

THE FATE OF A NATION-STATE LIES IN
CHARACTER AND SPIRIT OF HER PEOPLE
Liu Yazhou's China Vision

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Mao Zedong claims: History is created by the people. What a profound claim! Doubtlessly, in the rolling thunder of history, we hear the firm, solid footsteps of great leaders, as President Nixon asserts. Still, it is the people, and only the people, who are the real movers of world history, as Mao Zedong says. It is on the shoulder of the people, and only on the shoulder of the people, which a nation-state can stand. It is in the character and spirit of the people, and only in the character and spirit of the people, that the fate of a nation-state lies. No wonder, when the people stand, a nation-state stands. When the people crawl, the nation-state crawls. When the people display self-pity, a nation-state reflects that self-pity. When the people of the nation are “rusty,” the nation-state is rusty. And when a people is dying, a nation-state is vanishing. That much we learn from pre-modern and modern Chinese history, and that much we ought to learn from modern Chinese history, as we are told by Liu Yazhou, one of the most influential strategic thinkers in China today. The competition in the world today is not between nation-states, but between peoples; that much we learn from, and that much we ought to learn from pre-modern and modern Chinese history, as Liang QiChao and Liu insist.

History is a teacher. President Xi Jinping says that a nation-state's present comes from her past. A bloody, tearful history is a profound teacher. Pre-modern and modern Chinese history is a bloody, tearful history and a profound teacher. What can we, and what should we learn from this “teacher,” —that is the question which Liu Yazhou asks. As a passionate patriot, a staunch communist, a top Chinese army general and a profound strategic thinker, Liu thinks about China over the long haul, historically and strategically. With historical realism, his three articles “On Spirit: The 70th Anniversary of the Victory of the War of Resistance against Japan,” “Re-commemorating 1644: The 360th Anniversary of the Jiashen Year,” and “National Shame: On China's Defeat in the War of 1894” which are included in this volume epitomize some of his meditations. The essays, full with profound insights, are pregnant with a grandiose vision, and present a creative, idiosyncratic prospective. Using China's two wars with Japan — the War of Jiawu, and the War of Resistance against Japan — and the downfall of China's Ming Dynasty in 1644 as the double mirrors, as well as the May 4th Movement as the vista from which both pre-1915 China and pos-1915 China were mirrored, Liu explores three profound themes that are central to China's present

enterprise of fulfilling the Chinese Dream: modernization of China's national spirit, modernization of China's national character, and modernization of China's basic social institutions and structure. No platitude. No tautology. No hypocrisy. What we read are uncompromised reflections, unapologetic criticism, and unambiguous arguments. His political stance does not hinder the intellectual rigor and philosophical depth of his thought and thinking. His flamboyant style and tune only adds beauty to his view. We owe him great gratitude for those deep thoughts on and penetrating insights into China's past, present and future, as well as China's destiny. In these essays, we see in Liu's meditations the familiar shadows of Habermas' post-World War II reflection of modern Germany's fate and experience, and Socrates' post-Peloponnesian War reflection of the Athenian society and polity.

Spirit is a people's and a nation-state's backbone. A people cannot stand if her soul or spirit crawls. A nation-state cannot stand if her soul or spirit is nothing but an empty shell. This is the first lesson that we learn, and ought to learn, from pre-modern and modern China's fates, according to Liu. The 1644 downfall of Ming and the 1894 China's defeat pointed to one common lesson: "We were dead in spirit, even though our bodies remained alive" (p.37¹). Spirit constellates will, thoughts, core values, and moral strength such as courage. Neither the Chinese people of 1644 nor the Chinese people of 1894 had beliefs in what they fought for. For them, there was no difference between the country belonging to Li family and the country belonging to Zhao family. Both in 1644 and 1894 China was a spiritual desert and had no national consciousness that brought Chinese people home. A person without a spiritual home cannot stand. Nor can a nation-state. In 1644, and again 1894, China did not have a spiritual home and she could not stand on her own feet. Economically and militarily, the Ming dynasty was not backward in comparison to her grave-digger Qing minority group, but Chinese people in Ming territory had no national spirit to stand as a people. In 1894 China was not economically and militarily much weaker than Japan. Nonetheless, China's so-called "*Tong Zhi Reform* (同治中興)" did not build a Chinese national spirit, which was totally absent in China's two defeats in the two Opium Wars (1839-1842, 1856-1860), least a China's national spirit that was modern. Indeed, what the *Tong Zhi Reform* failed most to accomplish was to awaken the Chinese people. It was its total failure to turn Chinese people into a group of citizens with a China soul. Notwithstanding, in 1894, China was still a soulless country wherein Chinese people had no belief in themselves, no belief in their country, and no belief in their emperor. In comparison, the most successful part of the Japanese *Meiji Reform* was that it successfully

¹Editors' note: All Chen's citations are from this special edition (see the above pages).

awakened Japanese people and it was successful in building a national spirit that was modern. After *Meiji Reform*, Japanese people became a people of citizens with a Japan-soul. They had belief in their emperor, their country, and themselves. Thus, in the Sino-Japanese rivalry, Japan had a national vision and strategy, but China had none. Japanese people had a sense of national destiny, but the Chinese people had none. Japanese people had a sense of what Japan ought to do to bring Japan into a modern nation-state; Chinese people did not even have a concept of a modern nation-state. That was the fatal fork.

“The spirit of a nation finds its manifestation in the essence and quality of its culture, which fundamentally impacts the nation’s existence and development,” as Liu claims (p.7). Liu points out: what was profoundly wrong with pre-1915 China as a nation was that “Chinese lost their original spirit. For thousands of years they maintained but one posture spiritually and physically before power, be it royal or foreign, on their knees.” (p.8). In the 1894 Sino-Japanese War, Chinese weapons were not poorer than those of the Japanese and the Chinese navy was larger than the Japanese navy. Still, China was defeated badly. And the reason was vastly clear: China’s national spirit did not match Japan’s in any way. A nation whose spirit crawled was defeated by a nation whose spirit stood; a nation whose soul was lost was defeated by a nation whose soul was strong and modern. No fatality, no mysticism, but pure logic of history and social evolution. The 1894 Sino-Japanese War was a battle between two national spirits—the modern one vs. the pre-modern one—and the modern one won. As Liu points out, what is true of China’s 1894 defeat by Japan is also true of the 1644 fall of Ming China to the Qing minority: the cause was China’s total loss of her national spirit (or she had no national spirit at all). In 1644, what Ming China really lacked was a national spirit. China did not have a soul. As a result, Chinese people were akin to a dish of sand. The downfall of the Ming Dynasty in 1644 brought this hard truth home. So did the First Opium War, the prelude of modern China’s ill-fate. In the First Opium War, China was militarily defeated because it was first of all spiritually defeated. China, in 1839-1842, was the same as China in 1644: A nation-state without a soul; a people without a soul! China, in 1894, was the same as China in 1644: nation-state without a soul; a people without a soul! What a fatality! Lun Xun cried out: “In present day China where can I find a fighter who has spiritual pursuits?” (p.10).

So far as China’s 1894 defeat is concerned, as Liu indicates, China as a spiritual desert was due in no small measure to the total backwardness of Chinese thinking and thought at that time. Thinking and thought is the engine of spirit. The Chinese engine was outdated and died, while the Japanese engine was modern and operated at full throttle. As a result, China was caught in a time in which China did not belong, but Japan did

belong. In 1894, China's thinking and thought was behind Japan in every domain: in social-political thinking, in national vision and international vision, in economic thinking, in military thinking, and in self-conceptualization. Japanese started to learn from the West and thought as a modern people, while Chinese still thought as a pre-modern people. "The face-off between Japan and the Qing China is one between a modern country and a pre-modern country. How could the Qing China win?" (p.56) Accordingly, the fatal encounter between Japanese and Chinese in 1894 was an encounter between a people of modern spirit and a people of pre-modern spirit. Japanese were armed with modern thinking and modern knowledge. Chinese were equipped with pre-modern, outdated thinking and knowledge. For example, Liu rightly points out that "it (China) didn't have modern military thinkers" in 1894 (p.63). Thus, in 1894, the Japanese army "wins today's war with tomorrow's ideas" while China loses today's war with yesterday's ideas. Needless to say, China had no modern social-political thinkers or no modern economic thinkers, either. Thus, in 1894 the Chinese were akin to Margaret Mitchell's protagonist Ashley Wilkes, caught in a time in which she did not belong, trying to make a poor "best of it" by utilizing concepts and ideas of yesterday that were gone.

Thus, "The defeat in the War of Jiawu is also the defeat of culture" (p.65). It was first of all a defeat of China's pre-modern, backward thinking and beliefs. Chinese culture then was backward, corrupted, and malfunctioning. China's backwardness in spirit at that time epitomized China's backwardness in culture. And China's backwardness in spirit reflected China's backwardness in thinking and beliefs. "The core of the culture is spirit and the core of spirit is faith, which, as the gene of a nation, dictates its characters and development, as well as its mutation"(p.65). "You cannot overestimate the importance of ideas. People's spirit is their ideas and people's ideas are their spirit" (p.59). The same is true of a people, and of a nation-state. As China's 1894 defeat indicates, the consequence of the death of thoughts and faith can be devastating for a nation-state. A pale ghost cannot fight a real elephant. A people without thoughts and faith can only crawl. Mao Zedong says: When you are backward, you will be beaten. In terms of China's modern fate, backwardness should be understood comprehensively to include backwardness in thinking and thought. When a nation or a people is backward in thinking and thought—for example, her thinking and thought is not modern and fell behind time—the nation or people will be beaten. When a nation or people is backward in its social-political, military, economic thinking, not only is that nation or people backward in her national and international visions and national strategy of development; and, also, more crucially, that nation is backward in spirit—for example, in national consciousness and spirit. In time, no people or nation that is

backward in spirit can stand on her own feet. Thus, modernization of a nation-state's and a people's spirit is always a historical necessity of time and a timely obligation for a nation-state and a people, not merely an empty political slogan. Zhuangzi teaches that people should “操雪而精神 (*Cao Xue Er Jing Shen*”, literally meaning to purify oneself and therefore to become high in spirit. Mencius teaches that one should nurture one's 浩然之氣 (*Hao Ran Zhi Qi*), literally meaning the vital, spiritual energy. A people also must “*Cao Xue Er Jing Shen*” and nurture its *Hao Ran Zhi Qi*. So must a nation-state.

A modern faith, spirit, and culture, a pre-1915 China had none; but a post-1915 China has two of them: a modern faith and a modern spirit. The modern faith was the people's belief in their country and in themselves. The modern spirit is the Chinese people's spirit of scientific thinking and ethical-moral courage, persistency, tenacity, and their will to fight and live for their ethical-moral beliefs. In the 1931-1945 War of Resistance against Japan, China was still a socially, politically, economically and militarily backward country while Japan was a modern country with a mighty air force, navy, and army. Nonetheless, China fought, fought some more, and continually fought, ultimately emerging as the winner and becoming one of the world leaders in the Post-World War II world. In the War of Resistance against Japan, China was armed with advanced thoughts and her national spirit was outstanding and the Chinese people stood as a people. When the Chinese stand as a people, China is a lion, not a sick cat; she is a giant of infinite force. For China, in 1644 and in 1894, defeat was acceptable and part of life. For a post-1915 China, defeat was unacceptable, and there can be no substitute for victory. As Liu points out, “The War of 1894 occurred before the May 4th Movement and the War of Resistance against Japan occurred after the May 4th Movement. These two wars shared the same battlefield and the same opponents, but with totally different outcomes. Of all the wars against foreign aggressors the War of Resistance against Japan was one of the most devastating, and of all battles against the fascists in World War II China's victory was won with the most sacrifices. The reason was that there was a fundamental change in the spirit of Chinese nationals” (p.12). It is the spirit of the nation that makes the difference.

The May 4th Movement was the turning point in China's modern fate because it is a movement wherein China arrived at spiritual resurrection, redemption, and salvation. “The May 4th Movement remains the most influential and the largest war of ideology, almost like the renaissance. What we learned from this movement is that a nation could not hope to rise until its people were able to stand on their own feet, because people are the essence between heaven and earth” (p.11). The movement summarized the on-going nation-wide movement called “New Culture Movement,” which was inaugurated by the publication of *The New Youth*

in 1915 and at traumatic time of crisis in China: a pervasive feeling of national humiliation before the foreign aggressors, an imminent foreign threat to China's national independence and territorial integrity, a sentiment of China's being economically, politically and militarily backward, and a disillusionment with China's social-political system and government.² The New Culture Movement did two things. First, it called for Chinese people to 救亡圖存 (*Jiu Wang Tu Chun*), literally "to save the nation from extinction and assure its survival" and to re-empower. The call for China's *Jiu Wang Tu Chun* is a call for China to rebuild a national consciousness and spirit. Second, it called for China to build was a new, modern culture and to enter into modernization. At the core of the new, modern culture are two concepts, "democracy" and "science," as well as the concept of reason. In an essay entitled "Some Sincere Advice to the New Youth," in the opening issue of the journal, Chen Duhsiu (1879-1942) urged the youth to wake up and embrace Western science and the idea of democracy. He argued that "if we (Chinese) want to leave the *age of ignorance*, if we are shameful of being a *non-civilized* nation, we shall hurry up to catch with (the modern Europe), enter modern age, and embrace both science and the doctrine of human rights."³ The movement thus sounded the bugle for China's spiritual awakening.

The May 4th Movement underscored the call by the New Culture Movement. The movement, provoked by China's failed diplomacy in the Paris Peace Conference 1919 urged the Chinese Government to reject the Treaty of Versailles and called for Chinese people to wake up as a people. Indeed, the greatest achievement of the May 4th Movement is that it spiritually awakened China and its people. Liu thus rightly calls the

²Of Chinese terrible situation at that time, Wen-Shun Chi quotes R.R.Palmer as saying: "If reader will imagine what the United States would be like if foreign warships patrolled the Mississippi as far as St.Louis, if foreigners came and went throughout the country without being under its laws; if New York, New Orleans, or any other city contained foreign settlements outside its jurisdiction, but in which all banking and management were concentrated; if foreigners determined the tariff policy, collected the proceeds and remitted much of the money to their own governments; if the western part of the city of Washington had been burned [the Summer Palace], Long Island and California annexed to distant empires [Hong Kong and Indochina] and all New England were covered by two immediate neighbors [Manchuria]; if the national authorities were half in collusion with these foreigners and half victimized by them; and if large areas of the country were prey to bandits, guerillas, and revolutionary secret societies conspiring against the helpless government and occasionally murdering some of the foreigners--then he can understand how observant Chinese felt at the end of last century....." (Wen-Shun Chi. *Ideological Conflicts in Modern China: Democracy and Authoritarianism*, New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1986, pp.2-3).

³Chen Duxiu, "Some Sincere Advises to the New Youth," *The New Youth*, (Shanghai, China), 1-1, September 1915, p.25.

Movement one of enlightenment. It is a movement of Chinese enlightenment, resurrection, redemption, and salvation in spirit. In 1839, Gong wrote, “If China is to regain some fresh vitality, a spring thunder is needed.” The May 4th Movement was the needed spring thunder for China! The fruits which the movement produced for China’s resurrection, redemption, and salvation in spirit were beautiful.

First, it directly awakened China and the Chinese people to have a consciousness of the nation, a consciousness of crisis, and a consciousness of China’s destiny. It directly awakened China to have a modern spirit, a modern national character, and modern basic social institutions. It directly awakened Chinese people to believe in China, live for China and fight for China. In the movement, Japan was the *bête noire* again. Japan was a fiend; and Satan, the arch-enemy and an object of criticism. Meanwhile, from Japan, China saw her own shadow. Japan was thus a mirror, too.

Second, it produced a nation-wide spread of modern knowledge and new thoughts and ideas including the ideas of democracy, science, reason, modernization, as well as various social-political outlooks including Marxism, pragmatism, scientism, and liberalism. Thinkers broke free from chains and shackles. Thoughts broke free from cages. Modern knowledge overcame the barriers of ignorance. While the New Culture sounded the bugle of China’s march from pre-modern thinking and spirit into modern thinking and spirit, the May 4th Movement arrived at a milestone in China’s journey from pre-modern to modern thinking and spirit. Japan was the mirror, but China did not just want to keep riding on Japan’s coat-tails. China wanted to surpass Japan and become a modern country.

Third, it produced a group of intellectual, social-political leaders. In 1839, Gong Zizhen wrote, “I would like to ask Heaven to be in high spirit again, and to disregard forms but send China talents.” Whether or not Heaven indeed heeded Gong’s appeal, the May 4th Movement did give China those needed talents and leaders. The movement not only introduced the concepts of democracy and science, but also, more crucially, produced a group of intellectual, social-political, and spiritual leaders of China and among them were Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, Deng Xiaoping, and various others—the upcoming founding fathers of the People’s Republic of China.

Notwithstanding, after the May 4th Movement, China’s fate was irrevocably altered for better and better. In contrast with the forlorn days in 1894, post-1919 China and Chinese people, with a reinvented, rigorous national spirit, ascended to a new historical platform. A new Chinese messianism—that is, the concept that China has its own ‘special’ destiny—was born. “When spirit changes horizons can be expanded” (p.18). When the spirit of a people stands up, the people stand up. When the people stand up, a nation-state stands up. Admittedly, in the 1920s and 1930s, China’s national spirit was in building, not built, and China’s national soul

was in building, not made. Still, having or having no a national spirit ultimately made a fundamental difference to China's modern fate; for example, it is a crucial factor for China's ultimate victory in the War of Resistance against Japan from 1931 to 1945. It is fair enough to say that only a modern national spirit alone is insufficient for China to win the War of Resistance against Japan. However, there could be no China's victory without China's modernization of her national spirit and soul after the 1919 May 4th Movement. That is to say, a modern national spirit and soul may not be a sufficient condition to assure China's victory, but is a necessary one.

China's War of Resistance against Japan was a battlefield wherein the color of China's newly born national spirit and soul was verified, and a revolutionary oven wherein China's newly born national spirit and soul was refined and refined. With a newly born national spirit and soul, Chinese men and women carried bravely the fate of their nation on their shoulders, they courageously carried the burdens of the nation on their shoulders, they determinately carried the task of history on their shoulders, and with their flesh, blood, and souls they formed the Great Wall of defending their country and themselves before the Japanese aggressors. With loyalty, courage, perseverance, resilience and tenacity, they marched forward together as a mighty torrent.

The communist-led legendary Eighth Route Army and New 4th Army of the National Revolutionary Army lunched heroic guerrilla warfare behind the enemy lines in Eastern and Northern China. Their weapons were even poorer than the Chinese army in 1894. Yet, they fought with exceptional courage, resilience, tenacity, advanced military thoughts and strategies, and a new national spirit. They became the leader and backbone of China's War of Resistance against Japan in Eastern and Northern China. On September 25, 1937, thousands of officers and soldiers of the 115 division of the Eighth Route Army—led by Generals Lin Biao, Nie Rongzhen and Luo Ronghuan—with little ammunitions, thin summer cloths, and being constantly bombed by Japanese airplanes, heroically booby-trapped and wiped out more 1,000 Japanese troops of the 21st brigade of the 5th Division of the Japanese army, and thereby trashed the so-called invincibility myth of the Japanese army. In 1940, virtually without ammunition, supplies, even foods and clothes, the Eighth Route Army launched the famous "100 regime" campaign, and wiped out more than 10,000 Japanese troops. In May 1941, more than 100 thousand of the Japanese troops launched what was called the "May 1st Campaign" against the Eighth Route Army. But men and women of this army—led by generals Peng Dehuai, Zuo Quan, He Long, Nie Rongzhen, Liu Bocheng, Deng Xiaoping, Xu Xiangqian, Luo Ronghuan and others— fought back against their enemies courageously and determinedly. From 1937 to 1945, on the two banks of Yellow River, in areas inside and outside the Great

Wall, officers and soldiers of the Eighth Route Army and the New 4th Army fought in mountains, fought in rivers, fought in countryside, fought in cities, fought in villages, and fought in towns. They turned every inch of northern China into a vast battlefield wherein invaders were eliminated. The school song of the Anti-Japanese Military and Political University epitomizes their shining spirit:

On the banks of Yellow River,
Gathering a group of outstanding sons and daughters of China;
On their shoulders carry the burdens of and duties to mankind and our
nation

...

Let us move forward like the mighty torrent of Yellow River,
Let us drive out the Japanese aggressors back to their Eastern home;
Let us march toward a new society, let us march forward...

What a spirit! What heroism! What a declaration of the return of China's soul. What a group of outstanding sons and daughters of China! They courageously accepted the burdens of, and duties to, mankind and the nation that were put on their shoulders. They marched forward with heroism. Their celebrated leaders—Zhu De, Peng Dehuai, Ren Bishi, Zuo Qian, Liu Bocheng, Deng Xiaoping, Xu Xiangqian, Lin Biao, Nie Rongzhen, Luo Ronghuan, He Long, Xiao Ke, and Chen Geng—all are great sons of China with an iron-steel-made spirit.

Another communist-led force, the New 4th Army, went also behind the enemy lines in the provinces of Zhe Jiang, Jiang Su, An Hui, He Nan and Hu Bei. From 1938 to 1945, men and women of this army corps engaged in hundreds of battles against the aggressors. They also turned every inch of these provinces into the nightmares of Japanese troops. Part of the song of this army corps is as follows:

In the glorious northern military campaign, in the city of Wu
Chang, bloods bathed our name;

Fighting lonely in the Mountain Luo Xiao, we inherit martyrs'
distinguished service;

In a thousand struggles, we are accompanied by the wind, the snow,
hunger and cold;

Fighting in ten of thousand miles, we live in poor mountains and
slept in open fields;

We acquire rich experiences of struggle; we train our spirit of
standing hardship and self-sacrifice.

For social happiness, for the liberation of our nation, we
persistently fight;

We men and women of eight provinces form the mighty anti-
Japanese torrent;

We men and women of eight provinces form the mighty anti-
Japanese torrent;

March eastward, we are the iron-made New 4th Army ;
 March eastward, we are the iron-made New 4th Army.

What a spirit of heroism! This spirit always overwhelms the enemy, not bends before the enemy. This spirit always stands, not crawls. This spirit radiates, and does not get rusty. With this spirit, struggle is no longer a hell in which one suffers, but an oven of refinement in which one is refined, elevated, and transformed. With this spirit, men and women of the New 4th Army courageously carried out their burdens and duties to their country. Their celebrated leaders—Chen Yi, Ye Ting, Xiang Ying, Peng Xuefeng, Luo Binhui, Li Xiannian, Tan Zhenlin, Su Yu, Huang Kecheng, and Zhang Yunyi—are all great sons of China with an iron-steel made spirit.

We must not forget those heroes from the often forgotten communist-led force, the Anti-Japanese United Army of Northeastern China, including Yang Jingyu, Zhao Yiman, and Zhou Baozhong. As Liu points out,

General Yang Jingyu was admired by his Japanese opponents when he was alive and even more after his death. When he was surrounded by the enemy, the Japanese sent a Chinese collaborator to persuade him to surrender. He told the messenger: “My fellow countryman if we all surrender will there be a China anymore?” Even now those thunderous words ring with the power of belief. After General Yang’s death an autopsy was performed on him by the Japanese troops, but all they saw in his stomach were pieces of grass or cotton. There was no food at all. The Japanese present were all shaken by the scene. Kishitani Ryuichiro, their commander, even shed tears and remained quiet for a long time. He “aged tremendously in a one day,” it was said. Later in years, Kishitani Ryuichiro devoted himself to the research on the psychology of the Chinese resistance fighters. However the deeper he got into it the more tormented he became. In the end he killed himself, his wife and children by taking poison. In his will Kishitani Ryuichiro wrote: “The war launched by his Majesty is probably not a good idea. When China has brave soldiers like General Yang Jingyu, it will never be conquered (p.17).

Yes, China after 1915 had millions of millions of sons and daughters of iron-steel made spirit like Yang JingYu. The communists like General Yang were among the best.

Mao Zedong was the leader. Mao had been given to China by Heaven. Mao wrote the following in the eve of China’s War of Resistance against Japan: “The fatherland is so beautiful and sexy/ it draws competitions of numerous heroes/ all of them are the past now, true heroes

belong to those present ones!”⁴ As the new China’s founding father to be, Mao “really had a broad vision with a strong sense of humor to go along with it ” (p.20). His thoughts ultimately lead China to rebirth again and to become a world power after World War II. Mao is the light and hope of China, the nation, and Chinese people in the War of Resistance against Japan. His motto: It can only be that heroes drive away tigers and leopards; it cannot be that outstanding persons are afraid of bears of yellow-white colors. “During the most difficult time of the war Mao pointed out, in his *Study on the Occupied Areas* and again in his *Current Situation and Our Tasks* that Japan intended to ‘annihilate the national spirit of China.” He told students in the Anti-Japanese Aggression University that “every one of us in this university wants to fight them to the very end and every one of us in this university is opposed to capitulation!” (p.19).

Meanwhile, men and women of the more than two million nationalist-led National Revolutionary Army fought with an equal spirit. On July 7, 1937, men and women of the 29th Army heroically started the battle of the Great-Wall resistance and thus blew the bugle of China’s nation-wide War of Resistance against Japan. On August 8, 1937, the 13rd Army Corps, the 17th Army Corps, and the 35th Army Corps jointly launched the Battle of NanKou (南口戰役) in the Northwestern part of Beijing. Some 20,000 officers and soldiers of the 13rd Army Corps heroically held their position against more than 80,000 Japanese troops for 20 days. Then, in one military campaign after another, from 1937 to 1945, the nationalist forces fought heroically 24 large military campaigns against the Japanese troops, in addition to two military expeditions outside China into Burma.⁵ In these campaigns, when divisions and divisions of officers and soldiers fell for their fatherland new divisions and divisions of

⁴Mao Zedong. *Mao Zedong Poems*. Shang Chun: Shang Chun Publishing House, 1999, p.124.

⁵The 24 large Military Campaigns are: *Song Hu* Military Campaign (淞滬會戰 1937.8—1937.11), the Battle of Defending Nan Jing (南京保衛戰 1937.12.1—1937.12.13), Tai Yuan Campaign (太原會戰 1937.9—1.37.11), Xu Zhou Campaign (徐州會戰 1938.1—1938.5), Lan Feng Campaign (蘭封會戰 1938.5—1938.6), Wu Han Campaign (武漢會戰 1938.6—1938.10), Nan Chang Campaign (南昌會戰 1939.3—1939.5), Sui Zao Campaign (隨棗會戰 1939.5.1—1939.5.20), The first Chang Sha Campaign (第一次長沙會戰 1939.9—1939.10), Gui Nan Campaign (桂南會戰 1939.11.1940.2), Zao Yi Campaign (棗宜會戰 1940.5—1940.6), Yu Nan Campaign (豫南會戰 1941.1-1941.2), Shang Gao Campaign (上高會戰 1941.3—1941.4), Jin Nan (Zhong Tiao Shan) Campaign (晉南會戰/中條山會戰 1941.5), the Second Chang Sha Campaign (第二次長沙會戰 1941.9—1941.10), the Third Chang Sha Campaign (第三次長沙會戰 1941.12—1942.1), Zhe Gan Campaign (浙贛會戰 1942.4—1942.7), E Xi Campaign (鄂西會戰 1943.5—1943.6), Chang De Campaign (常德會戰 1943.11—1943.12), Yu Zhong Campaign (豫中會戰 1944.4—1944.5), Chang Heng Campaign (長衡會戰 1944.5—1944.8), Gui Liu Campaign (桂柳會戰 1944.8—1944.12), Dian Xi Mei Bei Counter-Attack Campaign 滇西緬北反攻 (1943.10—1944.2), Xiang Xi Campaign (湘西會戰 1945.4—1945.6).

men and women stepped forward. When the ones in the front row fell, the others in the second row stepped forward and continuously carried out the fight. One inch of blood for one inch of fatherland. Millions of men and women, million miles of great wall of national defense. The nationalist forces lost one military campaign after another. Nonetheless, the more they lost, the more courageous they became. The more they lost, the harder they fought. They fought, fought some more, and they fought continuously. They fought for one ideal: drive out the invaders, recover the fatherland.

The song of the Eighth Route Army has the following lines: “In the endless yellow dusts, one sees no persons but hears only sounds of battle/ Glorious are men and women in uniforms/ Their breaths make the universe solemn, and their voices tremble ghost and spirit ... /Who will live forever, I rather die as a battle soul.” What a declaration of spirit! Yes, who will live forever; better let one’s pure heart stay to lighten bright the fatherland. The Eighth Route Army became one of the most legendary army corps in the War of Resistance against Japan. The army corps participated in *Song Hu* Campaign, *Nan Chang* Campaign, *E Xi* Campaign, *Chang De* Campaign, and *Xiang Xi* Campaign. The song of another army corps, the 74th Army Corps, has these lines: “Stand up, brothers, let us launch counter-attack against the aggressors .../ we have feelings of shame, we carry bravely burdens/ we are the the nation’s army force, and we are the nation’s vanguards.” Let us stand up to be the nation’s vanguards, what a statement! The legendry army corps participated in the *Song Hu* Campaign, the Battle of Defending *Nan Jing*, *Xu Zhou* Campaign, *Lan Feng* Campaign, the first, second, and third *Chang Sha* Campaign, and the *Chang De* Campaign. It was the army corps that participated in more large military campaigns, engaged more enemies, and had more falling soldiers and officers than any other army corps in the entire War of Resistance against Japan. The song of another army corps, the 52th Army Corps, has these lines: “The blood of Chinese sons, should be shed in battle field/ I ignore airplanes/ I ignore cannons/ With justice I fight and resist.../Chinese men, no one can match them in righteousness and courage and righteousness/ shed their blood and ready to die for their country/ return as the victor of the nation or die in the battle field for national tragedy.” In the entire period of the War of Resistance against Japan, men and women in the 52th Army Corps fought from Northern China to Southwestern China. They fought as they walk, all the way. All the same, what we see in men and women of the nationalist-led army is the unprecedented spirit to fight for China, unprecedented national consciousness, and unprecedented Chinese soul that would rather die in standing, than exist in crawling.

Jiang Zhongzheng is the nationalist leader. Facing ten thousand-to-one odds against China, he led the nationalist forces to fight, fight, and

fight more, and continuously fight throughout the War of Resistance against Japan.⁶ He, too, is a son of the nation with an iron-steel made spirit.⁷ Noteworthy here, in 1936, the newly born national consciousness and spirited Chinese nationalists and communists set aside their differences and conflicts to form a united national front of The War of Resistance against Japan. The nationalist-led central government and various local warlords were also able to set their differences aside, and jointly fight to resist the Japanese aggression. Yes, the nationalist and the communists had fought against one another for almost ten years. But when the new national crisis of Japanese invasion occurred, they were all Chinese again, and all Chinese first. In front of a new national crisis, they became brothers, sisters, and comrades again, in spite of their ideological difference and of their 10 years of conflicts wherein each wanted to destroy the other. In front of a national crisis, the nationalist-led government took the Japanese to the international court of opinions and tried to ask for international assistance, on the one hand, and called for all Chinese people, regardless of their ages and areas where they lived, to resist Japanese invasion and to defend China. Meanwhile, Mao creatively called the War of Resistance against Japan a “People’s War.” In front of a new national crisis, both the nationalist leadership and the communist leadership prepared for a protracted war. In the eve of a full scale national War of Resistance against Japan, the nationalist government chose Chong Qing as the war-time capital to be in case their capital city Nanjing would fall to the Japanese invaders. The communist leadership not only established their basis in Yanan in Northwestern China, but also established the Anti-Japanese Military and Political University to train its cadre corps. All the same, with her new born national consciousness and spirit, the Chinese people could stand as a people, and China could stand on her own feet.

Another profound lesson of China’s pre-modern and modern fates is that China must modernize her national character and the Chinese people must modernize her national character to meet the challenge of time, as Liu indicates in the essays. For a person, a people, and a nation-state,

⁶Jiang was the chairman of the national military committee throughout the War of Resistance against Japan. In 1943, when President of China Lin Shen died, Jiang then assumed the presidency of the nationalist-led Chinese government.

⁷With Jiang are a group of celebrated nationalist generals and anti-Japanese war heroes including He Yingqin, Chen Cheng, Bai Chongxi, Zhang Zizhong, Xu Yongchang, Cheng Qian, Li Zhongren, Xue Yue, Wei Lihuang, Luo Zhuoying, Gu Zhutong, Liu Xiang, Tang Enbo, Hu Zongnan, Yang Sen, Wang Lingji, Tang Shizun, Sun Zhen, Wang Zuanxu, Li Pinxian, Guang Zenglin, Sun Lianzhong, Wang Yaowu, Wu Qiwei, Lu Han, Song Xilian, Gui Yongqing, Huang Wei, Fan Hanjie, Fu Zuoyi, Du Yuming, Liao Yaoxiang, Sun Yuanliang, Ou Zhen, Yu Jishi, Zheng Dongguo, Chen Mingren, Dai Anlan, Hu Lian, Sun Liren and so on. They are all outstanding sons of China.

spirit is the backbone of character. Character is the backbone of fate. A person is doomed if his character is distorted. A nation-state is doomed if its character is bad or outdated.

As indicated, in what is said of Chinese men and women in the War of Resistance against Japan above, the crucial difference between a pre-1915 China and a post-1915 China is national character: one had only a slavish character that did not value national dignity, love freedom and national independence and thus had no determination and will to fight for the nation; another had a national character that valued national dignity, loved freedom, and had determination and a will to fight, and dared to call out, “one inch of blood for one inch of fatherland; one had a character that was as ‘weak as sheep’; another had an iron-steel character; one was pre-modern and thus complacent, self-conceited, cowardly, and hostile to reform; and another was modern and thus outstanding, self-critical, courageous, open-minded to reform and change, and geared to modern thinking, thought and knowledge; one was willing to be degraded; another was geared to constant self-renovating and self-strengthening. Mao Zedong claims, “Chinese people are famous not only for their hard-working and diligence character, but also for their love of freedom and their rich revolutionary tradition”⁸. What Mao says is true of Chinese people in general and true of post-1915 Chinese men and women. That said, pre-1915 Chinese people lost their character and moral qualities. They were distorted-men and distorted-women in character.

The pre-1915 Chinese men and women lived as slaves, thought as slaves, and acted as slaves. Their personal characters were slavish characters with slavish mentality. Before their totalitarian rulers, they were slaves akin to dead beings, and before foreign aggressors, they were slaves akin to dead beings too. Needless to say, “When a slave is a slave before his master, can he transform into a master before a foreign invader? You must be dreaming!” (p.43). In comparison, the post-1915 Chinese men and women were awakening men and women. They sang their national anthem: “Arise, those who do not want to be slaves/ using our flesh and blood to form the Great Wall of the National defense; China has reached the most dangerous crisis.../Arise, Arise, let us unite as one, and let us march forward in spite of enemy’s barrages”. They rose up to call for their government to reject the Treaty of Versailles. The Post-1915 Chinese men and women had a disposition called *sanguinity*. The pre-1915 Chinese attitude of “taking Chinese learning as the substance and Western learning as the function and tool (中學為體, 西學為用),” summarized the Chinese people’s complacency and self-conceit. The

⁸Mao, Zedong. 1967. *The Selected Works of Mao ZeDong*. Beijing: The People’s Publishing House, p.586.

Chinese complacency refused to recognize China's backwardness in thinking, thought and spirit. It refused to see that China was backward substantially, not merely backward in some functions—that is, China was backward in spirit, in thinking, in character, and in facing the challenges of modern time. At issue here is not how best to understand the relationship between traditional Chinese learning and modern western learning. At issue here is that the pre-1915 China refused to learn what is new, modern, and advanced in order to modernize herself. In comparison, the post-1915 Chinese people wanted to move “Mr. Democracy” and “Mr. Science” to China. They recognized that China was backward in spirit, thinking, and basic social institutions. They were ready to embrace what was the most advanced at that time.

Meanwhile, the crucial difference between pre-1915 Chinese people and pre-1915 Japanese people was also national character: The Chinese men and women were apathetic, self-alienated, distorted, slave-like and cowardly in character; Japanese people were full-blooded, self-conscious, normal, hero-oriented, and courageous in character; the pre-1915 Chinese men and women were weak, inconsistent and disintegrated in character; The Japanese people were strong, consistent, and firm in character; the pre-1915 Chinese men and women were slaves in spirit; the pre-1915 Japanese men and women were citizens; the pre-1915 Chinese men and women were complacent, having no great goals; the pre-1915 Japanese men and women had a great goals; the pre-1915 Chinese people, as a whole, had no great goals; pre-1915 Japanese, people as a whole, had a great goals; the pre-1915 Chinese men and women were complacent and resisted learning new knowledge; the pre-1915 Japanese men and women were open-minded and enthusiastic about learning new knowledge.

First, the pre-1915 Chinese men and women are apathetic. They were akin to “a lower animal such as earthworm, which continued to live even if a part of its body was cut while other parts felt nothing at all” (p.57). They were apathetic to their own situation, and totally insensitive to the fate of China. In comparison, their Japanese rivals were full-blooded beings. They were sensitive to their own situation and the situation of their nation. “On July 1907, before she was executed in Xuan Ting Pavilion, in the city of Shao Xing, Qiu Jin exclaimed: “There doesn't seem to be a single brave man that I can see and there doesn't seem to be anyone who cares about this beautiful country!” (p.9). In connection with this, the pre-1915 Chinese men and women were self-alienated and alienated from their own nation, too. They had no self-consciousness. They had no consciousness of their country. They were what Sartre would call beings-in-itself, not beings-for-itself. They were totally alienated from themselves and from their country. In comparison, their Japanese rivals had turned themselves into self-consciousness citizens after the 1868 *Meiji Reform* (Ibid.). The Japanese people consisted of citizens (Ibid.).

Second, the pre-1915 Chinese men and women were distorted in character. “The entire dynasty was filled with horror, and China was a nation of spiritual slaves” (p.39). For a people of master character, freedom is a central value. For a people of a slavish character, nothing matters but life; freedom is worthless if life is lost. They had no will or courage or to be what they ought to be. They had no will to take responsibility on anything. In daily life, they lived as told by their masters about how to live. They did as told by the masters what to do. They lived at the will of their masters, not at their own will. They were used to be owned, oppressed and exploited. “Autocracy eats people, and the people become sheep. The Han were sheep. The knees of the Han bend with particular ease; they bend toward the emperor, and they bend toward the enemy” (p.44). In comparison, their Japanese rivals who might like to go to extremes in their endeavors, were normal and determined to own their fate and destiny. They stood straight, not at ready to bend their knees. The pre-1894 Japanese people aspired to be outstanding, while the pre-1894 Chinese people simply wanted to survive physically.

Third, the pre-1915 Chinese men and women were cowardly and lacked what is called “*sanguinity*” in their character. In 1644, when Li Zicheng’s peasant army attacked Beijing City, the capital of Ming Dynasty, only two of its 400,000 defenders fought to die; when Beijing fell, only the following numbers of government officers committed suicide in loyalty to the Ming Dynasty: “Zhejiang, 6; Jiangxi, 2; Henan, 2... Only one under the direct jurisdiction of Beijing” (p.41). What a list! Chinese men and women in the Qing dynasty did not fare better. Luo Fenglu, advisor to Li Hongzhang, described the situation by saying: “Japanese used to say that Chinese were like dead pigs on the ground ready to be butchered at will, which is what actually happened” (p.66). Yukechi Fukuzawa observed, “The cowardice expressed by the Chinese was beyond description” (Ibid.). No wonder, in the 1894 Sino-Japanese War, the Qing army was unable to defend one single city which could be defended and it was unable to take one single city which could be taken (Ibid.). In comparison, the pre-1915 Japanese men and women were tenacious, indomitable, and willing to die standing, rather than live crawling. In daily life, they were hard-working. In crisis, they were hard-fighting. They did not give in to any enemies, even if this meant to shed the last drop of blood of the last man or woman. The song of Japanese army has such lines: “Charge to the mountain top, let the valley be filled with our bodies. March to the vast oceans, let the water be covered with our bodies.” (p.68)

Fourth, before 1915 Chinese men and women were trivial, and complacent, having no life goals or *Zhixiang*, which is a constellation of a self’s ethical aspiration, sense of purpose, commitment, and overarching personal ethical plan in life. Confucius declared, “The commanders of the

three armies could be given away, but not a self's *zhi* (志)”⁹ Wang Yangming claimed, “A person's *zhi* is the commander of his/her body and mind. It is the foundation of his/her being.”¹⁰ “Persons who have no *zhi* are like ships without helms ... wandering around and losing in direction.”

¹¹ Both China and Japan share common Confucian cultural heritages. However, the pre-1915 Chinese men and women had no great *zhixiang*, but the pre-1915 Japanese men and women had. Liu rightly points out that in 1894, China lacked both a national strategic vision and a strategic will, military or comprehensive national strategic vision and will alike; in comparison, in 1894, Japan did not lack such strategies. This should not be surprising. In 1894, China had no national ambition and aspired for nothing. In comparison, Japan had the ambition to be a modern Japan. Thus, “In waging the War of Jiawu, Japan openly preached to ‘gamble with its nation's destiny.’ The Qing government did not have such a will.” (p.60). The only “*zhixiang*” of ordinary Chinese men in pre-1915 China were to become government officials of some rank, but Japanese men and women just wanted to become Japanese.

Fifth, before 1915, Chinese men and women were close-minded, self-conceited and resisted learning new knowledge; before 1915 Japanese men and women were open-minded and enthusiastic about learning new knowledge. China started her so-called “*Tong Zhi* Reform” and Japan started her Meiji Reform at approximately the same time: China in 1864 and Japan in 1868; China was even a few years earlier. But the Chinese did not really want to learn from the West. As mentioned above, their maxim was: To use the Chinese learning as the foundation and Western learning for practical purposes. Japanese people had a different attitude. “Japan was a nation good at learning; it learned from whomever was stronger and Japan did it effectively” (p.56). She did not tie her hands with such nonsensical distinctions between foundation and function. She wanted to learn from the West all its advanced knowledge and technologies. She emphasized the desire to “combine the Japanese soul with the Western one.” As Liu notes, “Bismarck, Germany's Iron Chancellor met with the delegations from China and Japan. When asked about his impression of China and Japan, he said, ‘In a contest between these two countries, Japan must win and China must lose.’ He also said, ‘The Japanese who visited Europe were interested in the ideas and political principles, for the purpose of making fundamental changes back

⁹Confucius. *The Analects*. In Yang XiaoMing (Eds.), *The Four Books and Five Classics*. Chengdu: Bachu Publishing House. Vol. 1. 1996, 9.26.

¹⁰Wang, Yangming. “Letter to Younger Brother on Establishing *Zhi*,” *The Complete Works of Wang Yangming*. Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Publishing House, Vol.7, 1968, p.7.

¹¹Wang, Yangming. “Instruction to the Youths in the Dragon Square,” *The Complete Works of Wang Yangming*. Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Publishing House, Vol. 26. 1968, p.26.

home. However, the Chinese here were interested only in how ships and cannons were made, and how much they cost; buying them and bringing them home sufficed.” (p.56). As Bismarck saw it, the Japanese wanted to learn whole-heartedly from Europe new knowledge and theories in order to transform Japan fundamentally. The Chinese did not want to do so, but merely cared about how to buy certain things for good prices. That is the difference. That is the difference that makes the difference!

Sixth, the pre-1915 Chinese men and women were mean, vulgar, and thus intolerant. The pre-1915 Japanese were not noble, but they were more cosmopolitan and tolerant of talents and genius. The pre-1915 Chinese people lived under totalitarian rule. “In an autocratic society, people’s characters are the most slavish and the least tolerant. The more slavish the mentality, the less tolerant it is” (p.45). As a result, such multi-fold dispositions of slave character of the Chinese people were essentially hostile to genius and those who were outstanding in pre-1915 China. Therefore, “A man of talent who proudly and aloofly guards his own convictions is sure to end up in Hell” (p.26). “Western culture emphasizes struggling against nature, so it has given birth to one thinker and inventor after another. Chinese culture emphasizes fighting with other people, so it has produced one champion persecutor after another” (p.46). In comparison, before 1915, Japanese people were full of spirit of competition. At the same time, Japanese men and women had real respect for men and women of real talents, and wanted to learn from them, not to destroy them. Thus, before 1915, Japanese society might not have been a pure garden to talents and genius, but at least was cosmopolitan tea houses. No wonder in pre-1915 Japan, there were so many innovations in technology and thought.

Seventh, before 1915, Chinese men and women were untrustworthy and cowardly in fighting against foreign enemies, but tenacious in in-fighting among themselves. “China’s civil war was a rare spectacle in world history. I believe that the more devastating a nation is in civil war, the less capable it is in external conflict. Conversely, the more incompetent a nation is in external conflict, the more ferocious it is in civil war” (p.45). As Liu quoted Lu Xun in saying, “China likes to say it loves peace, but in fact it loves fighting, loves watching things fight and loves watching its own people fight, but doesn’t dare fight foreign invaders” (p.45).

In short, before 1915, Chinese men’s and women’s common character was slavish, distorted, alienated, cowardly, complacent, close-minded, mean, vulgar, untrustworthiness, cowardly in fighting against foreign enemy but tenacious in in-fight. Such a character has no trace of the traditional Chinese character of humanity, wisdom, and courage. It cannot stand together with others, but can only crawl before others, in modern time. A person’s fate lies in the person’s character. So does a

people's. So does a nation's. The pre-1915 China and post-1915 China have different fates because Chinese men and women's common character differ in these two periods of time, with the May Fourth-New Culture Movement as the turning point. The pre-1915 China and pre-1915 Japan had different fates because the pre-1915 Chinese people and the pre-1915 Japanese people had different national characters. Thus, the lesson is that if China wants to stand on its own feet in modern times, Chinese people must modernize their character and China must have a modern national character.

A further profound lesson of pre-modern and modern China's fates is that China must modernize her basic social institutions to meet the challenge of time, as Liu indicates in the essays. The source of China's pre-modern and modern ill-fate must be traced back to China's feudalistic social institutions that produced China's loss of soul and character. As Liu sees it, "The defeat by Japan in the War of Jiawu is the defeat of neither the navy nor the army but the defeat of the country" (p.55). It is first of all the defeat of China's basic social institutions, e.g., government, laws, military, education, economic system, and so on. In comparison, "Japan won and China lost the war because of their social systems" (Ibid.). In effect, the 1644 downfall of the Ming dynasty was the downfall of the Ming system of social institutions. A totally corrupted and malfunctioning Ming system of social institutions was replaced by a relatively functioning Qing system.

Basic social institutions are indispensable social structures to define a nation-state and a people. People create institutions, but institutions in turn structuralize and canonize people and therefore make people, too. No wonder, Fukuzawa, a harbinger of modern Japanese education and a modern Japanese enlightenment thinker, would say: "It is essential to make three changes for a nation to rise: a change of minds, a change of political system and a change of instruments, exactly in that order." (p.55). In truth, for a nation-state to rise, not only her political institutions, but all of her basic social institutions must be changed. In Marxist idiom, for a nation-state to rise, it must renovate both its economic foundation and superstructures. As China's 1894 defeat indicates, Japanese *Meiji Reform* achieved that and therefore Japan rose to a modern nation before 1894. China's *Tong Zhi Reform* failed to achieve that, and therefore China remained as a backward, pre-modern nation-state in 1894 and was beaten by Japan. In 1894, China's basic social institutions were still feudalistic, pre-modern and suffered flaws as follows.

First, China's basic social institutions were oppressive of real thinking and thought, in particular creative and new thinking and thought. In 1894, China was stagnant because her basic social institutions were rigid and incompatible to new and creative thinking. Their problems can be traced back and embodied to the Qin dynasty. Before BC 221, China

was a spiritually dynamic country and had firm faith. But the Qin dynasty changed everything and its basic institutions caused the death of thought and therefore the national spirit: “The heritage from the Qin Dynasty, the worst of its kind, is that the powers that be become the ultimate judge for thinking.” Emperor Han Wudi of the Han Dynasty went even further. It was he who castrated one of the best Chinese thinkers. This act of shame was a symbol of monumental proportions in Chinese history. Since then no great thinkers were ever born in China. The situations deteriorated even further during the Ming and Qing dynasties, when Scholar Gong Zizhen remarked: It’s so stiffening – nobody dares to speak out, just like thousands of horses in the field, all dead quiet (p.8). China’s basic social institutions in the Qing dynasty inherited and sustained Emperor Wu’s cut on China and Chinese people. And China and Chinese people thus had no imagination and sensitivity.

Second, in connection with the above, China’s basic social institutions structuralized and canonized obscurantism. “As for the people who live under an autocracy, the most detestable characteristic of autocracy is its stultification of the people. Accomplishing this requires pressure, which brings about submission, and submission inevitably breeds a slave mentality” (p.43). “In the Spring and Autumn Period, the Chinese people were brave and courageous, with great minds, initiatives and creativity...Dictatorship started after the first Emperor of Qin Dynasty and people were trained to be slaves, one generation after another. The ruling classes altered Confucianism to be a training tool to make people only respect their filial clans but not their country; and, as a result, too many people were loyal only to their clans but not to their country. People were not allowed by the political elite to have or choose their own faith and moral standards and thus they were rendered as mindless objects, much like loose grains of sand on the beach. Especially after the Yuan and Qing Dynasties, represented by two horse-riding ethnic groups, the Han Chinese lost all of its bearings” (p.66).

Third, China’s basic social institutions alienated Chinese people from China as a nation-state. They turned China as a country into an individual person’s property—that is, the emperor’s property—and deprived Chinese people of their shares of the country. Notwithstanding, ordinary people would lose their national consciousness and national spirit. “Since emperors regarded the state as their private property, the people also saw the state as a commodity” (p.40). Chinese men and women had an idea that they were subjects to the emperors, but no concept that they had a country that was theirs.

Fourth, education in the Qing dynasty was totally malfunctioning. Success in the modernization of education was among the greatest achievements of *Meiji Reform*. In comparison, failure in education was among the fatal failures of *Tong Zhi Reform*. “Education in the Qing

Dynasty is the worst in the Chinese history”(p.58). For example, the following two lists of individuals—those individual persons who pass the official examinations and those who failed the official examinations—are revealing and instructive: “The first list includes Fu Yijian, Wang Shidan, Bi Yuan, Lin Zhaotang, Liu Zizhuan, Chen Yuan...The second list includes Li Yu, Hong Sheng, Gu Yanwu, Jin Shentan, Huang Zongxi, Wu Jingzi, Pu Songling, and Yuan Shikai” (p.58). Those who are on the first list passed the Qing official examinations but contributed virtually nothing to China. Those who are on the second list failed to pass the Qing official examinations but made their important marks on modern China’s fate.

Fifth, China’s basic social institutions were totally outdated, and could not befit to modern time and challenges. For example, China’s economic institutions could not befit to modernize China’s economy; they were hijacked by various social-political interest groups, on the one hand, and became hindrance to free enterprises, on the other hand. China’s military institutions were pre-modern and totally outdated, too.

Sixth, China’s basic social institutions were complacent and hostile to social reform and renovation, and produced stagnant culture and society, turning China into “dead water”. There were no any real institutional reforms in Qing dynasty, not even in *Tong Zhi Reform* period. All so-called changes during *Tong Zhi Reform* were the kind of changes in which water was changed, but medicine that water cooks was not. Also for example, after China’s 1894 defeat, a social reform movement lasted only 100 days and was thus called “the movement of 100 days of reform.”

In short, in comparison to her arch-rival Japan, in 1894, China was institutionally backward in full scale. Her form of government was outdated. Her legal system was outdated. Her economic system was outdated. Her military was outdated. Her education was outdated. Her other basic social institutions are oppressive, alienating, obscurant, malfunctioning, and complacent. They were totally unfit for modern time. In a modern world, China failed totally to modernize her basic social institutions and could only be beaten repeatedly before 1919!

In summary, we owe Liu great gratitude for re-educating us about those painful lessons that China has learned from the 1644 downfall of the Ming dynasty, the 1894 Sino-Japanese War, and the 1931-1945 China’s War of Resistance against Japan. History never dies or fades away. Liu’s essays are worth reading because the three themes of the historical lessons from modern China’s fate which they explore are still central to China’s present endeavor to realize the Chinese Dream: modernization of China’s national spirit, modernization of China’s national character, and modernization of China’s basic social institutions. Time changes, there’s no question about that. But the lessons learned from history still have important bearing on China today. Today’s Chinese Dream is essentially the continuity of Chinese Dream since the May 4th–New Culture

Movement: full-scale modernization of China. It is fair to say, China lives in an age of globalization. The challenges that China faces and her obligations change. China is also a world leader today, e.g., China is one of the five standing members of the United Nations Security Council and has the world's second largest economy. But the challenge and task remain the same, in essence, and the elephant in the room is still the same one: modernization, more modernization, and forever modernization. Above all, modernization of China's national spirit, national character, and basic social institutions, more modernization of China's national spirit, national character, and basic social institutions, and forever modernization of China's national spirit, national character, and basic social institutions. The burden is heavy, and the road is long. China must seize the hour, and seize the moment.

Finally please allow me to say a few words on the author of the articles in this volume to conclude my musings. Liu Yazhou is a full general of the Chinese People's Liberation Army and the political commissioner of Chinese University of National Defense. He is currently a member of the 18th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. Liu is an avant-garde military theorist of great renovating spirit and one of the most influential strategic thinkers in China today. His recent publications and public speeches on Chinese national strategy and national military strategy reveal a great vision and much avant-garde thinking. Many of his views and predictions of international conflicts are proven, time and time again to contain profound foresights. Meanwhile, Liu is also a prolific writer whose works include *Devil-directed War, That's the Malvinas, Attack, Attack, and Attack Again*, as well as *Chen Sheng, Qin Time and Month, Dagger and Loyal Soul, The Villa at Big and Mother Mountain, Two Merry Generations, Chinese Heart, A Book for Men, Woman, Is Thou Name the Weak? The Story of a Woman and Half-Man, and Hu Yaobang's Death*, just to name a few.

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*justice and a cosmopolitan order”, “Crisis and possibility: The ethical implication of contingency”, “God and toleration”, “Fate and humanity”, “Justice: The neglected argument and the pregnant vision”, “Culture and understanding”, “Moral reason and feeling”, “Rationalism and egalitarianism: The yin-yang dialectics of China’s struggle for democracy”, “Conflict and constellation”, and “Democracy, justice, and critique of reason: The Chinese experience.” Dr. Chen is the co-editor of *Journal of East-West Thought* (English), and an associate editor of *East-West Studies* (Chinese language).*