantic musings over creative diffi­
culties would no longer appear in the press.

March 30 was to carry the last edition of "Wen Yi", no. 111, and
(besides Xiao Jun's April 8th essay which will be discussed
below) the final curtain on the appearance of za wen and all
other remarks which tended to describe the negative aspects of
Yan'an social, political, ethical, and literary relations. At
this point, the official rectification reforms were to directly
affect JFRB. As noted above, the original intention of the re­
forms as outlined in February were not necessarily consistent
with the aim of the reforms carried out in the end of March.
This latter drive was largely comprised of recriminations against
writers (through "Wen Yi") who believed themselves to have been
participating in zheng feng according to the original CCP direct­
ives.

Carrying out the reform drive now against the writers, Mao
and Bo Gu, publisher of JFRB, convened a meeting on March 31 to
discuss revision of the paper. (Anonymous, JFRB, 1942B) Bo Gu
delivered a self-criticism on the past shortpoints of the news­
paper, while Mao denounced those who incorrectly espoused the
idea of "absolute egalitarianism" and the method of shooting
"sarcastic dark arrows" (冷嘲暗箭) i.e., stabs in the back.
This was a clear reference to Wang Shiwei, author of "Wild Lily", March 13 and 23. The Party Chairman labeled such ideas as "petty-bourgeois daydreams." He indicated his approval of "rigorous, pointed, sincere and frank criticism which was beneficial to others." While only sincere criticism was beneficial to unity, "sarcastic dark arrows", he said, were like a kind of medicine which only corrodes. This, we should note, was the earliest criticism of Wang Shiwei found in JFRB since the second installment of his za wen on March 23. Although such criticism was probably aimed also at writers such as Ding Ling, Luo Feng, Xiao Jun, and their followers, the mention of "absolute egalitarianism" most certainly singled out Wang Shiwei for attack, as only his essay had touched upon the rank system in Yan'an and urged for more equality in this respect. The amount of space devoted to the denouncement of sarcastic jabs aimed at the Communist camp in JFRB report on this March 31 meeting would indicate the two-fold nature of the revision of the newspaper. Not only was the aim of the revision to make a more lively, more readable, and more domestically-oriented Party organ, but it was also to put an end to "incorrect" criticism, articles by writers which raised topics too sensitive for open discussion and struck too close to home for Party standards by this time.

On April 1, the format of the paper had been revised according to plan. The literary section "Wen Yi" on page four no longer appeared, and page four became a kind of cultural page, composed of a mixture of articles concerned with literary and other, mainly political and social issues. The front-page editorial of April 1 addressed "To the Readers", in the spirit of self-criti-
cism fostered by the rectification movement, confessed to the paper's past mistakes and outlined its future direction. (Anonymous, JFRB, 1942A) The editorial indicated that less space should be devoted to international news and more to domestic news, such as the investigation into "the lives and struggles of the people in every anti-Japanese base and the people of all China." Less time should be given to dull and dry essays and translations, and more to explanations of Party resolutions in lively and easily comprehensible language. In general, more space was to be given to carrying out Party line, reflecting conditions of the masses, and intensifying the ideological struggle in accord with the rectification movement.34

On page four in April, we see less fiction and more articles concerned with local issues, reprints of some of the prescribed twenty-two zheng feng documents for study, analyses of zheng feng objectives, and a few relatively mild criticisms of Wang Shiwei. (Qi Su, JFRB, 1942; Li Tu, JFRB, 1942) Oddly enough, the April 1 reform did not totally eliminate pessimistic expressions of the dark side of Yan'an life. Two such pieces, one by the poet He Qifang, and one by Xiao Jun appeared in early April.

He Qifang's controversial "Three Poems" appeared on April 3. In the first poem, "I would like to talk about various pure matters" (我想談說種種純潔的事情), the poet indulged in a romantic reminiscence of his past life - reading books with friends on the grass, discussing their futures together under the stars, and having a perfect love affair. In the second, called "What can last forever?" (什麼東西能夠永存?), he mourned, "Of what benefit is the labor of man under the light
of the sun/When he so quickly passes from cradle to grave? Yet he gained confidence from the sound of the unceasing river and at last felt that the wisdom and labor of his ancestors could last forever. In the third and most contradictory poem, "How many times I have left my daily life" ("多少次呵我离开了我日常的生活") he described daily life as "narrow", "dusty", "clamorous", and "busy", and longed for the silence of nature - the sound of the river, the sky, and the clouds to cleanse his soul. Life was "hell" and everyone was a "prisoner in it", yet he ended with a lengthy plea to run back to that narrow life, to become one with the wrinkle-browed and sweating masses, to share their dreams and struggles, and to follow the soldiers to scenes of blood and death. "Even though personal peace and happiness are so easy to find/I am this unsettled, this stubborn, this restless/I cannot accept their temptation and protection!"

He Qifang's poems here reveal a real conflict between an idealized past existence and the present urgent demands of everyday life in the revolutionary base. He wants desperately to blend in with the toils of struggling countrymen, yet a longing for a pure and tranquil existence, offered by nature and the memory of his past, hinders his ability to harmonize with his "narrow" surroundings. As we will see later, one critic was unable to forgive him his "petty-bourgeois" musings, while others took a much more lenient attitude, appreciating the conflict writers such as He were undergoing in Yan'an. In spite of the condemnation of "sarcastic dark arrows", He Qifang's poetry was not viewed as a threat to the Party. This would be confirmed by the fact
that in July two separate critics will attack a June 19 harsh
critique of He's poetry for being biased, unscholarly, and exces-
sively severe on the poet's "petty-bourgeois" leanings. For
whatever reason, He Qifang was forgiven for suggesting the need
to get away from the "narrow" life at Yan'an, probably because
he also expressed the attraction it held for him. His poetry
indicated conflicts with daily life, but no criticism of the
Party as such.

Xiao Jun's "On 'Love' and 'Patience'" among Comrades of April
8, however, went further than suggesting conflicts with everyday
life. He made charges against the ethical relations between lead-
ers and led, as well as among revolutionary comrades. (Xiao Jun,
JFRB, 1942C) What is still a mystery is why a za wen such as
Xiao Jun's reached print a good three weeks after the appearance
of the cluster of essays whose similar subject matter had so
offended the Party. If we are to assume that Ding Ling was fired
as of March 31, and with the revision of JFRB came a ban on the
printing of such za wen, then it is odd that such a subversive
piece as "On 'Love' and 'Patience' among Comrades" made the
revised edition of page four.37

Under the heading "Love", the writer cited two scenes from
his novel Village in August (八月的乡村) in which he
consciously chose to portray the humanity of a tough troop com-
mander rather than let the reader see how a comrade many "use a
bullet to penetrate the chest of another comrade." In the first
scene, Boil Tang (煮老疙瘩), a member of a small section
of the anti-Japanese Revolutionary Army is endangering the safety
of the rest of his unit by refusing to leave behind the woman he
loves, too weak and sick to walk herself. Commander Iron Eagle (鐵鷹隊長) is afraid to leave Boil Tang behind, for he knows that if the advancing Japanese get a hold of him, he'd surely divulge the whereabouts of his troops under torture. Iron Eagle therefore must shoot the man if he won't abandon the woman for duty to his troops, and Boil Tang consequently invites him to shoot both of them, since he will not budge. Xiao Jun could not bear to have Iron Eagle kill one of his own men, so shows him wavering, until the solution comes. The author has the Japanese enemy move in immediately with cannon fire, leaving Boil Tang to scurry into the bushes with the woman, while Iron Eagle has no choice but to flee without them. The author preferred to show Boil Tang killed by the enemy.

The second scene to which Xiao Jun refers is when Iron Eagle offers some sympathy to one of his head soldiers, Xiao Ming (蕭明), who is miserable after learning that he must part from his Korean sweetheart, Anna. All the men in the band chide him about his affair and treat it in a very lewd manner, ostracizing him for it. Only tough Iron Eagle attempts to comfort him. Xiao wrote,

> This illustrates that just when someone is being attacked from all sides and is misunderstood, it is possible for there to be someone - even one with such a background as Commander 'Iron Eagle', to offer him sincere warmth.

Under "Patience", Xiao made an emotional and self-righteous plea to Party leaders to understand, respect, and have patience with young people in the Communist bases who are dissatisfied with the environment, the people, and with their work. Although
such youth are admittedly weak on occasion before the enemy and may even cause loss to the revolution, in the end they will return to the struggle, and be all the better for it, because by then they will have truly been "tested". He urged, "Is it not valuable to let 'the prodigal sons return home'? Besides, they really aren't yet prodigal sons."

Xiao advised these disallusioned young people by describing the revolutionary struggle in religious terms. "Religious exercise" was needed to overcome difficulties, a forbearance like that possessed by the disciples in Journey to the West (西遊記) who had to overcome the "seventy-two difficulties." Temptations of satan must also be resisted, as in Flaubert's La Tentation de Saint-Antoine, for 'satan' exists in all forms "both in and outside the ranks, as well as in our own minds." Youth must be willing to sacrifice and pave the way for later generations.

He then admonished people who for the sake of "position" and "authority" are apt to become nearsighted. Such things in and of themselves are not bad, he wrote, but if they're obtained unfairly, in the manner of "racers with no sportsmanship, who wearing nailed shoes run past their friends and newcomers by stamping on their faces", then they are unfair gains. "Don't people often say we should respect our enemies? As long as he is a comrade, no matter how inferior he is to others, could it be he is more detestable than your enemy, and less worthy of respect?" Then, in an unforgiving accusation against Yan'an leaders, he stated, "I won't affect the posture of a leader... and make high sounding insincere statements, talking about theories which even I personally cannot carry out."
He concluded with the advice to youth that patience was needed in carrying through any endeavor, while to the Party, that patience of the kind which persuades, instructs, and explains was required to deal with unhappy youth.41

From this essay as well as Wang Shiwei's "Wild Lily", it is clear that youth was the mainstay of dissent in Yan'an, and whoever defended their cause would enjoy their staunch support, and therefore, too, a high bargaining position within the Party. Xiao Jun had rallied for young people before in Yan'an (Xiao Jun, JFRB, 1941, October 21) and his novel Village in August enjoyed immense popularity among them. So although his passionate pleas to the Party on behalf of young people went as far as identifying hypocrisy among Party officials, he was never dealt the same severe treatment as Wang Shiwei, who was less well-known, and had a less colorful personality among youth. Even if other unknown reasons saved Xiao from a more unlucky fate at this time, his popularity and fame as a writer were probably large contributing factors. Even after the culmination of the literary rectification movement and the "trial" of Wang Shiwei, Xiao Jun was to get away with another bit of impassioned advice to the Party on June 13, with "The 'Bułba Spirit' in Literary Circles" (Xiao Jun, JFRB, 1942F) which will be discussed in the following chapter.

In conjunction with the above analysis of writers' response to the Party's February summons to cleanse the ranks, it is revealing in a different manner to examine the official Party explanation in the press of intellectuals' reactions to the rectification movement. After April, besides remarks made by writers in light of the literary conferences held in May, we are afforded
few glimpses into how writers were reacting to the rectification procedures. Through editorials in JFRB, however, we can see the intense level of resistance offered by writers-intellectuals, resistance which would continue even after Mao's "Talks" in May. Opposition to the study movement in particular was evidently strong enough to warrant much public exposure and entreaties for cooperation with the zheng feng campaign as a whole.

As a vital element of the rectification movement, a study campaign was officially initiated on April 3. The "Report of the Propaganda Bureau of the Central Committee on the Zheng Feng Movement" prescribed a period of study and discussion of twenty-two political documents (二十二文件) which was to start on April 20 and last two months for all Party schools, and three months for Party organizations. In June (Anonymous, JFRB, 1942E) this period would be extended an extra two months in both cases. The documents were comprised of speeches and reports by leaders of the Chinese and Soviet Russian Communist Parties, such as Mao, Liu Shaoqi, Stalin, and Lenin. (Compton, 1952:6-7) All other work and study was to stop for the time being while self-criticism sessions, organized from the bottom-up were to be held, based on thorough discussion of the contents of the documents.

But from April to June, editorials appeared which complained about the intellectuals' attitude towards reading the documents and to zheng feng in general. On April 23 (Anonymous, JFRB, 1942E) one editorial took exception to the intellectuals with a high cultural level who refused to take the documents seriously, read them superficially, and then shelved them, never bothering to attempt to put theories read into practice. On May 5 (Anonymous,
another stated that there was prejudice and opposition within the Party to studying the documents while "at present there exists all sorts of mistaken attitudes and absurd talk."

On May 28 (Cong Huichuan, JFRB, 1942) and June 5, (Anonymous, JFRB, 1942E) two more editorials brought up the problems of people "resisting", "fearing", or "misinterpreting" the methods and goals of the zheng feng study movement.

The group of urban writers and cultural workers from Shanghai and other cities were no doubt among the number of people who had reacted to the rectification movement in a manner outside the Party's hopes and expectations. Party leaders had called for reform within the Communist ranks, but response in the intellectual and cultural world crossed beyond the bounds of political tolerance for at least some in power. The discontinuation of "Wen Yi" and the firing of literary editor Ding Ling were only a prelude to a much broader and far-reaching decision on the part of the Party leaders to direct the production and printing of creative works - art, fiction, poetry, critical writing, etc. It is with this background in mind that we should assess the significance of the literary and art conferences to be convened by the Communist Party during the month of May, 1942.
1 Mao had already addressed the same problem in "Reform Our Study", May, 1941.

2 The "Central Committee on Strengthening the Party Spirit" passed on July 1, 1941 had long brought up the problems of "individualism", 'heroism', antiorganizational attitudes, 'independence', 'anti-centralism' and other tendencies counter to the Party spirit." (Compton:157) For Chinese, see Zhengfeng Wenxian, 1949:126.

3 In fact, when the journalist Zhao Chaogou visited Yan'an in 1944 he noted that JFRB was the "cadres' newspaper", while another newspaper called Qunzhong (群中) was written "to educate the masses." (Zhao Chaogou, 1946:164)

4 In "An Essay Not Basted Together" (Luo Feng, JFRB, 1941 B), the author, encouraging criticism within the Party, called for "merciless struggle". (See the appended translation, p.209) Whether or not Mao was referring to this kind of remark coming from young writers is not certain. It is more likely that he was instead alluding to older Party members who intimidated those whose opinions differed from their own.

5 See Chapter Two, pp. 52-53.

6 See D. Holm, 1978, p. 3-4. In his paper, Holm distinguishes two contending groups in Yan'an - the "intellectuals" and the "old cadres", the latter against whom zheng feng was originally intended, but who survived in the end and turned the reform campaign against the intellectuals.

7 It should be noted that certain days of JFRB are missing on the microfilm, as well as from the original Hoover Institution collection from which the U.B.C. microfilm was made. They are 1941: May 23; 1942: March 14,15, 16; April 10, 13, 18; and May 2. The 1942 issues appear on very crucial days and may, in fact,
contain pertinent information.


9 See David E. Pollard, p. 1. "The Way" here may be interpreted as any present political creed sanctioned by the State, i.e., communism.

10 See, for example, Ai Qing's anti-war poem "Kuqi de Laofu" 嘆泣的老妇人, *JFRB*, May 20, 1941, p. 2.

11 See Chapter Two, p. 48.

12 See Fokkema, 1965:13-15 for more discussion of this essay by Ai Qing. However, if Ai Qing is drawing a clear line anywhere, rather than between art and politics, it is between war propaganda which is hypocritically tendencious, "affected", and "unnatural" because of its author's lack of sincerity, and literary war propaganda which has the potential to move its readers towards social reform because of its author's faithfulness to his own feelings. Merle Goldman, 1967:29-30, is also guilty of misrepresenting Ai Qing's ideas so as to conform to a rather forced literature versus politics scheme. True, the poet wrote, "Only when artistic creation is given a spirit of freedom and independence can art play a progressive role in the enterprise of social reform" (Goldman: 30), but this very statement reinforces the poet's conception of the inherent connection between literature and politics. Moreover, by "freedom and independence" he probably did not mean from all Party directives and Party goals, (as a CCP member, surely he shared some of these goals), but more likely he desired freedom from the unscholarly and biased assessment of critics whose lack of serious literary and aesthetic study hindered his own production as well as the understanding
of the reader.

13 For later criticism and textual commentary of this March piece, see Feng Zhi, 1958; Jun Qing, 1958; and Ding Youguang, 1966.

14 For later discussion and criticism of this essay see Wang Ziye, 1958; Luo Hong, 1958; and Ding Youguang, 1966.

15 This and the following translations are taken from "Thoughts on 8 March (Women's Day)", translated by Gregor Benton in New Left Review 1975, 92:102-105.


17 This and the following translations are from "'It is still the Age of the Tsa-wen'", translated by G. Benton in New Left Review 1975, 92:105-106.

18 For later discussion and criticism of this piece see Yan Wenjing, 1958; Wenyi Bao, 1957, 22:2; and Ding Youguang, 1966.

19 See Fokkema: 15-16, Goldman: 25-26, and T.A. Hsia: 252 for other discussions of this essay. Any commentary in English or Chinese on this 1942 period in Yan'an focuses on Wang Shiwei's "Wild Lily". Because of the essay's sharp criticism of Communist leaders and because of the subsequent role played by its author as scapegoat (and primary negative example) in the rectification movement, "Wild Lily" is considered the first model article of dissent against the CCP by one of its intellectuals, the watershed in Party - writer relations which set the tone for later literary rectification movements. For later criticisms of Wang Shiwei and his essay see Ai Qing, 1955; Lin Mohan, 1958; and Ding Youguang, 1966.

20 This translation is from G. Benton in New Left Review 1975, 92:96-102.
Though not singling out Wang Shiwei by name, it was apparent that the criticism was aimed at him. See Anonymous, _JFRB_, 1942 B. The report referred to a meeting which took place on "the eve of the revised Liberation Daily", i.e., March 31.

The literature section was not formally called "Wen Yi" until September 16, 1941, but had evidently existed as a consciously separate section since the establishment of the newspaper on May 16.

We do not hear much about Chen Qixia at this time, although he did write three essays worth noting. On October 14, 1941, less than two weeks before Ding Ling offered her official sanction of the use of _za wen_ as a weapon with which to combat darkness, the co-editor of "Wen Yi" wrote a very contemplative and personal essay, the meaning of which is rather elusive. The style of the essay seems to conform to the original definition of _za wen_ as random, personal notes. (The meaning of the term _za wen_ as it came to be used in Yan'an indicated a characteristic tone of bitter sarcasm and criticism of existing social ills, yet this meaning was no doubt created by Lu Xun, whose _za wen_ fit this description. Since writers such as Ding Ling advocated the use of _za wen_ in the name of Lu Xun, the original more neutral definition of the term became obscured and _za wen_ came to be interpreted in a more narrow sense, i.e., in the sense that the famous Lu Xun had employed it.) In the essay "Struggle" (Chen Qixia, _JFRB_ 1941), the author makes wide use of abstract visual and aural images throughout. The thoughts are disconnected and at times vague. The piece ends thus:

... Perhaps it is that the yellow light of the lamp will blossom forth flowers in the darkness. Or perhaps a set of fresh and tender new leaves will hang from a severed branch, already withered and faded. Or maybe: it is the multi-colored clouds of morning in full splendor over the Eastern sky, or maybe a bit of white sail trembling in a corner of the sea, or a lofty range of mountain peaks moving in the cloudy mist...
Or maybe... the heroic and moving deeds at time of risking one's life, the sorrowful accounts of exile and dispersion that pass from mouth to mouth, all that is glorious and sacred in the world which creates sensation...

People's searching for things of beauty, is a kind of struggle. Facing this struggle, do you not have a trembling in your heart, a type of fear, yet not at all a simple one, as an old soldier about to thrust his bayonet?

It is impossible to ascertain whether or not the romantic hopes of the author were inspired by disillusion with the present environment. There is a synopsis available of a second essay written by Chen, however, which more clearly indicates his disappointment with life in the revolutionary camp. The original piece itself, entitled "The Cock Crows" (Ji Ti 雞啼) is to my knowledge unavailable. There is reference to it in Wenyi Bao, 1958, 2:3, as well as in Mingbao Yuekan, 1966, 2:91. T.A. Hsia has translated a summation of the piece given by a "Miss Tseng K'e" who in 1962 offered a reminiscence of her time in Yan'an as a member of the Yan'an Branch of the All-China Writers' Anti-aggression Association. (T.A. Hsia, 1968: 253-54) Her reminiscence is in Sichuan Wenyi (《四川文藝》), 1962, 3, which I have been unable to examine.

According to her assessment, Chen's "The Cock Crows" was a za wen in fable form. Perhaps mocking the naive romanticism of his first essay, the author satirized the disallusionment of enthusiastic revolutionary supporters who worked for the revolution in hopes that it would bring light. After they prematurely revel in triumph and discover darkness still surrounding them, they "regret" their "impetuosity" at assuming victory too early.

There is no date given for "The Cock Crows", but it probably appeared around the same time as another essay by Chen similarly titled "The Wolf Cries." This latter was printed in JFRB on February 2, 1942. Chen again used metaphors - employing animals to represent various political forces in Yan'an. He wrote, "Of all the cruel wild beasts active in the black night, there are none who do not fear fire and light." "When a wolf
goes into a stable, horses will neigh loudly yet donkeys become silent idiots waiting to be eaten..." The wolf apparently represented the forces of evil existing in Yan'an which were to be the aim of the reform movement, while the horses and donkeys represented, respectively, the active elements in the Party willing to push for progressive reforms and defend themselves and their camp against darkness, and the passive lazy elements (spoken of by Luo Feng and Wang Shiwei) who allowed darkness to overcome them. Chen Qixia was more optimistic in this essay than in "The Cock Crows", for here he believed that the light would ultimately overcome darkness, since there were no wild beasts "who do not fear fire and light."

"Ziyou Tan" (自由談) was the literary supplement to Shanghai's Shen Bao (申报). I have been unable to trace "Dong Xiang" (動向) but it too must have been a literary supplement.

The notion of literary supplements (fukan 副刊) existing and operating in an essentially independent fashion from the sponsorship of the main newspaper to which they belonged dates back to the 1920's in China. Literary supplements had often served as important channels through which young unknown writers could get published and make a name for themselves. Fukan also served as sounding boards for the discontents of writers. "Wen Yi", then, was viewed by writers as a potentially very powerful channel through which to launch their complaints, and solidify their strength against criticism they would receive from the government.

Wenyi Yuebao was mentioned by Ouyang Shan in JFRB on May 19, 1941. In December of that year Liu Xuewei referred to the "recently published" journals Gu Yu (谷雨), Cao Ye (草葉), and Shi Kan (詩刊). This would confirm Ding Ling's observation that in March, 1941, none of these journals had yet existed.
27 See Chapter Two, note 22.

28 Nowhere else did I find reference to Shu Qun's editorial position but neither did I find reference to Ai Siqi as editor, although according to later secondary sources, it was the latter who replaced Ding Ling. Neither Goldman (p. 143) nor T.A. Hsia (p. 247) give an exact date for Ding Ling's replacement, though Hsia refers to an article on April 22 by Ai Siqi who had by then "succeeded Ting Ling as editor of the Literary Page of the Liberation Daily" (T.A. Hsia: 247), while Klein and Clark write, "Following the ouster of Ting, in June 1942 Ai assumed her post as editor of the cultural page of the Chieh-fang jih-pao." (Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Communism: 1921-1965 ed. Donald W. Klein and Anne B. Clark, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971, p. 1.) Thus there is disagreement as to who took over when. At least as of March 13, Shu Qun was scheduled to assume the post. D. Holm also believes that it was Shu Qun who assumed the job along with Ding Ling's former co-editor Chen Qixia. (D. Holm, 1978, p. 6) See note 37 below.

29 See D. Holm, 1978, p. 3-4. This notion would support M. Goldman's postulation (p. 1-2; p. 33) that the Party planned the zheng feng movement as they went along, with no set rules prescribed beforehand. They designed guidelines in response to writers' opinions and actions.

30 Nonetheless such were the accusations made against Yan'an writers in 1957-58.

31 "Wen Yi" did not appear on March 31. It was common for the space allotted to the column to be interspersed on some days with other special sections such as "Qingnian zhi Ye" (青年之頁 ) which began on September 21; "Zhongguo Gongren" (中國工人 ) on September 24; "Di Qing" (敵情 ) on September 27; "Zhongguo Funu" (中國婦女 ) on September 28; "Kexue Yuandi" (科學園地 ) on October 4; "Jun Shi" (軍事 ) on October 29; and "Wei Sheng" (衛生 ) on November 24.
There are a few illegible characters on the JFRB microfilm copy at my disposal. This further prevents me from making any firm conclusion as to the meaning of this essay.

The meeting was held at Yang Jia Ling (楊家嶺), location of Party Central Headquarters. Over seventy people attended, both Party and non-Party members, including writers. Both Xiao Jun and the poet Ke Zhongping (柯仲平) were reported to have been "enthusiastic" about the reform of the paper.

Zhongguo Xiandai Chuban Shiliao, edited by Zhang Jinglu, volume 4 part 1: 243-48 has reprinted an editorial from JFRB, February 16, 1944 commemorating the 1000th issue of the newspaper. In it, the April, 1942 revisions were assessed and there are extensive quotes from the April 1, 1942 editorial concerning reasons for revision.

This set of poems, along with another, (He Qifang, JFRB, 1942 A) were to incite contention among critics as to the degree of criticism these poems deserved. The controversy appeared on June 19, July 2, and July 18, but will not be dealt with until the following chapter, within the context of the influence of Mao's May "Talks" on literary criticism.

See Goldman, p. 31 for a translation of one section of this poem.

The assumption that the Party ordered no more printing of za wen is based only on the report on the March 31 meeting to revise the paper in which there had been noted a difference between "sincere" criticism and "sarcastic dark arrows" (stabs in the back). It is safe to assume that the CCP was here disapproving of other writers of za wen besides Wang Shiwei. It would make sense that Ding Ling stepped down as of March 31, yet the printing of Xiao Jun's April 8 essay as well as the following may prove otherwise. In an anti-rightist criticism of Xiao Jun's
za wen by Ma Tieding, 1958, it is written that the five essays being criticized were all printed in JFRB when Ding Ling and Chen Qixia were editors. In Biographic Dictionary of Chinese Communism (see note 28 below) June is the month given when Ding Ling was replaced as editor, and in light of the fact that another subversive essay of Xiao Jun's made it to press on June 13, this later date of transfer of power in "Wen Yi" seems more likely. There is one further possibility (which however would not fit in with Ma Tieding's remarks above), which is that Shu Qun took over at the end of March and then the Party, dissatisfied with his work in light of the fact that he continued to print Xiao Jun's subversive essays, fired him and placed Ai Siqi in the post sometime in June.

38 This scene can be found in the Chinese version of the novel on pp. 114-117, and in the English translation on pp. 125-128. See Bibliography for texts used.


40 This translation is from Goldman, p. 28.

41 This essay was the target of attack in 1958 for pleasing the enemy Nationalists, for critics asserted that the Guomindang had praised it and used it for propaganda purposes. Such dissatisfied youth who had received Xiao's sympathy were labeled "Party traitors." See Ma Tieding, 1958.

42 See B. Compton, pp. 1-8 for the English translation, and Zhengfeng Wenxian, pp. 1-50 for the original Chinese.
CHAPTER FOUR: FROM THE MAY "TALKS" TO THE END OF AUGUST, 1942

Before discussing the literary and art forum convened in May we should look at a brief outline of developments on the cultural page of JFRB from May until August. Since such developments were to take place as a result of the May conference and the literary rectification movement, they may serve too as a parallel to political trends in the CCP base during these months.

A. The Effect of the May Forum on JFRB, page four.

On May 13, six weeks after the last issue of "Wen Yi", a new column called "Study" (学习) made its first appearance on page four of JFRB. This section focused on the study movement in Yan'an which had taken shape during the month of April. On May 2 the first meeting of the now well-known literary and art conference was held, and as of May 14 the editor(s) of page four announced that from that day on they would print materials related to this conference which was termed "an important event."

During the month of May we see long essays by such well-known writers as Xiao Jun, Ai Qing, He Qifang, and Liu Baiyu expressing their present views of the literary scene in light of Mao's "Forum" and later-to-be published "Talks at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art" (在延安文艺座谈会上的讲话), known herein as the "Talks".

On May 31, the editor(s) of page four announced a new request for manuscript contributions. They asked for "sketches, report-age, poems and songs, fiction, painting, woodblock prints, short
plays, etc. which reflect struggle and the life of the Border Region and which contain positive content."

Also requested were "essays on literature, book reviews, introductions to literary works, random notes on books, and za wen concerned with cultural ideology." This demand for contributions to page four differed from earlier requests in that it specifically called for works reflecting "struggle", and with a "positive content" an obvious recognition of the rectification movement and the new direction in literature and art indicated that month by the CCP via Mao's "Talks."

Almost half the month of June is filled with either direct or indirect criticisms of Wang Shiwei by writers, critics, academics, and politicians, while in July and August (minus a few pieces in July), specific attention to the accused "Trotskyite" ceases. Besides the appearance of more fiction and less articles devoted to the rectification campaign, we see various comments by writers on the tremendous difficulties they are encountering in their attempt to follow the newly established literary policy. We also find a few isolated observations on the as-of-yet unsuccessful implementation of national forms. While the dilemma arising from writers' inability to live-up to the new demands put upon them will be examined in more detail towards the end of this chapter, the general failure to make widespread the use of national forms as well as later literary discussions occurring in the pages of JFRB after summer, 1942, will not concern us in this paper. The close of the Wang Shiwei case and the end to immediate reaction to Mao's "Talks" will form the chronological boundary of our inquiry.
Having a general idea of how the May Forum affected page four of JFRB, we can now proceed to look at the framework, roots, and content of the conference itself.

B. The Framework of the Forum

Three major forums were convened in May in an attempt to solve the literary and artistic questions that had been brewing among writers and artists ever since their arrival to the Border Area. From the Party's point of view, this was the opportunity to correct mistaken tendencies which had come to a head in March through the medium of za wen expressing discontent with various aspects of life in the revolutionary camp. As we will see, the results of the discussions tended to contribute much more to the "correction" of ideas voiced by writers, that is, to the literary rectification campaign, than to a concrete and satisfactory treatment of the issues brought forth for debate in the pages of JFRB.

Interspersed between the three formal meetings called by the CCP - the first on May 2, the second on May 16 (He Qifang, 1977:2), and the third on May 23, smaller group sessions met to discuss relevant topics. Although others in the government leadership such as Liu Shaoqi, Chen Boda, Bo Gu, etc. were present, there is only a written record (based on notes) of Mao's speeches given at the first and third meetings. Sessions held before May 23 served as forums in which Party and non-Party writers and leaders were asked to air their opinions on existing literary concerns. Unfortunately, besides one written account by Xiao
Jun of his ideas voiced at the May 2 conference, there is no written record of the remarks of the other participants.

The poet He Qifang wrote a small book commemorating the 35th anniversary of the "Talks" in which he collected some observations of the conference based on the memories of people like himself who had been there. But these are not authentic, verified records and are no doubt colored by events which have occurred in the subsequent years since. We do know that everyone and anyone who occupied a position of any significance connected with the literary world voiced their ideas. The writer Zhou Libo who was present, wrote that on May 2, after Zhu De's (朱德, then Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army) opening remarks, Mao delivered his "Introduction" (引言) and then listened to everyone else's opinions, pen in hand. Zhou Yang was among the speakers. (Zhou Libo, 1962) According to He Qifang, one hundred people appeared at this first meeting, thirty of whom were teachers or cadres from the Lu Xun Academy of Arts. The poet also confirmed that there was much debate after Mao's "Introduction" and in fact recalled that on May 23, one writer (apparently dissatisfied with the proceedings) got up and lectured for an hour on "basic artistic knowledge." People were insulted and someone stood up and shouted "This is not a training class." (He Qifang, 1977:5) According to Mingbao Yuekan, there were still quite a few people who sympathized with Wang Shiwei at the first two meetings. (Ding Youguang, 1966, Part One:91) This likely led to spirited debate. Mao's "Introduction" was to be a preview and outline of the topics to be examined in his "Conclusion" (結論) of May 23.
Before looking over the "Talks" itself (of which the May 25 "Conclusion" occupies most of the text), it will be helpful to take a short look at some of the roots for Mao's theories on literature and art as well as the historical significance of his "Talks", although the scope of this thesis allows for only the most superficial assessments in these areas.

C. Roots of Theories Presented in the "Talks"

Mao's conception of the role of literature and art in revolution was inspired by both Soviet Russian interpretations of Marxist doctrine and previous Chinese Communist contributions and attempts at formulating a literary and art policy. Where the Marxist philosophical doctrine of dialectical materialism served as basis for Mao's fundamental assumptions of the relation between culture and the economic base of society, Lenin's ideas on literature lent more concrete inspiration for Mao's perspective on literature. Lenin's 1905 "Party Organization and Party Literature" was in fact directly quoted in later versions of the "Talks". (Mao Zedong, 1942 C, SWMTT:75) The most important elements taken from Lenin's speech and used as a basis for CCP literary policy were, first, the concept of a "party literature."

Literature cannot be a means of enriching individuals or groups: it cannot, in fact, be an individual undertaking, independent of the common cause of the proletariat. Down with non-partisan writers! Down with literary supermen! Literature must become part of the common cause of the proletariat, 'a cog and a screw' of one single great Social-Democratic mechanism...
Publishing and distributing centres, bookshops and reading rooms, libraries and similar establishments - must all be under party control. The organized socialist proletariat must keep an eye on all this work,... infuse it into the lifeflow of the living proletarian cause...

(Lenin, 1905:45, 46)

As Professor Fokkema noted, (1965:8-9) Lenin's speech was directed towards propaganda, journalistic writing, yet Mao interpreted his remarks to cover creative writing as well.

The next important feature of Lenin's notions on the regulation of literature which was espoused by Mao was the recognition of a certain allowance to be made in creative writing for the sake of aesthetic impact.

There is no question that literature is least of all subject to mechanical adjustment or leveling, to the rule of the majority over the minority. There is no question, either, that in this field greater scope must undoubtedly be allowed for personal initiative, individual inclination, thought and fantasy, form and content. All this is undeniable; but all this simply shows that the literary side of the proletarian party cause cannot be mechanically identified with its other sides. This, however, does not in the least refute the proposition, alien and strange to the bourgeoisie and bourgeois democracy, that literature must by all means and necessarily become an element of Social-Democratic Party work, inseparably bound up with the other elements. (Lenin, 1905:46)

Mao did not ever make allusion to this section of Lenin's speech, yet from his own position as a poet, from his distaste for formulistic literature, and from remarks made later during the Hundred Flowers Campaign, we can discern his own desire for aesthetically pleasing literature and art within the framework of revolutionary expression. He was fully aware that artistically effective works made all the more powerful political weapons.
Finally, from Lenin, came the sector of society towards whom literature and art would be directed. Mao, of course, was to add peasants and soldiers to the "working people" as audience:

It will be a free literature, because it will serve, not some satiated heroine, not the bored 'upper ten thousand' suffering from fatty degeneration, but the millions and tens of millions of working people - the flower of the country, its strength and its future. (Lenin, 1905:48-49)

Besides the ideas of Lenin, it is not obvious from Mao's "Talks" precisely which Soviet Marxist literary theories he had read, familiarized himself with, and been influenced by, although it is clear that his advocacy of "proletariat realism" was a direct result of Soviet influence.

Probably the primary Communist Chinese literary theorist to influence Mao was Qu Qiubai. Responsible for the introduction to China of Marxist theories on literature from the Soviet Union as early as the 1920's, Qu had also exerted much influence over the League of Left-wing Writers formed in 1930. The political premises of the League and its literary principles (see Chapter One) were certainly to contribute to Party policy in 1942. Qu's own writings in the early thirties expressing his concern for the preservation of traditional popular culture through the appropriate adoption of national forms to the revolutionary cause, had given shape to the desire on the part of many CCP cultural leaders to retain some element of national, traditional folk culture. (This denial of total iconoclasm has been traced back to Lenin. See P. Pickowicz, 1977:382) Although Mao did not share in Qu's extreme denunciation of the May Fourth "bourgeois" revolution in
literature, he did make the same hard distinctions between literature and art for the petty-bourgeoisie, and literature and art for the proletariat, adding peasants and soldiers to the latter group.

Another Chinese source for Mao's ideas offered in the "Talks" came from Zhou Yang. Zhou, like Qu, was versed in Soviet literary theories, and in 1942 was in the process of introducing the Russian theorist Chernyshevsky into the revolutionary base areas of China. Zhou's advise to young writers to fuse with everyday life around them in order to create more worthwhile, effective, and moving works (See Chapter Two, p. 32-34), served as one of the most fundamental tenets of "Maoist" literary theory and policy.

Hence, even the most superficial look at the historical and contemporary influences on Mao's theories in the "Talks" reveals that his policy on literature and art was by no means his own creation. It was, rather, a definitive affirmation and crystallization of attempts made before 1942 at creating some sort of fixed standard by which Chinese Communist writers, artists, and critics could proceed in their work.

Since 1942, Mao's "Talks" have been considered by the Communist orthodoxy to be a panacea, the long-awaited literary and art policy which not only answered the questions of Communist writers in China in 1942, but has been a correct guidebook for all Chinese revolutionary literature since than time. In 1942, leftist writers in China were indeed in need of a literary direction to guide them through the many dilemmas which surrounded their writing. But a close look at the "Talks" below will reveal that rather than offering final solutions to practical artistic
problems, the policy outlined theoretical and rather idealistic proposals for a future literature and art, a literature and art which could not possibly have existed at the time, nor in the very near future, given the still low cultural level of the masses and the disposition of the urban-trained writers. This is not to deny the value of the "Talks" which did offer a concise presentation of CCP literary policies accumulated over the years and a definition of the boundaries of literary rectification in 1942. But the limitations of the "Talks" as thorough solutions to artistic problems bothering writers in 1942 are undeniable.

D. The Yan'an "Talks"

In examining the text itself, rather than discussing the major points in the order in which they appear in the "Talks", it will be more useful to arrange them in the same order in which we examined similar issues brought up before May, 1942, in Chapter Two. This will enable us to see more clearly how Mao did or did not deal with the questions that had been raised for debate in the pages of JFRB during the past year. Treatment of Mao's remarks, then, will be divided into source material, creative method and approach, the application of Marxism-Leninism to literature and art, popularization and the raising of standards (including audience), and treatment of writers.

Addressing the question of source material, Mao plainly wanted to see depictions of "the new people and the new world", "the life of the people in our own time and place." (MZDJ:127/ SWMTT:81) The "people" (the "masses") were defined as first, the
workers; second, the peasants; third the army; and fourth, the "urban petty-bourgeoisie and intellectuals." (MZDJ:121/SWMTT:77)

Ten years earlier, Qu Qiubai had envisioned a similar hope:

Our work must reflect the actual revolutionary struggle by presenting revolutionary heroism, particularly the heroism of the people. This will require exposing reactionary consciousness and the timid wavering of the petty-bourgeoisie, thereby bringing to light the influence of this consciousness upon the struggle of the people, and thus assisting in the growth and development of revolutionary class consciousness. (Qu Qiubai, 1932:38-39/English:51)

Mao's original text read that although literature and art in "natural form" (自然形象的) was the only source of literature and art in "conceptualized form" (观念形象的), "processed literature and art is more organized, more concentrated, more typical, more ideal, and thus more universal than literature and art in natural form." (MZDJ:128) In later versions, "man's social life" was substituted for "literature and art in natural form", "conceptualized form" was omitted, and "processed literature and art" was changed to "life as reflected in works of literature and art." One of the six traits of art, "more organized", was also later changed to "on a higher plane, more intense." (SWMTT:82) In general, the revisions seemed to reflect a switch from very ambiguous to less ambiguous terminology. In any event, the characteristics of literature and art named by Mao were directly influenced by proletariat-realist art theory in the Soviet Union and were to shape subsequent conceptions of revolutionary realism/romanticism in China.
Next Mao gave a specific order concerning the portrayal of "petty-bourgeois intellectuals." This was an important point, since the majority of writers in Yan'an had spent much of their time and effort characterizing people of their own class. The CCP decreed here that petty-bourgeois intellectuals should be shown in the process of reforming their bourgeois ideology; thus the sympathetic portrayal of backward intellectuals only perpetuated the distance between themselves and the masses and was deemed unacceptable. Mao no doubt had in mind depictions such as that of the young heroine Lu Ping in Ding Ling's "In the Hospital" (see Chapter Two), and the young nurse in Fang Ji's "Beyond the Realm of Consciousness" ("意識以外").

As we observed earlier, Ding Ling's heroine was sympathetically played up as an enthusiastic woman comrade willing to serve the people and the Party but too disillusioned by the inefficiency and inhumanity of Party members to do so.

Fang Ji's short story, originally published in the now unavailable Yan'an journal Wenyi Yuebao was criticized by a Liu Huang on June 25, 1942. It apparently also concerned a nurse, a true sacrificer for the revolution who was troubled, however, by the environment, by something "outside her consciousness" and gradually went insane. The critic asserted that the only thing causing her illness was her own petty-bourgeois consciousness and not external factors (i.e., the Party) at all. (Liu Huang, JFRB, 1942) Ding Ling's Lu Ping had been criticized in exactly the same manner. In both cases, instead of making a positive example of how such people could overcome incorrect ideology, the authors had sympathized with their heroines against the Party.
Mao's solution for writers simply not versed in the portrayal of workers, peasants, and soldiers (known hereafter as gongnong-bing, 工农 兵) was for them to make themselves familiar with these subjects strange to them. Yet Mao was fully aware that urban writers were not accustomed to treating subject matter other than that with which they were familiar, i.e., other than their own class. In fact, he acknowledged that when writers did try to depict gongnongbing, the result was people in "working clothes but with petty-bourgeois faces." Even those who had been working at the front, in the base areas and in the army for a number of years had still not been able to satisfactorily solve the problem of mixing with the masses, nor, presumably, of creating a "proletarian" literature and art. The problem would take "eight to ten years" to solve, (MZDJ:123/SWMTT:78) assuming that once the question of class standpoint was resolved, literary and artistic difficulties would be more easily overcome.

It was now clear, then, that literature and art was to no longer focus on the educated elite, but was to glorify the deeds of the gongongbing. With all the recognition of difficulties ensuing from the practical implementation of this ideal, it is to be regreted that Mao did not offer more specific ideas on how writers were to make the tremendous transition which was being demanded of them with the definitive switch to mass-based literature. A political answer was offered, but contributed little to the solution of artistic methods necessary to accurately recreate the lives of the new subject matter, the gongnongbing.

Mao contributed less to the discussion of creative method than he did to approach and attitude towards subject matter. He
referred to the method of "proletarian realism", and permitted creative styles and methods other than realism to exist, only for the sake of the United Front. (MZDJ:136/SWM:87) Concerning approach to thematic material, his lengthy explanation of critical attitudes dealt exclusively with the question of whether to expose the dark aspects of life in the CCP camp, or to extol its bright side. This issue was, in fact, of the utmost importance to the urban writers since it was they who had supported the use of fiction and za wen as a means of exposing the evil remnants of the old society in the CCP in hopes of eliminating them and fostering progress toward the revolution. Here, in the "Talks", the CCP gave its official response to the challenges made that spring by the self-proclaimed followers of Lu Xun.

First, Mao refuted the idea that recent Chinese literary works had equally stressed the bright and the dark sides. Petty-bourgeois writers, he maintained, merely specialized in "preaching pessimism and world-weariness." (MZDJ:141/SWM:91) An example of what he probably had in mind here is a story by Yan Wenjing called "Comrade Luoyu Takes a Walk". (JFR, 1941, October 17) The short story shows two comrades during unguarded moments when they are anything but paragons of revolutionary virtue, but rather full of wearied and pessimistic remarks about Yan'an life. This story will be treated in more detail later.

Mao drew his inspiration for a literature which praised the strongpoints of the revolutionary camp from the Soviet Union. Soviet literature in the period of socialist construction was a model, he felt, worthy of emulation - literature which mainly portrayed the bright and only "describes shortcomings in work and
portrays negative characters to serve as a contrast to bring out the brightness of the whole picture." What should be praised and what should be exposed? "All the dark forces harming the masses of the people must be exposed and all the revolutionary struggles of the masses of the people must be extolled." Thus the shortcomings of the masses should be overcome by education and criticism from within, but not through exposure in literature. Exposure is only reserved for "aggressors, exploiters, and oppressors" of the masses. Here Mao was referring to the view that "the task of literature and art has always been to expose," (MZDJ:141/SWMTT:91) which was precisely what people such as Ai Qing, Luo Feng, Ding Ling, Xiao Jun, and Wang Shiwei had been espousing.

As for za wen, the essay form which had been used in Yan'an in the manner in which Lu Xun had so often employed it, i.e., to lay bare corruption both in and outside the ranks, the CCP took a firm stand. They thoroughly opposed its "abusive" use in satirizing allies and CCP people. Without mentioning names, Mao was alluding to Luo Feng's "Still the Age of za wen", Ding Ling's "We Need za wen", and to the satirical essays themselves written by these and other writers criticizing the CCP. Mao was furious that these people used Lu Xun's za wen to justify their own, and insisted that the great writer had only employed such a sarcastic tone of pen and obscure style to escape the KMT censors under whom he lived. Mao's assertion that Lu Xun had only directed his attacks against his opponents overlooked the fact that the writer's opponents were often those in the revolutionary camp.

An article by Zhou Wen which sought to clarify once and for all the difference between the za wen of Lu Xun and that used by
Wang Shiwei ("Wild Lily") appeared in press three weeks after Mao's "Talks". (JFRB, 1942, June 16) This shows how important the Party found it to clear the name of Lu Xun, to keep his reputation as a model revolutionary writer untainted from misuse by what were considered to be unrevolutionary elements. Zhou Wen did mention that Lu Xun had also criticized the revolutionary camp and cited his "Reply to Xu Mouyong" (Lu Xun, 1936) as an example. However, he was careful to point out that although Lu Xun's tone in this piece was not congenial, it at least contained "propriety of judgement" ( propriety of judgement ) since it was directed towards an ally rather than an enemy. Zhou Wen also claimed that Wang Shiwei had distorted Lu Xun in a passage in "Statesmen and Artists" where he wrote,

Lu Xun struggled his whole life, but those who had a little deeper understanding of him could certainly feel that he was rather lonely in the struggle. He struggled because he recognized the laws of order governing the development of society and believed that the future would certainly be brighter than the present. He was lonely because he saw that in the souls of his comrades-in-arms was also much filth and darkness. (Zhou Wen, JFRB, 1942, June 16)

In any event, Mao felt that in the free and democratic Border Area, there was no need to use "veiled and roundabout expressions which are hard for the people to understand." (MZDJ:142/ SWMTT:92)

Attacking za wen because it was incomprehensible to the people is unfair since it was not intended for them in the first place. Essays such as those written by Luo Feng and Wang Shiwei were most certainly aimed at the educated cadres and leaders in Yan'an about whom they were complaining, and not the average
workers, peasant, or soldier. It is doubtful that their intended audience had much difficulty in deciphering their "veiled meaning". After all, CCP members in leadership positions and most all people writing for JFRB were also guilty of writing in a style aimed at the better-educated, not the masses. However, in light of the stress on popularization, it is not surprising that za wen was attacked for its language as well as its critical attitude towards subject matter.

Mao objected to several "muddled ideas" (MZDJ:139/SWMTT:90) circulating around Yan'an which greatly affected writers' views of the society about which they wrote. Such ideas formed the basic premises from which writers engaged in literary creativity and approached their thematic material. The CCP was after all attempting to eliminate some of the most fundamental philosophical principles governing the work of many writers, and such a purging of "incorrect ideas" was to profoundly affect future literary creativity in the CCP camp.

One mistaken concept, according to Mao, was the "theory of human nature." (MZDJ:139/SWMTT:90) This was plainly a reference to Wang Shiwei. In a criticism of the author of "Wild Lily" by Zhang Ruxin, (JFRB, 1942, June 17) Wang's "theory of human nature" was traced back to a wall poster he had written on the walls of the Central Research Institute (former Marxist-Leninist Institute) where he worked as a translator. According to Zhang, Wang's za wen, entitled "Hard Bones and Soft Bones" 硬骨頭與軟骨頭病 (Cai Danye, 1972:65) divided the individual into two components - human bones and political bones, (the word "bones" meaning moral fiber here.) One's human bones, wrote Wang, were
determined by how one understood and related to other people, while one's political Party member bones were determined by the Central Party Bureau. He was criticized here for making no distinction between class but for describing one brand of human nature for people of all classes. Wang was attacked, too, for employing such abstract and non-class terms as "love", "politics", "art", "hard and soft bones" throughout his essay. This wall article had been written sometime between late March and mid-April, as it was refuted on April 17 in the newspaper by someone using the pen name of Li Tu. Mao labeled all such human nature which was supposedly devoid of class character as "bourgeois individualism" and upheld that a classless human nature did not exist. (MZDJ:140/SWMTT:90)

The next "muddled idea", that "the fundamental point of departure for literature and art is love, love of humanity", (MZDJ:140/SWMTT:90) was pointing to Xiao-Jun, Ding Ling, Wang Shiwei, and others who had exposed a lack of humanitarian values within the CCP through either fiction, essay form, or both. "On 'Love' and 'Patience' among Comrades", "In the Hospital", and "Wild Lily" had all addressed this problem in a very direct fashion. The response to these writers' pleas here was that love of humanity could not exist in a class society. This however did not really answer their question, for they were concerned with humanitarian values within the CCP camp while Mao treated the issue as if they were demanding that the enemy be included in their 'love of humanity'. Mao's answer here sidestepped the real issue raised by the writers. His directive discussed above not to expose the darkness in one's own camp contributed more to what
the Party's real answer to these writers on this point was: that a lack of humanity among the ranks was simply not an acceptable literary theme.

The next attitude to affect literary creation, renounced by Mao, was the defense offered by writers that "it is not a question of stand; my class stand is correct, my intentions are good and I understand all right, but I am not good at expressing myself and so the effect turns out bad." (MZDJ:143/SWMTT:93) The CCP's disapproval of this rationalization was for some part based on the defense of Wang Shiwei circulating which said that his motives (in writing his za wen) were good, but the effect of his actions were unfavorable. According to He Qifang, before Mao's speech, a small meeting was held in which speakers explained the difference between motive and effect. Someone had said, "We have written works with a bad influence but our motives were good." He Qifang wrote that this person tried to distinguish between works of this kind (written with good intentions) and the works of Ding Ling et al., when, in He's estimation, there was no distinction. (He Qifang, 1977:12) The poet recalled that Ding Ling and others had asked to be forgiven for the negative effect of their works. Therefore it was by no means only in reference to Wang Shiwei that Mao had brought up this problem, although it was Wang who was starting to receive most of the attention at this time. Support for the ideas which he represented was apparently strong despite Party attacks against him. Even by June 9, such defenses of Wang were still being offered in the literary world: "His standpoint is good but his attitude is inappropriate", or, "his subjective standpoint is correct, but the objective reflection
of his standpoint is incorrect." ([Li] Bozou, JFRB, 1942, June 9).

Mao was not interested in such explanations. When judging whether a writer's motives are good or bad, he stated, "We do not judge by his declarations but by the effect of his actions (mainly his works) on the masses in society." (MZDS:137-138/SWMTT:88) Those not willing to correct their mistakes after witnessing the harmful political effect of their efforts could not possibly have good intentions. It was, for Mao, like all else, a question of class stand.

The next point which was brought up for discussion in "Wen Yi" and was addressed specifically by Mao was the question of the application of Marxism-Leninism to literary and artistic creativity. Mao quoted the common complaint of writers that "to call on us to study Marxism is to repeat the mistake of the dialectical materialist creative method, which will harm the creative mood." (MZDJ:144/SWMTT:94) Ouyang Shan in May, 1941, and Zhou Yang in July of that year had raised the same issue. Some time during the literary and art conferences in May, Ding Ling was reported to have declared something to this effect: "She too would like to study Marxism, but as soon as she reads books on Marxist theory, they destroy her creative mood." (He Qifang, 1977: 14)

Mao offered the same explanation as Ouyang Shan and Zhou Yang had before him for the inability of writers to combine political doctrine with artistic practice in a creative manner. Writers were merely extracting "empty, dry, dogmatic formulas" from Marxist political philosophy. They were not adept in appropri-
ately applying Marxism to literary creativity, and the result of such dogmatic interpretations of Marxist doctrine did indeed destroy creative mood, as well as Marxism itself. (MZDJ:144/SWMTT:94) Here Mao was simply stating the existence of formula-writing, and by extension, formulistic criticism, both of which had been identified as fundamental dilemmas by writers in "Wen Yi". However, in line with the literary rectification taking shape, Mao contended that Marxism applied correctly to literature and art does and should destroy creative moods which are "feudal, bourgeois, petty-bourgeois, individualistic, art-for-art's sake". (MZDJ:145/SWMTT:94)

The question of popularization and the raising of standards had, significantly, not been a major topic of discussion in the pages of JFRB prior to Mao's "Talks." Mao recognized this and therefore devoted much time to the delineation of his ideas on the subject, pointing to its tremendous importance in his eyes.

Popularization is actually a question of "for whom" does one write, that is, towards what cultural level should writers gear their writing style and form. Mao's answer was that they should first take into consideration the gongnongbing above all else. Rather than starting from the highest educational level in society, one should begin raising standards only after popularization from the bottom up. Yet the "mass style" advocated by Mao and others necessary in this scheme had not been successfully implemented by anyone in Yan'an. On the question of "for whom", he stated, "there has hardly been any divergence between the two contending sides." Both sides "tended to look down upon the workers, peasants, and soldiers, and divorce themselves from the
masses." (MZDJ:124/SWMTT:79)

Both He Qifang and Zhou Yang, over thirty years later, appreciated the accuracy of Mao's observations (Zhou Yang, 1978:32; He Qifang, 1952:6); as we noted earlier, there had certainly been a conspicuous lack of concern in JFRB over the question of mass audience. It was other issues which Mao called "secondary"(MZDJ:124/SWMTT:78) that had been debated. Thus it can at least be concluded that being on the side of those who advocated praising the bright did not necessarily solve one's inability to write in a "mass style." It can be reasoned, then, that correct attitude (in CCP terms) towards the depiction of the bright and dark aspect of Yan'an could not necessarily solve stylistic problems, i.e., how to go about writing for a new audience with a lower cultural level and with different interests than the audience towards whom the writers had been gearing their works up to this time.

Mao's description of proper audience for revolutionary literature was interesting in that it allowed for two distinct levels of literature for two different levels of society. One type of literature was to be for the gongnongbing and allies among the "petty-bourgeoisie." It seems somewhat of a problem that he automatically classified the "petty-bourgeoisie" with the gongnongbing as if they shared the same artistic tastes, since on May 2, he had purposely pointed out the difference between the Shanghai petty-bourgeois audience for revolutionary literature and the audience of gongnongbing and cadres in the Border Areas. (MZDJ:114/SWMTT:71) Even if he was referring to a geographical rather than a class distinction, since the majority of writers in Yan'an
came from Shanghai, they could not help but share in at least some of the literary tastes native to that urban environment. Literature and art for the "allied petty-bourgeoisie" as a separate entity was never elaborated upon, presumably due to its secondary importance in the eyes of Communist leaders at this time. However, a higher level of literature, not for the petty-bourgeoisie, but for the cadres was mentioned.

When considering popularization and the raising of standards, although Mao firmly believed that the latter should be based on the existing cultural level of the general masses, he also indicated a raising of standards which should be based on the more advanced cultural level of the cadres. This is where a second level of literature emerged. It was called "advanced literature" (MZDJ:131/SWMTT:84) for the cadres, the "advanced elements of the masses" who were generally more educated and required a "literature and art of a higher level." (MZDJ:130/SWMTT:83) The original text contained a whole line deleted from later versions which read:

Their [the cadres'] ability to assimilate is higher than that of the masses, thus they cannot be satisfied with the same level of present popularization work as the masses, they can't be satisfied with 'the little cowherd', etc. (MZDJ:130)

Since the cadres direct the masses and have their best interests at heart, it was rationalized that creating a higher level art and literature for them would indirectly benefit the masses, whose literature and art was called "elementary." (SWMTT:84) The original text, in fact, had used "lower level" (低級 - MZDJ:
rather than "elementary" (初级).

This was an interesting point which Mao unfortunately did not elaborate upon in his speech. Thus although he acknowledged the significance of disparity in cultural levels (and tastes) between at least two different sectors of the "masses", he never specified where the line was to be drawn between literature for the gongnongbing and literature for the cadres, nor between literature for the first group and literature for the "allied petty-bourgeoisie."

The entire discussion of audience and "mass style" connected with popularization during the May conferences was very significant, if not because it was able to offer solutions to such problems, then certainly because it at least outlined a definitive and clear theoretical stance on the issue, and identified the topic as an immediate problem. It was obvious from the essays in "Wen Yi" that very few people had even bothered to give attention to the question of "for whom", as most were unconcerned with broadening the audience of their works.

National form, one of the means by which it was hoped that literary popularization could take effect, had also been neglected in JFRB prior to the "Talks", for after the 1939-40 debate, little more was added. Mao, however, hoping to remind people of the issue, gave some further observations on this subject. (His last remarks were made in 1938; see Chapter One). He said:

"We also do not reject the utilization of old forms of the feudal and capitalist classes, but once these old forms are in our hands, once they are reformed and infused with new content, they will become revolutionary things which serve the people." (MZDJ:121)
Here Mao in actuality presented nothing new on this matter. He did not give concrete examples of feudal or capitalist forms suitable for adoption to the revolutionary cause. As from his restatement of the need for adoption of national forms in his February 8 speech, we know here that national forms had not as yet found effective expression in creative works.

The last major topic which had come up in "Wen Yi" received only a brief but firm response in the "Talks". On the treatment of writers and their profession, Mao, as Xiao San (January 1, 1942) asked writers not to stop writing completely, but to first concentrate on participating in and contributing to popularization work. Their guidance, it was felt, would be greatly needed in such work, but they would only be worthy of respect (alluding to Ai Qing's plea in "Respect Writers, Understand Writers") if they loyally spoke for the masses and not for any special interest group.

If Mao's speech did not satisfactorily deal with all of the issues raised by writers in the pages of JFRB, it did define the rules for literary rectification in the following few years. Writers learned through the "Talks" the possible limitations of the purging to take place in literary and artistic circles. They learned that they had gone too far in their demands for reform, and literature would no longer be used as a medium through which discontents could be aired. Instead, they were asked to abandon their critical attitudes toward Yan'an life, and write about its more optimistic aspects in relation to the darkness outside the CCP camp. More specifically, the parts of the speech which contained obvious allusions to Wang Shiwei set the stage for the
systematic attack against him as a "Trotskyite", a symbol of all of the evil elements which it was hoped would be uprooted in the political and literary rectification campaign. As we will see in the Appendix, however, the case of Wang Shiwei, so often cited as the first case (and Wang Shiwei, the first victim) of literary rectification in CCP history, was in fact much more a political event focusing on political issues, as the Yan'an "Talks" were a politicization of literature.

E. Reaction to the May conferences in JFRB.

On the literature page of JFRB there was no news of the literature and art conferences which had begun on May 2 until May 14. On that day the editor(s) addressed the readers:

The recent 'forum on literature and art' preceded over by Comrades Mao Zedong and Kai Feng is an important event, especially to those readers concerned with the various problems in the present literary movement. The editor(s) of this page have decided to print here materials related to this conference as well as the opinions of individual writers for reference and discussion.

Appearing that day were two pieces related to the forum. One was a translation of Lenin's 1905 "Party Organization and Party Literature", and the other was Xiao Jun's written account of the opinions he had expressed at the forum on May 2. Lenin's speech was of course relevant to the literary discussions in that it served as inspiration for Mao's literary theories put forth at the conferences. Before looking at Xiao Jun's article, it is of interest to see what He Qifang wrote about the novelist in retro-
When He Qifang arrived in Yan'an in Summer of 1938, he heard that the Manchurian writer had once come to Yan'an and spoke at a meeting held in the latter's honor. In his talk he had quoted from Lu Xun's 1927 speech "The Divergence of Politics and Literature" (Lu Xun, 1927) in which Lu Xun had said, "Literature and politics are often in conflict because politics wants to maintain the status quo so is naturally headed in a different direction from literature and art which is not satisfied with the status quo." He Qifang maintained that Xiao Jun twisted Lu Xun's meaning here by using his words as evidence of the conflict between the writer and proletarian politics. According to the poet, Lu Xun had used politics in the sense of reactionary KMT politics, and literature and art in the sense of revolutionary literature and art. He wrote that Xiao Jun left a bad impression in Yan'an after his departure that time. (He Qifang, 1977:10)

In 1946, He Qifang recorded what he remembered from a speech given by Zhu De at the May conference. Why he waited four years to write this down he did not say. The speech by the Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army focused on Xiao Jun. Zhu said that on the first day of the conference, the writer had delivered a speech with a very haughty and overbearing attitude, mostly bragging about himself. He had said, "I could easily write one hundred thousand words about this meeting." He stated his belief in Romain Rolland's New Heroism and implied that he wanted to be China's and the world's number one writer. He also asserted, "I've never written essays which praise merit and virtue" (in defiance of Party pleas to "praise the bright"). Zhu De supposed-
ly refuted Xiao's ideas and asked "Why shouldn't he praise the merit and virtues of the Chinese Communist Party and the Eighth Route Army?" (He Qifang, 1977:15)

Xiao Jun's words and attitude as reported by He Qifang thirty-five years later are totally incongruous with the May 14 article which, according to the author himself, was based on the views he expressed on May 2. These opinions seem to have been fundamentally in accord with Mao's policies on literature, yet in retrospect the writer's disagreements with the Party are emphasized. This is surely due to his purge in 1948 and the recriticism of him ten years later. The case was the same for Ding Ling, Ai Qing, and Luo Feng, all of whose divergent ideas, unlike those of Wang Shiwei, were not stressed in public in 1942, but furiously denounced later retrospectively. 14

Xiao's May 14 essay "My Opinion on Various Present Literary and Artistic Problems" was divided into six parts: "standpoint", "attitude", "for whom!", "subject matter", "how to collect material", and "study". His only major point which may be interpreted as diverging from Mao's policy was under the heading "standpoint." He wrote here that all literature was written from the standpoint of a particular class but that the goal of all was to first "seek the liberation of the race", and second, to "seek the liberation of all humanity." No mention was made of class struggle within this framework. Merle Goldman wrote that Xiao's focus on the liberation of humanity was "to take precedence even over the class struggle" (Goldman, 1967:46), and used this as evidence that Xiao's views were not in accord with Mao's. Yet in light of the united front policy, even Mao himself had not emphasized the
point of class struggle as he would at other times.

Under "attitude", like Mao, the author saw a correct standpoint giving way to the creative method of realism, which according to Xiao had been the method used in all great works - old, new, foreign, or native. He differed from Mao, however, by making no mention of "proletariat realism". Xiao offered no definition of realism, yet his view of it may have encompassed more than a creative method applicable to literature, for he had once cited Lu Xun, Zhu De, and Mao Zedong as all "great realists." (Xiao Jun, JFRB, 1941 A, October 14)

Concerning "'for whom'", he echoed Mao's policy (and his terminology) by stating that a literary work must match the cultural level of its readers. The scope of readership was not determined by the subjective desires of the writer, but by the work itself - its social and artistic value. A work must maintain the readers' interest, make them move from emotion to thought, and from thought to action. He asked that writing take on a simpler form so as to be accessible to readers with a low cultural level.

As for subject matter, Xiao too advocated the depiction of the "typical", adding to this "the progressive, the inevitable, and the sharp side of things and people." He quoted (without reference), "'From the ugly extract the beautiful and develop it, from the beautiful extract the ugly and destroy it.'" This line, depending on the interpretation of the word "ugly", (ugliness of the enemy or in one's own camp) could have sounded like a rationalization given by the advocates of "exposing darkness" in the CCP base which reasoned that only by extracting ugliness can it be destroyed. As far as I know, no one took him up on this matter.
Under "how to collect material", Xiao essentially repeated the advice that Zhou Yang had given to writers in July, 1941. Xiao wrote that in order to understand man and express his life, one must not only penetrate into life, but must "blend with yet be independent from life." Like Zhou, he cautioned writers not to forget that although they may not be understood by others, they, however, were expected to understand other people. He warned that writers in the sea of life looking for pearls must not be drowned by life. This notion of approaching life from within while retaining an objective, ideological distance from it sounded as though lifted right out of Zhou Yang's essay.

To gather source material, Xiao allowed a broader scope than Mao. Material could be found in the villages, cities, and right before one's eyes, wherever complicated changes and sharpest struggles were taking place. He never specified gongnongbing as primary source material, and this was probably the most conspicuous difference between his outline and Mao's.

Last, Xiao reminded writers that they had to be "three steps ahead of others" in study in order to not disappoint their "'customers'".

In an appendix to his essay, Xiao included eight suggestions for improving the literary establishment. Though some were idealistic and vague, they are interesting to us in that they give us a good idea of the actual state of the Party literary apparatus in 1942 prior to Mao's "Talks", the needs of the writers, and the importance of creating a solid literature and art policy:

1) Establish an independent publishing house for literature and art, publish literary
works according to a plan, and sell general literary and artistic articles for use.  

2) Help new literary talent. 

3) Raise a good sum of money for a literary prize. 

4) Establish a bureau for the collection of literary data including revolutionary stories and folk tales. 

5) Establish a correct Marxist-Leninist style of literary criticism, print a critical journal supervised by fair and appropriate people. 

6) Have the Party or administration explain to everyone the task of writers, their use in the revolution, and their specialness. 

7) Take a firm but patient stand in persuading outside parties to go the revolutionary road; spend more time persuading and less time attacking. 

8) Create a 'literary policy', guide the present Chinese Communist Party literary direction and clarify our relations with writers from other parties. 

This last point seems odd since Xiao must have known by the time he wrote this article that a literary policy was in the making. Yet on May 19, a Yang Weizhe also wrote that an official CCP policy on literature and art did not yet exist. Apparently people were not aware of the extended significance of these May conference until the very end. 

If Xiao Jun's May 14 piece above seemed to go against all that he had expressed earlier in JFRB, in both tone and content, he did not abandon his old concerns for long. One month later, he made a plea to Party literary people to recognize the positive nature of a direct challenge of ideas from other comrades. 

On June 13, in "The 'Bulba' Spirit in Literary Circles", Xiao discussed Gogol's novel Tarus Bulba in which Bulba welcomes
home his two grown sons returned from the city by means of a sparring match. The father loses, but enjoys a good laugh on account of the progress of his sons. Thus, Xiao urged people in the literary world to emulate Bulba's spirit by encouraging their comrades and juniors to challenge them in a friendly manner, and to take pride in their students' victory. Xiao was careful to stress that this kind of fighting and attitude could only exist among allies, and that the real enemy could not be dealt with in the same friendly way. Yet there was something to be learned from the enemy as well, for, as in martial arts, one may learn more from unmerciful battle with the enemy than from the compassionate teaching of teachers and friends, because only the enemy knows one's weak points. But the competition in literary circles, said Xiao, was all in good spirit and based on "love" rather than hostile backbiting. Xiao was hoping, as earlier, that the Party would consider challenges from within its ranks as manifestations of affection and good will, not to be treated as one would treat enemy attacks.

It seems strange that such an apparently subversive article would appear in the press at such a late date - three weeks after the "Talks" and at the height of the rectification attacks launched against Wang Shiwei, whose "good intentions" had been labeled "counter-revolutionary". Assuming that the editor of page four was Ai Siqi, it would seem unusual that Xiao's defiant essay could have been printed, if not as a negative example. Ai Siqi, after all, had by this time been playing an important role in the rectification campaign, writing political pieces which analyzed Party policies, and speaking at the meetings against Wang. It would
appear unlikely that by June, Ding Ling still had any control over page four of JFRB, for on June 11 she delivered a self-criticism (in her speech denouncing Wang) for her actions as editor of "Wen Yi" in the spring. (See Chapter Three, note 28 and 37) Yet printing the piece as a negative example also seems unlikely, as I don't believe that this particular technique had been implemented in Yan'an at this time.

In any event, confusion as to the relationship between Xiao Jun and Party officials in 1942 will have to remain until further material is made available. Since he was denounced in 1948 for his policies as editor and contributor to Wenhua Bao (文化报) in Manchuria, it is doubtful that much objective commentary will be available until he is reinstated into the world of officially acceptable revolutionary writers.

The next major voice to come out on paper with personal literary views during the month of May was that of Ai Qing. On May 15, his "My Opinion on Several Present Literary Problems" appeared in JFRB. Because the poet did not directly recant many of his previous statements, his article could not be considered an actual self-criticism. His tone, however, had measurably altered from that of his February and March essays, and as in Xiao Jun's piece the day before, the influence of the literary conferences was obvious from the very terminology he employed.

Ai Qing's acknowledgement that literature and politics from different routes lead to the same goal of working for the benefit of people was not in contradiction to anything he had declared earlier. He reiterated his belief that literature was not merely a mouthpiece for politics, though this time he added that it must
at times be subservient to politics. He talked about "reality" in works of literature, and here went further than Xiao Jun in defining the term; he also went further in the mention of class struggle: "The higher the level of reality of a literary work, the more the work is in line with the progressive political direction of a particular period." This was because "the higher the level of reality in a literary work, the more it reflects a particular period, the contradictions between classes, the essence of each class, the opposition between the reasonable and the unreasonable, and the important need to change the system..." The notion of reality and contradictions between classes had not even been raised in his earlier essay. Yet here Ai Qing, as Xiao Jun, discussed "realism", but not Mao's "proletariat realism".

Concerning subject matter, the poet followed Mao's call to portray the hopes and ideals of the masses through the creation of new heroes. Like Xiao Jun, Ai Qing did not specify the gongnongbing, but emphasized the need to describe the changes taking place among all classes during the War of Resistance. He maintained that such changes were not only manifest in the habits of daily life, but at the same time in the psychological relationships between people.

Like Xiao and Mao, he urged writers to employ popular speech as a basis for language in literature so as to create a new language devoid of abstract, obscure terms. Back in February, in fact, he had already advocated simplicity in writing as opposed to "unsuitable clothing." Now, for the first time, he mentioned form, declaring that only new form could hold new content, but he did not elaborate further. It would seem that he disagreed
with Mao, Chen Boda and others that old forms were suitable for adoption into new literature if new content replaced the old.

As for theme, the poet affirmed that the purpose of describing people was to transcend the people themselves and write about their class. In February he had said basically the same thing, that the individual was part of a particular class and that a writer depicted characters in order to portray society as a whole. His later statement lent emphasis to the portrayal of class struggle, rather than just to the portrayal of society.

As in February, Ai Qing condemned the disunity in the literary world. This time he blamed the mutual praising and condemnation on "subjectivism" and "sectarianism", terms which by this time were used freely in connection with the rectification movement. Again he attacked plagiarism and the critics who blindly shouted down orders to writers, complaining, "Why aren't there any great works? Why are there no great writers?"

As earlier, literature was defined as a weapon to psychologically organize, strengthen, and unite a race or class. But writers were not mere news reporters or authors of propaganda pamphlets. Literature must have a deeper strength, and "the ability to change and influence others unobtrusively" (移风易化). Mao too, for that matter, objected to mere "poster and slogan style" (MZDJ:139/SWMTT:90) literature and art, so Ai Qing's concerns here were not unshared or unacknowledged.

Last, however, Ai Qing made a plea to those in power which definitely carried through from his earlier articles: "I hope that those who lead literary work understand the function of literature, understand writers, their thoughts, feelings, artis-
tic skill, language, structure, methods of expression, etc."

Ai Qing's essay, though not an all-out condemnation of his former views on literature, was nonetheless considerably altered in tone and emphasis. He had ended his previous emotional defense for the use of literature as an answer to man's existential questions. But not until the June 24 publication of his vehement attack against Wang Shiwei do we get the sense that he had conformed (in print, at least) to the demands of the rectification movement by dropping his rather self-righteous stance on the special value of literature and art.

Thus, directly after the "Talks" from both Xiao Jun and Ai Qing we sense that writers agreed with Mao for the most part but still managed to express opposition to some of the points in his directives, and felt that some previous values were still worth fighting for. Some of these values were apparently the adoption of a wider "realism" as opposed to "proletariat realism", a broad scope of writing material as opposed to only the gongnongbing, and a recognition of the "special" qualities of literature as opposed to only its mechanical function. So although by June, most writers abandoned Wang Shiwei, there was a hint of solidarity as far as literary issues were concerned.

F. Literary Criticism Immediately Following the "Talks"

Above we have indicated the changing literary views of two prominent writers in Yan'an following the May conferences. In the Appendix we will observe Ding Ling's shifted stance vis-à-vis Wang Shiwei. Now it will be of interest to examine the
effect of the "Talks" on literary criticism.

As we saw earlier, there were great deficiencies in literary criticism of creative works. First, there was too little of it. Very little time was devoted to critiques of new works coming out. Second, criticism which did emerge was blamed for being biased, unscholarly, sloppy, and generally unprofessional. An over-emphasis on political criteria due to a narrow interpretation of Marxism-Leninism was identified as the major problem.

Critics were searching as much as were writers for set standards: Mao offered this instruction in his "Talks":

We want no sectarianism in our literary and art criticism and, subject to the general principle of unity for resistance to Japan, we should tolerate literary and art works with a variety of political attitudes. But at the same time, in our criticism we must adhere firmly to principle and severely criticize and repudiate all works of literature and art expressing views in opposition to the nation, to science, to the masses and to the Communist Party... There is hardly a writer or artist who does not consider his own work beautiful, and our criticism ought to permit the free competition of all varieties of works of art; but it is also entirely necessary to subject these works to correct criticism according to the criteria of the science of aesthetics, so that art of a lower level can be gradually raised to a higher and art which does not meet the demands of the struggle of the broad masses can be transformed into art that does.

(MZDJ:138/SWMTT:88-89)

Through the following two examples of literary criticism I will attempt to show how after the "Talks" critics were still suspect and how there continued to be a lack of confidence and of accepted standards on the part of critics themselves. The first case will indicate an inability of critics to uniformly
follow Mao's directives, while the second case will show an inability of critics to agree even among themselves on a correct standard.

The first example will cite Yan Wenjing's short story "Comrade Luoyu Takes a Walk" (October 17, 1941), and Yang Sizhong's criticism of it, July 27, 1942. The second example will refer to He Qifang's "Sighing, Three Sections" (February 17), and "Three Poems" (April 3) together with three different criticisms of the poetry by Wu Shiyun (June 19), Jin Canran (July 2), and Jia Zhi (July 18).

Writer Yan Wenjing defined "a good work of literature" on May 15 by declaring that the novelist writes "to serve truth" and a piece of fiction can not be considered good if it lacks a good ideology or "principle" (道理), even if the story is interesting and the characters are depicted true-to-life. In theory he agreed with Mao and all those who had been saying in the past few years that no more abstractions and lifeless characters unbased on reality should exist.

On July 27 a Yang Sizhong was to criticize Yan Wenjing for the very offense Yan himself had condemned - lack of realness in character and dialogue. One of the short stories singled out by the critic was "Comrade Luoyu Takes a Walk". The story is worth examining due to the type of writing it represented as well as Yang Sizhong's criticism of it. I believe that Mao could have had it in mind when describing a type of literature made about and for the petty-bourgeois intellectuals. I would conclude, too, that Yang Sizhong's critique of it would have been deemed at the time unsatisfactory, or at least misdirected, though no
one took him up on it in the press.

The story is written from the very standpoint which the CCP was so vehemently attacking during the rectification movement. The author depicts a wearied, dispirited young comrade, obviously an intellectual, exhausted from overwork and a cold, who decides to take a Sunday stroll in the hills outside Yan'an. He purposefully wants to avoid the crowds in town and hopes that the fresh air will cure his fatigue. Common ways of remedying his mood such as humming a tune or playing poker do not suit him, so he resorts to his ten-year old habit of wandering about alone.

But today the rocks, the wild grass, and the mud on his shoes all seem to be plotting against him and he cannot find solace anywhere. As he lets his mind drift aimlessly, a younger friend happens to come along. But this fellow looks worse off than Luoyu. The latter quickly discovers that the source of his friend's distress is a fight he's just had with his girl-friend, Xiao Li ( 小李 ). The writer takes time to delve into the silly psychological games played between the two sweethearts, and Luoyu gains comfort in the end by convincing his friend to go back to Xiao Li, and by exchanging his own new shoes with his friend's old battered pair.

Yang Sizhong picked on the unrealness of Luoyu's spirits changing so suddenly by merely exchanging a pair of shoes. What is interesting to us is that the critic offered no critical response whatsoever to the author's depiction of the inner thoughts of Comrade Luoyu and his friend. The younger fellow opened his heart to Luoyu in this way: Being a bit lazy at times and not wishing to speak invites criticism by others who would say that
one is not close enough to the masses. But there are reasons for being lazy - too many meetings to attend, over ten a week, day and night. Little things too were unnerving, like not being able to find a carpenter when your table leg breaks, or losing your only bar of soap while washing your clothes in the river. The material discomforts could be forgiven, since everyone is in the same boat, but it is the lack of friends that is really hard to take.

It is odd that even as late as two full months after the "Talks", Yang Sizhong did not criticize the "petty-bourgeois" orientation of the story, nor its obvious portrayal of less than bright aspects of Yan'an life. He merely felt that the character Luoyu was not true-to-life, and that the dialogue, too, lacked naturalness. Thus even after the Party had set out a standard of literary criticism (clear at least in the political sense), this critic did not heed it. Why he did not opt for a seemingly safe angle of criticism, i.e., by denouncing the petty-bourgeois subject matter and treatment, but rather choose to find (what this reader feels to be) forced shortpoints in the reality of personality and dialogue, is somewhat of a mystery. If, in speculation we can conclude anything, it is that either critics such as Yang did not agree with the political standards established by Mao in May, or that they were still unsure of what boundaries such criticism should abide by.

One would imagine that the problem with "Comrade Luoyu Takes a Walk" in the eyes of Mao, would lie in the attitude of the writer to his subject matter, that is, his class standpoint. The story is surely a sympathetic portrayal of intellectuals shown not in the process of reform, but while indulging in "bourgeois",...
personal concerns, far removed from present day revolutionary struggle. The two men are shown totally wrapped up in their own miseries and we get no clear sense of historical time period, broader political struggle, nor of these characters' dedication or sincerity towards their work.

Yang Sizhong's reaction, or non-reaction to what would have been considered offensive elements by Mao may prove, as the following example, that critics were still faced with difficulties in making decisive judgements on literary works, that Mao's "Talks" had left them somewhat confused, or that they were determined to maintain some of their own standards of criticism in opposition to the new directives.

On June 19, a Wu Shiyun wrote a relentlessly harsh criticism of He Qifang's poetry of February 17 and April 3. Shortly after this, two different critics in turn castigated Wu for being unjust and biased in his critique of the poems. The approach of Wu in judging the work of the poet, and the subsequent severe reproach he received from other critics would indicate a battle taking place in the world of literary criticism over the interpretation of critical standards prescribed by Mao on May 23.

Wu Shiyun, writing that he had "no personal grievances against He Qifang", nonetheless went about disparaging the poet's work. Referring to He's "Sighing, Three Sections" (see Chapter Three), Wu condemned the poet's quasi-sarcastic tone (when mentioning people who make love their "occupation") as being sentimental, and not ironic at all. He labeled the poet's lines about revolution and sacrifices being minor as incongruous with lines coming before them. After lamenting upon how he has suf-
fered for love, how people in love suffer, and how people with no love too suffer, he tacked on an optimistic comment on the ability of revolution to improve human life. Wu wrote that if the poet really believed this, there would be no need for him to mourn so. Wu observed, "Because the writer himself is very lonely, he naturally makes everything lonely..."

Wu advised He Qifang that one shouldn't write poetry for mere consolation or diversion. Doing so would only make one more miserable and would not serve to fill any vacuum. The poet should instead spend time working and studying "enthusiastically", and love "bravely".

Wu was much more harsh with the poet's "Three Poems". He felt that here he was too loose with his feelings and desires: "He doesn't consider the effect his feelings and thoughts will have on people. I feel this is harmful to himself and to his readers, and is even very dangerous." By portraying the world as "hell" and people as "captive", he was exerting a bad influence over young people. He Qifang should stop creating such "unbeneficial" poetry, for our countrymen do not need poets with whom to "sigh together." Referring to the sympathy offered by the poet to soldiers at war, Wu defiantly stated that "our soldiers are not fighting in battle to die, but to defeat the enemy!" He then stressed that the poet's "inability to harmonize with reality" was due to the high position from which he choose to look down upon it (居高临下), and likened He to a king who feels badly because he is powerless to help his dirty, coarse, and ignorant servants become cleaner, more refined, and more knowledgable.
Yet Wu was only "a reader and a student" of poetry, and lastly felt that one could not overlook the success of He Qifang's artistic skill in the use of form.

On July 2, Jin Canran discussed the same group of poems, and although agreeing with Wu Shiyun's assessment of He Qifang's attitude towards life, he was willing to forgive the poet and, what's more important, take Wu to task for sloppy criticism. Through Jin, we see more evidence of a determination on the part of writers and critics to salvage pre-'Talks' standards, in this case, standards of literary criticism.

Jin agreed that there was a great distance between He Qifang and the masses with whom he aspired to mix. (In fact the title of Jin's essay was "Distance", "_EXPRESSION""). He defined the problem more clearly. There was a powerful contradiction underlying the poet's emotions which came through in his poetry. He would like to praise the new life, but remnants of past suffering and sadness still haunt him. He loves the reality of his daily life, but also hates its narrowness; he loves the workers and peasants, but maintains a distance from them. He envies comrades in the villages, but at the same time advises them to fill their dull lives with "reading, playing Chinese chess, and going for walks". His strong desire for progress is at battle with memories of the old within his consciousness, and when the latter control the former, he speaks of transcending reality and of leaving this life. This "adds a layer of darkness to his poems".

Jin went one step further than Wu by cautioning He Qifang that the latter's (narrow) life and knowledge limited his poetic themes as well as the class bounds of his readers. Some "pure"
things were actually "polluted" under his pen; perhaps what concerned the poet suited the tastes of a portion of young people, but writing about such things was not "praising the birth of the new world". Lastly, the most severe criticism of He by Jin Canran was on the former's portrayal of the masses as "innocent prisoners" (Jin) in hell, passive animals who sit under low roofs and sigh, in a word, who have no ideals. Jin asserted that the masses who were ready to conquer the old for the new revolution and "the liberation of all humanity" were distorted under He's pen. Here, Jin quoted Marx's criticism of urban writers for inaccurately portraying workers as passive and ignorant. Since the Chinese masses had passed through the 1911 Revolution, the Great Revolution (of 1927), and five years of war, they had a right to demand realist writers to portray their positive side, and in fact only works which did so could be considered "realistic".

However, Jin at last ended his discussion of He's poetry with a rather unexpected and sharp criticism of Wu Shiyun's methods and critical capabilities in assessing the poet's creative motivations and efforts. Jin wrote that although the poet should consider Wu's criticism, Wu tended to misinterpret some things and often quote out of context. At times he was reckless in establishing his point of view and attacking the poet. Most important, Wu ignored He Qifang's desire to reach the bright side of things. This, then was the fundamental difference between how Wu Shiyun and Jin Canran viewed the poet's attitude and ultimate motivation. Where Wu was ungenerous towards He's contradictory emotions, Jin was willing to give him the benefit of the doubt and assume that he was searching his best to find happiness
in the revolutionary struggle. Jin blamed Wu for attacking He Qifang in an arbitrary, unobjective manner, declaring that this approach did not "help others to practice virtue" (與人為善, an official CCP attitude towards those who have made mistakes). Moreover, Jin felt that Wu was very wrong in concluding that He Qifang's real pain was insincere and hypocritical. Perhaps the deepest blow delivered to Wu by Jin was that there was a distance between Wu Shiyun and the poet, that of "literary accomplishment" (文学的修养).

On July 18, a writer, Jia Zhi basically agreed with Jin Canran's criticism of Wu Shiyun. He also made some general remarks about the state of literary criticism and offered his own solution to the problems posed by He Qifang's poetry.

He started out by remarking on the positive trends in literature due to the influence of the rectification movement. There was generally more activity in literary criticism, and writers' partiality towards foreign literature was being corrected. Yet, he admitted, in relation to foreign classical works, our Chinese literature is still at a youthful stage of development. It is our responsibility to nurture it and not allow it to extinguish itself. If literary works were in a childhood stage, he wrote, all the more so for literary criticism. The latter was just beginning. We need more of it and more criticism of the literary criticism. Thus leading into a major point of his discussion, he turned to criticizing Wu Shiyun's appraisal of He Qifang's poetry.

Like Jin, Jia Zhi lashed out against Wu for quoting the poet out of context, thereby doing violence to the poet's intentions as well as the readers' understanding. He Qifang did have the
spirit of progress and did hope to go among the masses, yet Wu purposely only quoted the more negative, depressing lines of the poetry. Jia Zhi maintained that Wu in fact did not like the poetry and was therefore too picky. Jia agreed with Jin Canran that He did not depict the stronger, more active side of the masses. But he went further than either Wu or Jin by calling the poet's concerns "petty-bourgeois illusions" and too "individualistic". The masses could not appreciate his work because his poetry revealed more about himself than about their lives and cares.

Jia Zhi's solution to He's inability to interest the masses in his poetry was first not to dwell on how to withstand the hardships of life (as He saw them), but rather to concentrate on how to eliminate petty-bourgeois demands and expectations of the revolution. Second, the poet should fulfill the needs of the masses by writing about them and their interests. True, his poetry was meaningful for the "unawakened petty-bourgeois intellectuals", but his choice of material was inappropriate for a mass audience. They found petty-bourgeois attitudes ludicrous. It was not a matter of whether or not the poet was capable of criticizing petty-bourgeois intellectuals, a "problem of standpoint", but a problem of the selection of material. This point presents a contradiction in Jia Zhi's argument, since even when He did depict the masses, as stated above, he did so incorrectly by Jia's standards. It could not have possibly been only a question of source material.

Perhaps the most interesting point made by Jia Zhi was this: It is fine if one can portray himself well in order to see the "general" class as a whole, but if a petty-bourgeois writer
spends time trying to "make himself into a worker or peasant" (工农化 ) and ends up only talking about himself, it is certain that this depiction will have limitations. Since the voices of the masses were the "sounds of the times", the masses had the right to ask He Qifang to portray things with which they and not he, were familiar. Only by doing this would he grow familiar with such things. It was more important to demand the poet to write about mass concerns outside his own personal scope of memory and knowledge, than to ask him to be more critical of petty-bourgeois intellectuals. It was not a problem of how to write, but of what to write. He Qifang, said Jia Zhi, was only one of many writers to share this problem.21

Jia Zhi's criticism of Wu Shiyun taken together with Jin Canran's shows us the variance in standards of political literary criticism evident immediately after the "Talks". The approach of Yang Sizhong to a "petty-bourgeois" short story discussed above, would also lend credence to our conclusion that literary criticism after May 1942 (at least in the immediate months following) did not measurably differ from that before the "Talks" in that it was still rather erratic and inconsistent. Moreover, the literary critics who did venture to offer their analyses of creative works after the "Talks" were not in agreement among themselves about Mao's criteria for judging literary works, and in fact, even appear to disagree with him on certain points.

We are tempted to agree with both Jin Canran and Jia Zhi on the narrow and dogmatic nature of Wu Shiyun's analysis of He Qifang's poetry, and may look at both Jin's and Jia's essays as a defense of the poet and a reaction to overrash criticism by a
young aspiring critic attempting too quickly to implement Mao's policy, thereby showing his loyalty to the Party. If this was the case, if then Jin Canran and Jia Zhi were speaking with the blessing of the Party, then perhaps literary criticism was not as chaotic as we had imagined. It is not hard to imagine that two main lines had possibly emerged after the "Talks". One, represented by Wu Shiyun, was a tendency to implement Mao's criteria for literary criticism in a rash manner. It was probably fostered by young aspiring critics with little experience in the art of aesthetics, literary creation, or literary criticism. The other line, represented by people such as Jin Canran and Jia Zhi, tended to interpret Mao's ideas here in a less heedless fashion, taking into account the difficulties undergone by the writer. This second group was likely to offer more measured and better thought out advice to the writer. Even if those adopting this second tendency in literary criticism were in some places guilty of opting for oversimplistic solutions to literary problems (as in the case of Jia Zhi), still they seemed generally better-versed and capable of more profound observation than those in the first group, at least as represented by Wu Shiyun.

G. A Comparison of Issues Raised Before and After the "Talks"

Here it is appropriate that we briefly sum up a comparison of issues brought up for debate before and after the May forum on literature and art. It will be useful to retrace the issues (examined in Chapter Two) which had been brought forward by writers in JFRB before May, and see how they were or were not dealt
with after that important month.

Source material had of course occupied a position of high priority with Mao who specified that writers put their efforts into the depiction of gongnongbing. Writers before the forum were naturally concerned with subject matter, but very few (Zhou Yang as a theorist, not a writer himself, and Mao Dun) had explicitly expressed the need for urban writers to break through the class boundaries of their thematic material. In fact, it was not until after the end of May, i.e., after Mao's "Conclusion" that every writer appearing on page four of JFRB addressed the representation of gongnongbing as a major problem. As seen above, even Xiao Jun and Ai Qing in mid-May, one week before the "Conclusion" did not specify the gongnongbing as subject matter. This would attest to the watershed created by Mao's "Talks" on this point.

Creative method and approach to subject matter had not been given much attention (exception again - Zhou Yang and Mao Dun), save for the burning issue of whether to expose the dark side or extol the bright side of life in the revolutionary base. The answer given by Mao and many others after May was to adopt the creative method of realism which was defined by Jin Canran on July 2 as portraying the positive side of the masses. The issue over exposing the dark, then, was silenced, at least in the press, and the best approach for writers to take was to interact with the masses, their new principal source material.

The question of formulism resulting from an incorrect application of Marxism-Leninism to literature and art was not given space as an issue after May. It was presumably to be solved by
writers gaining a better understanding of themselves, of Marxism, and of artistic problems through going out to live among the masses.

Popularization and the raising of standards had not been noted often as a problem among writers before May. Afterwards, however, there was more discussion of the need to simplify language and adopt national forms. Both Jia Zhi (July 18) and Zhou Libo (June 12) declared the need to stop worshipping foreign literature and begin valuing native Chinese works, Jia writing that the rectification movement had corrected writers' old attitudes on this.

As for treatment of and attitudes towards writers, there was no more talk among writers in the press after May of their special role in society and the only opinion on this question at all was uniform and consistent - writers were cultural workers, part of the whole revolutionary machine. Their primary task was to go down to the masses and become one with them so as to be better able to write about their lives and concerns. Xiao San's advice (January, 1942) was taken as the major line on this issue.

H. Optimism versus Reality: the Contradictions

From mid-May until the end of the summer, excluding the many articles denouncing the "counter-revolutionary" Wang Shiwei, one basic concern ran throughout all other literary-related comments and observations: Present writers, nearly all "petty-bourgeois intellectuals" were simply incapable at that point of successfully depicting gongnongbing, as Mao had requested, nor any
class other than that to which they belonged or had experienced first-hand. Since there were as yet no writers of *gongnongbing* origin, there was no choice but to force urban writers to mix with the masses in hopes that this would have a positive effect on their writing. Thus there would be a waiting period until the potential talent among the *gongnongbing* themselves could be nurtured and developed so as to supplant the elitist writers.

But there was a significant contradiction at play underlying this reality. Writers themselves admitted that they were a hopeless case as far as writing for the masses was concerned, and they could only do their best under the restraints of their own handicaps (such as elitist education). Yet this semi-optimism was not compatible with the Party's hope that once the intellectual writers reformed their mistaken ideology, literary problems would fundamentally be solved as well. Even writers who supported the concept of "going down to the masses" openly admitted that such a move could not necessarily solve ideological problems, let alone artistic ones.

The problem arising from the impasse is well exemplified by an essay written by He Qifang, printed on May 19, entitled "The Paths to Literature", and the criticism of it by a Qiu Chi on June 12.

He Qifang began with a sincere explanation of the standpoint of the petty-bourgeois intellectuals vis-à-vis the revolution. He wrote,

> We intellectuals with a petty-bourgeois background are lacking something which real people should possess, many things which people in a future, reasonable society will possibly
have. Naturally, we don't intend to stress this point. Compared to lacking food, clothing and shelter, all of those so-called spiritual hardships and mental privations really don't amount to much. But this too is a fact: It is because of the spiritual hardships and mental privations that we intellectuals are moving towards revolution and that we love literature. In the past, through literature we have reached a different world, one much vaster and finer than our real world. The revolutionary theory which we study allows us to see this vague, dreamlike world in a clearer light. At present we are carrying out practical work precisely to strive for this world.

Therefore he urged comrades who wrote letters to him expressing the desire to leave their practical work and go study literature, to stay at their jobs. He maintained the view (once shared by Lu Xun, see 1928) that "At a time when the revolution is urgently moving forward, literature always manifests the small measure of its strength". And so he advised these young people "from a revolutionary as well as literary point of view" not to hasten to make a special study of literature. 23

He Qifang divided the "paths to literature" into two. One path led from literature to literature, that is, from reading literature to creating it in response to life's inadequacies. This, presumably, was the path he and others like him had taken, according to his statement above that the reason intellectuals love literature is that through it they can escape spiritual hardships. It is not difficult to see from reading his poetry that he had taken this path, although from the description of the second path it is likely that he had taken it, too. We should keep in mind that he himself declared that he had only divided the paths thus "for the sake of convenience". It would
seem to us that the two paths were not mutually exclusive.

The other path led from life to life. It meant that one would only write after having gained some degree of experience from the richness of life itself. Those taking the first path, he attested, would end up in a world of illusion because their knowledge was only based on the judgement of past writers whose works they had read, but not on their own lives. The poet felt that this was the danger in making a special study of literature. He somewhat dogmatically added that only the person who took the second path could discover the "truth of life" never to be discovered by past writers. This latter kind of writer would emerge from the "fertile lower layers" of China, from the group of people now in the process of being "tempered" by life, who were as of yet "unconscious of what they would write about in the future".

He Qifang believed that people like himself who had received specialized training in literature were hopelessly corrupted by their pampered education and thus plagued by their subjective judgements. Although literature had opened their eyes to another world, it had also hindered them from seeing the real world. Thus even a rather long period of time spent among the masses did not enable writers to create works truly representative of their subjects. He found it impossible for intellectuals to blend in with real life (with the "fertile lower layers") after having studied literature in a specialized manner, since that real life would probably seem restricting to the writer after his studies. The only way for people like himself to contribute to the cause through literature was to help nurture the future writers by "planting flowers along their path, cutting out the
This seems contradictory to his last call for potential writers to live out a long and full life, and participate in their own struggles, rather than having the way paved for them.

He Qifang's rather nihilistic analysis of the role of literature and writers (such as himself) in revolution was surely the product of an over reaction to the policies being formulated at the May conferences. Other writers such as Zhou Libo would also offer self-criticisms but He Qifang's was in comparison excessively critical of May Fourth writers and all they had accomplished since 1919.

On June 12, a Qiu Chi took to task the dogmatism and pessimism of He's claim that studying literature was unbeneficial to the revolutionary cause at present, and criticized the poet's less than sanguine attitude towards the problem.

First, Qiu Chi pointed out that studying literature in itself was not bad, but it was the method employed which determined such study's worthiness to the cause. He maintained that someone who hadn't studied literature could be faced with the same limitations of vision, knowledge, and experience. True, a specialist in literature was not representative of the majority, but neither was someone who had not studied literature, or someone from peasant or "hoodlum" (流氓) background.

Second, Qiu Chi objected to the fact that He had not pointed a clear way out for those who had written to him wanting to leave their practical work, nor had he expressed any hope for those like himself who had already taken the incorrect path to literature. To this critic, keeping away from literature was not the
solution. He insisted that people who studied literature could get closer to reality if they increased their knowledge and experience. He took exception to He's pessimistic view that literature is ineffectual during revolution. He corrected the poet by declaring that literature could not only lead to a dreamland, but could also point out the way for human life.

It seemed that here He Qifang had overstepped himself in an attempt at self-criticism. He was, though, confessing to a problem which even Qiu Chi could not deny. The critic admitted that a true proletarian standpoint in literature was only a future possibility:

But can someone from the masses who hasn't studied literature write a representative work? No. This is a semi-colonial, semi-feudal society. The workers and peasants can't write, and the people who have studied literature can't write.

To end on an optimistic note, he added, "Undoubtedly, some will be able to write in the future. The key link is to use a realistic creative method."

On June 12 the writer Zhou Libo reiterated the same problem. His "Ideology, Life, and Form" seems to be a self-criticism, though we have none of his previous theoretical views in print in JFRB with which to compare it. Although Zhou felt that writers could still tell a good story and express their own thoughts and feelings, he admitted that they were unable to create works which interested the masses. He disagreed with the saying "Going into life solves not only artistic problems, but ideological problems as well", because going into life did not solve
ideological difficulties for writers. (He ignored the issue of whether or not it solved artistic problems). Ideology was hard to reform: "An electrical wire even when plugged into life is still just an electrical wire". He refuted the opinion that ideology limits one's view of reality and for this reason many formulistic works were produced by people in the League of Left-wing Writers. Agreeing with Mao, Zhou wrote that it was "subjectivism, manifest in writing as formulism" and an incorrect standpoint that was responsible for formulistic works.

Like He Qifang, Zhou attacked the training and influences to which intellectuals like himself had been exposed. They had received the artistic influence of the period when literature sang for individual freedom (referring to the May Fourth period). That was useful then, but now, he wrote, we are in a period of proletarian revolution and new concepts must supplant old ones. He never went as far as He Qifang to declare that May Fourth writers were too hampered by their "bourgeois" upbringing to be useful to the present day cause. Here Zhou also raised the issue of form, which we discussed in Chapter One.

As for subject matter, like Mao, Zhou allowed the depiction of landlords and capitalists, if such groups were most familiar to writers, but only if they were represented from the masses' point of view. He did not deny that "writing a pretty love-letter", an expression of one's small joys and sorrows, was also a part of life, and would be perfect "stream-of-consciousness" material. But in this chaotic era, such writing was divorced from the more general joys and sorrows of the masses.24

Yet writers sent to the Front, the factories and villages,
were producing nothing able to move people, and "there is still not one writer of real worker-peasant origin among us". Zhou Libo was able, however, to conjure more optimism than He Qifang by insuring writers that they could produce better works if they put their hearts into it and blended with the masses. He Qifang stated more firmly that the writers' background prevented them from fitting in comfortably with the masses.

Zhou's conclusion on national forms, like that of another writer, Sha Kefu, was that next to nothing that could be considered national in form had yet been created. Sha Kefu's comments, printed on July 24 but dated "New Year's, 1942", were that the yangge (秧 歌) movement had stirred up much talk, but little production of national forms. Zhou was disappointed that so many imitations of foreign forms had been substituted for real creation. Many people, including himself, were still imitating writers such as Chekhov and not yet going their own path. He criticized himself for a course he had taught at the Lu Xun Academy of Arts called "Selected Readings of Famous Works". In it, he had ignored native Chinese works for foreign literature, when in fact the "power of imagination and realistic style" of such books as Hong Lou Meng and Xi You Ji were not below the rank of early Western works. The character Monkey was much better known to people than Ah Q, and the dialogue in Xi You Ji reflected the speech of Ming (明) people. Therefore such traditional novels were definitely worthy of selective use as models, as were good foreign works. No Chinese or anyone could compare to a Tolstoy, but he could be used as a model for the Chinese.

The concern over literature written for and about a gong-
nongbing audience continued. On July 4, Yang Sizhong repeated the dominant complaint. In "One Understanding of the Problem of Thematic Material", Yang lamented that writers could not create works capable of pleasing the masses. They could only portray intellectuals, and even when they did that they were guilty of incorrect standpoint. It is strange that he did not criticize "Comrade Luoyu Takes a Walk" for this three weeks later on July 27.

Yang felt that the two slogans "write themes with which you are familiar" and "don't write merely for the sake of responsibility" had been simplified by writers. It was true that one needed to have experienced drunkenness in order to accurately describe a drunk man, but one shouldn't write about the five fingers on one's hand just because they were what he was most familiar with. Hence the first slogan had been too narrowly and empirically interpreted. Since we can't expect our writers to be able to produce good works about the workers and peasants right away, our model should be Soviet literature, until we ultimately find our own way. He then concluded with a lengthy passage praising the success of socialist literature in the Soviet Union.

This article, yet another pessimistic assessment of the potential for urban writers to answer the call for gongnongbing literature, nonetheless ended on the optimistic hope that for the time being, relying on a foreign Soviet model was the best solution. National forms, interestingly enough, were not mentioned.

The last three articles included in my survey of JFRB
treated the same dilemma, indicating the tremendous amount of attention given to the issue, and thus to its extreme importance in the eyes of the literary world in Yan'an after the "Talks".

On August 7, Lin Mohan alluded to Lenin's separation of two types of literature: the "black-bread" type and the "sweet molasses" type. The masses demanded nourishing black bread as opposed to externally pretty sweets. Yet writers still insisted on feeding them literary works full of the "sighing" and "miseries" of intellectuals, dressing up cry-baby intellectuals as workers and peasants, without fooling the masses in the least. Writers, said Lin, still felt that they were the center of the universe. There was hope for them to reform, but only if they had the determination to do so. Thus, Lin Mohan was not as pessimistic as others before him. He may in fact have been attempting to enforce the new CCP directives among others writers. In "On the Depiction of Workers and Peasants", Lin confirmed that intellectuals were not only the group most portrayed, but, he allowed, the group most successfully portrayed. He had not yet seen an accurate depiction of one worker. When workers did appear, they were totally unreal. Either they were made to look so bright that their real identities were blurred, or they looked like intellectuals, or very bizarre as if they'd come from another planet. Often they were made to look like gangsters and swindlers with hats worn crookedly, eyes furtively glancing sideways, and "saying 'to hell with it' (他媽 的 ) every other line". This, he wrote, was because writers came from the cities and were familiar with these ganster-type characters, so confused them with workers.

It is of interest to note that ten years before, Lu Xun
had made exactly the same observation. He wrote:

Some writers nowadays interlard their dialogue quite unnecessarily with swearwords, as if this makes it proletarian - the more swear words, the more proletarian. As a matter of fact, very few decent workers and peasants swear each time they open their mouths and writers should not saddle them with the ways of Shanghai hooligans. (Lu Xun, 1932:46 /English:170)

According to Lin Mohan, Lenin had complained of the same problem of distorted images in Soviet painting. Paintings of workers revealed great thick necks and tiny heads, a ridiculous image. Chinese painters, said Lin, were doing the same thing. Workers were given fiery, frightening eyes (to express their spirit of resistance), red mouths, and fists larger than heads. This was not artistic exaggeration, he felt, but merely bad distortion.

Lin wrote that depicting the progressive reform of intellectuals was just as revolutionary as writing about workers and peasants, but that more effort should be given to the accurate representation of workers and peasants (he did not mention soldiers), since they were the mainstay of the revolution.

Thus after the "Talks", writers' reactions appeared to have been to agree, at least theoretically with the new line on literature. There was a sincere recognition of the need to expand subject matter to include the gongnongbing, but only in some cases (Lin Mohan, for instance), were writers unequivocally willing to make the latter group their primary source of writing material. Writers were actually making excuses and allowances for one another for their inability to heed the new guidelines,
i.e., to portray subject matter with which they were unfamiliar. However, an opposite trend, exemplified by He Qifang, was also apparent. This was the overly self-conscious attempt on the part of writers to become very "left" through an excessive denunciation of their previous values. As one would expect, in the case of He Qifang, such a reaction provided no cure for his inability to come to grips with the new reality. The problem would not be solved overnight.

Therefore we can see that after May of 1942, Chinese writers were faced with further difficulties in literary creativity, which, when added to the problems already existing for them since May Fourth, resulted in a lack of significant literary production. Yet all of China, not only the Liberated Areas, experienced problems with literature at this time, and so the restrictive nature of the guidelines for literature set forth in the "Talks" should not be viewed as the sole source of literary inactivity in CCP areas. As we observed above, long before the "Talks", literary creation had already encountered numerous obstacles. Some of these problems had been created by the dynamism of modern China's politics, society and economic relations, and some of them stemmed from the particular demands on literature created by the War of Resistance against Japan. It is therefore important to differentiate between the problems for literature created by the "Talks" in 1942 and the difficulties for modern Chinese writers which had already existed for over twenty years. The "Talks" can, in fact, be seen as one response to general literary dilemmas for all twentieth century Chinese writers, even though many of Mao's points addressed specific issues directed only to CCP
writers. The larger concerns of the May forum, however, were equally applicable to non-Communist regions. During the war, writers in the "White" Areas were searching just as hard for some solution to the questions of how and where writers could go to collect first-hand source material, how they should process this material, how they could popularize the war message without boring the readership, and what roles they should play in society under contemporary conditions. In this sense, Mao's attempts to solve dilemmas encountered by writers in the CCP base were at the same time attempts at finding solutions to problems raised by all Chinese writers everywhere in 1942.
NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1 Back in the very first issue of the paper (May 16, 1941) on page one, editors had welcomed simply "all manuscripts of political articles, translations, literary works, poems and songs, and short stories." On September 16 of that year, with the introduction of the section "Wen Yi" the request had more specifically stated that works should be short, while "strong and unyielding". The limit in length in all cases remained at 3000 characters.

2 Ding Youguang, 1966, Part One: 91 also lists the following leaders as attending the first meeting which took place in the auditorium of the CCP Central Headquarters: Ren Bishi (任弼时), Chen Yun (陈雲), Kang Sheng (康生), Hu Qiaomu (胡橋木), and He Kaifeng (何凱豐).

3 The book, "Mao Zedong Sixiang de Yangguang Zhaoyaozhe Women: Jinian 'Zai Yan'an Wenyi Zuotan Hui Shang de Jianghua' Fabiao Sanshiwu Zhounian" (毛泽东思想的阳光照耀着我们：纪念'在延安文艺座谈会上的讲话'发表三十五周年) is mentioned by He Qifang (1977:30) in the appendix to his article. I have been unable to locate this booklet. According to the poet the small book contains twelve parts, eight of which deal directly with the "Talks". Parts Seven and Eight are reproduced in Wenyi Luncong, vol. 1, (location of this 1977 article by He Qifang).

4 See JFRB, April 16, 1942, "Weiwu zhuyi de Meixue: Jieshao Cheernishefusiji de 'Meixue,'" (唯物主义的美学：介绍卓尔尼舍夫斯基的'美学'). A note to the piece informs us that Zhou Yang's translations of Chernyshevsky's "Life and Aesthetics" and "The Aesthetic Relationship of Art to Reality" have been published by Huabei Shudian (华北書店).

5 For a discussion in English of the "Talks" which covers different aspects than below, see Fokkema: 3-11 and D. Holm,
1978:6-12. The original Chinese text can be found in Mao Zedong Ji, vol. 8:111-148. There are alterations and omissions in later official versions, for which I will use the English translation Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, 1975, vol. 3:69-98. All quotes will cite the original text and alterations in the English will be made when necessary to match the original Chinese version.

6 See the appendix on Wang Shiwei for reference to this essay.

7 For more on za wen see Jin Canran, JFRB, 1942, July 25 in which it is hoped that the essay form would be taken out of the hands of a small circle and brought closer to the masses. The author of the article observed that za wen had become a misunderstood form of expression and that people incorrectly associated its sometimes sarcastic tone and "evil intent" with the essence of the form.

8 The following brief description of the "materialist-dialectical method of creation" abandoned in the Soviet Union in the early thirties was offered by Liu Xuewei in Lun Wenxue de Gongnongbing Fangxiang (論文學的工農兵方向) Shanghai: Haiyan Shudian, 1949, p. 17: "... to write according to the formula: the description of the birth of the new amidst the old, the tomorrow in today, the conquest of the old by the new, etc. As a result of this kind of formularist theory, formularist writings (in the foreign "eight-legged' style) were mass-produced". The translation is taken from T.A. Hsia, 1968:236.

9 The "two contending sides" were composed of those in favor of exposing the dark in Yan'an and those against it. See Zhou Yang, 1978: 31-32, and He Qifang, 1952: 6.

10 Later texts were not so specific about the use of "feudal and capitalist forms". They read: "The rich legacy and good traditions in literature and art inherited from ancient China
and foreign countries could be utilized, but only with the aim of serving the masses." (SWMTT:76)

Again his comments must be accepted selectively in light of the lapse of time and literary purges between 1942 and 1977. The line between mere political and literary polemics and sincere objective observation is sometimes difficult to define with any confidence. Here, all the more so, since there are few other reminiscences with which to compare He Qifang's.

Lu Xun, 1927: 470-471. This is also quoted by He Qifang, 1952:5.

Xiao Jun was also reported as stating, "The red lotus, its white rootstock, and green leaves, [like] Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism, are of one family. Politics, military affairs, and literature are also of one family, but none of them directs the other." Unqualified and taken out of context, we can not pass judgement on the statement, but it was obviously cited by He in his attempt to prove Xiao Jun's contempt for politically-directed literature.

A vital question of great interest and curiosity is why writers such as Xiao Jun and Ding Ling were not singled out for vicious attack in 1942 as was Wang Shiwei. As we speculated above, the answer may partially lie in the immense popularity of these authors, while Wang Shiwei was himself only a translator and not as well-known. Maybe the answer can be found too by looking at the vulnerability of Wang's character and background to CCP criticism, rather than at the attributes of the other writers which may have kept them immune from attack. In more than one criticism of Wang after May, allusions to his uncooperative, smug, and unyielding character were brought to attention. He refused to concede in the least to Party requests to participate in ideological reform and he was reported to have been responsible for factionalism in the Central Research Institute in which he worked. Even those close to him spoke of his negative personality traits.
Someone using the pen name Guo He (郭和) wrote this about his friend in the Hong Kong journal Guancha Jia (观察家), 1979, 1, p. 60: "In discussing his defects, perhaps he was a bit too irascible, too easily excitable. As soon as something did not suit him his face would turn color. With both old and new friends he could be equally as headstrong and let loose an angry temper".

Whether his weak points were real or exaggerated for purpose of attack, his opponents took advantage of them to denounce him. One other major setback was his previous Trotskyite connections. These he acknowledged himself, but rather than apologizing, he worsened his situation by publicly denouncing Stalin and the Comintern. (See Zhang Ruxin, JFRB, 1942, June 14; and Chen Boda, JFRB, 1942, June 15).

15 Art and writing supplies were very difficult to obtain in Yan'an, as were reading materials, due to KMT and Japanese blockades.

16 Such a request was probably inspired by the Stalin Prize for Literature in the Soviet Union.

17 Note that Xiao dared to ascribe a "special" role to writers at this late date. This notion would be strongly refuted in the "Talks" a week later, and Xiao no doubt already knew how Mao felt about the issue from the May 2 conference.

18 This was perfectly in line with united front policy and should be distinguished from Xiao's call in "On 'Love' and 'Patience' among Comrades" to be lenient with people within the Party.

19 Other critics by this time were indeed assessing creative works by such political standards, for instance June 10, Wang Liaoying on "In the Hospital", and June 25, Liu Huang on "Beyond the Realm of Consciousness".
We'll see later that Yang Sizhong delivered his approval of criticizing "petty-bourgeois" writing as such on July 4, yet still he apparently did not bide by his own standards on July 27.

Remember that on March 30, Xiao Jun had described the "pitfall" before writers as not the pitfall of "what to write" but the pitfall of "how to write". The problem, then, was not so simple and was certainly perceived differently by different people.

As discussed above, Jia Zhi had successfully defined the contradiction for a poet such as He Qifang, but he did not appreciate the complexity of the problem created by such a contradiction.

On May 23, Sai Ke was to offer the same advice for the same reason.

Here again, as we saw earlier in Chapter One, Zhou confused content and form, "stream-of-consciousness" being a style and form which was not defined by a non-mass content.

Although his remarks were made on December 31, 1941, I came across nothing about yangge in JFRB until this time, i.e., July 24, 1942. For a general outline of the yangge movement see D. Holm's "Introduction to Ma Ke's 'Man and Wife Learn to Read'" in Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars vol. 8, no. 2 (April - June 1976): 2-4. For a much more detailed description of the yangge movement in the CCP areas, see, by the same author, "The Yangge Movement", paper submitted for the Harvard Workshop on Literature and the Performing Arts in Contemporary China, June 1979.

For further discussion of the tendency in the Lu Xun Academy of Arts to stress the Western rather Chinese tradition in all its departments, see Wang Yao, 1953, Chapter 16, Part one, who cites He Qifang, 1944 and Zhou Yang, "Yishu Jiaoyu de Gaizao Wenti (艺术教育的改造问题)" in Biaoxian Xin de Qunzhong de Shidai, 1950.
CONCLUSION

The period covered in my study of JFRB ended on August 31, 1942. A cursory assessment of the general orientation of page four after that date reveals a move towards the printing of fiction concerned with gongnongbing subject matter, and the frequent appearance of woodcuts depicting peasant life in the Border Areas. On January 7, 1943, the editor of page four declared the page a "general interest supplement" (zonghexing fukan 綜合性副刊) and requested contributions from a broad range of fields. All contributors were to pay attention to the ideal that their works be "commonly understood" (tongsu 通俗) and brief.

On March 10, 1943, a Conference of Party Literary and Art Workers was summoned by the Central Cultural Committee and the Organization Department of the Central Committee to solve some of the questions arising from the movement of writers and artists to the countryside. Over fifty people attended. Opening remarks were made by Zhou Yang and speeches were given by Kai Feng and Chen Yun, followed by remarks by Liu Shaoqi, Bo Gu, and others. According to a March 13 report in JFRB, the changes manifested in literature and art since "the new direction indicated by Comrade Mao Zedong at last year's literature and art forum" were dramatic. (Mao's "Talks" were not published until October 19, 1943 in JFRB, hence his speeches were not yet referred to as the "Talks at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art"). All fiction, poetry, drama, woodblock prints, etc. printed in the paper reflected a move towards the masses; the reform and performance of yangge by troupes organized by the Lu Xun Academy of Arts and other Party
schools were reported to be enjoying immense popularity among the masses. More writers were expressing an interest in going to live with the gongnongbing. However, these writers were still unclear as to how they should present themselves to the masses, and thus the conference was held in an attempt to answer such questions.

On March 10, Kai Feng declared that the study movement was basically over and that only now were writers ideologically prepared to go down to the masses. Although some had already been there, the situation this time was to be different in that they would no longer be going as guests to collect source material over a limited period of time. Now they would go as full-time workers over a more prolonged length of time. Acceptance of peasant customs and cooperation with local cadres were essential to successful assimilation into their new environment. (Kai Feng, JFRB, 1943, March 28)

Next month, in April, Ai Siqi wrote an editorial in JFRB which praised the success of the yangge movement but conceded that many writers were still unfamiliar with the lives of the masses, that the artistic level of the yangge was not yet at the level it should be, and that the literature and art movement was confined to Yan'an and should be spread throughout the Border Areas. (Ai Siqi, JFRB, 1943, April 25)

Thus it is evident that this literary and artistic work had great difficulties to overcome in meeting the new demands put upon it after 1942. Whether or not the theories presented by Mao in the "Talks" offered sufficient solution to old and new problems plaguing writers was never an issue in the press. The focus of attention shifted to reforming literature and writers to meet the
demands of a mass audience; this new direction naturally presented fresh problems for writers. All writers and artists sympathetic to the Communist cause were presented with the large task of applying the new theories to daily practice in their attempt to familiarize themselves with the large sector of society from which they had always been alienated.

The views on literature and art formulated by the CCP in Yan'an have functioned as the Party's official literature and art policy since Liberation in 1949. When evaluating this policy in light of its present relevance and application to literature and art today, it is important to bear in mind the historical factors affecting literature which influenced the development of policy in 1942. It is hoped that this paper has provided a basis for understanding these factors.
APPENDIX

I. Wang Shiwei

The case of Wang Shiwei has been misinterpreted as a case of a literary rather than a political purge. Here, rather than go into great detail about the vast amount of criticism against Wang in the press from May until August, I will merely try to clarify the significance of the case by outlining the framework of the proceedings held against Wang, sum up the results of the criticisms, and discuss the reaction in the literary world to attacks against him.

Information about Wang Shiwei's background is sketchy at best. Most of what we know of his literary and political activities is based on the word of his attackers who were in some cases supposedly quoting Wang Shiwei himself. He was a Peking University graduate from Henan Province who joined the CCP in 1926. (Cai Danye, 1972:62) In 1929 he established connections with the Trotskyites and did translating into Chinese for them, as well as publishing fiction in their journals. (Wen Jize, JFRB, 1942). He was primarily a translator of Marxist works and is said to have translated two million words for the CCP, although he did have some fiction to his credit.¹ When he went to Yan'an at the beginning of the war he became a researcher and translator in the Marxist-Leninist Institute (Malie Xueyuan 馬列學院), later changed to the Central Research Institute (Zhongyang Yanjiu Yuan 中央研究院).

We know that he wrote four articles in Yan'an, three of which
were published, one of which was written on the wall of the Central Research Institute. According to Ai Qing on June 24, 1942, Wang had also printed articles in Chongqing's Liangxin Hua (良心話) and Xian's Kangzhan yu Wenhua (抗战與文化).

The four articles written in Yan'an were "Short Discourse on National Form" (Wenyi de Minzu Xingshi Duanlun 文艺的民族形式短論); "Statesmen and Artists" (Zhengzhi Jia, Yishu Jia 政治家, 艺术家) which appeared in the now unavailable journal Gu Yu (谷雨), vol. 1, no 4, sometime soon after the first article, "Wild Lily", in JFRB March 13 and 23, 1942, and "Hard Bones, Soft Bones", probably written sometime between late March and mid-April. Only "Wild Lily" is available to us today; all that we know of the other three pieces is based on JFRB critiques of their content.

Since something has been mentioned of the last three essays by Wang Shiwei in previous chapters, here I will only sum up the principle ideas of the first, "Short Discourse on National Form" basing my comments on Chen Boda's criticism of it on July 3, 1942. First, wrote Wang, "The proletarian revolution should rely on the masses - but only those masses who have already been awakened, who have been given freedom and culture and who have accepted Marxism, not the 'ruled' slaves of today". According to Chen, Wang believed in waiting until the masses obtained culture from the bourgeois class, and then and only then could they be relied upon to make revolution. He was pessimistic about the effectiveness of literary popularization, for the masses would be affected by nothing except "progressive politics" which would create progressive culture. Chen Boda wrote that Wang also said that it
was right and proper that those with no culture were ruled and that only the rulers had culture. "The backwardness of Chinese society and economics determines the backwardness of Chinese culture, literature included. Backwardness of content in literature determines backwardness of form. 'Literature in the temple' is like this and so especially is folk literature".

Thus Wang apparently did not believe in the use of old forms. He wrote, "The basis of creation is on progressive forms already existing". He gave no indication of the meaning of "progressive forms", but, stated Chen, Wang had no faith that new content could overcome old form and feared that everyone would drag along the old content with old forms if the latter were adopted. He defended the use of foreign forms, for Chen quotes him as writing "Anything that can be taken by a nation and used in its own way for its own purposes is 'national' - be it foreign or domestic, for today these things are foreign, tomorrow they are national [i.e., assimilated]."

Chen did not label Wang a Trotskyite in this criticism, for it was written long before the attacks against Wang for being a Trotskyite began, but he did imply that Wang shared Trotsky's ideas. Wang is said to have expressed in his article a lack of faith that the proletarian class was capable of creating its own culture, that folk forms were backward, and that revolution could only be realized after the majority of masses had been enlightened by bourgeois culture.

From March 19 until May 27 (70 days) a Mobilization Meeting (Dongyuan Dahui 動員大會) was held in the Central Research Institute. At that point the focus of the meeting was on general
rectification issues and had not as yet brought up the specific case of Wang Shiwei, though if we remember, Wang had already begun to receive criticism of a relatively mild sort in the press during the month of April. On May 27, however, a criticism session initiated by the Central Research Institute began, aimed directly against Wang. This Central Research Institute Forum (Zhongyang Yangjiu Yuan Zuotan Hui 中央研究院座谈会) lasted until June 11 (16 days):

The forum started out by discussing the system of democratic centralism and then switched to a purging of Wang Shiwei's ideology. This two-week-long forum has on the one hand carried out a general purge of the bad tendencies present in Yan'an and on the other hand has carried out a rather thorough exposure of Wang Shiwei's anti-revolutionary ideology and anti-party behavior. (Luo Mai, JFRB, 1942, June 28)

Below is a chronological outline of the significant points of the forum proceedings in relation to Wang Shiwei, based on Wen Jize's "Diary of Struggle", June 28, 1942.

May 27: The topic is "Party Democracy and Discipline". Wang Shiwei is brought up but is not yet the focus of discussion.

May 30: Ai Siqi broadcasts Mao's "Conclusion"; it is agreed that Wang's mistakes are of a different quality than everyone else's "bad tendencies".

June 1: The topic shifts to Wang. Reports tell us that he has said "Stalin's personality is unlikable"; "The failure of China's Great Revolution is the responsibility of the Communist International."; "Some Trotskyite theory is correct."; "On the problem of democracy in this institute, Comrades Luo Mai and Fan Wenlan are in two different groups." No one believes anymore that his motives are good.

June 2: There is no meeting. Everyone is requested to read Lenin's
"On Party Organization and Party Literature", Lu Xun's "Thoughts on the League of Left-wing Writers", and the notes of Mao's "Talks", plus other rectification documents, all to be used as weapons with which to criticize Wang. Today Wang Shiwei asks to resign from the CCP: "The contradiction between myself and the Party's utilitarianism is almost impossible to solve."

June 3: It is said that Wang's future is bleak if he does not confess to his mistakes. Ai Siqi attacks him on four points: 1) He feigned revolutionary enthusiasm while actually feeling pessimistic and disappointed. 2) He has a negative attitude towards the united front. 3) He stresses 'human nature' that transcends class. 4) He has sectarian views towards inner-Party struggles; he pits the youth against the old cadres, lowers against superiors [in "Hard Bones, Soft Bones" he supposedly wrote, "Comrades, look at yourselves first. Do you have meak moral fiber? Do you have anything you dare not say to those above you?"], and artists against politicians. After the meeting, some go over to see Wang and attempt to convince him to repent.

June 4: Wang makes his first appearance at the forum. Several hundred people come from the political department of the Central Research Institute and from the Yan'an Branch of the All-China Writers' Anti-aggression Association. Wang says "I solemnly and seriously retract my request of the day before yesterday posed under abnormality... because I have been moved by the 'love' of several friends." He then admits to previous Trotskyite connections, taking time out to "spread Trotskyite propaganda" instead of confessing to his errors. When asked why he did not report his Trotskyite affiliations as soon as he came to Yan'an, he replied that when he first came to the capital he felt unliked. He had disagreed with Chen Boda over national form in 1940 and Chen labeled him a "second international opportunist." "Would it do for him to call me a fourth international opportunist?" So at
that point he reported his connections "so as to secure my footing."

June 9: Speeches against Wang are delivered by Chen Boda (printed June 15) and Ai Qing (printed June 24). Everyone agrees that Wang's problems are ideological, political, and organizational.

June 10: Zhang Ruxin delivers a speech denouncing Wang (printed June 17); Wang's Party membership is taken away.

June 11: Today's speeches are given by Luo Mai (printed June 28), Ding Ling (printed June 16), and Fan Wenlan (printed June 29). Hu Qiaomu has talked with Wang eight times, Fan Wenlan [vice-president of the Central Research Institute] two or three times; the Party standing committee has sent five people to help him, others have criticized him either orally or on paper, and still he is unwilling to budge.

Wang was at some time sent to work in a matchbox factory, according to journalists visiting Yan'an in the summer of 1944. (Lin Yutang, 1958:227-8) He was shot by Party security forces during evacuation of Yan'an in spring of 1947, but according to Mao was not shot by decision of the Party Central, but by the forces acting on their own initiative.9

In sum, Wang was purged for inciting disunity in the CCP, for castigating Party leaders who, he said "oppress the masses" (Zhang Ruxin, JFRB, 1942, June 17), and most important, for spreading Trotsky's ideas.

Reaction to Wang Shiwei in the literary world came in the form of two speeches delivered at the Central Research Institute Forum - one by Ding Ling and the other by Ai Qing.

Ding Ling's speech of June 11 (JFRB, 1942 C) served as both a denouncement of Wang Shiwei and as a self-criticism. First she mentioned that she would talk in more detail at a meeting summoned
next week by the Yan'an Branch of the All-China Writers' Anti-aggression Association to discuss Wang Shiwei and engage in self-criticism. Her attack on Wang was vicious. She said that since writers had not participated enough in criticizing him, it was time that they did and she, evidently, would lead the way. She called him a "hoodlum" with a "complicated and gloomy character" and a "plotter against the revolution."

About herself, she confessed that to have printed his "Wild Lily" in "Wen Yi" when she was editor was a careless mistake, "a great shame and crime".

This mistake did not originate from a temporary recklessness on my part, but was related to the policy of the editors at that time. Because the literary column needed short and forceful articles which aimed at the outside as well as at our own ranks, and debates on literary theory, etc., we caused lots of trouble to the point where we only wanted to be able to stir up debate. We did not fear essays whose theory was immature, nor negative essays (fanmian wenzhang 反面文章). We had the simple idea that they all could be printed. Many writers... after reading "Wild Lily" felt that it was a bit excessive and that the attitude was inappropriate. So we held it for a few days and then finally sent it to the newspaper to be published for lack of other manuscripts.

She admitted that at that time she was acting as an ordinary editor, and not as a Party member editing a Party newspaper.

Concerning her earlier za wen "Thoughts on March Eighth", she conceded that she had been only speaking for a small part of the Party and gave too much attention to minor dark spots without affirming the bright aspect of life in Yan'an for women. She urged people, even those who still wrote to her sympathizing with her views expressed in this piece, not to read it, but to instead
concentrate on studying the twenty-two rectification documents. Incidentally, she made no mention of her short story "In the Hospital" which was criticized in *JFRB* on June 10, one day before her speech.

Thus, Ding Ling by this time gave her full support to the rectification movement and the attack against Wang Shiwei. Throughout her speech she was very careful to make distinctions between herself and Wang, and in fact in one place stated that Wang Shiwei was not a writer. His problem, she said, was not one of standpoint or method [as it was with writers] but one of politics, i.e., Trotskyism. Ding Ling's self-criticism was accepted by the Party and she participated in ideological reform, but she just about stopped producing literature at this time. (Nym Wales, 1961: 51)

Ai Qing's speech attacking Wang on June 9 seemed all the more vehement when compared to his previous essays of February and March. In June he thoroughly refuted the accusations against the Party made by Wang in "Wild Lily" on the grounds that, since they were coming from a "petty-bourgeois" point of view, they presented an exaggerated and distorted picture of life in Yan'an. There were, granted Ai Qing, salary differentials between Party leaders and members, as well as special treatment towards "cultural people" and "those with skills", but the difference was small. Yan'an did have material difficulties due to Japanese and KMT blockades, but only the selfish petty-bourgeoisie were critical of these points, said the poet. Finally, Ai Qing called Wang Shiwei "dark and corrupt" (like the Yan'an he described) and maintained that no one need use "logic and conscience" with him.
Neither Ding Ling's nor Ai Qing's turnabout was surprising in light of the intense criticism they received on May 23 in Mao's "Talks". Their lack of sympathy for him may make more sense if we view Wang Shiwei as victim of a political rather than literary purge. Only he was branded a Trotskyite, a symbol of everything which should be purged in the rectification movement. To show support of this movement one had to come out against Wang Shiwei. There was no doubt little choice in the matter.

A significant point which leads one to conclude that Wang Shiwei was in the main purged for his political beliefs rather than for his literary theory is this: Wang wrote only one essay on literary theory, his "Short Discourse on National Form". In it, as we saw above, he expressed disagreement with the major CCP proponents of old forms (Mao, Chen Boda, Ai Siqi) by criticizing such forms as being "backward" and incapable of holding new content. Yet only Chen Boda attacked him for this article, and Chen's major criticism had actually been written long before Spring of 1942, and then printed in JFRB (July 3-4) to serve as more dirt against Wang. In other words, between the months of May and August when the paper abounded with denouncements of Wang, no one at all (except Chen, again, on June 15) took Wang to task for his views on national form. It may not seem odd that other writers did not wish to criticize his beliefs on this issue because either they agreed with him (witness Ai Qing in Chapter Four) and/or they did not want to subject his literary views to attack, since he was already in enough trouble for his other outspoken ideas. However, it does seem strange that neither Mao nor Ai Siqi (nor anyone else) followed Chen's lead to
specifically bring up Wang's article on national form for fresh examination and criticism after May. Instead, Wang's accusers in JFRB focused their attack on his other essays, never once did they allude to his "Short Discourse on National Form".

Therefore, the thrust of the more far-reaching campaign against Wang was aimed at his political beliefs, as can be seen too from a more detailed study of the proceedings of his "trial" in the Central Research Institute. The majority of questions asked of him concerned his political views on both Soviet and Chinese historical events vis-à-vis Trotskyite interpretations. His most serious challenges to the CCP were made in the realm of political ideology and practice. Although his refusal to espouse the use of old forms in literature surely did not help his image in the eyes of Party leaders, it was not the primary cause of his purge. His downfall could probably be attributed to a combination of the intense and high-reaching nature of his criticism of Yan'an leaders together with the ability of the CCP to build a case for his "Trotskyism" on the basis of previous connections (no matter how mild they may have been) and his present political and literary views. Since the overwhelming majority of criticisms against him did not specifically address his opinions on literature, it seems that it was not his literary views which were the primary source of his purge.
NOTES TO APPENDIX I

1 According to Lin Yutang in *The Secret Name*, New York: Farrar, Straus, and Cudahy, 1958:227, Wang had "years ago" contributed to one of his literary magazines in Shanghai. Wang Shiwei did author a book called *Xiuxi* (休息), published in Shanghai, 1930 by Zhonghua Shuju, as part of a series edited by Xu Zhimo called "Xin Wenyi Congshu" (新文艺丛书). The book is in the form of correspondences from a melancholy, disillusioned and suicidal "friend" of Wang Shiwei's who pours out his heart to the author.

2 I have been unable to locate either of these magazines.

3 This was the name of Wang's piece before he submitted it for approval to Chen Boda, with whom he had disagreed over national form in 1940. After Chen's revisions and criticism, (the criticism was written in January 1941 but not published until July 3, 1942 in *JFRB*), Wang's article was printed in February, 1941 in *Zhongguo Wenhua* (中国文化), vol. 2, no. 6 as "Wenyi Minzu Xingshi Shang de Jiu Cuowu yu Xin Pianxiang" (文艺民族形式上的错误与新偏向). According to Chen Boda (*JFRB*, 1942, June 15) Wang cut out some of what had been criticized before printing the article under the new title. Both the original and the revised version are now unavailable.


5 For criticisms of "Wild Lily" see Qi Su, *JFRB*, 1942, April 7; (Lî) Bozhao, *JFRB*, 1942, June 9; Chen Dao, *JFRB*, 1942, June 9.
See Li Tu, *JFRB*, 1942, April 17, and Zhang Ruxin, *JFRB*, 1942, June 17 for discussion of the content of "Hard Bones, Soft Bones".

See D. Holm, 1978:14-19 for a detailed analysis of Chen Boda's July 3 criticism.


Stuart Schram, 1974:184-5. Before quoting Mao here it should be noted that Wang Shiwei was labeled an "Anti-communist agent" in a *JFRB* editorial on April 25, 1943, p.1, and an "enemy agent" on November 8, 1943, p.1.

That incident happened at the time when the army was on the march and the security organs themselves made the decision to execute him; the decision did not come from the Centre. We have often made criticisms on this very matter; we thought that he shouldn't have been executed.
One day a comrade came to test into the fine arts department of the Lu Xun Academy of Arts. Having known him for a long time and knowing that he loved literature, I casually asked him, "Do you like literature very much?" Probably he misinterpreted my intention, thinking I was hinting that it would be more appropriate for him to be studying literature. He answered in a half-explanatory, half-showy manner, "Literature needn't any particular study. Wherever there is life, there is literature".

I was stunned by this simple notion. Using the same kind of simplicity, a most appropriate retort would have been "Wherever there is life, there is not necessarily literature".

However I did not reply thus. I don't consider the virtues of youth such as confidence, courageous explanations, and love for epigram, in a bad light. Moreover, in the relationship between literature and life, I always put the latter over and above the former. In the field of aesthetics, I am a loyal and faithful admirer of Chernyshevky. His famous formula "beauty is life" contains profound truth.

The sentence "wherever there is life, there is literature" naturally states a partial truth. That is to say, literature is produced from life. As soon as it becomes divorced from life, there can be no literature. But literature and life are ultimately two entities. In speaking of the process of creation,
they are still two poles in mutual contradiction and mutual struggle. Creativity is the process of the writer's hand-to-hand fight with life. Images must be found in life, but although life is full of them, they are not easy things to grasp. To borrow a metaphor from Balzac, an image is even harder to capture than the Proteus of legend — a wriggling, quickly metamorphasizing Proteus. The writer must struggle with this constantly changing magician of an ocean spirit, and other than language and words, he has no spell for subduing the enemy.

Don't you often have this feeling? Everyday I am living a meaningful life, yet I don't see anything worthy of making into the stuff of literature. You say that life itself has become too prosaic? But the artist's skill lies in seeing poetry in ordinary life. At times it seems that you have also seen something which moves you to write it down. An image quickens in your mind, but at such a critical moment your cursed pen will not obey your command. You have no way of directing it to put to paper what is in your mind.

Therefore the problem is not as simple as we had imagined. After having life, you still have to be able to "see", and after having seen, you still must be able to "write". This is the problem in art of knowing and expressing, and the problem of unifying the practice of life and the practice of creativity. Life is just raw material for the writer; the writer's work lies in how to choose and process his material. This necessitates a specialized skill and knowledge. In short, this necessitates good and hard study. It is in fact not a very wise notion that wherever there is life, there is literature, and literature needn't be
studied.

Everyone likes to bring up the fact that Gorky, never having
gone to college, still became the world's greatest writer. Natu­
rally it is good to emulate Gorky. But don't forget: although
Gorky never had the opportunity to go to university during the
Tzari st period, he was the first in the Soviet Union to advocate
the establishment of schools specializing in literature. He was
self-taught and expended arduous effort on the study of litera­
ture. He always advocated that literary youth should not only
read more native as well as foreign works of literature, but that
they should also be familiar with and understand the history of
literature. He was a person who profoundly experienced the "pain
of language". I think that when we study Gorky, it would be
better to be practical by emulating and adopting his determined
spirit of being able to bury himself in strenous study in any
environment, rather than aspiring to his colorful and glittering
life as a vagabond.

It is most worthless to shout "Ah, life, life, since there
is no life, study will slacken".

Where there is life, there is not necessarily the ability to
write creatively. And works which describe life are still not
necessarily good works. For the task of literature lies not just
in describing life as it is, but also in stating truths concern­
ing life. On the relationship between the writer and life, Wang
Guo-wei, in his Ren Jian Ci Hua 人間 詞話 has a most reveal­
ing passage in which he says "In his attitude towards the world
and human life, the poet must enter them from within, but he also
must be able to come out. By entering from within he is able to
write about them; by coming out he is able to observe them. By entering from within, his work can have vitality; by coming out, his work can be sublimely detached.\(^4\)

The relationship between art and life is like this. You must be able to "enter" as well as "come out". This is a delicate dialectical relationship. To be able to penetrate inside life and also transcend it \([\text{at the same time}]\) are two inseparable notions. The latter can only be a result of the former, or one could say, the ultimate attainment of the former. To be drowned in the sea of life's facts, to be unable to view human life in its overall appearance or see its real essence from a certain intellectual elevation, is called "Not seeing the forest for the trees". In the field of philosophy this is narrow empiricism, while in the field of literature, it is naturalism. We choose neither.

Using a simple definition, art is the formalized expression of thought through image. One is unable to write or create works with vitality without images. One cannot investigate or create works of sublime detachment without thought. Engels set out this ideal aim for literature: the perfected fusion of great intellectual profundity and historical content, with a Shakespearian aggressiveness and abundance of action.\(^5\) Isn't this the best explanation, the highest standard of the unity of vitality and sublime detachment in art?

In the subjectivive consciousness of the writer, sublime detachment is a penetrating understanding of the myriad things that is as clear as water. Is it to transcend all material things? Not corrupted in the least? A Kantian "disinterested mind"? To lack enthusiasm for life? It is none of these. It is
the result of a deep tasting of human life; the form of emotion under control. All thinkers and writers are able to maintain calmness of mind. They have done flesh and blood battle with life, identifying life's every fiber, directly locating its heart; they grasp life's laws in their entirety. Therefore they are calm and unperturbed in the face of any change. Only they really understand humor.

In his famous "On Naive and Sentimental Poetry"; Schiller said this about the two great realist poets Homer and Shakespeare: At the point of their most sorrowful and melancholy writing, it seems as if they were narrating everyday events - they are seemingly quite insensitive. Are they really insensitive? Not at all. Their hearts have penetrated into their objects, becoming entirely one with them. It is just as Schiller praised Shakespeare: "His heart is not like ordinary metal which merely floats on the surface, but like gold which must seek the deepest area". He compared Shakespeare's literary creation to God's creating the world. God and the world reside in the same place. "He (Shakespeare) is the literary work, and the literary work is him". He is life itself, the essential core of life. He doesn't cry or laugh, yet causes others to cry and laugh. This is why great artists, apparently calm and composed, set our souls on fire with blazing flames.

We often feel that we have experienced life and that what we write about is all life. Yet the reader is still not the least moved. The creative work is still lacking something, we may say that it's lacking something "poetic" or "intellectual". In sum, it is a work with no life. What is the reason for this?
This is because without penetrating life, there can be no rising above it. You have maintained too much of a distance from everyday life (you are a bystander'), yet while creating you are too close. You don't understand how to look down on life from a certain altitude. You don't use enough ardor in life, you're not interested in any number of problems, and you lack warmth towards people. Yet in your works you reveal too much ardor. Literature is the most honest of things. A piece of literature cannot pretend to have double of something of which it has only one. A literary creation is like a person in that the richer his life, the more he can view life from a certain distance; the more full of emotion, the more these emotions will not be exposed. The truly outstanding writer does not just casually grab anything to write about, and then allow the words to flow out endlessly when he is moved. He must instead collect numerous facts of life and extract from them only the essence, using all his energies to concentrate his attention on them, until his own subjectivity and objectivity have completely blended together. I remember there was a writer who used a similar metaphor concerning the process of creation: Over there is a big stack of wet hay piled up and inside it is a hidden fire burning. Yet it doesn't burn, it merely emits smoke. It works like this for a while until all the sudden, completely unexpectedly, fire exits from within, and with flames outstretched, wildly sets the whole sky red. This fire fuses objectivity, and subjectivity breaking through the emotion of the subject. To use an expression in the style of Wang Guowei, this is called "forgetting the distinction between emotion and scene, the subject and I are of one body". This is the
highest state of mind of creation.

This state of mind is not easily obtained, but everyone aspiring to write literature must work hard towards it.

My conclusion: To be a writer you must naturally first have experienced life, but you absolutely cannot think that as soon as you have experienced life that everything will go well for you. More important is that you have knowledge of life, an ability to express it, and the armament of thought and skill. But if you want these things, you must pay the price of long-term concentrated and arduous study. Literary amateurs or schools of geniuses must be eliminated.

Part Two

July 18, 1941

I advocate that writers should have more actual first-hand experience of life, whether it be at the front, or in the farm villages. Because of this I have been called a "frontline-ist", but to this day I don't consider my view mistaken.

However, the problems are numerous. Among them, the most important are how to make yourself become one with this new life, and how to find material from within it.

When people enter a life of which they had not previously known, in the beginning they always feel a sense of novelty about it. But after coming in contact with it for a while, the actual situation gradually exposes to you its original face, and the colors engendered by illusion quickly fade. It all becomes dull
or even detestable. You've seen that which you did not wish to see. War is full of blood, death, and cruelty. Filth, obscurity, and darkness still occupy positions of power in the farm villages. You feel anguish, yet this was the life which you considered meaningful and which you strenuously sought after; yet you cannot and do not wish to break yourself away from it. You will arduously exercise restraint over yourself until you slowly adapt to this type of life.

But adaptation is not something that can be achieved all at once. It requires a rather long period of time. Naturally it's easy to wander around everywhere in a superficial manner, but nothing will be gained in this way. You must participate in some real work, but if you do this, you must not be afraid of trouble. Take a turn engraving plates, do some publishing, be a little nobody in a military unit, or do messenger work for the rural government. Be content in your work, be enthusiastic, and don't delude yourself about seeking the time and place for creativity here. Become one with the people who surround you and learn from them. Do not resent them for not understanding you, it is you who must understand them. Taste all kinds of life, and try very hard to understand all types of people. This is the capital that must be accumulated for creativity. However, this entails many troubles, troubles that would never have occurred to you.

I have many times received letters from literary workers at the front. In the beginning, most of them were not used to their life and were upset. Only later did things change for the better, and they became enthusiastic. I hear that even some comrades who had written to me expressing complete negativism about their
personal disappointment and misery at the front, now all exert much energy in their work. Naturally there are one or two who could not tolerate it and in the end, deserted. This is a trial given to us by a great age.

Marx once quoted Chernyshevsky, "People who build history are not afraid of getting their hands dirty". If we, the artists of a great age, the witnesses and recorders of unprecedented great events, will not dirty our hands, we should at least have the courage to look at the hands being dirtied. We must look at life straight in the eye. Let us discard all unbeneficial illusions. Many liberal writers and newspaper reporters in the West are not afraid of tolerating difficulties and braving the greatest dangers for the sake of collecting writing material and covering a news item. And they only do this for literary and professional motives!

We are participating in the War of National Liberation and the construction of a new society. Even if not for the sake of writing, we should still make ourselves adapt to the life which we are living. We must have this kind of determination: Don't let life compromise towards me, let me compromise towards life. All of this is spiritual preparation for us to go and actually experience life first-hand.

The next question is how to collect material. Comrades who have been to the front unanimously agree that there are many, many either praiseworthy or lamentable phenomena as well as incredible and surpassing heroic stories to be found there. The writing of them could never end and never be exhausted! Thereupon you are inevitably completely absorbed by these stories. Your interest will focus on them. You take these stories which you have heard,
and work them up in your own unique and special style, making their plots as novel as possible, adding some leaves and branches in order to make them a bit more luxuriant. In this way, you think you have created a work of literature, when actually, if you allow me to be blunt, they are often still quite far from works of any true significance.

Therefore these works inevitably elicit upbraidng from readers:"I am simply not moved by these at all. Even I know more stories. Why does he beat around the bush so many times when telling such a small story?" I do not think these complaints are entirely without reason. In telling a story you are not very familiar with yourself, you still pretend to be one of the people in it. You give attention to the writing of the story, but none to the depiction of characters; your characters have no flesh and blood. You always relay your own emotions to the reader but are unable to rely on life itself to move the reader. Your description sometimes goes overboard, yet you force it into your works as embellishment when it doesn't serve as an organic part of the whole. All of this is because we haven't understood life on a concrete level.

After all, a work of literature is not storytelling. It must describe people, personality, individuality. In writing about any matter at all, no matter how small, you must be faithful and liberal. One can say that literature needs most of all minute accuracy, and should particularly prohibit sketchy, rough description. Therefore when we go into actual life, it would be better to first observe rather than listen. Stories that you hear can only serve as a kind of reference. If you must employ
them in your writing, I think it would be more natural and proper to use them straightforwardly as you hear them. But these materials can be used indirectly. Creativity is still determined by those things which are experienced directly. Trust your own eyes and use them to observe all that is around you. Look carefully, repeatedly, and comparatively. As Flaubert instructed Maupassant, "In order to describe a burning fire or a tree on the plain, we must look straight at this fire and tree until they become different in our eyes from any other tree or fire".

Friends, you who have gone especially to experience real life, have you ever put this kind of effort into your works? Everyone has seen the Eighth Route Army and the peasants in the Border Areas, but aren't there still very few really outstanding works written about them? In fact, how many literary workers have really lived together with them for a relatively long period of time, aligned their hearts with theirs, understood all their life habits and the subtleties of their minds? We have little contact with them [the peasants and soldiers] and that we do have is often unnatural. We always like to choose from among them those with especially unique life experiences and inquire of them their life history, hoping to immediately find a large stock of material from their persons. No - what we in fact hope to discover is a miracle. People [writers] like to take advantage and to get off on the cheap. But in this world nothing is cheap. If you treat them simply as material, they will alertly close their hearts to you.

A writer must make even more comprehensive, multi-faceted, and penetrating contact with people in everyday life. You must
want to become friends with them; make conversation about ordinary matters as well as things close to their hearts until neither one of you feels on guard towards or out of touch with the other. They will then totally and straightforwardly reveal their hearts to you. It is at this point that you will be seeing the real people, and what you understand will not be an abstract notion of the people, but concrete, flesh and blood individuals. Carry a notebook with you - not just to record people's biographies or to write an explanation of their class background, but more important, carry it to be able to record at any time the movements, language, and postures which emanate from each different individual personality which you may witness. Material does not come ready-made, nor is it just there to be picked up. You must go discover it, accumulating it a drop at a time. Do not just look for the unique about people, make more contact with ordinary people. Don't just observe one or two people, but several. With one person, don't just be satisfied with knowing a thing or two about him when you should know many. Your gaze should not be upwards, but downwards. Do not look only at the major points but look more at the small. This requires not only great patience and care in work, but love towards people as well.

The spirit and work method revealed by Comrade Mao Zedong in his report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan is worthy of thorough study by every writer. It is not the dull statistical survey of the ordinary sociologist, but a work permeated with a great revolutionary's tremendous love for the masses, a love which should also burn in our hearts. Let us penetrate into the life of the masses embracing that kind of love
and scientific spirit. It is not necessary to first think of a theme, complete a rough outline, and then fabricate a plot. Let life itself move us with its own logic!

Part Three

July 19, 1941

In Yan'an there are some comrades interested in writing who feel they cannot write anything, though we are living a new and meaningful life, and there is freedom of creativity here. Why can't they write or why do they write so little? Could it be that in the face of this new life creativity dries up? Of course not. Thus we hear all sorts of interesting explanations: Some say that a great thinker (wasn't it Engels?) once said that human civilization relied on eating meat to be born, and we [at Yan'an] eat too little meat. Others say that because our food lacks vitamin C, we're not getting enough nutrition. Still others say that everyone gets an allowance, so although life is hard, no one has to worry about food or clothing, so no one need sell manuscripts. Yet others say that Yan'an is lacking in literary periodicals, so no one is stimulated. These are the types of explanations we hear.

Although these "materialist" explanations are not groundless, they don't satisfy us. Since writers are called the "engineers of the soul", let us look at the spiritual aspect to seek the reason.

There are possibly two absolutely opposite reasons for the
contradiction between a writer's spirit and his environment. One is that the surrounding life itself is a stretch of darkness which oppresses and suffocates people. The writer, embracing a burning hope for the bright, cannot be a part of that environment, and struggles with all his might to oppose it. The other reason is that, once placed in the life which he has sought for himself, he sees brightness, but there are also dark spots in the sunlight. The new life is not without flaws, in fact at times they are even numerous. But he is, after all, in the quick flight of progress. The writer follows the special pace of the artistic intellectual which is not necessarily matched with the pace of life. Sometimes he feels that life has fallen far behind his ideals; he stops and feels slightly disappointed. At times life actually runs ahead of him and he is held back by the power of some old consciousness or habit. To some degree he feels unable to harmonize with life.

I'm thinking of the Bolshevik poet Mayakovsky whom Comrade Stalin has called "the most outstanding Soviet poet". He deeply understood the distress of the intellectual in a great age. Lamenting the death of Yesenin, he wrote these two lines of poetry:

"In this kind of life, death is not difficult, what is most difficult is to reestablish life again".

Yet before ending his own life, he left this melancholy poem:

"Love's boat has smashed against the daily grind".  

We are a generation younger than they, so of course we are much healthier. Writers, like others in Yan'an, feel quite satisfied spiritually; they all consider this their home. But it's
not that there are no problems at all. Don't we sometimes hear
something like this: "I feel that life is dull and narrow. In
general things are all right, but it's the little matters that
make people uncomfortable. The comrades above are o.k. but many
below are quite mechanical, "etc., etc. It seems as if these are
all small points, but they are constant, very annoying matters
which greatly influence one's moods.

We can't say that this is all the personal sensitivity and
bias of the writers. It's true that a writer often builds a cir­
 cle around himself which is not easily broken into by others.
But Yan'an itself has its own circle, its own set ways. Everyone
wears the same uniform, receives the same allowance, has the same
work, and goes to the same meetings. Walking along the street
you can hear the same old set of revolutionary jargon on all sides
of you. Everyone harps on the same old themes without the slight­
est change! Yet what you see before your eyes is something unmis­
takably new, laden with infinite and rich content, and full of
life. You are about to praise it, but there are also some things
which irritate you. You can't not enter inside of this circle
because besides it, there is no better life. Yet you still feel
it's too narrow and monotonous and cannot accomodate you. If the
writer can anchor himself in his own circle, confine himself to
the traditional way and not seek to become one with the new life,
then there's no problem. For its part, however, Yan'an absolutely
cannot be satisfied with its set ways. It must seek improvement
and broaden itself to include more variety. If a writer feels
distressed here, he must first strive to do away with the sources
of distress in his life. Even though the writer may find some
incompatibilities with life here in Yan'an, because he and this life share the same fundamental direction of striving for progress, both sides will ultimately be mutually supportive. Now is the time specially termed by Comrade Mao Zedong as the process of the converging of two torrents - "on the mountains" and "in the garrets". Yan'an has been called "the sacred land", but we are not religious followers. We are Marxists, we do not discriminate against those who disagree with us, we sincerely welcome criticism. We rely on self-criticism for progress. Therefore we shouldn't think that just because some writer makes one or two bad remarks about Yan'an (moreover, not even talking about all of Yan'an) that he is opposing us. At this time only introspection and appropriate explanation are needed. Neither tiny disagreements of opinion, nor dissimilar habits, nor an individual's temporary bad mood or emotional conflicts should be raised to questions of principle. Almost all of the writers in Yan'an have a blood relationship with revolution. One could say that they are the flesh and blood of the revolution. A Gide would probably not appear here, even less a Bunin.

I don't approve of writers considering themselves more special than other people. That's actually a most undesirable state of mind. Yet Yan'an must become the type of place where writers are especially understood and respected. It is a truly fertile land in which fruits of culture and art can ripen in abundance.

Their lives and moods are not, of course, the only, or even the most important, reasons why writers cannot write here. I think that a problem of creation itself as well as that of what to write about are also very much related.
This problem is not unique to Yan'an. After the outbreak of the War of Resistance, many writers ran into this impasse: write about the War of Resistance, but we're not familiar with it; write about the past, but now is not the time. Having come to Yan'an, we feel even more that we should write on some new and meaningful themes.

We have already sung our songs of praise for Yan'an, but we still have not been able to write about it from all aspects. We live in caves and have almost no contact with the outside world. Those with whom we do interact are still intellectual friends from the outside. It is naturally difficult for them to gain a profound understanding of Yan'an, let alone of the conditions of the farm villages in the Border Areas. Yet these farm villages are filled with fresh stories of life and struggle. They are worthy of being reflected in art. If you feel there is nothing to write about now, let your intense desire for life be a substitute for your creative impulse. It would certainly be beneficial for you to come out from your caves and go mingle and live among the common people.

Naturally, themes of the past can and ought to be written about. Although it is an admirable sense of responsibility, if one is forced to choose themes which reflect the Border Areas and Eighth Route Army, or which at least relate to the War of Resistance, it could turn into a restriction on creativity. We must allow for the broadest scope in theme, style, artistry, etc. In Yan'an, the slogan of freedom of creativity should become a reality.

Write, bravely write. When you can't write and need to breathe in some fresh air, go out into life, and eliminate all of your mental worries.
Lazy people like taking out their personal miseries on the environment, for thereby the act of cursing, reviling, and beating becomes their enemyless courage. Yet the problem remains unresolved, because after that courage is fully released, they often make use of sobbing and grumbling as a tool for consoling themselves. Of course their wounds of suffering do not heal easily, and the environment remains the same as always.

If Napoleon's ideal dictionary did not contain the word "difficult", then our revolutionary blood stream should purge itself of the term "lazy". The innocent noisy quarreling of children is always more exuberant than the calm and peaceful meditation of old men. There is nothing more worthy of rejoicing than the ability to envision a lively perspective of life from childish movements.

It's just unfortunate that most people enjoy drawing on their foreheads several phoney wrinkles of experience thus making it not only difficult for others to pick out tones of distress on their faces, but even more difficult to extract sounds of sobbing and grumbling from their mouths. This is probably called loyalty, but this type of "loyalty" is as numerous as the opals on the banks of the Yan River, and equally as useless to the revolution.

Struggle! We need merciless struggle! As long as the fight doesn't get personal, even violence and fighting with one's last breath is beneficial in the end.

The aim is to shoot at a target as if it were coarse rock; you needn't harbor loving feelings towards it.
Even if others call it a "shot in the back", an upright and honest archer will not allow the sneering and threats of those beside him to destroy the order of his shooting method. If the first arrow does not meet its mark, then he must have the courage to shoot a second one.

Even if others shout sarcastically "that's the way to go", he must know that "ordinariness praises ordinariness, and inability promotes his friends". This is behavior innately characteristic of human nature.

My entire body is full of strength and joy to assist the birth of the new and destroy the old structure. Although there are various contradictions which come into play, the motivating force is still forward progress. Having surface peace and unity with no basis in reality is like building a foundation on top of sand. We do not welcome Wilde searching for pleasure among tragedy; we should praise Gorky happily shouldering the burden of humanity's sufferings.

"Only praising that which is correct and praising that which you love yet ignoring that which is wrong and that which you hate" is only passive support. "Just as you ardently advocate what is correct, you should ardently attack what is wrong; just as you ardently embrace that which you love, you should even more ardently embrace that which you hate". Only then can you obtain an indivisible unity.

If this is really not just basted together, then the result of the basting will always be firm.

Yet the "intelligent person" avoids rough roads at night. The "intelligent person" always "turns in before dark". Only the
dreamer likes traveling the road avoided by the "intelligent person". It's not that the dreamer isn't aware beforehand of the hardships of the road, but that his source of pain lies in seeing the dawn before others see it.

He who dares not throw himself into the brilliant fire of revolution for fear of getting burned and only dances in the smoke like a plantom, is inevitably afraid of entering the furnace of revolution. Yet he ardently yearns for the sparks which can be gazed upon but never reached. At this time he customarily bravely curses his fellow travelers for being "Simeina Huifu". (footnote)

Just when he becomes a "Simeina Huifu" himself, he not only continues to curse, but wants to lay blame on other "Simeina Huifu"'s!

(footnote): These were the sort of intellectuals who for the time being accepted the Soviet regime, but whose basic mental disposition caused them to hope to change the nature of the regime. 11

Evening, September 13, 1941
"We Need Za Wen"  
Ding Ling  
October 23, 1941

There was a theoretician who once said to me: "It is difficult to talk about people still alive, from now on why don't you discuss the deceased?" I understand the meaning of this, for talking about living people often invites quarrel, while the deceased will never be able to defend themselves, let alone incur the ridicule and upbraiding resulting from mutual disdain among literary people, sectarianism, and egotism. In order to evade controversy, it is naturally correct to rely on the principle of keeping detached from political disorder to protect oneself.

There are also others who say something like this: "It is better to be a good member of the masses and raise a hand whenever you have an opinion".

I've even heard voiced this kind of hidden resentment which should have become a part of the past: "What am I? I say one sentence and it's as good as passing wind!"

What do these opinions show? They show that we still don't understand how to utilize democracy, how to develop self-criticism, and free debate. We are lacking a spirit of tolerance, and we are lacking the patience to listen carefully to other people's opinions. At the same time, they show that we have no courage or perseverance, we fear trouble, we fear meeting with rejection, and we fear sacrifice. We only loaf on the job, mumbling indistinct utterances from behind the back.

If there is someone willing to speak out, and who dares to speak out, even though his opinions are not yet completely correct, there are inevitably overly sensitive people who say that his opinions
are having a negative effect, that he has his own private faction, and is very contentious. This destroys unity and makes a big fuss over nothing... In this case certainly no one continues to debate with him to help him perfect his theories. This is the shame in our lives.

Before an event or an opinion is understood by many people, if one person ventures to take the step, he inevitably meets up with criticism. Only those who don't fear criticism and determinately carry on will be victorious. Mr. Lu Xun is the best example.

Because Mr. Lu Xun hoped to start at curing the souls of humanity, he abandoned medicine to involve himself in literature. Because he recognized that the disease of his age required the sharpest of blades, he turned from writing fiction to za wen. The subject matter touched upon in his za wen included the entire Chinese society. When Lu Xun wrote za wen, he received the disdain of those literary men who "use their own shortcomings to look down upon others' strongpoints". He was cursed by those who said that he only wrote za wen because he was unable to write fiction. Yet now, his za wen have become China's greatest intellectual works and most brilliant literary pieces. But they still cause people to retreat in fear.

If you won't take pen to paper unless you can write za wen as well as Lu Xun, you might as well first decide not to write at all. Your essays will progress through practice. It is not written for glory, but for the sake of truth.

The present age has still not separated from the time of Mr. Lu Xun. Filth and corruption, darkness, and the oppression and
slaughter of progressive elements still exist. People don't even have the freedom to protect their advocacy of the War of Resistance, yet still all we can say is "China is in the age of the United Front!" We don't understand that an even firmer unity can be established through criticism. Thus, we have abandoned our responsibility.

Even the progressive places where the first steps of democracy exist, require even more encouragement and watchful surveillance. China's deeply rooted feudal bad habits of several thousand years are not easy to eradicate, and so-called progressive places do not fall from the sky - they are connected to the old society of China. Yet here we only say that it is not appropriate to write za wen, that this place should only reflect the democratic life and the Great Construction.

Although it is man's natural reaction to be carried away by small successes, to conceal one's ailment and take no remedial measures, this is really only indolence and cowardice.

Mr. Lu Xun has died. All of us often talk about how to commemorate him this way and that way, but we lack the courage to emulate his fearlessness. Today I feel that it would be best to emulate the way in which he firmly and eternally faced the truth, dared speak out for truth, and feared nothing. We of this generation still need za wen. We must not abandon this weapon. Raise it up, and za wen will not die.
NOTES TO APPENDIX II

1 Zhou Yang arrived in Yan'an from Shanghai in autumn of 1937. In the interview with him printed in the September 1978 issue of Seventies magazine, he gives this account of the circumstances which led him to go to Yan'an:

"At that time [during the debate over the two National Defense slogans] I was twenty odd years of age [he was actually twenty-eight] and really not very sensible. I had plenty of revolutionary fervor, but I found work difficult to undertake especially after Lu Xun publicly singled me out for criticism. At that time I had no sure means of livelihood. Although I was a professional revolutionary, in Shanghai I completely relied on the money I made through selling manuscripts; the Party gave me no financial support. Just at that time Yan'an needed people. Because by then, cooperation between the Nationalist and Communist Parties had reached basic settlement, and at least the civil war could cease. A telegram was sent from Yan'an saying that they needed cultural workers from Shanghai to be sent there. So I, Ai Siqi, and others went to Yan'an."

At Yan'an in 1938, Zhou Yang served as Head of the Education Department of the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Regional Government. He was a member of the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region Cultural Association, and at the time of writing this article was also the Dean of the Lu Xun Academy of Arts, a part of Yan'an University.

2 N.G. Chernyshevsky (1828-1889) was an extremely influential figure among the progressive elements in Russia. His writings covered a wide variety of subjects including philosophical, political, social, and literary theory. Zhou Yang had translated his "The Aesthetic Relationship of Art to Reality".

3 In Richard Hare's Maxim Gorky: Romantic Realist and Conservative Revolutionary, London: Oxford University Press, 1962, Gorky describes how difficult the Russian language was for him.
Gerhard Habermann in Maksim Gorki, New York: Frederick Ungar, 1971, p. 78, also quotes Gorky as saying "It is good for the writer to battle with the word".

4 The Chinese expression which I have translated as "sublimely detached" is 高致. It seems to mean something like noble detachment or elevating thoughts. I am told it most likely refers to an almost Daoist philosophical attitude towards the world. Here, it denotes the objective distance or broader scope of vision which a writer must have to balance his subjective knowledge of subject matter. The English term "sublime detachment" connotes a negative snobbishness which is not intended here in the Chinese, although the Chinese do use it at times in this negative sense.


6 See Chapter Two, p. 58, note 6.

7 MZDJ vol. 1:207-249; English in SWMTT vol, 1:23-59

8 Vladimir Mayakovskii (1893-1930) was a Russian revolutionary poet known for his romantic personality. He wrote lyrical poetry and also devoted himself to much propaganda writing after 1917. He committed suicide in April of 1930.

Sergei Alexandrovich Yesenin (1895-1925) was a Russian lyrical poet of peasant origin very popular in the 1920's. He too was a very romantic figure, and after his brief marriage to the American dancer Isadora Duncan, he supposedly grew melancholy and disillusioned. In a fit of depression he hanged himself in a Leningrad hotel in December of 1925. According to Olga Garlisle's Poets On Street Corners, New York: Random House, 1968, p. 227. "Soon afterwards, Mayakovskii, once a close friend of Yesenin's wrote a long, sententious poem in which he showed disapproval for Yesenin's lack of civic responsibility".
"On the mountains" refers to Yan'an and environs, while "in the garrets" refers to the writers and cultural workers who came to Yan'an from the relatively secluded environment of the foreign concessions of Shanghai.

André Gide (1869-1951) the French poet, novelist, critic, and essayist, was disallusioned about communism after his visit to Russia in 1936, although it is said that he didn't allow this to color his life or make him an enemy to communist causes. Influenced by Symbolism, Futurism, and extreme individualism, he was known as being faithful to his art regardless of politics.

Ivan Bunin (1870-1953) was a Russian prose writer and poet who emigrated to Paris in 1920. He was known to be politically aloof, for taking pride in his gentry origin, and for his "uncompromising hostility against the Communist regime". His writing is described for its subtleties of style and sophistication.

I have been unable to trace the meaning of the Soviet name Simeina Huifu.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>CKZL</td>
<td>Zhongguo Xiandai Wenxue Shi Cankao Ziliao</td>
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<td>JFRB</td>
<td>Jiefang Ribao</td>
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<tr>
<td>JNJ</td>
<td>Zhonghua Quanguo Wenxue Yishu Gongzuozhe Daibiao Dahui Jinian Ji</td>
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<td>LXQJ</td>
<td>Lu Xun Quanji</td>
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<td>MZDJ</td>
<td>Mao Zedong Ji</td>
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<td>SWLH</td>
<td>Selected Works of Lu Hsun</td>
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<td>SWMTT</td>
<td>Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung</td>
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