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鲁迅 著
杨宪益 戴乃迭 译



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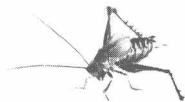
Lu Xun Selected Essays

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双语插图本



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Contents

My Views on Chastity	8
Random Thoughts (62) —Dying in Bitterness	30
What Is Required of Us as Fathers Today	32
Knowledge Is a Crime	58
Waiting for a Genius	66
My Moustache	74
Thoughts before the Mirror	84
Fighters and Flies	96
Teachers	100
On Deferring Fair Play	104
This and That	120
“Dangerous Ground”	134
Silent China	138
Literature of a Revolutionary Period	148
Literature and Perspiration	162
The Evolution of Roughs	166

The New Don Quixotes of the Chinese Republic	170
On Watching Fights	174
In Memory of the Forgotten	178
How I Came to Write Stories	200
Modern History	208
The Chinese People's "Life Belt"	212
In Praise of Night	216
The Art of the Number-two Clown	220
Sand.	224
The Chinese Imagination	228
Shanghai Children	232
A Stroll on an Autumn Evening	236
The Crisis of the Essay	242
Circus Shows	248
The Quintessence of Worldly Wisdom	252
On the Emancipation of Women.	258
Fire	262
"Peking Type" and "Shanghai Type"	266
Two or Three Things Chinese	270
On the Adoption of Old Forms	284

The Take-over Policy	290
Gossip Is a Fearful Thing	296

【目次】

我之节烈观.....	9
随感录六十二 恨恨而死.....	31
我们现在怎样做父亲.....	33
智识即罪恶.....	59
未有天才之前.....	67
说胡须.....	75
看镜有感.....	85
战士和苍蝇.....	97
导师.....	101
论“费厄泼赖”应该缓行.....	105
这个与那个.....	121
“死地”.....	135
无声的中国.....	139
革命时代的文学.....	149
文学和出汗.....	163
流氓的变迁.....	167

中华民国的新“堂·吉诃德”们	171
观斗	175
为了忘却的记念	179
我怎么做起小说来	201
现代史	209
中国人的生命圈	213
夜颂	217
二丑艺术	221
沙	225
中国的奇想	229
上海的儿童	233
秋夜纪游	237
小品文的危机	243
看变戏法	249
世故三昧	253
关于妇女解放	259
火	263
“京派”与“海派”	267
关于中国的两三件事	271
论“旧形式的采用”	285

拿来主义 291

论人言可畏 297

❧ My Views on Chastity

“The world is going to the dogs! Men are growing more degenerate every day! The country is faced with ruin!”—such laments have been heard in China since time immemorial. But “degeneracy” varies from age to age. It used to mean one thing, now it means another. Except in memorials to the throne and the like, in which no one dares make wild statements, this is the tone of all written and spoken pronouncements. For not only is such carping good for people; it removes the speaker from the ranks of the degenerate. That gentlemen sigh when they meet is only natural. But now even murderers, incendiaries, libertines, swindlers and other scoundrels shake their heads in the intervals between their crimes and mutter: “Men are growing more degenerate every day!”

As far as morality goes, inciters to evil are not the only degenerates. So are those who simply condone it, delight in it or deplore it. That is why some men this year have actually not contented themselves with empty talk, but after expressing their horror have looked round for a remedy. The first was Kang Yu-wei. Stamping and sawing the air, he declared “constitutional monarchy” the panacea. He was refuted by Chen Tu-hsiu, who was followed by the spiritualists who somehow or other hit on the weird idea of inviting the ghost of Mencius to devise a policy for them. However, Chen Pai-nien, Chien Hsuan-tung and Liu Pan-hung swear they are talking nonsense.

Those articles refuting them in *New Youth* are enough to make anyone's blood run cold. This is the twentieth century, and dawn has already broken on mankind. If *New Youth* were to carry an article debating whether the earth were square or round, readers would almost certainly sit up. Yet their present arguments are pretty well on a par with contending that the earth is not square. That such a debate should continue *today* is enough to make anyone's blood run cold!

“世道浇漓，人心日下，国将不国”这一类话，本是中国历来的叹声。不过时代不同，则所谓“日下”的事情，也有迁变：从前指的是甲事，现在叹的或是乙事。除了“进呈御览”的东西不敢妄说外，其余的文章议论里，一向就带这口吻。因为如此叹息，不但针砭世人，还可以从“日下”之中，除去自己。所以君子固然相对慨叹，连杀人放火嫖妓骗钱以及一切鬼混的人，也都乘作恶余暇，摇着头说道，“他们人心日下了。”

世风人心这件事，不但鼓吹坏事，可以“日下”；即使未曾鼓吹，只是旁观，只是赏玩，只是叹息，也可以叫他“日下”。所以近一年来，居然也有几个不肯徒托空言的人，叹息一番之后，还要想法子来挽救。第一个是康有为，指手画脚的说“虚君共和”才好，陈独秀便斥他不兴；其次是一班灵学派的人，不知何以起了极古奥的思想，要请“孟圣矣乎”的鬼来画策；陈百年钱玄同刘半农又道他胡说。

这几篇驳论，都是《新青年》里最可寒心的文章。时候已是二十世紀了；人类眼前，早已闪出曙光。假如《新青年》里，有一篇和别人辩地球方圆的文字，读者见了，怕一定要发怔。然而现今所辩，正和说地体不方相差无几。将时代和事实，对照起来，怎能不教人寒心而且害怕？

Though constitutional monarchy is no longer discussed, the spiritualists still seem to be going strong. But they have failed to satisfy another group, who continued to shake their heads and mutter: "Men are growing more degenerate every day!" These, in fact, have thought up a different remedy, which they call "extolling chastity".

For many years now, ever since the failure of the reformists and the call for a return to the past, devices like this have been generally approved: all we are doing now is raising the old banners. Moreover, in step with this, writers and public speakers keep singing the praises of chastity. This is their only way to rise above those who are "growing more degenerate every day".

Chastity used to be a virtue for men as well as women, hence the references to "chaste gentlemen" in our literature. However, the chastity which is extolled today is for women only—men have no part in it. According to contemporary moralists, a chaste woman is one who does not remarry or run off with a lover after her husband's death, while the earlier her husband dies and the poorer her family the more chaste it is possible for her to be. In addition, there are two other types of chaste woman: one kills herself when her husband or fiancé dies; the other manages to commit suicide when confronted by a ravisher, or meets her death while resisting. The more cruel her death, the greater glory she wins. If she kills herself only after being surprised and ravished, there is bound to be talk. She has one chance in ten thousand of finding a generous moralist who may excuse her in view of the circumstances and grant her the title "chaste". But no man of letters will want to write her biography and, if forced to, he is sure to end on a note of disapproval.

In short, when a woman's husband dies she should remain single or die. If she meets a ravisher she should also die. When such women are praised, it shows that society is morally sound and there is still hope for China. That is the gist of the matter.

Kang Yu-wei had to use the emperor's name; the spiritualists depend on superstitious nonsense; but up-holding chastity is entirely up to the

近来虚君共和是不提了，灵学似乎还在那里捣鬼，此时却又有一群人，不能满足；仍然摇头说道，“人心日下”了。于是又想出一种挽救的方法；他们叫作“表彰节烈”！

这类妙法，自从君政复古时代以来，上上下下，已经提倡多年；此刻不过是竖起旗帜的时候。文章议论里，也照例时常出现，都嚷道“表彰节烈”！要不说这件事，也不能将自己提拔，出于“人心日下”之中。

节烈这两个字，从前也算是男子的美德，所以有过“节士”，“烈士”的名称。然而现在的“表彰节烈”，却是专指女子，并无男子在内。据时下道德家的意见，来定界说，大约节是丈夫死了，决不再嫁，也不私奔，丈夫死得愈早，家里愈穷，他便节得愈好。烈可是有两种：一种是无论已嫁未嫁，只要丈夫死了，他也跟着自尽；一种是有强暴来污辱他的时候，设法自戕，或者抗拒被杀，都无不可。这也是死得愈惨愈苦，他便烈得愈好，倘若不及抵御，竟受了污辱，然后自戕，便免不了议论。万一幸而遇着宽厚的道德家，有时也可以略迹原情，许他一个烈字。可是文人学士，已经不甚愿意替他作传；就令勉强动笔，临了也不免加上几个“惜夫惜夫”了。

总而言之：女子死了丈夫，便守着，或者死掉；遇了强暴，便死掉；将这类人物，称赞一通，世道人心便好，中国便得救了。大意只是如此。

康有为借重皇帝的虚名，灵学家全靠着鬼话。这表彰节烈，却是全权都在人民，大有渐进自力之意了。然而我仍有几个疑问，须得提出。还

people. This shows we are coming on. However, there are still some questions I would like to raise, which I shall try to answer according to my own lights. Moreover, since I take it that this idea of saving the world through chastity is held by the majority of my countrymen, those who expound it being merely their spokesmen who voice something which affects the whole body corporate, I am putting my questions and answers before the majority of the people.

My first question is: In what way do unchaste women injure the country? It is only too clear today that "the country is faced with ruin." There is no end to the dastardly crimes committed, and war, banditry, famine, flood and drought follow one after the other. But this is owing to the fact that we have no new morality or new science and all our thoughts and actions are out of date. That is why these benighted times resemble the old dark ages. Besides, all government, army, academic and business posts are filled by men, not by unchaste women. And it seems unlikely that the men in power have been so bewitched by such women as to lose all sense of right and wrong and plunge into dissipation. As for flood, drought and famine, they result from a lack of modern knowledge, from worshipping dragons and snakes, cutting down forests and neglecting water conservancy—they have even less to do with women. War and banditry, it is true, often produce a crop of unchaste women; but the war and banditry come first, and the unchaste women follow. It is not women's wantonness that causes such troubles.

My second question is: Why should women shoulder the whole responsibility for saving the world? According to the old school, women belong to the *yin* or negative element. Their place is in the home, as chattels of men. Surely, then, the onus for governing the state and saving the country should rest with the men, who belong to the *yang* or positive element. How can we burden weak females with such a tremendous task? And according to the moderns, both sexes are equal with roughly the same obligations. Though women have their duties, they should not have more than their share. It is up to the men to play their part as well, not just by combating violence but

要据我的意见，给他解答。我又认定这节烈救世说，是多数国民的意思，主张的人，只是喉舌。虽然是他发声，却和四支五官神经内脏，都有关系。所以我这疑问和解答，便是提出于这群多数国民之前。

首先的疑问是：不节烈（中国称不守节作“失节”，不烈却并无成语，所以只能合称他“不节烈”）的女子如何害了国家？照现在的情形，“国将不国”，自不消说：丧尽良心的事故，层出不穷；刀兵盗贼水旱饥荒，又接连而起。但此等现象，只是不讲新道德新学问的缘故，行为思想，全钞旧帐；所以种种黑暗，竟和古代的乱世仿佛，况且政界军界学界商界等等里面，全是男人，并无不节烈的女子夹杂在内。也未必是有权力的男子，因为受了他们蛊惑，这才丧了良心，放手作恶。至于水旱饥荒，便是专拜龙神，迎大王，滥伐森林，不修水利的祸祟，没有新知识的结果；更与女子无关。只有刀兵盗贼，往往造出许多不节烈的妇女。但也是兵盗在先，不节烈在后，并非因为他们不节烈了，才将刀兵盗贼招来。

其次的疑问是：何以救世的责任，全在女子？照着旧派说起来，女子是“阴类”，是主内的，是男子的附属品。然则治世救国，正须责成阳类，全仗外子，偏劳主体。决不能将一个绝大题目，都搁在阴类肩上。倘依新说，则男女平等，义务略同。纵令该担责任，也只得分担。其余的一半男子，都该各尽义务。不特须除去强暴，还应发挥他自己的美德。不能专靠

by exercising their own masculine virtues. It is not enough merely to punish and lecture the women.

My third question is: What purpose is served by upholding chastity? If we grade all the women in the world according to their chastity, we shall probably find they fall into three classes: those who are chaste and should be praised; those who are unchaste; and those who have not yet married or whose husbands are still alive, who have not yet met a ravisher, and whose chastity therefore cannot yet be gauged. The first class is doing very nicely with all these encomiums, so we can pass over it. And the second class is beyond hope, for there has never been any room for repentance in China once a woman has erred—she can only die of shame. This is not worth dwelling on either. The third class, therefore, is the most important. Now that their hearts have been touched, they must have vowed to themselves: “If my husband dies, I shall never marry again! If I meet a ravisher, I shall kill myself as fast as ever I can!” But what effect, pray, do such decisions have upon public morality which, as pointed out earlier, is determined by men? And here another question arises. These chaste women who have been praised are naturally paragons of virtue. But though all may aspire to be sages, not all can be models of chastity. Some of the women in the third class may have the noblest resolutions, but what if their husbands live to a ripe old age and the world remains at peace? They will just have to suffer in silence, doomed to be second-class citizens all their lives.

So far we have simply used old-world common sense, yet even so we have found much that is contradictory. If we live at all in the twentieth century, two more points will occur to us.

First of all: Is chastity a virtue? Virtues should be universal, required of all, within the reach of all, and beneficial to others as well as oneself. Only then are they worth having. But in addition to the fact that all men are excluded from what goes by the name of chastity today, not even all women are eligible for this honour. Hence it cannot be counted a virtue, or held up as an example.

When a rough man swoops down on one of the weaker sex (women are