HU SHIH AND FEMALE EMANCIPATION IN CHINA

by

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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

The term "feminism" may be used to describe a world-wide cultural and political movement to secure the complete equality of women with men in the enjoyment of all human rights - moral, ethical, social, political, educational, legal and economic. As a result of these trends, in the 19th and 20th centuries, there was a revolution in the status and education of women, which first swept Europe and the United States, and then spread to Asia.

These two centuries were also a period of transformation of a more general kind in China. Continuous aggression from abroad and protracted internal struggles induced a deep sense of China's backwardness in the minds of her countrymen. From the beginning of the 20th century, thousands of students went abroad to study in an effort to find ways to build a new country.

The revolution of 1911 and the establishment of the Republic gave some hope to the new intelligentsia, but this was soon dashed by internal political chaos and external political pressures. The threat of the Japanese Twenty-one Demands in 1915, and the decisions of the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 regarding China, aroused in the Chinese a fever of patriotic and nationalist sentiment. The new intellectuals, with their wide knowledge and new ideas, seeing their country under threat, and in such disorder, were anxious to save the nation. They agitated for a wide range of reforms in every sphere. Social reform was given
particular attention, and under this heading female emancipation and reform of the family system were important items. At about the same time, or a little before, a lively struggle to achieve these objectives was taking place in the United States and Europe, and in view of the increasing contacts between China and the Western world, it was inevitable that this movement would spread to China.

In the Western countries in the 19th and early 20th centuries, co-education in colleges and universities was providing pragmatic proof that girls, like boys, could master the known and explore the unknown. New sciences, notably biology, psychology, and anthropology, were throwing fresh light on the similarities and differences of the male and the female. They offered no confirmation of the alleged inferiority of women. So, while Western countries were broadening the scope of higher education for their women, the majority of women in early 20th century China still lived with bound feet in their isolated homes, engaged in their household duties, and with little or no education or independence. Their life was determined by the social customs and the traditions of the past, most of which found general acceptance by the whole country.

Such a state of affairs appeared intolerable to the new intellectuals. In a civilized country, they believed, women could not be held in such backwardness. If China aspired to be a democratic country, men and women should be equal in all respects. If China wished to become an industrialized country, women should be enabled to play an equal part with men in increasing the nation's output. From the sociological point
of view, unemancipated women were a big obstacle in society. In a healthy and well organized community, every individual should be healthy and independent. Besides, the feminist’s demand for complete equality also posed a moral and ethical problem. Feminism was an appeal to conscience, no less than to common sense. For all these reasons, China’s progressive intellectuals prepared to set the female emancipation movement in motion.

There were many feminists in that period, all of whom made some contribution to the movement. The reason for choosing Hu Shih as an example is because he was not only a distinguished representative of a great generation of revolutionary intellectuals, but also because he was the man who largely took upon himself the enormous task of creating the "New Culture Movement", and stood out as one of the main advocates of the female emancipation movement in China. A great scholar, whose knowledge of the West was as well grounded as his knowledge of China, Hu Shih was born into a traditional Chinese family, and was educated under the old Chinese code of ethics until he was 19 years old. Then, in 1910, he went to the United States, where he spent altogether more than twenty years, first as a student at Cornell and Columbia Universities (1910-1917), later as China’s wartime Ambassador to Washington (1938-42), and again as a visitor after the Communist conquest, in 1949, of the Chinese mainland (1949-58). Hu Shih did much more than learn to speak the language of the West and move with assurance in an alien society: he came very early to admire the social and political ideals
embodied in the Western tradition, and it was this that endeared him to his friends in the United States and gained him world fame.

Hu Shih was not a political activist. Except for four years as Ambassador in Washington, he spent his whole life in education and social reform. Although originally interested in politics, he avoided involvement in it. His determination to have nothing to do with politics may have begun when, on his way back to China in the summer of 1917, he heard of, and was discouraged by, the news of Chang Hsün's "Restoration Movement". a

He thought that such a "restoration movement" was natural enough in view of China's total situation — but that it was the situation itself that had to be changed. 6 He was convinced that a stable political settlement could be achieved only after the social patterns and values accepted without question in the past had been swept away; and his chief concern was with the introduction of new methods of intellectual discovery and new modes of thought by means of which he hoped to liberate the Chinese mind from the bonds of traditional attitudes and judgments.

Upon his return to China in 1917, Hu became a Professor at Peking University and, apart from a short period in the late twenties when he lived in Shanghai, and a period of about a decade during the war, his association with the University continued until 1949. Throughout this time, Peking University was the intellectual centre of China. Hu Shih's

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a. Chang Hsün tried to restore the last Manchu boy Emperor P'u Yi to the throne. The restoration announcement was made on July 1st.
new ideas thus exerted a direct influence on a large number of the younger scholars of those years.

Apart from his activity as a scholar, he also sought to shape the views of his countrymen on contemporary problems. His views on a broad range of social and political issues were expounded in essays that he contributed to the leading magazine of the new culture movement - New Youth - and to other influential periodicals during the twenties and thirties. Always he spoke out against tyranny and tradition, and for the people's welfare: at the same time he never sought to be the spokesman of a popular cause.

It is likely that almost every university and institute of higher learning, whether concerned with philosophy, literature, history, arts, education or even science, has been affected in one way or another by Hu Shih's teaching.

His influence can be seen today most clearly in Nationalist China. In Communist China, however, many of his former pupils have repudiated him. Eight volumes of criticism of Hu Shih's ideas have been published in Communist China. For years, essays attacking Hu's ideas have appeared in newspapers everyday. It is clear from this that his views were recognized as having no small importance. The May Fourth Movement was one of the great events in Chinese modern history, and the campaign for female emancipation was one of its main achievements. Its success was such that the traditional family was forced on the defensive, while marriage based on mutual love became increasingly frequent. Chinese youth strove to assert their identity and rights in society against the
old family and clan systems. A tendency toward wider social cohesion as a substitute for the ligatures of family and clan made itself felt both during and after the struggle. The social status of women began to improve. Co-education was established, and women began to be emancipated from traditional ethical, social, and political bonds. The May Fourth Movement brought the female emancipation movement to maturity and brought women into political and social activities.

Hu Shih was a leading figure in the May Fourth Movement and one of the earliest contributors to the female emancipation movement. Although his essays and articles on this subject comprise only a fraction of his total writings, they are broadly representative of the ideas of the day. Furthermore, his writings were concerned with all the problems of women of that period and they were written in a simple, empirical style.

Ironically, Hu Shih's own marriage was a union on traditional lines. His views on his own marriage, and on marriage in general, are in sharp contrast - a circumstance which too will be discussed in the following chapters.
CHAPTER II. THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN TRADITIONAL CHINA

The movement for female emancipation began in China about 1917. Before considering the movement in detail, it will be convenient to describe briefly the position of women before that time. The subject is a large one however, and does not lend itself easily to summarized statement. Customs and practices, especially in a country as big as China, vary widely from one geographical region to another. Hence, what is attempted here is a general sketch of the position of women in China in the late Ch'ing period and early years of the Republic; while some of the views which were prominent and widely accepted throughout Chinese history, and especially those which Hu Shih and other intellectuals attacked as anachronistic in the twentieth century, will be noticed and discussed.

1. Traditional Relations between Men and Women

Traditional Chinese society was entirely a world of man's making, and was moreover underpinned by every principle of traditional Chinese philosophical thought.

This latter point is well exhibited in the "Yin and Yang" teaching. Yin (阴), a negative principle, included the concepts of darkness, mystery, coldness, weakness and "depth"; more specifically, it covered the moon and everything "feminine" in character. Yang (阳), a positive principle, included the concepts of light, brightness, "superiority", heat, and strength. The sun, and everything supposedly
"masculine" in character, fell under Yang. In this primitive cosmology, though Yin and Yang are considered as necessary and complementary to each other, Yin is always the symbol of weakness.

Differences in the status of the two sexes in traditional China began from birth. In the Book of Poetry it reads as follows:

Sons shall be born to him;-
They will be put to sleep on couches;
They will be clothed in robes;
They will have sceptres to play with;
Their cry will be loud.
They will be (hereafter) resplendent with red knee-covers.
The (future) king, the princes of the land.

Daughters shall be born to him;-
They will be put to sleep on the ground;
They will be clothed with wrappers;
They will have tiles to play with.
It will be theirs neither to do wrong nor to do good.
Only about the spirits and the food will they have to think,
And to cause no sorrow to their parents.  

From the above lines, we can tell that the Chinese did not esteem baby girls. The Confucian school of thought, which has profoundly influenced the Chinese people throughout the ages, is antipathetic to women. Confucius said: "Of all people, girls and servants are the most difficult to behave to. If you are familiar with them, they lose their humility. If you maintain a reserve towards them, they are discontented".  

The message of these teachings is man's superiority over woman, and it was this philosophy that underlay the relations between man and woman.
in traditional Chinese society.

In China the worlds of men and women were clearly separated. According to Li Chi (The Book of Rites): "The man's sphere is the whole world, the woman's is her house". "Man rules outside the household, woman within it".

Three principles of obedience to the male sex shaped a woman's life: "An unmarried girl should obey her father; a married woman her husband; a widow her son". Hence, a woman's status in society, before her marriage, depended upon the status of her father; and, after her marriage, upon that of her husband or son.

Women in general had no chance to hold political office. The status of women members of the ruling family, or of families of the nobility, directly depended on the status of father, husband or son; but such women normally had no opportunity to guide the affairs of state. There are a few notorious exceptions in history to this rule, but the women who wielded direct power over the nation, such as the Empress Lü (呂) of the Han Dynasty, the Empress Wu (武) of the T'ang Dynasty, and the Empress Tz'u Hsi (慈禧 ) of the Ch'ing Dynasty, are all regarded as devils incarnate by historians of sound Confucian principle.

2. The Position of Women in the Family

Although the woman's sphere was her home, and she ruled the household, the family was not dominated by her. A Chinese family was like a state in miniature; it was usually ruled by grandfather or father,
while the eldest brother could also enjoy considerable influence. Wives, children, servants and concubines were treated as subjects or underlings. The family head had supreme authority within the family. His will was a command, and every member of the family was bound to obey it.

The traditional Chinese family unit consisted of members related to each other by blood, marriage, or adoption, and possessing common property. Usually, the family consisted of parents, their unmarried children, and married sons and their wives and children. As a rule it included not more than two or three generations. Among the great majority of the population, and particularly among the peasants, brothers separated after their parents had died, and each of them set up his own domicile for his own wife and children. However, among the upper gentry the family unit sometimes included members up to the fourth and fifth generations.

Within the family, differences of generation, age and sex were very important. In different generations, people of the older enjoyed the deference of those of the younger; within each generation, the eldest had preference over the youngest; and men, of course, were considered superior to women. Children were obliged to adopt an attitude of "filial piety" to their parents: Confucius considered this to be "the root of all virtue".

The main principle underlying traditional Chinese family life was the preservation of the male line of descent. Only a male could hold the position of family head. Usually it was a grandfather or a father,
but sometimes it might be a grandfather's brother, an elder brother or cousin. Whoever was the recognized head exercised the "father's" authority. When a family head died his son would take over, but never his wife, no matter if she were a mother or even a grandmother. The widow was expected to be obedient to her son, unless he was too young to play his part adequately.

3. Marriage

Marriage in old China, as defined in the canonical Book of Rites, is a "bond of affection between two surnames. It serves the ancestral temple, and continues the family line". From this ancient and most authoritative definition it can be seen that it was the family that held pride of place in the "theory" of marriage. Since marriage was a union of two families, its conclusion depended on agreement between the heads of the two families concerned. It was the reflection of mutual esteem and friendship between these families, but not of mutual love between the young people themselves. Personal affection between a man and a woman before marriage was considered not only unnecessary but harmful. Respectable young people did not meet each other until after their marriage. It was recognized both by law and in society that the head of the family had absolute authority over his offspring's marriage. The legal code of the Ch'ing declared: "A marriage should be authorized by grandparents or parents. If they are all dead, the other senior members of the family are in authority". Sons who disobeyed and refused to
marry the person chosen by their parents were considered "unfilial" and immoral. They were despised by the community and deprived of their rights to inherit the family property.

Marriage was a union between two different surnames. In accordance with the rule of "surname exogamy", the marriage of persons bearing the same surname was strictly prohibited. The same prohibition applied to the taking of concubines. Thus when a man bought a concubine whose surname could not be certainly ascertained, recourse was had to divination. Originally, the surname indicated the line of origin, and it was believed that persons of the same surname were related by blood. Later on, though it was clear that people with the same surname might belong to quite separate kinship groups, the prohibition was retained and still enforced by law. In Ch'ing times the punishment for a marriage that contravened the rule of surname exogamy was sixty strokes, and the marriage itself was annulled. Although marriages between persons with the same surname were thus prohibited, marriages between first cousins with different surnames were very common. Romantic relations between cousins is a very popular theme of the Chinese novel. The "Dream of the Red Chamber" is the best, and best known, example.

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After a young couple married they usually stayed in the house of the husband's parents. Marriage was a Chinese woman's only destiny, the fulfilment of her life, the meaning of her existence. Without marriage she had no status of her own in either the home or society.

In her new environment, under the roof of her husband's parents, the first and most important function of the newly-married bride was not to be a wife but a daughter-in-law. Her husband himself occupied a subordinate position in a house ruled by his father. In her new position she should serve her parents-in-law as a daughter served her own parents. Her chief duty was to serve them respectfully and carefully, and to display toward them great affection and obedience. Failure to do so was in fact one of the seven conditions on which a wife could be divorced.

The harsh treatment of daughter-in-law by mother-in-law is one of the most notable features of Chinese family life. In former times, life as a young bride was particularly bitter because of the authoritarian character of the Chinese family. It was a husband's duty, as a son, to side with his mother rather than with his wife, and the mother often took advantage of this circumstance. No matter how hard her life, how intolerable her position, the only course open to the young wife was to be tolerant. She had no legal right to claim a divorce. She owned no property. A wife usually received a limited sum of money for household expenses, but she had no claim on, much less power to dispose of, family property. More importantly, the family property descended directly to her son, or to an adopted heir, after her husband's death. She had, in other
words, no right of inheritance. She could only receive a dowry from her father upon her marriage. In the Ch'ing period, a widow who married again was prohibited from taking either her former husband's property, or even her own dowry, with her. Both remained with her deceased husband's family. As late as 1918 the Supreme Court held that the wife's own property was subject to the husband's authority.

A wife's powers were controlled and limited by the will of the husband. Although she had the right to discipline her children and arrange for their marriage, she could of course not go counter to her husband's decision. She had authority to control the household and the household property, but this authority was a delegation from her husband. Any activity over and above routine matters had to be approved by him. This was clearly stated by the Supreme Court in 1916. Undoubtedly, such decisions of the highest court of the land reflected the traditional view of the position of women in society.

In the old Chinese society there was no provision for female education; girls were never permitted to go to school, and moreover most families prevented their girls from learning how to read and write, since the view was generally accepted that "lack of learning is a credit to a woman's virtue". Therefore the occupations open to women were limited to prostitution, "matchmaking", midwifery or nunhood. If a woman was divorced, she had no means of making a living for herself.

However, not everything was to the disadvantage of the Chinese wife.
Sooner or later the mother-in-law would die, or cease to be the principal house-keeper. The young woman's husband would assume the duties of family head, and she would then become the "first lady" of the house. If by that time she had children - and especially boys - her position when she herself became a mother-in-law would finally have come full-circle.

As with marriage in all societies, the relations of husband and wife depended to a great degree on the character of the couple. When the husband was weak or stupid and the wife capable and attractive, she was often the despot of the family. There are many stories of "hen-pecked" husbands in China. The wife built up her strong position sometimes upon affection, sometimes upon physical beauty or personality, but in most cases upon the fact that she could not be dislodged from her position, since she could not without difficulty be divorced.

There was in fact no law forbidding divorce. The Li-chi laid down seven conditions for divorcing a wife: she could be sent away for (1) lack of filial respect for, and non-performance of filial duty towards the husband's parents; (2) failure to provide sons; (3) immorality; (4) jealousy; (5) disabling illness; (6) being a scold; or (7) theft. But at the same time there were also three conditions under which she could not be sent away: (1) if she had mourned for her parents-in-law for three years; (2) if her husband's family, formerly poor, had become rich in the meantime; or (3) if she had no home to which she could return. These conditions were commonly met and made divorce almost impossible.
There are some well known instances of divorce in history. For example, it is suggested in the Li chi that both Confucius' son, and his grandson divorced their wives. But during China's medieval period, and particularly as a result of the growth of Buddhist influence, divorce came to be regarded as a stain on the respectability of a good family. Although there was no rule that a woman who had been divorced could not marry again, society would consider her behaviour as more correct if she remained single. But if she remained single and her parents were still living, they would be ashamed of her; and if her parents were dead, she could not look for support to her brothers and sisters-in-law. She had no property rights and no resources with which to face a hostile society. Thus a wife threatened with divorce had no choice except death or entering a nunnery. In these circumstances it would be difficult for a humane man to divorce his wife, no matter how much he disliked her. On the other hand, no matter how wretched her position in the family or how badly her marriage turned out, a wife could only learn to bear her misfortunes.

Besides the seven conditions, mentioned above, which provided grounds only for the divorce of a wife, another condition under which a marriage could be dissolved was "breaking the bond of matrimonial relation", which could be invoked against both husband and wife. This, according to the T'ang code, consisted in such acts as a husband's beating or killing members of his wife's family; a wife's beating or killing members of her husband's family; a wife having illicit intercourse with her husband's relatives or a husband having illicit
intercourse with his wife's mother; or a wife's attempted murder of her husband. If any such actions were proved, divorce was required by law. If the couple did not divorce in such circumstances, they were liable, in the T'ang and Sung codes, to one year's imprisonment and, under the Ming and Ch'ing codes, to a penalty of eight strokes. 23

Since inheritance was always through males in traditional China, sons were precious. Mencius said that "There are three things which are unfilial, and to have no posterity is the greatest of them" (不孝有三無後為大). 24 Hence preservation of the male line became the most important desideratum in a family. In theory, a wife who failed to bear a son could be sent away; but, as I have mentioned, divorce in old China was not easy. If the first wife did not give birth to a son, something had to be done to provide a male descendant to carry on the family name and the sacrifices to the ancestors. One possibility was adoption, but as only closely related members of the lineage were normally adopted, recourse to this method was often limited. Another was for the husband to take a concubine who might bear him a son.

Concubinage can be documented in China's earliest historical records. A concubine's position in the family was inferior to that of a wife, because only one woman in the household was recognized as the wife by society and the law. 25 A concubine's status remained not much above that of a maidservant; she was under the wife's authority and had to wait on her, and serve her respectfully. That is why, in general, a family hesitated to give its daughters to married men. In practice,
however, although the concubine in China had no legal status, often enough her life required but little effort and gave her much leisure and opportunity for pleasure. On the other hand she enjoyed considerably less freedom than a wife. The wife of a farmer, who performed heavy work in the field, had a free relationship with her husband in his work and with the women working in the adjoining fields. Although she worked harder than the pampered concubine, she was freer in her coming and going from the house and in her association with others.  

4. Maternal Responsibility and The Education of A "Good Wife and Mother"

The supremacy in the family of the patria potestas did not mean that the mother was without authority over her children. Generally speaking, a mother had the same authority over her children as the father. Both social custom and the law demanded that a son respect, and be "filial" towards, his mother. Nevertheless, in the last analysis the father's authority was supreme. The mother's was neither permanent nor absolute. She was expected to follow her husband's will in all things, and to be only her husband's auxiliary in ruling their family. Usually, however, the education of the children in the Chinese family was a mother's responsibility. This education included a good deal of moral training. Only when the sons became young men did their education become the primary responsibility of the father. If the father was absent, neglected their education, or was dead, the mother continued the training of her sons. As Hu Shih's father died when he was very young, the responsibility
for his education fell on his mother. There is a favourite story among the Chinese about Mencius' mother, who moved three times to find the right place for her son to live, and cut the web of her loom to show him the correct attitude to study. This story has been famous throughout Chinese history; its influence has lasted for over two thousand years, and to the present it still serves to depict the model of what a mother should be.

In traditional Chinese society, girls were given no opportunity to learn how to read and write. They spent their whole time, from childhood on, in sewing, cooking and housekeeping. A girl's ambitions were limited to being a good wife and mother, mainly because there were no possibilities open to her to develop her personality along other lines.

Female education in China began in the middle of the nineteenth century. The first schools for girls were founded by Christian missionaries. After the Revolution of 1911 the government officially recognized the need for women's education, and for co-education in primary schools. In practice, however, though some girls' schools made their appearance, co-education was not introduced until much later, in the 1920's. Female education was limited to elementary schools and teachers' training colleges. The purpose of those schools was primarily to educate good mothers and wives.

5. Bound Feet and Chastity

In traditional China, there were some kinds of customary behaviour
toward women that the modern world regards as inhuman. First among them was the infamous practice of foot-binding. It is not known exactly when foot-binding was introduced into China. According to Ch'en Tung-yuan (陳東原), in his "History of Chinese Women's Life" (中國婦女生活史), it began in the tenth century. At first it was practised only by women of the upper classes. Later on, it became a fashion common to all classes. At the very beginning of the Ch'ing period, in 1664, Emperor K'ang Hsi tried to forbid foot-binding. His initiative met with strong resistance and the prohibition was withdrawn four years later, because foot-binding had become a deeply rooted aesthetic ideal and standard of female beauty. If a woman had large unbound feet she would find it difficult to find a suitable husband, or might even be deprived of all chance of marrying. Hence the greater a mother's love for her daughter, the tighter she would bind her daughter's feet.

The purpose of foot-binding was to keep the feet small. Tight wrapping prevented the bones and muscles from developing, and curled the toes under so that women found it very difficult to walk for any considerable distance. Thus it "kept women at home, made them safer, less movable property". Foot-binding was not only terribly painful during the first years, as the circulation of the blood was blocked; it also caused considerable injury to health, and sometimes people even died of it. Objections to foot-binding were sporadic during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. At the end of the nineteenth, in 1895, ten ladies of several different nationalities formed the Natural
Foot Society (天足會), with Mrs. Archibald Little as President. In 1896, K'ang Yu-wei (康有為) formed Pu Ch' an Tsu Hui (不缠足會) which eventually had 10,000 members. Later, a considerable number of smaller societies, also dedicated to the cause of eradicating foot-binding, arose all over China. Undoubtedly they had a very large share in creating a strong public opinion against the practice. The custom was abandoned by practically all members of the official classes; though in the early decades of the present century it was still widely practised among the poor. Even though many people were aware of the disadvantages of bound feet, they held it was better for their daughters to put up with the discomfort of bound feet than have to face the difficulties of marrying when feet were not bound.36

The second example is provided by the traditional view concerning female "chastity". In ancient China the sexes were kept strictly apart. "At the age of seven, boys and girls should not sit at the same table to have their meals".37 We also find ideas expressed such as: "A woman once having married, does not change; and if her husband dies, she does not marry again".38 But in this earlier period the concept of "chastity" (as we are here using the term) was not interpreted too rigidly. Under the Han, while "chastity" was commended by the government, infringements of the rule were not taken too seriously by the population at large. No one criticized a woman if she married more than once.

There are a few examples in the Biographies of Chinese Women (列女傳) by Liu Hsiang (向) of the earlier Han period. Chi was the wife of
Duke Pai of Ch'u (楚白公). When the Duke died, Chi twisted hempen thread for a living and did not remarry. The King of Wu (吳), having heard that she was beautiful and that her deportment was good, sent a minister with a large sum of money and two pieces of white jade to invite her to marry him. Chi declined, declaring that the faithful minister did not lend his strength to other rulers and the chaste woman did not lend her beauty to other men. The King of Wu praised her for preserving a chaste widowhood and gave her the honorary title of "Chi, the Chaste, of Ch'u". So even at that time, while a widow who remained such could gain an honorary title, a King did not hesitate to make her a proposal of marriage!

Until the time of the Sung dynasty the status of women in Chinese society was influenced by the reception of Buddhist ideas in China. Ch'eng I (程頤), one of the two brothers who were principally responsible for elaborating the philosophy known in the West as Neo-Confucianism, gave an entirely new interpretation of the old Confucian ideal of womanhood. According to him "It was a small matter to die of starvation, but a serious matter (for a woman) to lose her virtue (by marrying a second time)". Chastity and absolute loyalty to one man was made the touchstone of all womanly virtue. Everything else must be subordinate to this. From that time people began to despise a re-married widow. If a woman who had lost her husband remained single, she was regarded as "virtuous"; or if she committed suicide, as "heroic". It
was considered a great honour to have a "virtuous" or "heroic" woman in the family.\textsuperscript{a}

At the same time, the connotation of the concept of "chastity" was made broader. A virtuous woman should avoid meeting any man, and even her hands or arms should never be touched by a man. In the Ming History we are told of a widow, née Hu (胡), who fell sick. Her family wanted to call a doctor to see her, but she refused on the grounds that a widow's hand could not be shown to others. Finally she died because of lack of treatment.\textsuperscript{43}

A woman who had suffered rape was regarded as "unchaste" unless she committed suicide. This explains the many examples recorded in history of women who died resisting rape.\textsuperscript{b}

A betrothed woman whose fiancé died would be known as "virtuous" if thereafter she lived a life of celibacy, or as "heroic" if she committed suicide for her deceased fiancé (even if the couple had never met). In the Yuan dynasty, Miss Fan Mao (范妙) was betrothed to Chiang Wen-tao (江文濤). Chiang died before their marriage was celebrated. After Miss

\textsuperscript{a} An example from the Yuan period was the wife, née Chiang (趙), of Wu Tzu-kung (吳子恭). Her husband died when she was 28, and she remained a widow for half a century, dying herself at the age of 78. Because of her "chastity" the family received, in 1354, a testimonial of merit from the Emperor.\textsuperscript{41} Another from the Ming was the wife, née Chang (張), of Miao Fu (缪富). On the death of her husband she elected to commit suicide, thus winning for herself the honourable title of "virtuous and heroic".\textsuperscript{42}

\textsuperscript{b} Miss Lin of Sung period,\textsuperscript{44} and Miss Chao (趙), Mrs. Ch'ao (趙) and Ti Huan's (狄穀) widow of Yuan, etc.\textsuperscript{45}
Fan heard the news she said: "As I was betrothed to Chiang, I am his wife already." She moved to Chiang's house and lived with his family for the rest of her life. Liu (柳) was the fiancée of Chao Ye (趙野). When Chao died, Liu decided that she would never marry. She refused to take medicine when ill, and died.46

From Sung times on, this way of understanding the concept of "chastity" became more and more widely accepted in society, and became a recognized way for women to gain honour and reputation. It was commended in the legal codes of the Sung, Yüan, Ming and Ch'ing dynasties alike. The institutes of the Ch'ing Dynasty lay down that women entitled to win commendation should include the following:

1. "Virtuous" women (貞婦)— widows who had eschewed remarriage and led a celibate life from before their thirtieth to their fiftieth year.

2. "Heroic" women (節婦,節女)— who had either
   a. committed suicide for their deceased husbands or fiancés, or
   b. died resisting rape.

3. "Filial" women (孝婦)— those who had fully and in every respect fulfilled their duties to their parents-in-law.

4. "Filial" girls (孝女)— virgins who had remained unmarried in order to take care of their parents.

5. "Virtuous" girls— who had either:
   a. committed suicide for their deceased fiancés.
   b. after the fiancé's death, moved to his home and lived in celibacy.47
Until 1917 this kind of legislation was still in force in China. According to the Statute of Commendation, a women with one of the following qualifications were to be entitled to be commended:

1. If she was a good wife and mother, whose conduct was worthy of being an example to the town or village.

2. If she was a "virtuous" woman who, being over fifty, had begun before she was thirty to lead a life of celibacy out of respect for her deceased husband. Equal honour was to be accorded to one who died before reaching the age of fifty but who had lived in celibacy for more than ten years previously.

3. If she was a virgin willing to live in celibacy out of respect for her deceased fiancé.

4. If she had been a "heroic" woman or girl, who had either died in resisting rape or assault, or had later committed suicide out of shame or humiliation, or had killed herself because of the death of her husband or betrothed.48

A comparison of this statute with the provisions of the Ch'ing code shows no difference at all. It also seems that in real life "virtuous" or "heroic" women were common at the beginning of the Republic. Articles

referring to them appeared very often in the newspapers, and as late
as 1918.

Thus, it can be seen that, although after the Revolution of 1911
the position of women in China was changing and improving, particularly
as a result of such factors as women's education, Chinese law and customs
continued generally to reflect the traditional viewpoint. A key concept

a. Peking Chung-hua hsin pao (北京中華新報), 23rd & 24th July, 1918:
"To bring about her own death, the virtuous and heroic woman T'ang
tried five times by taking lime water, the solution of verdigris
from copper money, drowning and hanging; and three times by starvation;
so that, in addition to the arsenic that finished her, she had tried
nine ways of killing herself. From the evening on which her husband
breathed his last to New Year's Eve there were ninety eight days.
Should we not attribute great resolution to a soul that, being devoted
to chastity, never shaken by adversities but endeavoured by all means
to attain its end, without weakening in the teeth of frustration?"

"The girl, nineteen years of age, was engaged to a man of the Chang
family of Haiyeng (海興 ). Her fiancé died, whereupon she, though
unmarried, fasted for seven days. While taking only a little gruel,
after her whole family had exhorted her unceasingly, she said:
'should I survive, to the Changs I must go, to be in mourning for
three years, and then to join him beneath the ground'".

Another story comes from a Shanghai newspaper:

"The virtuous and heroic girl Chen Wen-jen (陳婉珍) was seventeen
years old and was betrothed to Wang Chin-shih.(王靜士 ). Chin-shih
died of an illness on the 23rd of March this year, at the age of
eighteen. As soon as the girl Chen heard the sad tidings, she took
a bath, changed her dress and secretly swallowed poison. When her
family discovered it they tried desperately to save her, but it was
too late. The girl said with flowing tears, 'My decision has been
made. Although I have not had the chance to know my husband while
alive, yet, I shall be with him after I die'. Having thus spoken
her mind, she passed away. It was only three hours after her fiancé's
death".49
was that of "chastity", which was fostered by scholars and rewarded by governments. It had survived in China for about a thousand years, but was now to be broken down by the new influence of a new generation of intellectuals and the adoption of a new attitude by the Chinese government. The collapse of this traditional concept and of the traditional Chinese family system is attributable to the movement for female emancipation, which, in its turn, drew strength from the activities of the new Chinese intellectuals.
1. Family Background and Early life

Hu Shih was born into a mandarin family in Anhwei (安 徽 ) province on the 17th of December, 1881. He was the youngest child of Hu Ti-hua (胡 鐵 花 ), a minor official of the declining years of the Ch'ing dynasty. Hu Shih's mother, née Feng (馮 ), was his father's third wife and on her marriage she was younger than some of the children of her husband's previous marriages. Hu Ti-hua's first wife was killed in the Taiping rebellion (太平天國之亂 ). His second wife bore him six children before her death in 1878. In 1889, at the age of forty-seven, he married Hu Shih's mother who was then only seventeen years of age.

This young wife became stepmother to a family of far greater means and social standing than her own. The eldest daughter and son were respectively eleven and two years older than herself. Despite this disparity of ages the marriage appears to have been a happy one. Although it ended after six years, when Hu Ti-hua, as a member of the Taiwan defence force, died fighting the Japanese, it resulted in a woman, Hu Shih's young widowed mother, becoming the major influence in his early life.

Hu Shih's father was a man of learning. For the two years prior to his death he was Magistrate of the Prefecture of T'aitung (台 东 ) in Taiwan (台 湾 ). In his will he said: "Hu Shih is very
intelligent - let him study." When his father died Hu Shih was only three years old, and from this time on his mother applied herself to fulfilling her husband's request.

Beginning his education at a family school when three and a half years old, Hu Shih went on to display an early aptitude for study. He was quiet and shy, but although he was young and physically weak in comparison with the other children, he was scholastically pre-eminent.

In his early schooling, some of the books he used had been written by his father; and from them, and from the instruction he received from his mother, he inherited his father's appreciation of the humanistic tradition of orthodox Confucian thought. This later contributed to the growth of a mature scepticism in which he was to incorporate ideas borrowed from such Western thinkers as T. H. Huxley (1825-1895) and John Dewey (1859-1952).

Hu Shih's mother supervised his studies daily; guiding, correcting, and quoting the example of his father. Hu Shih in his Autobiography remembers her as saying: "Follow in the steps of your father. He was the only perfect man I ever knew. You should follow after him and not disgrace his memory."

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a. Hu Shih wrote: "My thought is influenced mainly by two persons: one is Huxley and the other Dewey. Huxley teaches me how to doubt, and to believe in nothing without sufficient evidence. Dewey teaches me how to think and to consider the immediate problem in all cases, to regard all theories and ideals as hypotheses which are in need of verification, and to take into account the value of thought. These two men make me understand the character and function of scientific method."
Hu Shih suffered greatly with the loss of his father. After the latter's death the family depended materially on his second brother's business in Shanghai, and the family harmony was seriously troubled by a spendthrift eldest brother. These family troubles left their impression on the character and general demeanour of Hu Shih. As a small boy he learned tolerance and restraint in the face of family moods and domestic storms. His developing character was strongly influenced by the women of the family - by his grandmother, aunts and eldest sister; while his mother never failed to set an example of fortitude and patience, and was a constant inspiration. Hu Shih later wrote: "If I learned a little to be friendly toward others, if I can forgive or excuse others, I have my mother to thank." 

In 1904 Hu Shih left his home town to continue his education in Shanghai, where he remained for six years - an important period for the development of his mature personality. At the age of twelve he enrolled at Maiche School (梅溪学堂), in 1905 transferring to Chengchung School (澄衷学堂), where he concentrated on English and Mathematics. His earlier family schooling also served him well, for his performance in Chinese literature was much better than that of his fellow students.

While at these two schools Hu Shih was influenced by the ideas of Yen Fu (嚴復 1853-1921) and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao (梁啟超 1873-1929).

also J. Levenson, Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and the Mind of Modern China, Camb. Mass., Harvard U.P., 1953
The former was one of China's best translators of Western scientific and sociological works. One of his translations, Thomas Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics* (天演論), was very popular among the students of the day. The latter was a publicist of outstanding literary ability, the chief secretary of Ch'iang Hsueh Hui (強學會) and an advocate of the political reforms of 1898.

A period of self-expression and re-appraisal began for Hu Shih when he enrolled in the China Academy (中國公學) during 1906. A colloquial student newspaper (競業旬報) was in circulation to which he became a regular contributor of his ideas and opinions. It was an illness which, occurring shortly after his enrolment at the Academy, led him to change his course from Natural Science to Arts. Suffering from a leg infection, which resulted in several months of restricted activity and withdrawal from study, he sought to amuse himself by reading and writing poetry. This convinced him that literature should be his life's work.

As a result of family insolvency, he was unable to graduate from the Academy. For almost a year, he sought to earn his living by teaching English and Chinese, and the preparation which he found necessary for the former laid the foundations for his improvement in that language.

As a result of the frustration and depression which he felt during this period, Hu Shih found a vent in playing majong and drinking. While returning home alone from a heavy drinking party, he became involved in a brawl with the police and was detained overnight. He
emerged from this incident with a severe sense of remorse about how he would appear in the eyes of his mother. This sobering experience led him to mend his ways and to think about his future.

He resigned his teaching appointment because he felt his conduct no longer fitted him to continue as a teacher. It was the second year (1910), of the examinations for the Boxer Indemnity Fund Scholarships; and Hu Shih, encouraged and assisted financially by his closest friend, Hsü I-sun, decided to enter for the examination. After several months' intensive study, he won the scholarship award and thereby opened up the prospect of his studying abroad.

2. Education in the U.S.A.

In 1910 Hu Shih arrived in the United States and enrolled in Cornell University. After a year of studying agriculture, he decided that he was better fitted for Arts and changed his course. He completed his Bachelor of Arts in 1914, and continued for another year to do his Master of Arts under a Graduate Scholarship. In 1915 he went to Columbia University to further his research work in Philosophy and received his Ph.D. in 1917.

a. In September 1901, the signing of the Treaty of Peking ended the Boxer War. Under the treaty terms, China was disarmed and had to pay large indemnities. The Boxer scholarship was founded on the returned American portion of the Boxer Indemnity, for Chinese students to study in American Universities.
Hu Shih worked very hard in his first year in the United States. He gained full marks for Chemistry and the honour of Exempt from English. a His friends were limited only to those Chinese students who went to America with him. Although he endeavoured to concentrate on what he studied, he could not resist devouring Chinese Classics and writing poems. His scholastic results were good, but he drew no attention in other activities. However, after he changed his course to Arts, his interests broadened and he became implicated with a number of different fields of students' activities. He was the president of the Vactional Conference of the Arts and Sciences; the editor of the Students' English Monthly, and also a chief member of the Association of the Cosmopolitan Club. b As well as joining these clubs he organised the Political Science Association of Chinese Students and the Chinese Students' Reading Club. The purpose of both organisations was to give Chinese students more opportunity to have contact with the political and cultural aspects of the Western world. c

Hu Shih was extremely interested in Western politics, social work and economics. He was not content with merely concerning himself with domestic politics - apart from what went on within the University - but took a close interest in world affairs as a whole. He missed very few of the speeches given by the protagonists of American political parties and, so keen was his interest, he even sometimes went to hear the discussions of the Ithaca Common Council. He paid special attention

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a. A student with an English result of over 85 during the term was exempt from final examination.
to the American elections, noting the reactions to them of the various strata of society. He was therefore very well informed about American political and social conditions. As he recorded in his diary, "I regard the political and social affairs of the place where I stay as the business of my own country and my own town. I am not only very happy to hear about their political activities and about social improvements, but I also try to join in them as well, to study their profit and loss, and the rights and wrongs. We should regard the place where we are living as being 'our own' society, and should study its public affairs. If we do not consider ourselves a part of this society, we certainly will not be able to know the views of its members with any thoroughness; we will know something, but our knowledge will remain superficial." As a result he came to know the country better than many Americans; and could move with assurance in the alien society. In a competition at Cornell, he won the Corson Browning Prize with an essay entitled "A Defense of Browning's Optimism", being the first Asian student to win this honour. Again, at Columbia, he won the Prize of the American Association for International Conciliation with his essay "Is there a Substitute for Force in International Relations?"

He was often invited to speak, and by different organisations in different places; and, according to his own record, he gave about seventy addresses between 1912 and 1914. He used these opportunities to introduce his American audiences to Chinese culture, ideas and customs. Among the topics most frequently represented in his speeches

The most important single influence upon Hu Shih during his seven years in the United States was John Dewey, whose student he was at Columbia from 1915 to 1917. From that period "the methodology of Dewey's pragmatism became a guide of his life and thought, and the basis of his own philosophy". Throughout his life he expounded Dewey's ideas; and emphasised his discipleship of Dewey by referring to himself as an "experimentalist", both in politics and scholarship.

Besides the influence of Dewey, his ideas and his personal development were greatly influenced by other friends in the United States. Hu Shih was a sociable person, and popular wherever he went. Professors, students, married couples and single women were all his friends, and it was from his contact with these people that he shaped his views on the contemporary problems of his own country.

Hu Shih's discussions with Professor J. Q. Adams on the theme that there was not one single university in China worthy of the name, led him to embark upon his lifelong task: namely that of improving China's higher education. In his diary he recorded his dream: "If during my life I can see China with a national university able to compare with Oxford, Cambridge, Berlin or Paris, I shall depart in peace." Upon his return to China in 1917, he started his teaching career in the National Peking University. He began as Professor of
Philosophy, later becoming Dean of the Faculty of Arts, and ending as Chancellor. His association with this university lasted until 1949; and for the whole of this period Peking University was the uncontested centre of China's new intellectual life. In 1958 he became the President of Academia Sinica in Taiwan, thus fulfilling a life-long dream: that of placing China in a leading position for academic research. He worked hard for four years and died at his post.

As a foreign student in America, he was often invited to visit American families. As a guest in their homes, he was deeply moved by the impression he received of American family life. On one occasion he paid a visit to a Dr. and Mrs. Mortimer J. Brown in Niagara Falls: a happy couple, without children, but loving each other deeply and sharing everything together. Dr. Brown had built a washing machine for his wife because she washed their clothes herself. Mrs. Brown pointed to the machine and said to Hu Shih: "This is my Christmas gift from my husband this year." Dr. Brown retorted, "What are you going to give me?" She smiled and pointed to the parcel on the table. Dr. Brown opened it—it was a typewriter platen. Not long before, Dr. Brown had mentioned that his typewriter was very old and the platen was ruined. Mrs. Brown had overheard this and accordingly bought one for him. She was a very tall woman, and the kitchen fittings were all too low for her; and Dr. Brown, with his own hands, had made them all one foot higher. Hu Shih was deeply impressed at seeing how happy these two were together, although they had no children. He recorded in his
Diary that he had come to know many childless American married couples, such as Professor and Mrs. Alfred Hayes, Professor and Mrs. J.H. Comstock, Professor and Mrs. J. E. Crighton, and Professor and Mrs. E. Albee. "These couples are all highly educated and respect and love each other. They do not worry whether or not they have children."  

Hu Shih admired these examples of happy family life. One Sunday he was invited to a family dinner with his friend F. King. Mr. King had three sons and three daughters. Two of the daughters were now middle-aged spinsters. The other daughters, and the sons, were all married, and all lived near by. They visited their parents very often. The day Hu Shih was there, the two older daughters were at home, and one of the sons had brought his wife and their own two girls over. The whole occasion created a very cheerful atmosphere. As Hu Shih said: "The family was as happy as the day was long, and I envied them."  

Hu Shih also received and shaped his ideas of female emancipation in the United States. Although as a child he was brought up and surrounded by women, he had no contact with women for six years after he left home, and in his first four years in the United States he knew only a few women, all of whom were over middle age. During all this period the development he underwent was purely intellectual, leaving his emotional side completely neglected. Later he decided that he should do something about this. "Take advantage of the opportunity of American co-educational Universities to make friends with educated women" he wrote in his diary on 8th June, 1914. The Diary continues:
"I know myself that I am quite quick-witted, but lack something of gentleness; and moreover I have no sentimental side, which is a great shortcoming and one that I should mend. Should I improve this by associating with the young educated women of this country? I always used to boast to myself that I had never been to Sage College to visit a girl friend in these four years. I feel sorry about that as I think of it now; and so I paid a visit to a girl this evening." 27

From then he was often in the company of women. Mixing with highly educated American women of independent spirit naturally turned his thoughts to Chinese women, rigidly controlled by their families, locked inside the house with bound feet, and given no opportunity of getting any education. The comparison led him to consider seriously the problem of Chinese women and female emancipation.

Among his close women friends were Miss Williams, Miss Crane and Miss Rebun. All three were brilliant and intelligent, and represented the "new woman" of the day. They changed Hu Shih's ideas about women, and led him to devote his energies to female emancipation shortly after he returned to China.

Miss Edith Clifford Williams was the second daughter of H.S. Williams the Professor of Geology at Cornell University. She was a well educated woman with a brilliant mind; a deep thinker, but eccentric. She paid little attention to dress and never followed current fashions. During her early twenties she had cut her hair short and gone alone to New York to study art. Her mother and sister who were more old-fashioned
in their ideas, had for years sought to persuade her to change her way of life, but in vain. She was trusting, kind and sincere. Most of her friends were poor artists, and although this fact worried her mother very much, Miss Williams was quite unaffected by her mother's opinion of them.28

Hu Shih met Edith Williams in Ithaca, where he was not only her good friend but also a friend of the whole family. After he transferred to Columbia he still stayed with the Williams family every time he visited Ithaca. He was always astonished by Miss Williams' extraordinary opinions, and this led him to extol her: "I have seen many women, but she is the only one who really has intellect, knowledge, power, and warmth."29

One day Hu Shih happened to mention that Chinese intellectuals never resisted new ideas, citing as an example that Darwin's theory of evolution had been attacked by Western conservatives for more than fifty years, before gaining acceptance, while when it had been introduced into China it had spread over the whole country without meeting the slightest opposition. Miss Williams said: "This is not necessarily to the advantage of Chinese intellectuals. Westerners do not like to follow the mass. They prefer to experiment, discuss, sift the evidence, and then come to a decision... It is not a short-coming of Westerners that they do not easily accept new ideas; nor is it to their credit that Easterners easily accept them."30

In one letter to Hu Shih she discussed the problem of relations
between men and women: "My habit, as you well know, is to consider what is right for the highest type of human being.... The only 'propriety' between those persons of the highest type - that is those who have had their eyes opened to the beauty of a still higher human development, and souls stimulated by the constant effort of realizing it - is propriety of thought. It is quite simple, isn't it? The things worthy of either of two people to be thought of at all, can worthily be thought of together...When one thinks alone there are many things which one faces squarely and then casts away as unfit. If one does this as promptly before speaking, surely there can be no impropriety. And in the association (or friendship) of man and woman, surely this all holds good, if the truth of sex attraction is clearly understood and valued for just so much as it is good for, and if, when it consciously appears not of use, it is consciously put away by wilful turning of the attention to the higher side of that friendship. And because of the possibility of this effort being called into action, should all the richness of communication between human beings whose real life after all is spiritual and not physical, be blocked by a 'sense of propriety'? Surely, some of the closest and most stimulating interaction of thought comes between two persons - no more. This is true between two women, and I feel sure it is so between two men; and it is also true between a man and a woman." 

Miss Williams' strong influence on Hu Shih was matched by his on her. When the first World War broke out, Miss Williams' feelings were
deeply involved, and she wanted to give up her art and join the army as a nurse. She was rejected because of her lack of experience. She was furious about this, and Hu Shih comforted her with the words that it is better there should be a division of labour, with people doing what they are best fitted to do, than that everyone should feel obliged to offer themselves to the forces; after all to compose an imperishable song or to paint an imperishable painting is also a great contribution to the world. One does not have to go to war or serve in a hospital in order to contribute something to society. Miss Williams agreed with him, and went back to her art. 

But Miss Williams' influence on Hu Shih was, it must be admitted, greater. Hu Shih, with his quick mind and wide-ranging interests, tended to allow his thoughts far to move from the main stream of his interest. It seems that Miss Williams was the only one who could prevent him from dispersing his energies and keep him to his main purpose. In one of his letters to her he writes: "Indeed I have been drifting - farther and farther away from my main purpose. Not without a plausible pretext perhaps - that is the worst of it. I have long needed a streetsman who can set me on the right course. Yet so far no one, except you, has been able to give me what I am surely in need of. For a time I began to see, dimly, through my own eyes this drifting; and was alarmed by it. And then this Sino-Japanese Crisis upset the whole thing and once more I found excuses for my irrelevant activities. You have been very kind. You have done me a great deal of good. I am
now determined to live up to what you said to me yesterday. So much for idle wishing—how. It steals time! To business Now! To business Now!" 33

This letter shows clearly her influence on Hu Shih. He later (4th May, 1917) recorded in his diary: "In Miss Williams' place I saw a huge bundle of letters that I had written to her over the past two and three years. I borrowed them and read them over... they were mostly letters that I wrote in 1915 and 1916....How my ideas and emotions changed is clearly illustrated in these hundreds of letters." 34

"Since knowing my friend Miss Williams, my ideas toward women have greatly altered. I believe in female education. I have noticed before that to bring up a good wife and mother for the country is a preparation for family education. Now I realize that the highest aim is that of bringing up a new kind of independent woman. A nation which possesses 'independent women' will be able to improve its people's morals and personalities." 35

Miss Marion D. Crane was born in a quite poor family, but was very studious. She studied philosophy, receiving her Ph.D. from Cornell University. She was a straightforward woman who thought deeply, and was a good friend of both Hu Shih and of Miss Edith Williams. Hu Shih liked to discuss poetry with her. In 1916 she was appointed Women's Advisor, a position which had the same status as professor. She was the first woman to have this title in Cornell.

Cornell was the earliest co-educational university in America.
During the time when Hu Shih was studying there, men and women in the university did not have equal rights. The only way in which a woman could earn a reputation for herself was by obtaining good academic results, but she could never play a rôle in the University administration. As the first woman to hold the post of Women's Advisor, Miss Crane was able to learn a great deal at first hand about the ambitions, and joys and sorrows, of young women students. Hu Shih was very excited to hear of her appointment, regarding it as a big step towards the achieving of women's rights.

Miss Carmen S. Reuben, the wife of Hu Shih's colleague Paul B. Schumm in Cornell University, thought of herself as a "new woman". Although married, she refused to change her name. She was a kind and intelligent person, and greatly interested in classical music. After she married, her husband continued his post-graduate course in Urban Architecture at Cornell University. The couple, separated by more than two hundred miles, concentrated on their studies, and met each other only once a month. As she often heard her husband talking about Hu Shih, she wrote a letter, under her own name of Carmen Reuben, to him after he arrived in New York, introducing herself as Mr. Schumm's wife, and asking to meet him. They met several times, and she left on Hu Shih a deep impression of a married woman, profoundly involved with her studies, and earning her own living, and who yet at the same time could be possessed by a deep love for her husband. This situation was unknown in Chinese history, and hence Hu Shih admired her very much; he
regarded her as representative of "leading an independent life". 37

Clearly, the influence of these three women helped to change Hu Shih's views about their sex, and led him to ponder the problems of Chinese women. In June 1917, he finished his seven-years of study in the United States, and with his degree, his new ideas and new philosophy, returned to a country where traditions were still deeply rooted. The Republic of China had been in existence then for six years, and new ideas which had permeated western intellectual life were gradually spreading to China. China needed leaders of a new stamp like Hu Shih, in her world of thought. As soon as he returned to China, he threw in his lot with the growing group of new intellectuals.

3. The New Culture Movement

Before discussing the new culture movement, it is necessary to mention a few words about China's economic, social and political background between 1911 and 1920.

Before her contact with the West, China's economy was predominantly agricultural and self-sufficient. The basic units of Chinese life were the family and village. This agrarian economy began to change after the Opium War and the consequent opening of China to the West in the 19th century; but industrial production still had little opportunity to expand because lower-priced and better-quality foreign goods flooded Chinese markets under privileged conditions exacted by the Great Powers. The outbreak of World War I and the preoccupation of the European
countries with the conduct of the war, and with military production, gave native Chinese industry an opportunity to grow; and the output of Chinese light industry significantly increased between 1914 and 1920. But this development came to a halt with the end of the War as a result of the growing competition of Japan and of the return of the other Powers to the Chinese market. The sequence of economic transformation, national prosperity, crisis and struggle for survival, naturally left its mark on contemporary political and cultural activities.

New classes of merchants, industrialists and urban workers arose with the growth of new cities. The collapse of the rural economy increased unemployment. The power of the landlords and of the old gentry waned, and a new intelligentsia, armed with modern western knowledge, emerged.

At the same time the internal and external political situation of China provided fertile soil for revolt. During and after World War I, sentiments of nationalism and democracy grew in strength and prestige in every part of the world under such influences as Woodrow Wilson's political idealism and his advocacy of the abolition of secret diplomacy, and of the right of national self-determination. The Russian October Revolution of 1917, and socialist revolts in Finland, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Bavaria and other countries, also exerted a powerful influence on the political climate of the East. In contrast to the revolutionary fire abroad, the Chinese domestic scene remained unpromisingly dark.
In spite of the Revolution of 1911, Chinese political thinking and behaviour had not moved very far from ancient tradition. Most of the people were still victims of oppression, still obedient to authority, cowed by armed force, and to a great degree retained their respect for the traditional ethical and political teachings of the old society. 1914 saw the dissolution of Parliament, and the annulling of the constitution by Yuan Shih-k'ai. In 1915 and 1919 two unsuccessful monarchical restoration movements were staged. This political chaos and backwardness convinced the new intellectuals that vast and fundamental reforms were necessary if the country was to be rejuvenated.

Chinese hopes were also strengthened by the tide of political change in Europe; but when the Great Powers attempted to re-establish their colonial policies at the Paris Peace Conference, China's mood of high expectancy gave way to one of deep despair, and nationalist feeling ran higher than ever before.

The first patriotic movement began in January 1915, after the Japanese Minister to China had presented privately to the Chinese President, Yuan Shih-k'ai, the notorious Twenty-one Demands. These "demands" called in effect for Japanese control of Manchuria, Inner Mongolia, Shantung, the south-east coast, and the Yangtze Valley. The

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a. Yuan Shih-k'ai's abolition of the Republic lasted eighty-three days and the restoration of the Manchu boy Emperor Pu I to the throne by Chang Hsun.
effect of acceptance of these demands would be to allow Japanese colonization of all these areas, with, as a result, her economic and administrative control of the whole country. Negotiations between China and Japan followed and lasted for almost four months. Finally, following a Japanese threat of the use of force, Yuan Shih-k'ài's government accepted the demands on 9th. May.40

Despite the conditions of political chaos, backwardness, and warlord rule, Chinese public opinion now for the first time in modern Chinese history found a way of making itself heard. The demands hurt the pride of the Chinese people more deeply than real machine guns had ever done. The voice of the new intelligentsia, giving expression to the general feeling of national humiliation, reverberated throughout the country. While the negotiations were going on in Peking, excitement prevailed in many parts of China. Almost all Chinese newspapers voiced strong anti-Japanese feelings.41

In the United States, the news of the Japanese demands on China had aroused great excitement among Chinese students, who called for war with Japan. "Fight and be vanquished, if we must." "We Chinese have no choice but to fight!" Although the general sentiment of indignation among the Chinese students in the United States ran high, a minority nevertheless advised a calmer course. Hu Shih was one of these. As the "Home News" editor of the Chinese Students' Monthly, he wrote "An Open Letter to all Chinese Students", warning them against over-excitement at such a critical moment. He said:

"It seems to me that the right course for us students to take at
this moment, and at this distance from China, is this: Let us be calm. Let us do our duty which is to study. Let us not be carried away by the turmoil of the newspapers from our serious mission. Let us apply ourselves seriously, calmly, undisturbedly and unshakenly to our studies, and prepare ourselves to uplift our fatherland, if she survives this crisis - as I am sure she will - or to resurrect her from the dead, if it needs be! ... The final solution of the Far Eastern Question is not to be sought in fighting Japan at present; nor in any external interference by any other Power or Powers ... The real and final solution must be sought somewhere else - far, far deeper perhaps than most of us now suspect. I do not know wherein it lies; I only know wherein it does not lie. Let us study it out calmly and dispassionately...."42

This open letter occasioned violent expressions of disapproval, but though Hu Shih's position was widely condemned, his advocacy of meditation and contemplation is clearly brought out.

At the same time certain Western "experts" in Far Eastern affairs expressed the view that "China is incapable of developing herself". This being so, they maintained that the solution of the Far Eastern question lay in Japan's taking over the "responsible and effective direction of China's affairs". Hu Shih wrote letters to newspapers declaring that in this twentieth century "no nation can ever hope peacefully to rule over, or interfere with, the internal administrative affairs of another nation.... A Japanese attempt to assume control
of China will result in a sea of trouble." His outspokenness won broad sympathy and agreement in the United States. To Hu Shih, the solution of the Chinese problem lay deeper than in merely building an army. "It is no disgrace", he wrote in his diary on February 20th., 1915, "for a nation to lack a navy; or an army! It is only a disgrace for a nation to lack public libraries, museums, and art galleries. This is the disgrace of which our people must rid themselves." Simultaneously with these events, another movement was also taking shape. In the dormitories of Cornell and Columbia Universities, during the summer term of 1916, Hu Shih was discussing and hammering out with some of his fellow students the problem of the "literary revolution": the substitution of the colloquial language (pai hua) for the classical literary style (wen yen) as the medium for all Chinese literature. This change, forcefully advocated by Hu Shih, did not at first arouse particular interest among the students; and the idea of a "literary reform" was not to be enthusiastically discussed until Hu Shih's article in Chinese on the subject was published, and supported by Ch'en Tu-hsiu (陳獨秀), in the New Youth monthly in January 1917.

While the Chinese suffered national humiliation abroad, the infant republic was also endangered by the plots of warlords, old-style bureaucrats and ambitious gentry members at home. In the midst of such chaos, young Chinese intellectuals looked with growing anxiety for some means of saving the nation.

This was also a time when numerous Chinese intellectuals were
returning from abroad, bringing with them new ideas. Ch'en Tu-hsiu's return from Japan in 1915, and his establishment of the New Youth magazine, started a basic reform movement. This was reinforced by Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei's (蔡元培) return from France in 1916, and by his campaign for reorganization at Peking University during and after 1917. In the summer of 1917 Hu Shih too returned from the United States, and joined these new intellectual leaders. 46

The first issue of New Youth appeared on 15th September, 1915. The magazine was to play a very significant role in the New Culture Movement. In the main it opposed old customs and patterns of thought and advocated the new learning. It opposed monarchy, and political privilege for the few, and advocated democracy, liberalism and individualism; while later it also gave some support to socialism. The magazine was critical of the traditionally received ethics, such as "loyalty" of officials, "filial duty" to parents, and a double standard of sexual morality for men and women; and on the other hand favoured equality of all individuals in society. It set itself against the traditional "extended family", and in its place advocated the Western small family system, and the equal right of choice in love and marriage exercised by both parties instead of marriages arranged by parents. In later issues the magazine took up the cause of the "literary revolution", and began to use punctuation in its articles. It was resolutely against ancient superstition and traditional Confucianism, and upheld scientific outlook and agnosticism. The contributors to the magazine demanded that education should encourage
individuality rather than assert the traditional authority of educators.

This ambitious program of denigrating tradition and awakening the youth was carried on by Ch'en and a few other contributors to the magazine until 1917. During these two years the magazine filled the role of an informal alliance to promote the ideas of such intellectuals as Wu Chih-hui (吳稚暉), Hu Shih, Li Ta-chao (李大釗), Kao I-han (高一涵), and Liu Fu (劉復); though at this time the alliance was both casual and unorganized. By early in 1917 the literary revolution was beginning to take shape. Already in the previous December Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei, the acknowledged leader of the new intelligentsia, and one of China's great educators and liberals, had been appointed Chancellor of the National University of Peking. Under Ts'ai's stimulus and protection the new intellectual leaders gathered at Peking University, and the reform movement was able to go forward with more assurance.

Early in 1917, when he assumed the Chancellorship, Ts'ai brought Ch'en Tu-hsiu to the University as Dean of the Faculty of Arts. Many other men who were identified with the new ideas were also invited to join the Faculty about this time. Among them were Ch'ien Hsuan-t'ung (錢玄同); Liu Fu (劉復 1891-1934) a linguist and poet; and Shen Yin-mo, also a poet; all of whom were forerunners in the new vernacular poetry movement and in the literary revolution. In the summer Hu Shih, just returned from the United States, also joined the Faculty. He taught courses in the history of Chinese philosophy, expounding views that were far from traditional. Chou Tso-jen (周作人),
a pioneer experimenter in the new essay and short story forms taught at the University after April 1917. The anti-Confucian scholar, Wu Yu (吴虞), was invited to teach at the University from 1919. Lu Hsün (鲁迅 1881-1936) joined the Faculty in 1920. In February, 1918, Li Ta-chao (李大钊 1888-1927) was appointed Chief Librarian of the University library, and later held professorial posts in history, political science, economics, and law. Other professors were Kao I-han, a political scientist; T'ao Li-kung (陶孟和), a social scientist; Ch'en Ta-ch'i (陈大齐), a pioneering psychologist and logician; and Wang Hsing-kung (王子洪), one of the first scholars in China to study scientific method. Under the leadership of Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei these outstanding intellectuals exerted a profound influence upon the students of the University. Many of them became academic contributors to New Youth.

There were references to the "feminist question" in the earliest issues of the magazine. In the very first issue (Sept. 1915) Ch'en Tu-hsiu translated Max O'Rell's "Thoughts on Women" into Chinese; and again in November, 1915, wrote an article entitled "The Seven Most Eminent Women in Europe", in which he introduced Florence Nightingale (1820-1910), Sophia Perovkasa (1853-1881), Jeanne d'Arc (1412-1431), Marie Curie (1867-1934), Clemence Royer (1803-1902), Louise Michel

(1833-1905) and Marie Rolland (1754-1793) to Chinese women to show that women could also achieve great deeds. In the beginning of 1917 the magazine started a "Column for Women". In February of that year two articles appeared: "The sorrows of Youth" by Mrs. Li-Chang Shao-nan (李張紹南), and "The Good Mother and China's Future" by Mrs. Ch'en-Chien Ai-sun (陳錢愛琛). These were the first articles, actually written by women themselves, to take up such problems of importance to all Chinese women as bound feet and female education.

In January 1918 two other important articles: "The Women's Problem" by T'ao Li-kung, and "Free Love" a by Liu Pan-nung (Liu Fu), also appeared in the pages of the magazine.

In May 1918, Mr. Chou Tso-jen published a Chinese translation of the essay "On Chastity" by the Japanese Yosano Akiko (野崎晶子) in New Youth. This article suggested that "chastity" was not a duty which applied unilaterally to women, and that the remarriage of a widow was an entirely personal affair which the person concerned should be allowed to decide without any interference from others. This was reinforced by Hu Shih's essay "On the Problem of Chastity" (July, 1918), and T'ang Ssü's (盧恆) "My View of 'Virtue'" (August, 1918).

This problem was even more effectively brought to the attention of

a. "Free Love" means freedom of choice in love and marriage rather than marriage arranged by parents; the phrase carries no implication (as it might to a Western reader) of sexual promiscuity.
the wider public when Lan Chih-hsien (藍志先), the Director and Chief Editor of the "Peking Citizen", joined the controversy in April 1919.

In June 1918 New Youth published a special column on Ibsenism, intended to introduce Ibsen's ideas and his portrayal of the darker aspects of society and family life. This was followed, in September of that year, by Hu Shih's address on "American Women", given to the Peking Women's Teacher College, an address which was later published in New Youth. In his speech Hu Shih introduced his audience to the way of life of the "independent woman", to "free marriage", to "equal rights in divorce" and to co-education. This last immediately became a topic of great interest. At the same time, a group of students at Peking University organized a "Society for the Promotion of Virtue", whose members undertook to eschew all consorting with prostitutes, as well as the taking of concubines. The female emancipation movement was to reach its climax early in 1919, with widespread opposition to the traditional "extended family", to arranged marriages, and to restrictive traditional customs of every kind.

An unexpected event in May 1919 suddenly carried the new thought movement to a rapid success. This incident was the centre of the whirlwind of the whole movement. The immediate cause of the May Fourth Incident was the handling of the Shantung question at the Versailles Peace Conference. When World War I ended on November 11th, 1918, the Chinese people were jubilant. They were ready to believe that the war
had put an end to the idea and practice of secret diplomacy, to violations of international law, to military interventions in political affairs, and to every kind of dictatorship. They also assumed that the territories seized by Germany from China in 1898 would be restored, and Germany's special privileges disappear; and that the Sino-Japanese treaties and agreements, concluded under duress during the war, would be readjusted at the Peace Conference. But these expectations were to be brutally disappointed. After the opening of the Versailles Peace Conference on January 18, 1919, reports from Paris revealed that Japan was going to take over the position formerly held by Germany in China. This news shocked the Chinese public; and the students in Peking University held a mass meeting of protest and, in their demonstration parade, broke into the house of a pro-Japanese minister, set fire to the house, and beat the Chinese minister to Tokyo almost to death. They also started a campaign of open-air meetings in the streets, advocating a boycott of Japanese goods. The government arrested a number of the students, but public feeling ran so high that the whole nation seemed to stand with the university students and against the notoriously pro-Japanese Government. Merchants in Shanghai and other cities closed their shops as a protest against the peace negotiations and the pusillanimity of the government. The Chinese Delegation at the Paris Conference was warned by public bodies not to sign the treaty; and obeyed the warning. The government was forced by this strong demonstration of national sentiment to release the students and
to dismiss from office three well-known pro-Japanese ministers. The struggle began on May 4 and lasted till the final surrender of the government in the first days of June.

In this political struggle "Peita", the Peking University, suddenly rose to a position of national leadership in the eyes of the student population of the whole country. The "new literature" and "new thought" movements, led by an active group of professors and students of the University, had now for some years been making gradual progress among the youth of the nation. With the victory of the May Fourth Movement, this group found itself openly acknowledged as a new and welcome force for national emancipation. A number of the measures to which the group had given its support had been taken up in the stirring days that followed the 4th of May. The manifesto of the mass meeting of students which began the whole movement had been written in the simple vernacular Chinese advocated by the proponents of the literary revolution. During the years 1919-20 about 400 new periodicals made their appearance - almost all of them published by students in different parts of China, and all of them using the simple colloquial style. Quite suddenly the literary revolution had spread throughout the country. Among these periodicals there were two women's magazines. One was called New Women (新婦女), the other Women's Bell (婦女評論). The object of the former was "to use women as a means of reforming society"; while the latter's aim was "to educate women and enable them to take part in the progress of society".
The May Fourth Movement was, significantly, the first time in Chinese history that boy and girl students convened jointly, participated actively in the same meetings and organized themselves into a single group. Students' Unions were established in all the middle schools and colleges, and girl representatives took their places on their governing committees. Following the model of the Students' Unions, the Tientsin Women's Association of Patriotic Comrades (天津婦女愛國運動會) was founded under the leadership of Liu Ch'ing-yang, an alumna of the Hopei Province First Girls' Normal School and Li I-t'ao, a teacher of the school's elementary school, and with girl students Wang T'ien-lin (then named Wang Jui-sheng) and Kuo Lung-chen (then Kuo Lin-i) as its nucleus. This was the first all-women's organization in Chinese history.

In the course of the open-air meetings calling for a boycott of Japanese goods, the ranks of the student speakers were reinforced again and again to replace those arrested by the government, which found itself obliged to use the buildings of the Peking University as temporary prisons. This drastic action aroused fury throughout the country. Girl students joined in the protests. More than a thousand pupils from 15 girls' schools in Peking assembled and marched to the President's palace to protest against the government treating students as bandits and using school buildings as prisons; to demand the release of the young men under arrest; and to demand freedom of speech—an action without precedent in Chinese history. Thus girl students
gave the student movement a vital stimulus. Their action at this
time contributed significantly to the progressive adoption of co-
education in China in the following years, and later aided the women's
suffrage movement.55

Looking back in Chinese history, we can see that the New Culture
Movement was a necessary concomitant of the development of modern
Chinese society. It is hardly possible to name particular people as
the "leaders" of the movement, and indeed one cannot really view it
as having been originated by a few individuals. At the same time, it
is impossible to deny that Hu Shih, Ch'en Tu-hsiu and T'sai Yuan-p'ei
were the men primarily responsible for creating the ideology and
public opinion of that time. An essential tool of the movement -
namely the use of the colloquial language as a literary medium - was
introduced by Hu Shih and Ch'en Tu-hsiu and their followers. Even
granting that the vernacular literature was developed largely to meet
needs created by China's growing industrialization, it remains true
that "if there had not been Hu Shih, Ch'en Tu-hsiu and their company,
the adoption of the vernacular in literary writing would have been
delayed for at least two or three decades".56 The implication is that
the "New Culture Movement" would have been equally delayed, as also
the movement for female emancipation.
CHAPTER IV. THE INTRODUCTION OF IBSENISM INTO CHINA

1. New Youth and Ibsenism

From its earliest issues New Youth preached the virtues of individualism, and one particular aspect of this new creed which it introduced into China was Ibsenism. On 15th June, 1918, New Youth published a special number on Ibsen which contained articles on "Ibsenism" by Hu Shih and a "Life of Ibsen" by Yüan Chên-yin (袁振英). In later issues Ibsen's plays were translated into Chinese: A Doll's House (娜拉) by Hu Shih and Lo Chia-lun (Hu translated Act III); An Enemy of the People (國民之敵) by T'ao Li-kung (陶履泰 T'ao Meng-ho陶孟和); Little Eyolf (小愛友夫) by Wu Jo-nan (吳弱男). Yüan's "Life of Ibsen" was a normal biography, describing Ibsen's family, educational background, ideas and works. Hu Shih's "Ibsenism" was concerned only with introducing Ibsen's ideas, and is a simply written but penetrating analysis of Ibsen's main themes.

This number of New Youth had a greater influence on female emancipation than on the development of drama. It stimulated the spread of individualism in China and drew public attention to the inferior status of women in Chinese society. As well as encouraging independent thought it encouraged Chinese women in their fight for emancipation.

2. Hu Shih and Ibsenism

Hu Shih's "Ibsenism" formed the introduction to this special number. In it he examined five aspects of Ibsenism: Ibsen's basic philosophy;
his views on the family; his concept of three powers in society; his
views on relations between the individual and society; and, lastly, his
political views.

However, Hu Shih was not content merely to report on Ibsen's
thought, but used the occasion to put forward his own views as well.
He said that a main source of trouble in society was that men would not
open their eyes to see the facts of this world. Chinese society was
rotten, yet China was claimed as a land of saints and sages. Society
was infested with corruption and nepotism, yet eulogies were showered
on the corrupt. Chinese society was infected with incurable diseases,
yet it was claimed that all was fine and well. "Why don't we realize
that if we want to cure the diseases we must first of all admit that
they exist; if we want to have a good policy, we must first of all
admit that the policy we have today is a bad one; and if we want to
improve our society, we must first of all acknowledge that our society,
as it is, is rotten to the core." It was with this programme in mind
that Hu Shih sought to introduce Ibsenism into China.

Hu Shih regarded one of the paragraphs in When We Dead Awaken as
revealing Ibsen's basic thought. The passage tells of an artist who
has spent his whole life working on one statue which he calls "Resurrec-
tion Day". It reads: "I was young then - with no experience of life.
The Resurrection, I thought, would be most beautifully and exquisitely
figured as a young unsullied woman - with none of a life's experiences -
awakening to light and glory without having to put away from her anything
ugly and impure. .... I learned worldly wisdom in the years that followed. .... 'The Resurrection Day' became in my mind's eye something more and something - something more complex. .... I imaged that which I saw with my eyes around me in the world. I had to include it - I could not help it, .... I expanded the plinth - made it wide and spacious. And on it I placed a segment of the curving, bursting earth. And up from the fissures of the soil there now swarm men and women with dimly-suggested animal-faces. Women and men - as I knew them in real life."  

That statue with no experience of life behind it represented to Hu Shih the literature of blind idealism; and the men and women "with dimly suggested animal-faces" stood for the literature of realism. Ibsen was a realist, as his works and philosophy show. In 1882 he wrote, in a letter to a friend, "My intention was to produce the impression in the mind of the reader that he was witnessing something real".  

Hu Shih distinguishes in Ibsen's writing four evils that could affect the life of the family: selfishness, menial dependence, insincerity and cowardice. Ibsen's husbands are patterns of selfishness, who marry only for their own social standing and enjoyment. One such is Tarvold in *A Doll's House*. He regards the display of affection towards his wife merely as a form of self-amusement. He calls her his "little lark", "my dearest girl", "little song bird", and so on; and gives her money to buy cosmetics and clothes with, as he wants her to look pretty. The wife becomes little more than a slave, without free choice of her own, and forced to like what her husband likes. Her only responsibility is to further her husband's pleasure. In effect, she becomes her husband's
puppet instead of a human being.

Hu Shih also takes up the question of the "double standard", noting in the families which Ibsen portrays, it is the accepted rule that the husband expects the wife to remain faithful to him, while the wife is never entitled to make the same demand. Ghosts offers the best example of this. When Mrs. Alving can no longer bear her husband, she flees to a friend's house. The friend is a priest, who dissuades her from going away, saying to her "... your duty was to hold firmly to the man you had once chosen, and to whom you were bound by the holiest ties."  

Alving, however, had led a vicious life, and had a secret liaison with his wife's maid. Nevertheless no one thinks the worse of him, and even the priest maintains that "a wife is not appointed to be her husband's judge". It is her duty to bear with humility the cross which a Higher Power, in Its wisdom, has laid upon her. A wife should sacrifice everything for her husband, though it is not necessary for the husband to reciprocate. Another example is A Doll's House. Nora is so anxious to save her husband's life that she uses her father's signature on a promissory note to borrow money. When her husband discovers what she has done, he is not only unwilling to share the responsibility for Nora's crime, but also blames her for ruining his future. Finally, when the affair has been settled quietly, he pretends to be broad-minded, and, forgiving Nora, says proudly, "There is something indescribably sweet and soothing to a man in having forgiven his wife - honestly forgiven her, from the bottom of his heart."  

Hu Shih saw as the reason for people finding themselves in this
kind of situation their craving for dignity; they could not help but create a false morality behind which to hide. The majority are cowards. Nora, realizing the true character of her married life, and unwilling to remain a puppet, has the courage to leave her husband and seek her own life. Mrs. Alving on the other hand, is lacking in courage, and is only concerned with maintaining her dignity. As a result she is easily convinced by her friend, the priest, and returns to do her "duty" as a "wife". Alving remains as before; and the only thing Mrs. Alving can do is sacrifice herself, and try hard to keep him at home. When their son is seven, she sends him to Paris to escape the pollution of their home. She dominates her husband, but at the same time conceals everything, and leads her son to believe that his father is an honourable man. After Alving's death, she uses her inheritance to build an orphanage, the "Chamberlain Alving Foundation"; but the orphanage burns down and the son inherits syphilis from his father and goes mad. Such are the results of cowardice and concern for dignity.

Hu Shih also discusses Ibsen's opposition to the conformism imposed by law, religion and moral principles. Ibsen said that the effect of law was to banish evil, to forbid people from doing wrong things. All were equal under the law, and if a man offended against a certain statute, he would be sentenced for a certain crime. The defect of the law was that it had no human feeling. It could not admit that the same crime could be committed with different motives. Individuals might commit the same crime, but their knowledge of life and their experience could be different. The law took no account of such differences. For
example, in *A Doll's House*, there are two crimes involving false
signatures; one is committed by a lawyer and the other by a woman with
no knowledge of the law. But the law itself gives no weight to this
distinction. Here is how Ibsen writes the scene:

Krogstad: Mrs. Helmer, you evidently do not realise what you have
been guilty of. But I can assure you it was nothing more
and nothing worse that made me an outcast from society.

Nora: You! You want me to believe that you did a brave thing to
save your wife's life?

Krogstad: The law takes no account of motives.

Nora: Then it must be a very bad law.

Krogstad: Bad or not, if I produce this document in court, you will
be condemned according to law.

Nora: I don't believe that. Do you mean to tell me that a
daughter has no right to spare her dying father trouble
and anxiety? - that a wife has no right to save her
husband's life? I don't know much about the law, but I'm
sure you'll find, somewhere or another, that that is
allowed. And you don't know that - you, a lawyer! You
must be a bad one, Mr. Krogstad.12

In Ibsen's mind, religion had become a listless creed which had lost
its power of changing people. It had deteriorated into a mere collection
of words, no longer capable of generating enthusiasm. In *A Doll's House*:
Ibsen wrote:

Helmer: .... Have you not religion?

Nora: Oh, Torvald, I don't really know what religion is.
Helmer: What do you mean?

Nora: I know nothing but what Pastor Hansen told me when I was confirmed. He explained that religion was this and that. The playwright regarded all the "religious" people of his day as being of that sort. If one of them were asked what he believed, he would only repeat the words that his pastor had told him. Reading his prayers was what his religion amounted to. Religion in the beginning had been established for the people; but later it had changed and become antipathetic to human nature. An example of this is the priest in Ghosts telling Mrs. Alving to go back home to her morally corrupt husband. He says: "It is the very mark of the spirit of rebellion to crave for happiness in this life. What right have we human beings to happiness? We have simply to do our duty". And: "A wife is not appointed to be her husband's judge." All the affirmations in the priest's pronouncements are negations in Mrs. Alving's mind. After she has examined the "seam" of the priest's doctrines, she realizes that it is wholly "machine-sewn".

Why was this kind of "machine-sewn religion" so successful? In Hu Shih's opinion, although the religion of the day had lost its spiritual value, it had still retained its material advantage. An example of what Hu Shih means is the carpenter in Ghosts, a rascally drunkard who, by parading religious talk before the priest, and by showing great enthusiasm at prayer meetings, leads the latter to believe that he had become a Changed man.

Another example is Rosmer in the play Rosmersholm, a priest whose ideas gradually change so that he "loses" his religion. He then joins
the Liberal Party, but the party leader stops him from announcing that he has abandoned his religious belief, as this would impair his usefulness in attracting the votes of the religious. So, religion is not vital to wellbeing: its survival depends solely on people who can "make use" of it.

According to Ibsen, morality was nothing else than time-honoured social custom. It was based on those customs that suited society. In China, members of the older generation regarded the practice of "free marriage" by young people as immoral, yet they thought it was moral to have concubines themselves. This was simply because "free marriage" was not in accord with Chinese social custom, while concubinage was. As the latter was socially accepted, its immorality was regarded as moral.

This "immoral morality", in society, necessarily resulted in hypocrisy. Ibsen hated hypocrites. Bernick, in *Pillars of Society* is an example. He had committed a misdemeanour and layed the blame upon his brother-in-law, Johan, spreading the story that Johan had taken money and fled to America. Finally, he attempts to drown Johan in an unseaworthy ship, so that the truth would be hidden forever. In public life, however, Bernick is regarded as a "gentleman". The respectable respect him, look on him as "an ideal citizen", "a model of all the civic virtues" and one of "The Pillars of Society". On the very day that Bernick attempts to murder Johan, the whole town comes out in procession to do homage to him. They cry: "Long live Consul Bernick! Long live the Pillars of Society!" So this is called "morality"!

Hu Shih pointed out that Ibsen's plays show clearly that society
and individuality are mutually damaging. The authoritarian society forcibly destroys individuality and suppresses the spirit of individual freedom and independence. Ibsen argued that no spirit would remain to society if individuality were destroyed. Society would stagnate and lose all ability to advance. Bernick as a young man had tried to be a reformer; later, influenced by society, he had given his loyalty to the old order of things, and had become a "Pillar of Society".

The **Wild Duck** tells of a man who caught a wild duck and kept it in a garret. Every day the duck was given a trough of water in which to splash about. As time passed, the duck became used to the attic and lived there comfortably, completely forgetting the joy of flying in the open sky. In Hu Shih's mind the individual in society was very like that wild duck. At first he would be dissatisfied; but later, as he became used to his situation, he would regard this sombre world as very heaven.

As Hu Shih pointed out, Ibsen showed that society commended those who obeyed its rules, but strongly condemned idealists who opposed them. It was held that "the compact majority" was right. Ibsen, however, was constantly denying this, and saying the "minority is always on the right side". He demonstrated that every reform began with a minority and was bitterly opposed by the majority. The minority indeed sometimes started off with only a single individual, who was dissatisfied with the condition of society, and demanded change and revolution. Such idealists would always be denounced by the majority as "disturbing elements", and "breakers of the peace". Society would use force to
suppress him, forbid him to speak, deny him liberty of action, imprison, banish or even kill him. Then, after a few decades or a few centuries, the views of the minority would become those of the majority; and society would hold in great esteem the "disturbing element" whom it had killed. Men should be brought to realize that the "new" ideas of past ages become "old superstition" very quickly. By the time it has come to respect "distinctive independence", the new "minorities" already have been sentenced to death as their forerunners.

This principle is clearly enunciated in Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*. In this play Dr. Stockmann discovers that his native town has possibilities of development as a spa. A few baths are built, and a little-known town suddenly becomes famous. The Baths are the town's chief source of prosperity. Dr. Stockmann is appointed Medical Officer of the Baths. Later, some unusual cases of illness—typhoid and gastric attacks—occur among the visitors. After careful investigation, the Doctor sends a sample of spa water to the University for exact chemical analysis. The analysis shows that there are millions of infusoria in the water—a condition fatal to health. The feed-pipes leading into the Pump-Room are polluted, and the same accursed poisonous refuse seeps out onto the beach. The Doctor thereupon reports to the Directors, requesting that all the water-pipes be re-layed. This, however, would cost a lot of money: the baths would have to be closed for at least two years, and the town's income would be very adversely affected. The town authorities are strongly opposed to Dr. Stockmann's suggestions. They prefer the visitors to be ill to losing their incomes, and forbid the
Doctor to speak out. The newspapers refuse to publish his report. He decides to give the true facts of the situation in a public speech, but no one in the town would rent him a hall. Finally he contrives to find a hall in which to hold a public meeting. At the meeting no one listens to the Doctor's statement. He is driven from the platform and declared "an enemy of the people". The next day he is dismissed from his post. The House-owners' Association circulates an appeal in which all well-disposed citizens are called upon not to employ him. His landlord asked the family to move out. This was the result of "independent action", and exemplifies the methods by which society punishes the "disturbing element". 21

Ibsen did not explicitly discuss politics in his plays, but his political ideas find expression in his letters. In his early years he was an anarchist. A letter to a friend, written during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871, clearly shows this tendency:

"Now there is absolutely no reasonable necessity for the individual to be a citizen. On the contrary - the state is the curse of the individual. With what is the strength of Prussia as a state bought? With the merging of the individual in the political and geographical concept. The waiter makes the best soldier. Now, turn to the Jewish nation, the nobility of the human race. How has it preserved itself - isolated, poetical - despite all the barbarity from without? Because it had no state to burden it. Had the Jewish nation remained in Palestine, it would long since have been ruined in the process of construction, like all the other nations. The state must be abolished! In that
revolution I will take part. Undermine the idea of the state; make willingness and spiritual kinship the only essentials in the case of a union - and you have the beginning of a liberty that is of some value. The changing of forms of government is mere toying with degrees - a little more or a little less - folly, the whole of it."

Ibsen's position gradually changed from pure anarchism to a more generalized progressivism after he had seen the failure of the Paris Commune in 1871. Writing to a friend (more than ten years later, in 1884) he said that if he could have his way at home, he would unite all the unprivileged and form a strong, resolute, progressive party, whose aims would be to extend the suffrage, improve the position of women, and emancipate national education from every kind of medievalism. This was no longer the attitude of intransigent anarchism. He never joined a political party, as he thought to do so was very demoralizing. He hated the idea of political liberty, for he thought "the struggle for liberty is nothing but the constant, living assimilation of the idea of freedom. He who possesses liberty otherwise than as a thing to be striven for, possesses it dead and soulless; for the idea of liberty has undoubtedly this characteristic, that it develops steadily during its assimilation."

Ibsen was never an advocate of nationalism, and could never be a narrow patriot. In a letter to a friend in 1888, he said: "A man of reasonably well-developed intellect is no longer satisfied with the old conception of nationality. We can no longer be content with the political community to which we belong. I believe that national consciousness is
on the point of dying out, and that it will be replaced by racial consciousness; I myself, at least, have passed through this evolution. I began by feeling myself a Norwegian; I developed into a Scandinavian; and now I have arrived at Teutonism."

Hu Shih inferred from this letter that Ibsen must have reached a position of cosmopolitanism in his later years.

Hu Shih saw Ibsen's philosophy as a simple realism. Ibsen recorded the darkside of society and the family. While his thought, on the surface, seemed destructive, it was in fact constructive. Ibsen was like a doctor who examined his patients, and kept a record of their symptoms. Nevertheless, although he recorded many symptoms, he did not always find it easy to give the correct prescription. He knew very well that society was an organism of great complexity; and that its malfunctions were unlikely to yield to any one simple panacea.

Nevertheless, an important point in Ibsen's teaching was that an "individual might develop to the full his talent and individuality". In a letter to his friend George Brandes he said: "What I chiefly desire for you is a genuine, full-blooded egoism, which shall force you for a time to regard what concerns you yourself as the only thing of any consequence, and everything else as non-existent. .... There is no way in which you can benefit society more than by coining the metal you have in yourself. .... There are actually moments when the whole history of the world appears to me like one great shipwreck, and the only important thing seems to be to save one's self."
To Ibsen the idea was absurd that people who knew the world was sinking should just let themselves sink with it, without ever a thought to save themselves. Society was composed of individuals. If even only a single person were to be saved, there would at least be one more member for the new society. This sort of "selfishness" was in reality the highest "altruism". In *A Doll's House*, Nora leaves her husband and children simply because she wishes to "save herself". One passage reads:

Helmer: ... Can you forsake your holiest duties in this way?
Nora: What do you consider my holiest duties?
Helmer: Do I need to tell you that? Your duties to your husband and your children.
Nora: I have other duties equally sacred.
Helmer: Impossible! What duties do you mean?
Nora: My duties towards myself.
Helmer: Before all else you are a wife and a mother.
Nora: That I no longer believe. I believe that before all else I am a human being, just as much as you are - or at least that I should try to become one. .... 27

Society's greatest crime was to inhibit an individual's personality and stop him developing in his own way. There were two important conditions for an individual's development of his personality. One was to have free will; the other was to have a sense of responsibility towards himself. In *A Doll's House*, Helmer's mistake was to treat Nora as a "puppet". He would not allow her free will nor let her take the responsibility of her family upon herself. Another example is the Doctor in
The Lady From the Sea, who takes a second wife - the woman Ellida - from the open sea. Having two young but grown-up daughters by his first marriage, the Doctor does not let his young wife manage the household. Ellida, as a wife with no freedom, and stepmother with no responsibility, finds her life devoid of interest and is always thinking of going away to find her freedom. As the Doctor realizes that it is impossible for her to stay any longer, he sets her free:

Wangel: ...Now you are set wholly free from me and mine. Now your own true life can return to its - its right groove again. For now you can choose in freedom; and on your own responsibility, Ellida.

Ellida: In freedom - and on my own responsibility? Responsibility! This - this transforms everything.

Ellida cares nothing about life on the sea once she has won freedom and self-responsibility. Her discontent arose simply because nothing is interesting as long as one lives a slave-life without freedom or responsibility.28

In society as well as in the family, every individual should have freedom of choice, and be responsible for his own actions. Otherwise there will be no independent spirit in the society; and without such a spirit, there can be no hope of social progress.

Ibsen had one main aim: that society should learn to tolerate its Dr. Stockmanns. Society should have numerous "enemies of the people" who dare to tell the truth. More people should announce, like Dr. Stockmann, that "The strongest man in the world is he who stands most
Since society and the state are constantly subject to change, it is impossible to say what is the best way to save this world. Moreover, every country and society is different; and the medicine which suits Japan would not necessarily suit China. Ibsen knew there was no such thing as a single cure for all diseases. There is no principle which can be a rule for every country in the world. Accordingly, Ibsen only told the facts, wrote down the symptoms. He did not give the prescription, and yet the lessons he taught were invaluable to all who wanted to have a healthy society. He seemed to be saying: "The human body depends entirely on the blood's white corpuscles, which constantly wage war against bacteria to keep us healthy. In the same way, the health of society also depends on the 'white corpuscles' which are never satisfied and always fighting against what is unclean. With enough 'white corpuscles' like Dr. Stockmann in the social blood-stream society could not help but improve day by day."

In another letter to Brandes he wrote: "In ten years, the majority will, possibly, occupy the standpoint which Dr. Stockmann held at the public meeting. But during these ten years the Doctor will not have been standing still; he will still be at least ten years ahead of the majority. He can never have the majority with him. As regards myself, at least, I am conscious of incessant progression. At the point where I stood when I wrote each of my books, there now stands a tolerably compact crowd; but I myself am no longer there; I am elsewhere, further ahead, I hope."

Under Ibsen's influence Hu Shih wrote The Greatest Event in Life.
a one-act play. He wrote this piece in China in 1919, in English, and later translated it into Chinese. It was published in *New Youth* (March, 1919). In this play Hu Shih ridicules old Chinese superstitions and customs, and the contradiction between old and new ideas in a newly modernised Chinese family. The young girl of the play, Miss Tien, wishes to marry a pleasant, reliable young man, Mr. Ch'en, whom she met in Japan. The mother, an old-fashioned woman, cannot bring herself to give up the custom of predicting the outcome of a marriage by comparing horoscopes, the less so since this is the marriage of an only daughter. The mother cannot risk making her own decision, and so she asks for a "Divine Stick" from the Goddess of Mercy, and seeks out a fortune-teller to divine her daughter's marriage. The horoscopes conflict, and the mother consequently strongly opposes the marriage. The father, who has always wanted to break with ancient superstition, has forbidden his wife to worship Buddha or visit the fortune-teller; but in the end lacks the courage to oppose deep-rooted custom. He likes Mr. Ch'en very much, but finds that he has no alternative but to oppose the marriage, if only for the reason that some two thousand five hundred years before the names Tien (田) and Ch'en (陳) were pronounced in the same way: a proof that in ancient times these two surnames belonged to the same family. This is fatal to the marriage, because according to time-honoured law a man and woman of the same surname are not allowed to marry. The following dialogue is taken from the play:

Miss Tien: Does this prohibition apply to persons whose relationship dates back two thousand five hundred years?
Mr. Tien: Unfortunately it does.

Miss Tien: Oh, Father, surely you don't believe in the reasonableness of such a custom.

Mr. Tien: I don't, but society does and the old scholars do. ....

Miss Tien is bitterly disappointed, and tries to argue that Tien and Ch'en are really different names:

Miss Tien: But we are not of the same family!

Mr. Tien: Our genealogy says we are, and the old scholars say we are. I have consulted a number of scholars on this point, and they all oppose this union. You see, in a matter of such importance, although one must not be deceived by the wooden gods and blind fortune-tellers, one must respect the opinion of old scholars. ....

Miss Tien: Oh, Oh! Father! You have destroyed the idols of superstition, but you bow to the idols of tradition!

Finally Miss Tien runs away, leaving a note for her parents saying:

"This is the greatest event in my life. I must decide for myself. I am gone with Mr. Ch'en in his car. Good-bye!"

Despite Hu Shih's good intentions, no woman could be found at that time (1919) who dared play the part of the heroine, simply because at the end of the play Miss Tien runs away with her lover.

3. Ibsen's Influence on Chinese Female Emancipation

As well as Hu Shih's "Ibsenism", Yüan Chên-yin's "Life of Ibsen" was another important study of the Norwegian playwright. Furthermore,
translations of three of Ibsen's important plays also appeared in *New Youth*'s special Ibsen number, while at the same time *Ghosts* was translated into Chinese by P'an Chia-hsün (潘家洵) and published in *New Tide* in May 1919. It seems, however, that the Chinese had a special affection for *A Doll's House*, which has been repeatedly discussed and quoted, especially in articles relating to feminism. This play was regarded as an alarum to rouse wives who blindly obeyed their husbands; and Nora, the heroine, was regarded as the model to the modern woman. Chinese women were encouraged to "realize themselves" like Nora, to be strong enough to oppose the male sex, and emancipate themselves. The "new woman" of the present day should have a new philosophy based on the new idea of humanism. She should not rest content with the rôle of being her husband's pet, and should realize that she is a human being, and that, just like her husband, she has her own responsibilities and obligations.

Lu Hsün, a lecturer at Peking National University and one of the most widely read writers of the day, also reacted to Ibsenism, but at a much deeper level than most of his contemporaries. Instead of encouraging Chinese women to follow the example of Nora and leave their husbands, he explored the implications of Nora's act to consider how women could be independent in reality. In a speech called "What Happened to Nora After She Left Home?" (娜拉走後怎樣), given at Peking Women's Normal College, Lu Hsün suggested that Nora could only adopt one of two courses when she left her husband - she could become a prostitute, or else return home.
Lu Hsün held that the most painful thing in the world was that there was no way to go after waking from a dream. A man was fortunate if he could remain in his dream, and it was no kindness to wake him up if we knew he had no other place to go. Nora had woken up, and it was impossible for her to return again into her dream. She had to go away, and yet she had nothing to take with her except her awakened heart. If she wanted to live alone in the world, she would need something more than this, something essential - money. The dream was sweet, but to realize it money was important. Freedom could not be bought with money, and yet it could not be had without money.

Lu Hsün argued that no one in the world could avoid being hungry. If you wanted to escape from hunger, or from being a puppet in this society, you needed the right to provide for yourself. Men and women should be equal both in the family and in society.Demanding the right to earn one's own living seemed an insignificant matter, but might well be more difficult than demanding the suffrage. If one sat at home and cried for women's suffrage, one would not bring forth much opposition, but if one called for equal rights for earning one's living, this would inevitably excite immediate opposition, because this was a bread-and-butter question of immediate concern.

If it was desired to solve this problem peacefully, a start would have to be made with the children. They should be given equal property rights, and should be allowed to take the responsibility for what was theirs. To attain this end, a record of past events would be needed. An inaccurate record was bad for descendents, because once a person
escaped from what he had suffered, he forgot what he had struggled for, and he would repeat all his previous errors. A young woman who suffered ill-treatment from her mother-in-law would, when she became a mother-in-law herself, ill-treat her daughter-in-law. Statesmen who hated students were always the students who had fought with statesmen before. The parents who today oppressed their children were the revolutionaries in family matters of ten years ago. Might not this tendency to change one's opinions have something to do with advancing years and exalted position? The way to offset this was for everyone to keep an accurate record for use as a reference as one grew older and one's position was changed.

If Nora were a special person, if she were willing to go out to sacrifice herself, that would be something else again. We have the right neither to encourage anyone nor prevent anyone from sacrificing themselves. Sacrifice is often a matter purely for the person concerned: it is seldom undertaken for the sake of society. The majority, especially in China, are always spectators. A startling sacrifice is no better than a long, deep, pliable and strong fight to realize one's aims.

China was too hard to change. It seemed to take blood simply to move a chair or stove. The country itself would not progress unless the whip slashed on its back. The end result was another question, but the whip was unavoidable.

Lu Hsün thought that the result of the publication of *A Doll's House* might be that many women would leave home to be "human beings", 
without giving a thought to the future. In order to prevent the creation of a new problem in this way, he advised Chinese women to fight for genuine equality rather than seek an aimless independence. There was no value in sacrificing oneself fruitlessly. It was better to join the ranks of those fighting for the future of the whole society.

In "How We Should be Fathers in the Present Day", published in New Youth (Nov. 1919) Lu Hsün also argued that, just as the world of other living creatures exhibited the virtues of egoism, so human life should also base itself on this principle. All over the world, everyone accepted that it was right to love oneself. This gave meaning to the preservation of one's life, and was also a base for the continuation of life. Unhealthy parents were a danger to their descendents. In Ibsen's Ghosts, we could learn the importance of inheritance. Oswald was young, and a hard worker with every opportunity to lead his own life, but because of his inheritance of syphilis from his father, his mind collapsed so that he would never be able to work again. He loved his mother dearly, and determined that he would not live to be a burden to her. He kept some morphia so that when the disease affected him, his maid Regina could help him and make sure that he killed himself. When the time came Regina had gone, so he had to ask his mother:

Oswald: Well then, it is you that must come to the rescue, mother.

Mrs. Alving: I!

Oswald: Who should do it if not you?

Mrs. Alving: I! your mother!
Oswald: For that very reason.

Mrs. Alving: I, who gave you life!

Oswald: I never asked you for life. And what sort of a life have you given me? I will not have it! You shall take it back again! 38

Lu Hsün regarded this part of *Ghosts* as a signal warning to fathers. A man without self-love was not qualified to be a father. Parents should not transmit mental or physical defect. 39

In Hu Shih's and Lu Hsün's writings, the reflection of Ibsen's ideas is clearly apparent. "Ibsenism" had awakened the Chinese to the importance of individualism and to the responsibilities of citizenship and parenthood. It also exerted a powerful influence on the Chinese female emancipation movement.
CHAPTER V. HU SHIH'S VIEWS ON WOMEN

1. Marriage

Hu Shih was one of the leading figures in the movement for Chinese female emancipation. He is known as a great scholar who opposed arranged marriages. However, although he advocated the Western concept of marriage for China in several of his speeches and writings and regarded the changing of Chinese marriage customs as a fundamental step in progress towards social reform in China, he was not completely opposed to all aspects of traditional Chinese marriage. He always believed that the status of Chinese women was superior to that of women in the West, and that the Chinese marriage system was better than the Western. "Woman's position in China" he wrote, "is superior to that of Western woman. We take our women's reputations and integrity very seriously, and they are never forced to worry about the possibility of marriage. Their parents arrange everything for them." He thought that women in China did not have to immerse themselves in the social round in order to achieve the cultivation of their personalities. In the Western world it was different. There, when girls were grown up, they began to look for a husband, and went out with men. Those who knew how to please, or were able to catch a man, got married first. Those lacking social graces, or who were unwilling to swallow their pride to please men, remained single and became old maids. This meant that women were prevented from realizing true development of their personalities.
"The old fashioned Chinese marriage system respects a woman's personality. It is not necessary for her to seek out her own husband ... Those who are born lacking the ability to please others, or who do not like to flatter others, are not thereby prevented from marrying."

He believed that love in western marriage was "self-made", while love in Chinese marriage was "duty-made". In China, after her engagement, a woman had a special sentiment toward her betrothed. When she heard his name mentioned, she would be bashful; when she heard someone talking about him, she would listen unobtrusively. A man would show the same feeling toward the woman to whom he was betrothed. When they married, both of them knew their responsibility to love each other and to sympathize with each other. "Originally their feeling was grounded on imagination and fostered by duty; now through practice and necessity it can always grow into real love."

Hu Shih's own marriage was arranged by his mother. At the age of 14, as the result of an understanding between the two families, he was engaged to Miss Kiang Tung-hsiu. He never complained about this arrangement. Miss Kiang had bound feet, and had never been educated; but Hu Shih approved the principle of having a wife chosen for him. "Besides knowledge, there are still many other considerations, such as health and appearance, that we cannot neglect.... If I cannot obtain a knowledgeable companion at home, I can always find one from among my friends. This is why I do not object to my marriage". In one of his letters to his mother, in 1915, he wrote: "I did not mean
to complain about my marriage. I know very well that you tried your best to seek a happy family for me. If I still tend to complain... I am really stupid that I cannot appreciate what you have done for me nor distinguish between good and bad.... At the present time it is a good thing if a woman is able to study; but, even if she cannot, it is not a great short-coming. The knowledge obtained from books and papers is only one kind of knowledge. I have seen many women who know how to study and write but lack the ability to be good wives and mothers. Do I dare to think about a perfect companion?... A man would indeed be fortunate to have a wife who was also a teacher and friend. It is rare even in this country (the U.S.A.) for both parties to a marriage to be equally well educated. How could this happen in China where there is no female education at all? If I take 'equal knowledge' as my rule in seeking a wife, no doubt I would have to be single for my whole life...."

Hu also criticised those students who came back from abroad and divorced their old-fashioned wives. "The student who has recently studied abroad, and who, after breathing in some civilized air, divorces his wife as soon as he arrives home, does not stop to think how his culture and sophistication were given to him simply by chance, and how much money all this cost. If his wife had been given the same chance, she would also have acquired culture and sophistication, and then would not be despised by him".

In the year he returned to China from America he married Miss Kiang, to whom he had now been betrothed for twelve years. His friends
were very worried about his marriage, but it turned out to be one of the most richly rewarding associations of his life. He loved his wife dearly, and that love was reciprocated in full measure by his wife, who bore him two sons.\(^\text{12}\)

Despite Hu Shih's lack of strong opposition to old-style marriages, he was one of the leading advocates of "free marriage". In "American Women" he described the concept of "free marriage" as practised in America, and the laws governing marriage in that country. Later on he wrote a short play - "The Greatest Thing in Life",\(^\text{13}\) the plot of which concerns a young woman who runs away from home to marry her lover. This play, which treats the whole problem of woman's emancipation, influenced an entire generation of young women.

Hu Shih believed in divorce. He thought that under certain conditions, divorce was not immoral. He occasionally criticised the traditional "seven grounds for divorce" as making it, in his view, too easy for a man to divorce his wife, but his opposition to the traditional concept of divorce seems to have been much more directed against the "three conditions" given in the Li Chi under which a wife could not be sent away. This, he thought gave too much protection to the wife. Limitations on the possibility of divorce caused a lot of unhappy marriages, and gave rise to "hen-pecked" husbands. In "Disintegration and Readjustment" - the last lecture of a series which he delivered in July, 1933, as Haskell Lecturer for the Department of Comparative Religion in the University of Chicago - he discussed Pu Sung-ling's (蒲松齡) A Marriage That Will Awaken the World (醒世姻緣)
as an example of the problem of unhappy Chinese marriages. It deals with a wife who has only one eye, who is guilty of every conceivable crime, who maltreats her own parents, her parents-in-law, and in particular her husband, whom she treats with most brutal cruelty and whom she twice tries to murder. There is no way of escape for the husband except to run away from home and seek a new life in Peking, and later in Szechuan; but the wife follows him, and he is forced to tolerate her and suffer her cruelties. She has never been physically unfaithful to him, and social usage and religion alike conspire to protect her from being sent away or divorced. After labouring the point for what seems like "a million words", the author comes to the only possible conclusion: namely that such a marriage must be the result of the accumulated retribution of past existences in which the tables had been turned, and the oppressed was once the oppressor and the oppressor once the oppressed. The causal chain could be broken only through a resignation to fate and a determination never again to offer grounds for revenge in a future existence by short-sighted measures of human invention.

He also used the diary of a well-known scholar of the late nineteenth century, Wang shih-t'o, (汪士鐸 ), to provide an example of a husband's horrible sufferings at the hands of his wife. Hu Shih quotes: "I cannot fight you, nor can I escape from you. But

a. In Ming dynasty, adultery became the only justifiable cause for sending away a wife.
you are an illiterate and cannot read what I write down about you. And you cannot answer back. I hereby solemnly and truthfully set down and charge against you ninety points of your unpardonable crimes. ... This is the only means I have to revenge myself!" - and adds the comment that, "He, too, never thought of divorce as a possible way of escape".  

These examples are enough to show that he believed that an unhappy marriage which was not based on affection and respect, and could not give a good result, should not continue.  

In the lecture already referred to, Hu Shih expresses the view that "the changed status of woman in the family and in society" was "one of the most important phases of the social revolution in China".  

The new Civil Code, promulgated some two years earlier, a great measure of freedom to men and women in matters of marriage and divorce. The law distinguished between divorce by mutual consent and divorce for a special reason. The new social consciousness made it possible for the divorced wife to live without public censure and to remarry without losing her respectability; and the law further provided for compensation if a woman could not support herself after divorce. The private property of the wife, if she chose to keep it separate from the property of her husband, was protected by law.

2. The Families That Influenced Hu Shih

When Hu Shih was in the United States he was often entertained
by American families; and, as I have already suggested in an earlier chapter, he was deeply influenced by their way of life. He divided these families into several groups. Thus in his diary he recorded under the heading "Various Types of American Families": "I have seen quite a lot of American married couples with no children, but in Syracuse, John B. Tuck's family is similar to Professor W. Comfort's, in that both have children all of whom are very clever and charming. In the Williams' family the parents are old and the sons are all grown up and have children. The daughters are also grown up and all have left home. That is another type. As regards Professor and Mrs. Alfred Hayes, Professor and Mrs. J. H. Comstock, Professor and Mrs. J. E. Creighton, and Professor and Mrs. E. Albee, the partners are both well educated, and respect and love each other. They do not worry about whether they have children or not. That is another kind of family". After Hu Shih returned to China, in his address on "American Women" he explained to his own countrywomen the types of family he had known in the United States. He divided them into four. In the first the husband and wife are both highly educated, love and respect each other, and have a satisfactory family life. An example he used as an illustration was the wife of the philosopher John Dewey, who had helped her husband to establish an 'Experimental School'. She spent ten years testing his theory of education. Later on, their eldest daughter also studied education, and travelled to many different places to examine new educational movements for her father. Hu also cited the case of the wife of Professor Comstock, herself a biologist,
and the wife of a biologist. Both were university teachers and authors of very useful books. The economist Alvin Johnson's wife was a philosopher and a distinguished authority on Aristotle's philosophy. "Couples of this kind, who are equally matched in learning and also have very good families, are few in America. In the second place there was the ordinary middle class family - a happy one as the husband and wife shared their happiness and sadness together. When Hu Shih was in Ithaca, he had dinner one evening in a professor's home. The Professor and his wife told him that originally they had both been poor students. Although they had no children, they suffered many troubles together. In recent years their situation had improved, and they were now building a house. The husband was a professor of architecture, and he designed the house, while his wife superintended the work. "This common life deepens the love between husband and wife, and also increases the happiness of the family." Hu Shih also used Dr. and Mrs. Mortimer J. Brown as another example of this kind of happy marriage. In Hu Shih's third type of marriage, the husband and wife each retain their own personality and each reads their own life, but they nevertheless can get along very well together. He cited an anonymous friend as an example. "This friend is the manager of a transportation company in New York and goes to his office every day. His wife is a society woman, goes out a great deal, reads books in several languages, and studies art and music as well. She gives parties once or twice a month. Among the guests are writers,
artists, musicians, reporters, rich 'society women' and also those 'new women' with their unadorned hair and bizarre dress. This hostess entertains her mixed guests hospitably and capably. The guests never see her husband, and he never joins these parties. But both partners in the marriage love and are good to each other. They are not separated because of their different interests". Lastly, there was the family life of the "New Woman": After her marriage, she and her husband both carry on their independent lives. As examples Hu Shih cited Paul B. Schumm and Carmen S. Reuben, without mentioning their names.

While making the acquaintance of these families Hu Shih continually compared them with traditional Chinese families. He studied the good and bad points of both, and thought of ways in which Chinese family life could be improved. "I often talk to Americans, saying that in the Chinese family system children have a duty to care for their parents. As the parents grow old, they have someone to rely on. This is a much better way than the individualism to be found in this country. But here people are brought up to be independent...Thinking it over, it is a great shortcoming in our family system to be reared as a dependent...."

In his essay entitled Ibsenism, Hu Shih pointed out that Ibsen's plays stress four evils that could harm family life: selfishness, dependent drudgery, insincerity, and cowardice. These were also to be found in Chinese family life, and Hu Shih touched on them in another of his writings, A Biography of Li Ch'ao. This biography is in
essence a collection of Li Ch'ao's (李超) letters. Her parents had died when she was a baby, and she had only two sisters, both older than herself. Since no son had been born to them, her parents had earlier adopted her uncle's son as the family heir. During her whole life, Li Ch'ao's only ambition was to be able to study for a few more years, but her adopted brother tried by every conceivable means to prevent her. She fought her family in vain; and finally died, a broken woman, in her early twenties. Hu Shih's purpose in writing her life was to draw attention to the problem of patriarchy and the male line of descent in the Chinese family, and to the related problem of female education and women's rights of inheritance.

He criticised the fact that the structure of the traditional Chinese family was so strongly orientated towards preserving the male line of descent. It was because of this that polygamy was not considered an evil. A man who reached forty and had no son could take a concubine, and neither society nor his wife would think he was acting wrongly. As the family was so eager to preserve its line and name, early marriages were very common, and sons in the family were regarded as much more precious than daughters. This greatly weakened the position of women.

Hu Shih regarded the break-up of the old family as one of the greatest achievements of social reform in China. "The Chinese family of old times rarely, if ever, possessed the valuable virtues which have sometimes been attributed to it or read into it. The Chinese family is theoretically built on the foundation of suppressing
individuality for the sake of the well-being of the whole." He attacked the family as a system under which members, unable to support themselves, were supported by parental and ancestral charity, or by the communal income earned by their more enterprising and productive brothers. Sometimes, as soon as his son was capable of earning a comfortable living, father might retire from active work although himself still only forty five years old. Not only would this family burden break the back of a productive young man, but he might also find imposed upon him an immoral obligation to give employment to his good-for-nothing relations.

Hu Shih thought the traditional family system undesirable because "it is often a nest of friction, suspicion, intrigues, oppressions, and even suicides". He drew a contrast between family life in China where sons and daughters-in-law lived together with parents and supported them, and family life in western countries, where sons left home after marriage and lived in their separate houses, and did not worry about their parents any more. Both of these patterns, he thought, represented extremes. The best, to his way of thinking, would be that the sons should move out after marriage, but live close to their parents' home so that they could come back and visit their parents often. Then there would not be so many quarrels in the family; and parents, sons and daughters could at the same time be independent of, and yet remain very close to, each other.
3. Female Education and the Independent Woman

Hu Shih devoted his life to education and strongly influenced the Chinese educational system, in particular the development of the education of women. In 1918, in "American Women", he described female education in the United States, from primary school to university. Seeking to bring its advantages to China, he tried hard to promote co-education in his own country. In primary schools, he said, "as the girls and boys often work together, girls naturally shed many weaknesses, while the boys are led to give up rough behaviour, such as the use of coarse language. The greatest advantage of co-education is that it helps young men and women to develop the ability to look after themselves."  

Hu believed that in the condition of Chinese customary behaviour, the sexes were too widely separated; so that, when men and women met each other, they had no way of judging how they should behave. It was very easy to make mistakes, and very easy for immorality to occur; whereas in the United States young men and women received together practically the same education from childhood on. "They study in the same classroom, take part in sport on the same ground, come and go together, and so, whether male or female, feel simply that they are school-mates, or friends; and are just 'human beings'. The barrier between the sexes is gradually broken down, and young people forget the physical differences between them. This kind of 'unawareness' in the social intercourse of male and female is the only way to improve the ability of young people to take
care of themselves". In the universities co-education could extend the scope of advanced education for women, and at the same time develop young peoples' independence. It would make it more possible for adult men and women to have normal relations, to share a common life and the experience of getting along with others. The male student would improve his personal standards of morality, by including women among his acquaintances simply as friends. In Hu Shih's opinion a not unimportant by-product of the introduction of co-educational courses was that they showed that women scored, on the average, better results than men. The more that men were made aware of this, the less likely they would be to feel contempt for women; while the women, for their part, would gain confidence in themselves, and so feel less dependent upon, or inclined to defer to, the men. Accordingly Hu Shih advocated "an emancipated co-education from high school to university. Let young men and women share the same education and have a common life".

In his article on "American Women" Hu Shih referred approvingly to the opinion held by so many women in the United States that a woman should be "more than a good wife and mother", and furthermore should be "independent". "A single woman, not afraid of fatigue or danger, had by herself travelled thousands of miles to Russia, when conditions there were in chaos, to investigate the facts about that country after the Revolution. This kind of spirit is a demonstration of the philosophy of 'being more than a good wife and mother'; and is representative of the spirit of the American woman. This philosophy, in other words,
embodies the idea of 'independence'". 36 "The meaning of 'independence' is to develop one's own ability without another's help. One can live by oneself and work for society". 37 The traditional Chinese concept was that women should manage the homekeeping: "The husband handles outside affairs and the wife keeps house". 38 In common speech the wife calls her husband "the outside one", while the husband calls his wife "the inner helper". This distinction is certainly not recognized by the modern American woman, who is rather of the opinion that men and women are all "human beings", and should all aim at making themselves really independent "persons", with no nonsense about 'inside' and 'outside'." Hu Shih cited as examples a woman who graduated from the Department of Forestry and an aviatrix who broke flying records; and spoke at length of a woman's rôle in American social and political activities. "I lived in America for seven years, and felt that nothing significant happened there without women being involved. There was no movement of value without innumerable enthusiastic women devoting money and energy to it's furtherance.... Furthermore, as regards religious affairs, charitable works, literary, artistic and musical activities etc., the most enthusiastic in advocating and assisting all of these are women". 39 He also discussed the contribution of American women to the "Social Settlement" movement. This movement had as its main purpose the establishment of model dwelling houses in working class areas and the promotion of activities such as debating societies, sport, music, 'after-school' courses, medical care and nursing, to
enable working class people to have an exemplary for their life, a useful education and normal amusement. He pointed out that two world famous "Settlements" in the United States were managed by women. One was Hull House in Chicago. It had been directed by Jane Addams for more than thirty years. It was not known how many poor children she had influenced, nor how many poor families she had relieved. The other was the Henry Street Settlement in New York, directed by Lilian Wald. In its early stage the purpose of this "Settlement" was to send out nurses to poor and working class families to attend the sick, provide medicine, and give help at child-birth, without charge. Later on its scope was gradually extended. The "Settlement" later acquired schools, meeting places, theatres and play grounds. Originally, Henry Street was a poverty-stricken and wretched area. "Since the 'Settlement' started, it really was as if a Heaven had appeared in Hell. These two 'Settlements' are the most outstanding examples of what American women have accomplished in the field of social reform. In the United States I often saw rich women who gave up comfortable lives to live in these 'Settlements'. One cannot but praise this kind of spirit". Hu Shih analysed three steps in the decision taken by such women. As they thought that doing something useful and practical was the only way to raise women's position and prestige. "So we can say that American women's social work not only demonstrates the individual's spirit of 'independence', but also the way in which women can extend their rights". He thought that Chinese women lacked this
outlook. "If our Chinese sisters can use this 'independent' spirit to supplement their 'dependent' temperament, and use the philosophy of these American women to supplement our concept of 'being a good mother and wife', then Chinese women will certainly attain to a new attitude, and China will also produce some genuinely 'independent' women. For this spirit has a contagious quality, spreading wider and wider; and gradually innumerable 'independent' men and women will be produced. Everyone will feel that he is really a 'person', that he has obligations which he must fulfil, and that he has a significant part to play in life. With such men and women, a good society will develop naturally." 42

4. Bound Feet and Chastity

Hu Shih strongly opposed the custom of binding women's feet, and also the traditional Chinese concept of "chastity". a When he was in the United States, he wrote to his betrothed urging her not to bind her feet, and be a pioneer in her home town and help seek to get rid of this evil custom. 43 When he returned to China he bitterly criticised footbinding; and denounced "China as a 'rotten society' because of the way our ancestors have treated their women". 44 This is a great crime in our country. Our ancestors have gravely erred, and their descendents are paying the penalty. I cannot plumb the depth of our wretchedness.

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a. Here and what follows I am again translating the Chinese term 貞操 chên-ch'ao by the English "chastity". See Chapter II, PP. 21-26
The expression 'regarding women as cattle and horses' hardly describes how cruelly we Chinese treat women. To put yokes and reins on them is not enough, we might as well cut off a leg or chop away their feet before sending them to work at hard labour. There is no other country in the world that retains so barbaric a custom as this. The ancient Sages and the Classics are of no use for rescuing our women. All the scholars of the past thousand years have talked about benevolence and righteousness every day, but they have closed their eyes to how inhumanely their mothers, wives and sisters have been made to suffer...

"Bound feet" are not only injurious to the people's health: this practice treats half the population as non-human. Treat them as cattle and horses; and for good measure break their legs. The mental cruelty this practice reflects is not easy to clean away even in a hundred or thousand years". 

Hu Shih returned over and again to this kind of criticism in his speeches and writings.

In July 1918, following the appearance of the essay "On Chastity" by Yosano Akiko of Japan, translated into Chinese by Mr. Chou Tso-jen, Hu Shih published his own article on "The Problem of Chastity". In it he attacked the practice of a young woman for the rest of her life foregoing her right to marry simply because the young man to whom her family had betrothed her had died before the marriage had even taken place; and equally that which, after a marriage in which the husband had died early, condemned the widow either, in the most extreme case, to commit suicide, or, at the least, to avoid re-marriage and
dedicate her remaining years to the service of her deceased husband's family.

In a country where marriages were invariably "arranged", and where, even after the couple had become engaged, the woman often did not even know what her future husband looked like, how could there be love between them? There were nevertheless, illiterate pretenders to scholarship who made use of the slogan "to immortalize your name" and encouraged innocent girls to be "virtuous and heroic women", who glorified "high ethical principles and discipline", in order that "the effect on good morals would be made grand and sublime". "I think if we are today to attack the problem of remarriage constructively, we should, first of all, oppose the cruel and fiendish conception of the 'virtuous and heroic woman' and develop a public opinion that will not only refuse to recognize this sort of behaviour as praiseworthy, but will openly denounce it as a crime against humanity and natural justice, and condemn the custom of persuading women to be 'virtuous and heroic' at the cost of their future life and fulfillment as a deliberate act of murder".49 Hu Shih was of the opinion that "chastity", in both the wider and narrower sense, was an essentially moral responsibility belonging to both men and women alike. It was unfair for Chinese men to exact an observance of chastity from their wives, while they themselves openly visited prostitutes, openly kept concubines, and openly dallied with other women. Men who married again, or were polygamous, incurred no social disapproval at all. "I do not mean to say that, since men visit prostitutes, women should therefore commit
adultery; nor would I say that a man who visits a prostitute and a woman who commits adultery are equal; or that a husband taking a concubine and a wife taking a lover are equally in error".  

Hu Shih believed that a chaste woman is one who, respecting a man's love, is so much devoted to him that she loves no one else. What is important is the attitude of one person towards another person. For this reason, men ought to assume the same attitude towards women as they expect women to adopt to them. Hence, chastity is not a duty unilaterally binding on the woman: it is a reciprocal morality equally binding on both sexes. "Chastity reflects the manner in which husband and wife treat each other". It exists where love between husband and wife is so deep and affection so strong, that, no matter whether both are living or whether one has died, and no matter which of the two survives the other, neither would wish to transfer his (or her) love to a third person. "Without love, there is no place for chastity". If it is taken as irrelevant whether there exists enduring love between husband and wife, and if the question of whether the husband deserves his wife's "chastity" is just not asked, but the assertion is simply and one-sidedly made that the wife is under an obligation to observe "chastity" toward her husband, then we are in the presence of a view of "chastity" that rests on a quite inhuman moral principle. In Hu Shih's opinion the question whether a widow should remarry or not was entirely a personal one, and one involving a number of different factors, such as one's affection, physical personality, economic
condition, etc.: factors which vary so much from one individual case to another that to lay down as an absolute rule that every widow should always remain a widow was utterly unreasonable. The only proper reason for a widow to die for her deceased husband would be the nature of the love between them. When love was deep, then even separation in life will be unbearable, let alone departure at death. There was, besides, the superstition leading to the belief in the re-union of a husband and wife after death. This was why many women, at the death of their husbands, were prepared to kill themselves in order to join their husbands in the afterlife. But this had nothing to do with the problem of "chastity". The latter, in Hu Shih's view, was a matter of love, to be decided by one's own free will. 53

He further believed that a woman who had been raped should not think of killing herself, because it was not true that she had thereby "lost her chastity". The case was the same as that of "a man walking at night-time who meets a robber, who points his gun at you and commands you to hand over your money and rings to him. You are obliged, being unarmed, to obey his orders. This is not considered as cowardice.... and it is no different for a woman who suffers rape". In both cases the victim is "choosing the lesser evil". 54 He thought that people should show sympathy to a woman who had suffered rape, and should not condemn her.

Hu Shih strongly opposed the traditional state legislation for the commendation of "Chastity". To commend a widow simply for remaining in this condition of widowhood implied that it was immoral for a
widow to remarry. If the law did not declare that the remarriage of a widow was immoral, it should not commend a widow for remaining unmarried. "Since to die for the death of one's husband is a matter depending purely on love, it should not either be commended or encouraged by legislation.... As long as the law provides for the official commendation of a woman who dies for her husband, women will make martyrs of themselves in the expectation of leaving an immortal name to history; the law providing for such commendation will only give rise to 'fame-fishing' hypocrisy." 55 "There is no place for 'chastity' where there is no affection between husband and wife; and what affection can an unmarried girl have toward one to whom she was merely betrothed? Whence arises the obligation for such "chastity"? Since the law had not encouraged such practice in the male, nor penalized the male for refusing to adopt such behaviour, it was wrong for it one-sidedly to encourage female "chastity". "As to legislation which commends an innocent girl for killing herself out of loyalty to a betrothed whom she has never even seen, this is a carry-over from old customs prevalent in the days when men were dominant, customs which should have no place in the world of today." 57
CHAPTER VI.

THE COMPARISON OF HU SHIH'S VIEWS AND THOSE OF HIS CONTEMPORARIES

The movement for female emancipation was developed under the leadership of the New Youth group. Its members gave co-operation and support to each other. As soon as one member of the group took up a question, the others would give their support immediately by bringing it forward for public discussion. Thus it is very hard to say whom we should designate as the leading spirit of the movement. Although it would perhaps be too much to say that if there had been no New Youth magazine, and if this group of intellectuals had not existed, the movement for female emancipation would not have happened, one can at least say that without this magazine and this group, the movement would not have developed so early or achieved such rapid success.

In this chapter, I propose to compare Hu Shih's views with those of his contemporaries. The subject-matter is taken mainly from the magazine New Youth. Additional substance is drawn from the monthly magazine New Tide published by the New Tide Society, an organization which brought together a number of outstanding students in Peking, which received support, both financially and by way of literary contributions, from Ch'en Tu-hsiu and Li Ta-chao, and which had Hu Shih as its adviser. The first issue of New Tide appeared on the 1st of January, 1919. It burst like a bomb shell among the literary youth and soon became the second most popular and influential magazine of the day. Besides New Youth and New Tide, I have also made use of a few articles
in the book *An Anthology of Articles on Chinese Feminism* (中國婦女問題討論集), compiled from contributions to various magazines and newspapers in the 1910's and 1920's. Some of the contributing writers have since become famous and important, such as Hu Shih, Lo Chia-lun, Lu Hsün, Ch'en Tu-hsiu, T'ao Meng-ho. However, there are a number of other writers who have sunk into oblivion and can no longer be identified. Quite a number of contributors wrote under pen-names. While some can be identified, as with Lu Hsün, the identity of many others cannot now be ascertained. Nevertheless, all the articles I have cited, by both famous and obscure writers, may be taken as representative of the ideas and tendencies of the period, and are cited in this study on that basis.

The first person to discuss the feminist problem in China was Ch'en Tu-hsiu (陳獨秀), the founder of the *New Youth* magazine. Early in 1916 he published an article entitled "The Year 1916" in *New Youth*. In it he expressed the wish that the youth of 1916 would overcome the problems of society, and not be overcome by them. Among humankind, man has been the subjugator, woman the subjugated. The youth of 1916, both male and female, should erase this enormous humiliation. All people are individuals, with a character of their own which demands respect. No one should become the property of another. Wife and son should become independent persons, and escape from the position of being the property of husband and parent.\(^\dagger\)

In December of the same year, again in *New Youth*, he published an article entitled "Confucianism and Modern Life" (孔子之道與現代生活), in which he bitterly criticised Confucianism as being totally inapplicable.
to modern life. In modern democracies, he said, sons and wives should be able to join political parties other than those of their parents and husbands; but Confucianism taught that sons should accept their parents' beliefs, at least until three years after their parents' death. As long as women had to obey their fathers, husbands or sons, female suffrage was impossible. Furthermore, Confucianism's demands for female chastity were one-sided. Widows could not marry again. And many trifling taboos concerning relations between men and women - such as that men and women should not sit together, and that a woman should cover her face before going out - were impractical for everyday life.2

Ch'en's ideas were radical. He felt strongly a responsibility to help build a new China and to reform the ideas of Chinese youth. His articles were written before the time of the "New Culture Movement", and were in the classical style. At that time, New Youth was only about twelve months old, and had not yet acquired the popularity it was to win a year later. However, Ch'en's articles attracted the attention of those members of the intelligentsia who were aware that in the feminist problem and the family system was to be found the key to China's social problem. Thus, at the beginning of 1917, New Youth opened a "column for women". In 1917 Hu Shih returned from the United States, Chou Tao-jen arrived back from Japan, Liu Fu (Liu Pan-nung) from France, and some other members of the intelligentsia also returned to China from abroad. Articles by them on feminism appeared in the pages of New Youth in rapid succession, and brought the movement for female emancipation to a head.
Although Hu Shih was not the originator of the movement, his strength lay in the way he used concrete examples to bring out the problems involved. For this reason Hu Shih always achieved a certain success both in his speeches and writings. He constantly drew attention to new or previously undiscussed aspects of a problem. For example, he published "The Problem of Chastity" in support of Chou Tso-jen's translation of "On Chastity" by Yosano Akiko of Japan; but went on further to discuss the "heroic and virtuous" women in China. In "American Women", he introduced the subject of American women's education, the American family and women's occupations. At the same time he suggested that the aims of women's education should be more than to produce good wives and mothers, and advocated co-education. He also wrote in favour of the permission of divorce, with equal rights for wife and husband. These became the main aims of the movement.

1. The New Chinese Intellectuals' Attack on the Traditional Family System

The new Chinese intellectuals regarded the traditional family as a monstrous system that must be overthrown. Almost all the youth of the day had experience of the so-called "large family". Now, as students began to study abroad and to make contact with Western families, they were automatically brought to think about the reform of the traditional Chinese institution of the large family. When Hu Shih visited families

a. See Chapter II. P.22-23
in the United States, he at once was led to compare the two systems, and consider the disadvantages of the Chinese family. 3

In November 1916, Ch'en Tu-hsiu in New Youth drew the contrast between life in East and West, taking more or less the same view as Hu Shih had expressed in his Diary. Ch'en suggested that the most significant difference was that Western civilization was based on a thorough-going individualism, whereas the Eastern civilization rested on family or lineage units. As he understood them, Western ethics, morals, political theory and law all tended to promote the rights and welfare of individuals, freedom of thought and speech, and the development of individuality. Under the Eastern system, a man was a member of his family and lineage, and not an independent individual. This system destroyed individual dignity and self-respect, strangled free-will and independent thought, deprived a person of equal rights under the law, and encouraged him to reply on others. Consequently Ch'en urged the substitution of individualism for the traditional family system. 4 It is clear that the intellectuals of the day shared this opinion concerning the shortcomings of the Chinese traditional family. Wu Yü (吴虞), a famous anti-Confucian scholar and a lecturer at Peking University, though he may here be accused of failing to give due credit to some of the family's advantages, flatly asserted that the family system should be held responsible for China being still in the stage of "clan society," with little prospect of advancing beyond it. 5 Chang Yao-hsiang (张耀翔) asked, if the youth of the country were only prepared to devote their energies to the well-being of their families which offered them
protection, who would then protect the country which offered protection to these families?  

Hu Shih, in his "Biography of Li Ch'ao" (李超傳), also attacked the traditional family system, especially the concept of descent and right of inheritance exclusively being in the male line. Hu Shih made use of Li Ch'ao's letters to tell her whole story, and in conclusion asked his readers for their opinions of her life and of the Chinese family system. Ch'en replied immediately in New Youth (the "Biography of Li Ch'ao" had been published in New Tide in December 1919, and Ch'en's reply appeared in New Youth in January 1920). He said that from reading the story of Li Ch'ao it could be seen that there were two great shortcomings in Chinese society: one was the male line of descent, and the other the system of inheritance. Li Ch'ao would not have died as a result of her economic difficulties if the system of inheritance had been abolished. So the death of Li Ch'ao was not an isolated incident, but the symptom of a social problem - a very serious social problem.

What was the "ideal family" which these intellectuals favoured? "The Family of New Youth" (新青年之家庭), by Li P'ing (李平), suggested that the family should properly include only husband and wife and their unmarried children. Family outgoings should be the wife's concern, and the husband should not interfere. Sons and daughters should receive the same education. The husband should not take concubines and the wife should not keep maids. Parents had a duty as far as the bringing up of their children was concerned, but they should not regard their

a. Possibly a pen-name; I have not been able to identify this writer.
children as property nor decide their marriage for them. Education and health should be given priority in the family budget. Adult brothers and sisters should not live together, and their property should be separated. In the eyes of the people of the present generation, there is really nothing special about this kind of "nuclear" family which would lead to its being set up as an ideal; but if we think ourselves back into the kind of relations between family members which characterized the China of the period I discussed in Chapter II, this so-called "ideal family" is very understandable.

Hu Shih himself was brought up in a family of the traditional Chinese type. He had the opportunity of observing and living with Western families during his seven years as a student in America. As a result, his ideas about family life were strongly influenced by what he saw and knew of American families. He would not go so far as to advocate that sons should leave home after marriage without accepting any further responsibility for their parents. He thought the best solution might be that sons should leave home after their marriage, and yet live close enough to their parents' house so that they could be independent and at the same time look after their parents. It is obvious that Mr. King's family was his ideal family, a happy old couple with married sons and daughters living near by, and with their sons, daughters and grandchildren visiting them very often and cheerfully spending weekends or holidays together. He published the part of his diary which dealt with the life of the King family in New Youth in
February 1917. This contribution seems to have had considerable influence on the movement for Chinese family reform.

2. The Contradiction Between Hu Shih's Attitude Towards Marriage and His Advocacy of "Free Marriage" and Divorce

It can be seen from what has been written above that Hu Shih's attitude towards marriage was inconsistent. While he was in America he constantly expressed the view that the Chinese marriage system was better than the Western. He never voiced any doubts as to his own engagement, despite the great change in his ideas about women and society that had taken place since he had known Miss Williams. The year he returned to China he married Miss Chiang Tung-hsiu, the girl his mother had chosen for him, without hesitation or complaint. There was no love or even affection between them before they married. It was only one year after his marriage that he published his essay entitled "The Problem of Chastity", in which he declared that in civilized countries a man and a woman who loved one another should become engaged of their own free will. China was a country where marriage was unfree. Hu Shih's words, therefore, were not in accord with his actions: while advocating a new ethic, he himself remained true to the traditional morality.

In "The Problem of Chastity" Hu Shih again contradicted himself. He said that if there was no affection between a husband and a wife then for them to live together as man and wife was abnormal. "The only conclusion to be drawn is that they are forced to live together. If they
are not a normal married couple, the concept of 'posthumous chastity' clearly cannot apply to them.\textsuperscript{14}

Hu Shih had no affection for Chiang Tung-hsiu before he married her. Although he emphasized that love played no part with most Chinese couples before their marriage, he also stressed that once they were married, and had begun to live their life together, enjoying a common happiness and sharing common difficulties, it was possible for a deep love to grow from this joint confrontation of varied fortunes.\textsuperscript{15} Although Hu Shih's marriage is believed to have been very successful, it still involved a great risk at its beginning. Thus, although Hu Shih attacked the values of traditional society, it seems possible that in his inner convictions he was a supporter of the very values he seemed to oppose.

This possibility is further suggested by Hu Shih's reputation of being a "filial" son to his mother.\textsuperscript{a} He knew that his mother had experienced considerable hardship when bringing him up. For this reason, it seems, he felt that it was impossible for him to oppose his mother. He had grown up within a traditional family. He left his mother at the age of twelve. It was inevitable that he should have had some feeling of guilt about this, particularly as his mother was a widow. Before he went to America, his family intended that he should get married, and his mother was terribly disappointed because Hu Shih did not follow the plan that he should return home.\textsuperscript{17} Furthermore, Chiang Tung-hsiu was a very good-natured girl. When Hu Shih was in America she frequently visited

\textsuperscript{a}. Although Hu Shih is known as a "filial" son to his mother, he himself strongly opposed the patriarchal family system. In "My Son" he said that he wanted his son to be a useful person, not simply his "filial son".\textsuperscript{16}
his family to provide company for Hu Shih's mother. He was a man of sensibility, and viewed marriages arranged by parents as only a custom of traditional society, and not a mistake of the people concerned. Miss Chiang had been engaged to him for twelve years. He knew that if he broke off the engagement, his mother would be bitterly hurt. And what future would there be for Chiang, his fiancée, in a society which at that time was still overwhelmingly traditional? In spite of all this, it is still possible for us to affirm that Hu Shih was an honest opponent of the traditional system: he advocated "free marriage" for the generation which would follow his own.

However, his Diary suggests that his opposition to traditional Chinese marriage did not arise from the depths of his own nature but rather that he was led to attack the system because this kind of critical attitude was in harmony with the intellectual current of the time. As Western civilization extended its influence over China, the system of "freely contracted marriage" was noted as one of its distinguishing characteristics. It is possible that Hu Shih was influenced by the thought that, with all the other intellectuals advocating "free marriage", he, as one of them, could not afford to take up the defence of traditional practices. As he had introduced "American Women", he could not deprive the Chinese women of their freedom in marriage. And as he was against the Chinese concept of "chaste widowhood", he could not help but oppose marriages arranged by parents. This would seem to be the explanation of the contradictions in Hu Shih. It is perhaps because he sensed the presence of this contradiction that "free marriage" took up so little
space in his speeches and writings.

Hu Shih was the first of the progressive intellectuals to mention divorce. In "American Women" he had suggested that in a marriage not based on affection and respect, and unlikely to lead to a happy life, the partners should divorce each other. Chang Sung-nien, a member of the New Tide Society, also made public his own views on divorce. Basically they were similar to Hu Shih's, but more radical. He thought a man and woman should live together while they had affection for each other, but when the affection died, clearly they should separate. Separation should not be felt as something strange or shameful. Affections are no different from the weather. It is impossible that the weather should be the same every day; and in the same way, it could be expected that a person's affection might sometimes change. Chang's views are perhaps difficult to disagree with; but, as might have been predicted, they have not met with easy acceptance.

Lan Chih-hsien, the Director and Chief Editor of the "Peking Citizen", thought that the significance of marriage lay in its being a union of two persons' personalities. Those who were able to take their decision to marry in full freedom should accept their responsibilities seriously too, and choose carefully. Once married, they should not again change their minds. But for those who did not have this freedom, the responsibility was not properly theirs, and consequently there should be no limitation on their subsequent divorce or remarriage.

It is clear, then, that on the question of marriage, Hu Shih and
other intellectuals shared a common opinion: namely that the traditional form of marriage should be broken down; and that marriage should be based on the affections of the two persons concerned. They opposed husbands taking concubines, and advocated monogamy. They also accepted divorce; and attacked the custom of prohibiting marriage between persons bearing the same surname, and between close relatives.

3. Education for Women

Education was the main theme of the new culture movement. Articles such as "Today's Educational Method" (今日之教育方針) and "The Foundation of a Nation Rests on the Education of Its Youth" (國家基礎在少年教育) made their appearance in the very early editions of New Youth magazine, and female education was regarded as a prerequisite for a strong country. The most important forward step in education in that period was the development of female education. Some of its supporters held that the aim of women's education should be the producing of good wives and mothers; others urged that the same education should be given to both men and women; others advocated co-education; and yet others insisted that women should be trained not only to be good wives and mothers but also good citizens. In February 1917 the first article written by a woman and concerned with female education made its appearance. This was "The Good Mother and China's Future" (賢母氏與中國前途之關係) by Mrs. Ch'en Chien Ai-sun (陳錢愛巋). It set out to show that the progress of a nation's civilization depended on the knowledge of her citizens. Women made up a half of China's population, i.e. two hundred
million, but the vast majority of them were uneducated. How could China compete with other countries? Female education should therefore be developed to train good mothers and wives and to advance the country. Other articles appeared in the "women's column" in New Youth proposing higher education for women, and the introduction of the American co-educational system. In 1918 T'ao Lu-Kung (陶履恭) T'aomeng-ho陶孟和), a social scientist and a Peking University professor, published the article "The Woman Problem" (女子問題) in New Youth, advocating compulsory education, and firmly asserting that a woman was not the property of her family or clan, but a member of society and a citizen of the nation. A woman should work not only for her family but also for society. She should not only be a good wife and mother but also a technologist, a poet or a scholar. An article entitled "Society and the Problem of Female Emancipation" (社會與婦女解放問題) by Hua Lin (華林), declared that education should be the same for all, and should be based on the principle of humanism. The old educational system which sought to train women only to be "good mothers and wives" should be replaced by a new one, dedicated to leading people to a happy life and securing the happiness and well-being of mankind.

In September 1918 Hu Shih made his speech on "American Women" at Peking Women's Normal College, and it was published in New Youth afterwards. Hu Shih brought forward reasoned arguments in favour of advanced

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education for women and co-education, and suggested that the Chinese woman, like her American sister, should have a wider aim than to be simply a good mother and wife. Hu Shih's speech combined all the ideas mentioned above but expressed them more clearly and logically than hitherto. The women's college in which it was given was a centre for the progressive women of the day. Later, *New Youth* brought this article to the attention of people all over China, and it had a considerable influence. One year after its publication in *New Youth* the Ministry of Education announced plans to build a women's university. There was immediate criticism that it would be better to have one fully co-educational university rather than two separate institutions.

After the May Fourth Movement, Lo Chia-lun (羅家倫), a distinguished student of Peking University, the founder of the "New Tide Society" and the drafter of the May Fourth manifesto, wrote an article entitled "On Female Emancipation" in *New Tide*. He reiterated that the first step toward female emancipation was education; that this education should be more than the mere training to be a good wife and mother; and should be co-educational. Lo Chia-lun's contribution clearly reflected Hu Shih's ideas. In fact, after the appearance of the latter's "American Women", Chinese education moved firmly in the direction of co-education. Although Hu Shih was not the first to discuss in public the question of higher education for women and to suggest that its aim should go beyond that of producing "good wives and mothers", examination of his Diary shows that his views were formed long before the articles mentioned.
above were published. Already when a student in the United States, he had arrived at the conclusion that the great aim of female education should be to produce a new kind of "independent" woman. A nation whose women were "independent" could improve the morals and personalities of all its citizens. It is apparent that education for women was regarded as a necessity by all the intellectuals of the day.

The May Fourth Movement gave considerable impetus to the drive for female emancipation, women's education, and normal relations between the sexes. In 1920, when Hu Shih was Dean of the Arts Faculty, women students for the first time were admitted to the University of Peking. This was a concrete step towards higher education for women in China on a co-educational basis.

4. Redefinition of the Concept of "Chastity"

Public discussion aiming at a redefinition of the concept of "chastity" began with Chou Tso-jen's translation of the essay "On Chastity" by the Japanese woman author Yosano Akiko (1878-1942). The main theme of this essay was that

a. Chastity here indicates the traditional thought of wide separation between male and female, the absolute loyalty of woman to one man and the "virtuous" or "heroic" woman. See Chapter II, pp. 22-25

b. An authoress of twenty books of modern Japanese poetry and verse - poetical works well known for their freedom in expression and criticism of society. She advocated the extension of women's rights and suffrage in modern Japan.
"chastity" implied standards of behaviour required reciprocally of both sexes, and was not a duty binding on women alone. She raised the questions: whether chastity was a moral responsibility belonging essentially to women alone, or to men and women alike; whether it was necessary that everyone in all circumstances should abide by the ideal of chastity; and whether this were possible. If chastity was a moral obligation for women, then it should also be one for men, but it was a matter of values and self-interest, based on an obsession with cleanliness.

Chou Tso-jen stated that his purpose in translating this essay was not that of bringing forward the problem of "chastity" for discussion in China. His more modest objective was simply to make known to his countrymen the Japanese attitude towards this question, and bring them to take note of the problem of relations between men and women. Nevertheless, his translation effectively began the debate of the subject in China. Two months after Chou's translation was published, Hu Shih's article on "The Problem of Chastity" appeared in New Youth (July, 1918). The leading ideas of this essay are much the same as Yosano Akiko's. The important difference is that Hu Shih directly relates the problem of "chastity" to the Chinese setting.

Hu Shih was the first person to discuss publicly the concept of "virtuous" and "heroic" women which had influenced Chinese life for thousands of years. He not only raised the problem of chastity, but at the same time drew attention to a number of other defects in the life of women. He was, for instance, the first person to criticize Chinese
family law from a humanist point of view. Lan Chih-hsien joined the
discussion some months later, in 1919. He suggested that affection
between husband and wife, though important, could not be taken as the
only criterion: "chastity", to be sure, was an obligation which lay
equally on both partners, but it should not be made to depend on
affection nor on whether the marriage had or had not been the free
decision of the two people concerned. Since affection was blind, there
must be certain restraints, and these were morally binding. The demand
that husband and wife be regarded as having rights and responsibilities
was not based on their doing the same work, but on concern for their
personalities and on their right to proper treatment. The goal of
female emancipation should be free woman's personality, not her sexual
morals. "Chastity" should be regarded as a moral imperative: neither
as a matter of self-interest, as a convention, or as the consequence
of an obsession with cleanliness. Without moral restraint there could
be no marriage system. The error in Yosano Akiko's idea of "chastity"
as a matter of convention, self-interest and an obsession with cleanliness
was that she forgot that people have personalities. Lan agreed with
Hu Shih that chastity was a purely personal moral obligation which
allowed no external interference and did not need fostering by legislation
but he thought external restraints should not be entirely obliterated.
To set up as a model the ideal of the "virtuous" girl and "heroic" woman
in a country like China was to propagate evil, and was inadmissible
from the viewpoint of modern humanism. Some legal restraints, he thought,
should exist; for instance, there should be some limitations on divorce. Widows and widowers should equally have the right to re-marry.  

The problem was further discussed by Lu Hsün, then a lecturer at Peking University, already one of the popular writers of the day, and a frequent contributor to the New Culture Movement. Writing under the pen-name of "T'ang Ssū" (唐俟), he published "My View Towards Chastity" (我之節烈觀), in which he supported Hu Shih's view that the one-sided traditional concept of "chastity" was not to be commended.  

Another important article on the same theme came from Lu Hsün's younger brother Chou Chien-jen (周達人). It was entitled "Marriage Customs of Shao-hsing" (紹興的結婚風俗), and noted such facts as that a girl was expected to move to her fiancé's home and remain there celibate in the event of her fiancé's death. He also mentioned the obstacles to divorce and the strong objection to the remarriage of widows. In rehearsing the literature produced around this problem we must also note the story "A Chaste Girl" (一個貞烈的女孩子), by Kuai An (天庵). This tells of the fate of a fourteen year old girl whose fiancé dies. For the sake of the family's reputation, her father is determined that the girl shall follow the pattern of "heroic maidenhood". The daughter, however, is too young to understand what is asked of her, and cannot bear to commit suicide by starvation. The father locks her in her room and forces her to do so. In the end she starves to death.  

5. Communal Care of Children  

During the movement for female emancipation the idea was often
expressed that the most difficult of women's problems arose from their having children, because no matter how much education a woman had received, she could not become a "worker" once she had children to bring up. Some therefore advocated the "communal care of children" (公共育兒). The suggestion was that when a child is born, it should be placed in a state nursery, where it could be taken care of, and educated, by trained nurses. Such an upbringing, it could be argued, would be more efficient than anything ordinary family life could provide, for parents were seldom properly qualified for parenthood, and most of them lacked money, time and education. Since today's children were the citizens of tomorrow, would it not be the height of recklessness to leave them in the hands of their totally unqualified parents? To follow logical principles, the care and education of children should be left to those who are willing and able to undertake such tasks. Freed from the bother of children, the mothers could then choose their own careers, and achieve real equality with men.

At that time a number of intellectuals favoured this system. Thus, in 1919, Lo Chia-lun (羅家倫) thought that until children could be put into public nurseries, the problem of the working women would never be solved. Shen Chien-shih (沈兼士), in his article on "The

\[\text{a. This again is a phrase for which it is difficult to find an exact English equivalent. It seems capable of carrying a range of interpretations, according as to which writer is using it, stretching all the way from the sort of arrangement for the communal bringing up of children envisaged by Plato in the Republic (or Aldous Huxley in Brave New World) to the simple institution of the crèche or "Mother Craft Centre".}\]
Communal Care of Children" in *New Youth*, said that the principal difficulties in the way of female emancipation arose after motherhood. If women's problems were to be solved, a start must be made with some kind of "communalization" of children. The benefits would be that a woman would be able to continue studying and working after bearing children. She would be able to support herself and not be dependent upon her husband. As for men, they would also be rid of the responsibility of having to support a family. And for the children the advantage would be that education in a community would help them to develop the faculty of co-operation with others, and heighten their awareness of themselves as members of society. Under the guidance of trained nurses their intellectual and physical capacities would receive a common development. Within the state, the family system and divisions between social classes would break down, and the problem of labour find a solution. It can be seen that Shen regarded the communal upbringing of children as the key to a new world.

Yang Chung-chuan (楊鍾健), in an essay entitled "The Communal Care of Children" agreed with Shen about the advantages of "communalizing" children, but differed from him in not regarding it as the answer to all problems. In his view communal arrangements for children should logically follow after female emancipation and the break-

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a. In the essay referred to Yang describes himself as "a student". I have not been able to trace him further.
down of the family system had been achieved. In other words, there
must be a reform first, and only then could the problem of children be
solved in the way suggested. 39

Shen Yen-pin (沈雁冰), better known by his pen-name of Mao Tun
(茅盾) who was then editing the Short Story Monthly (小說月報) and was already known as a translator of contemporary Western literature into Chinese, believed that the question of children's education was a very difficult one whose solution was vital for the future of China. As he contemplated the Chinese family of the time, he felt deeply pessimistic. Many children were affected by the presence of bad traits in the family circle, and later became problem children. If the introduction of communal arrangements for the bringing up of children had to wait until after the majority of women had been emancipated and had received a proper education, it would be far too late. He advocated that such arrangements should be put into operation as soon as possible. 40

It was only to be expected that many people were hostile to such proposals. Lan Chih-hsien declared that children brought up by their parents were completely different from those brought up by strangers. It was difficult to foresee what would follow from an attempt at "communalizing" children; and it was not right to put the responsibility for one's children onto others. Since all desired equality, asked Lan, why should strangers be forced to educate children when parents were not willing to do so? 41 Clearly, he did not fully understand what the proponents of "community care" were suggesting. It is not surprising that Hu Shih criticised Lan's attitude towards the plan as unreasonable,
even though Hu himself did not approve of "communalization".\textsuperscript{42}

A certain Yang Hsiao-ch'un (楊效春), whom I have not been able further to identify, wrote several articles on this question. In his opinion the aim of those who advocated "communalization" was really to bring about the breakdown of the family system. To this he was firmly opposed. The traditional family should be reformed, but could not be abolished. If time and circumstances permitted, a woman could go out and work in the same way as a man; but her principal contribution to society lay in the bearing and upbringing of children. The family was an important element in the survival of civilized society; and the "communalizing of children" would destroy family life directly, and indirectly the social system too.\textsuperscript{43}

In addition to the writing mentioned above, we must finally draw attention to a very interesting and important article, "My View on the 'Communal Care' of Children" (兒童公育問題的我見), by a certain Sung Hua (頌華).\textsuperscript{a} This writer begins by declaring that parental love is a human instinct, and is vital to the development of human sympathy and of a disposition to co-operation in children. Every person has his own personality, and these differ widely as between scientists, philosophers, artists and men of letters. The children of any particular family would inherit valuable traits of character from their parents,

\textsuperscript{a} This name may or may not be a nom-de-plume. I have been unable to find any reference to him in the literature of the time.
and it would be a misfortune both for the state and the children themselves if they were not allowed to receive this heritage. If children were kept away from their parents in state nurseries, their education would tend to a drab uniformity, and native originality of character would be lost.

Nevertheless, in view of the existing situation in China, he accepted the need for establishing some sort of system for the communal care of children, simply because the corruption of the Chinese traditional family system had such a deleterious effect on children. Most parents were ignorant, and in no position to give sound advice to their children. The only effective way to reform the lower classes was through organizing community institutions to take care of the children; but this should be done gradually. As a first step he favoured something in the nature of a boarding school. Parents would take their children there in the morning, and bring them home again in the evening. Orphans, or those children whose parents were too busy, or whose homes were too far away from the school, could be boarded in a school hostel. In this way the parents' work would not be disrupted and family happiness left undisturbed.

Although some idealists thought that in the idea of "communal care of children" lay the only solution of the problems of women, they overlooked the fact that the principal aim of the female emancipation movement was to gain freedom and rights for women, so that they could decide their own lives, just as men did. The purpose of the movement was not that women should abandon their responsibilities as mothers, and compete with men in every respect. In urging that women's education
should go beyond the goal of producing merely the "good wife and mother", Hu Shih and his colleagues were not asking that women should cease to be good wives and mothers, but that they should be these things and, in addition, be given the fullest opportunities, with men, to function as useful members of society.
CHAPTER VII. THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN MODERN CHINA

The movement for Female Emancipation in China reached its height in early 1919, following the May Fourth Movement. In the course of that movement, male and female students joined together in the same groups and attended the same meetings together, a thing which had never happened before in Chinese history. Girl representatives were elected to Student Unions; women's magazines made their appearance and women's associations were established. Female students made public speeches advocating a boycott of Japanese goods, and marched in the streets demanding freedom of speech. The magazine New Youth had been responsible for spreading the idea of feminism, but it took the May Fourth Movement to break down the traditional view that a woman's only proper sphere of activity was in her home. It was after 1919 that women began to take part in social and political activities on a large scale. Co-education was established; professional opportunities for women increased; and "free marriages" became more frequent. Step by step, Chinese women made rapid progress towards equality and freedom.

1. New Women - Influenced by the May Fourth Movement

It may be both useful and relevant at this point if we cite as illustrations a few of the notable Chinese women of the present century whose careers reflect the wider opportunities which the May Fourth Movement opened up.

The first is the famous writer Ping Hsin, 127
To Young Readers etc. Ping Hsin first began writing when she was a student at Yenching Women's College in 1919; and most of her works were completed between 1919 and 1923, before she went to the United States for further study. Her early works reveal her as a writer who tried to seek the meaning of human existence—a philosophical quest which greatly preoccupied the young people of her time. Her devotion to this theme was responsible for the enthusiastic public reception of "Superman" when it appeared in 1921. Her answer to the problem, given in "Apprehension", was "all for love". Her early works were largely concerned with exploring the problems of society; but later she chose other themes. She said herself that "By the time I had finished racking my brain writing about all the problems of the day, all the things stored in my memory came alive. A happy childhood, and soldiers with guns on their shoulders, supplied me with material for my stories, though of a rather monochrome kind. An immature smattering of different philosophies was also mixed up with my memories." We can see that her creative writing was stimulated by the May Fourth Movement, and that her work was occasioned and conditioned by practical issues: the search for a "philosophy of life", female emancipation, and the clash between fathers and sons were typical of the problems that appear in her works. Later, the idea of restricting her writing to problems of this type became irksome to her, and she began to feel that society and its problems were too unpleasant. So in her later
works she returned to the ideal world of her mother's arms. She was born and had grown up in a family full of love, and feeling the "hatefulness" present in society at large, she sought warmth in the world with "love". Hence, most of her stories tell of love, especially a mother's love. Some of her works were widely reprinted and used in primary and high school textbooks.

Lu Ying (盧隱, Huang Ying 黃英, 1898-1934) was another outstanding Chinese woman writer of the period closely following the May Fourth Movement. Her writings were highly regarded by Chinese students, although her literary influence was less than that of Ping Hsin. Lu Ying's career as a writer began when she was still studying at Peking Higher Normal School for Women. During her first year there, in 1919, she came under the influence of Hu Shih, who was then in Peking. She attended his lectures on the history of Chinese philosophy, and responded to his call for pai-hua as a medium for creative writing. Most of her stories are autobiographical, with love among women and between the sexes as their surface theme. At a deeper level - as with Ping Hsin's stories - there runs a deeper theme - the quest for the meaning of human existence. However, while Ping Hsin's life led her to answer this question with the word "love", Lu Ying's led her to answer with "hate". Her works depict the psychology and outlook of Chinese youth in the May Fourth era - a new generation, emancipated from the constraints imposed by centuries of tradition, and seeking a new synthesis to give meaning to life. Torn between reason and emotion,
they grope toward new values and new standards to be established in
the modern world. The essential value of Lu Ying's work lies, according
to the novelist Mao Tun, "in its reflection of the psychology of the
young people of her time: despondent and vacillating, they dwell on
the brink of hedonism". The heroines in her stories - most of which
are avowals of personal experience - are full of passion, suffering,
and are caught up in the conflict between reason and emotion. They
fight against their destiny.  

Têng Ying-ch'ao (盧英超) at the time of the May Fourth Movement
was a student at the First Girls' Normal School in Tientsin. After the
establishment of the Women's Association of Patriotic Comrades, she
became the leader of its "speech corps", and head of the "speech
department" of the Student Union of Tientsin. After the founding of
the Communist Party in 1921, she adhered to the radical wing of the
Student Union. In 1925 she married Chou En-lai (周恩来), now the
Premier of Communist China. Today, she is the Vice-Chairman of the
All-China Democratic Women's Federation.  

2. The Development of Women's Education and Occupations

As a result of the Female Emancipation Movement, many girls'
schools and teachers' seminaries for women were established. The first

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a. See 海濱故人 Hai-pin ku-jen, Kai-ming shu-chu, Shanghai, 1925.

海潮夕 Ling hai ch'ao hsi, Kai-ming shu-chu, Shanghai, 1949.
two girl students were enrolled in Peking University in 1920. Two years later, in the country as a whole, there were twenty-eight universities and colleges with girl students. In March, 1922, Mrs. Margaret Sanger arrived in China and, invited by Peking University, gave a public lecture about "Birth Control". Hu Shih, at that time a professor of the University, acted as her interpreter. Mrs. Sanger's speech caused a great sensation, for it was the first time in Chinese history that sex had been discussed in public, and by a woman no less. Her lecture did much to break down the wall of silence by which the topic of sex had been surrounded for thousands of years. Since that time, the problems of sex and love were studied frankly in Chinese schools and universities. The former rigid separation of the sexes has gone. Young men and women study together, go to meetings and demonstrate together, and often spend their leisure together.

In today's China, both in Taiwan and on the mainland, forty years after the May Fourth Movement, all primary schools are co-educational, as are most of the universities. Women have the same opportunities as men to receive advanced education. Many of them take post-graduate courses or enter research institutes for further study after they have received their first degree. Many young Chinese girls study abroad, and Chinese girl students have become familiar figures in universities all over the world.

This development has been accompanied by women's entry into professional work. Women compete with men in the teaching profession,
in schools, and also occupy senior academic positions in Universities. An Example is Su Hsueh-lin (蘇雪林, 1899- ), who was educated at Peking Normal College for women and became a student of Hu Shih's. She is now a famous writer and head of the Department of Chinese Literature in the Cheng Kung University in Taiwan. Another is Chang Hsiao-sung (張肖松), a graduate of Ginling Girls' College in Nanking who, after receiving her Ph.D in Psychology at Michigan University, taught at Ginling College, Fu Tan University (復旦大學), and is now Professor of Psychology in the National Taiwan University. A third example is Wu Chien-Hsiung (吳健雄, Mrs. Yuan Chia-liu袁家錫), an outstanding woman nuclear physicist who was also at one time one of Hu Shih's students. She received the "Research Corps of America" award in 1958, and is now a Professor of Physics at Columbia University and a member of Academia Sinica and of the National Academy of Science.

Besides education, Chinese women also play an important part in the public service (including the diplomatic service) and in social work. They are found in professions such as nursing, medicine, dentistry, and law; and have also entered a wide variety of other occupations, such as waitress, shop assistant, dress-maker, air hostess,

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a. A letter from Wu to Hu Shih in 1958 said "In my life, there are two people to whom I am very grateful for special favours, one is my father and the other, you". This was because Hu Shih had given her advice and encouraged her to transfer from Arts to Science, in order to develop her own talents and interest. This move changed her life and led her to be a successful physicist.
hairdresser, bus conductress, film actress, taxi driver, newspaper reporter, business woman, banker, police woman, radio announcer, architect and even labourer. Increasing industrialization has broken down the prejudice against working women. In one sense the way was opened for women to walk out to the world that lay beyond the home and work there from the day that women were emancipated from their "bound-feet". Within three decades the idea of women playing their part in income-producing work, not just because of dire economic necessity but as an accepted feature of normal life, won general acceptance among the urban intelligentsia. Female labour is playing a more and more important role in China. Especially in Communist China, women work in literally every sector of the economy. Regardless of physical problems, they work in textile and jute mills, machine-tool factories and rubber factories, steel mills, farms and mines. They are also employed in bridge-building projects, in putting up factories, raising dams and digging ditches. They work on equal terms with men, both in positions of responsibility and in the heavy manual jobs which, in non-Communist countries, are usually considered unfit for women.16

3. The Breakdown of Traditional Family and the Communal Care of Children

At the same time that industrialization was gradually disintegrating the Chinese self-sufficient peasant economy, the family was also gradually being deprived of its role as a productive unit. The family head - the father or eldest brother - lost his position as the leader.
of the family group; improved means of transportation enabled rural
immigrants to the cities to take their wives and children with them;
the high cost of living in the cities restricted the family to its
immediate members, and prolonged absences from home weakened the cohesion
of the large family community. Accompanying these changes, the new
ideas and new knowledge which the younger generation acquired after
the May Fourth Movement transformed old customs and loosened old ties.
A young woman no longer wished to live with her mother-in-law and
sisters-in-law. Furthermore, the war and the long period of chaos in
China, separated many families. In these circumstances it was only to
be expected that the large family would break up into smaller units.
The new unit normally consists of the "nuclear family" only, of husband,
wife and children. As China is a country with a tenacious moral
tradition, the obligation of supporting parents is still generally
accepted. In the majority of cases, therefore, the old parents live
with an eldest son or with one of the other sons or daughters. This
family pattern is the one most commonly found in China today.

Naturally, if women work side by side with men, they cannot give
the major part of their time to the household and to taking care of
the children. Today in Taiwan and in most parts of Communist China,
a "semi-Community" of children is very popular. Parents put their
children in a kindergarten in the morning and collect them again in
the afternoon, so that both parents can work freely, while at the same
time the children can enjoy both group and family life. However, a
fundamental feature of Communist China is the "Commune". The eventual aim is that the family should become an even narrower unit, limited to a married couple: this aim can be achieved if the old people go to a home for the aged, while the children are taken care of at school or in a creche. It is intended that babies should be placed with a creche immediately after birth, thus coming at once under the care of trained nurses. It is thought that, as a result, parents will work harder in the knowledge that their children are being well looked after. Owing to the dearth of reliable information about conditions in Communist China, it is difficult to judge whether the communes are successful or not; but, according to S. Chandrasekhar's report of his tour of Communist China in 1958, it seems that people are unhappy at the disruption of their families. 17

4. New Rights for Women - the Holding of Property

Now that women have occupations, enjoy equal pay with men and are able to earn their own living, they have naturally become independent and, equally naturally, their status in society has been raised. Under the Succession Law of the Republic of China, (promulgated by National

a. Factory Law of the Republic of China (Promulgated on December 30, 1929 and effective from August 1, 1931). Article 24: Male and female workers performing the same type of work with equal efficiency shall be paid wages at the same rate. 18

Under Communist China's Constitution women enjoy equal rights with men in all spheres of political, economic, cultural, social and domestic life. 19
daughters are entitled to an equal share with their brothers in the inheritance of property from parents (Article 1138); furthermore the private property of the wife is fully protected by law (Article 1017); while, under Article 1016 of the Family Civil Code, all properties belonging to the spouses at the time of marriage, as well as properties acquired by them during the continuance of the marriage, are henceforth owned by them in common.

The marriage law of Communist China also provides that husband and wife shall have equal rights in the possession and management of family property (Article 10). Husbands and wives, parents and children, have the right to inherit one another's property. (Articles 12&14)  

5. Freedom of Marriage and Divorce

The introduction of the western concept of free choice in marriage into China led to a major change in Chinese social life and, after only a few decades, the struggle against "arranged" marriages, and for the right freely to contract marriages on the basis of the

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a. However, Article 1013 provides for separate property for a wife and Article 1017 states that: That part of the union property which belonged to the wife at the time of marriage as well as that which she acquires by inheritance or other title during the continuance of the marriage constitutes her contributed property and remains in her ownership.
mutual affection of the partners concerned, achieved its goal. This freedom has now been written into laws and regulations. In the section on marriage in the Civil Code of the Republic of China, (promulgated by National Government on 26th December, 1930 and effective from 5th May, 1931) Article 972 reads: "An agreement to marry shall be made by the male and female partner of their own accord".a The Marriage Law of the People's Republic of China (promulgated on 1st May 1950), stipulates that marriage shall be based on the complete willingness of the two parties. Neither party shall use compulsion, and no third party shall interfere (Article 3).b

Divorce is also now practised in China. The law of the Republic of China says that husband and wife may effect a divorce between themselves by mutual consent (Article 1049). Divorce by mutual consent is effected in writing and requires the signatures of at least two witnesses (Article 1050). A husband or wife may apply to the court

a. Certain customary exceptions to Article 972 are listed where marriages between relatives are concerned. These include marriages between lineal relatives by blood or by marriage; between collateral relatives by blood or by marriage of a different generation, except where the former is beyond the fifth; between collateral relatives by blood who are of the same generation and within the eighth degree of relationship.25

b. But no man and woman, where any of the following situations obtain, shall be allowed to marry: Where the man and woman are lineal relatives by blood or where the man and woman are brother and sister born of the same parents or where the man and woman are half-brother and half-sister. The question of prohibiting marriage between collateral relations by blood within the fifth degree of relationship is to be determined by custom.26
for a divorce on any of the following grounds: if the other spouse has committed bigamy or adultery; if one spouse receives such ill-treatment from the other as to render it intolerable for them to live together; if the wife has so ill-treated the parents of the husband, or has been so ill-treated by them, that life in common becomes intolerable; where either party has deserted the other in bad faith, and such desertion still continues; where one party has made an attempt on the life of the other; where the applicant's spouse has a loathsome and incurable disease, or a serious and incurable mental illness; where it has been impossible to determine, over a period of three years, whether the other party is alive or dead; or where the other party has been sentenced to not less than three years' imprisonment, to imprisonment for a heinous crime (Article 1052).  

The Marriage Law of the People's Republic of China lays it down that "divorce shall be granted when husband and wife both desire it. In the event of either husband or wife insisting on divorce, it may be granted only when consistent and friendly mediation ... has failed to bring about a reconciliation. In cases where divorce is desired by both husband and wife, both parties shall register with the sub-district People's Government to obtain divorce certificates. ... After establishing that divorce is desired by both parties. ... the divorce certificates shall be issued without delay" (Article 17).  

In practice, marriage in China today is a matter between the couple involved; and a woman can no longer be married without her consent.
Few Parents would wish to arrange marriages for their children, and no young people would be willing to accept such arrangements. "Free Marriage" has become usual throughout China; and divorce is also publicly accepted. A divorced woman, or a remarried widow, is no longer a figure of scorn in society; and the "virtuous woman", in the traditional sense, is becoming a thing of the past. Public opinion towards this concept of "virtue" now regards it exactly as Hu Shih described it: "a crime against humanity and natural justice." 29

As a result of the above changes, modern Chinese women are free and independent. They are jealous of their equality with men, and anxious to make clear their insistence to be "a person in their own right" - independent of father, husband or sons. Today, many women, after they marry, retain their maiden names. In Taiwan, in any office, a married woman is always addressed as "Miss So-and-so"; and this is also the case when her name is mentioned in newspapers or magazines. In Communist China the marriage law stipulates (Article 11) that husband and wife each have the right to use their own family names. 30 Women are always addressed as "Worker" (工人) or "Comrade" (同志), never as "Mrs."

6. Women's Suffrage Movement

After the May Fourth Movement, the struggle for women's suffrage

a. The term "virtuous woman" or "virtuous girl" translate the expressions "Chieh Fu" (節婦) and "Chên Nü" (貞女), as explained in Chapter II.
made great advances. In 1920 a number of women in Ch'ang-sha (長沙) joined a demonstration for citizens' rights, demanding both 'free marriage' and personal freedom. In February 1921, the Women's Association of Honan (河南婦女聯合會) was established there, calling for the realization of five rights for women; equality in the right of inheriting property, equal right to education, equal right to work, equal rights of both partners in marriage, and the right to vote and to be elected to office. This later became known as the "Five Rights Movement" (五權運動). In July and August 1922, The Women's Suffrage Association (女子參政協進會) and The Women's Rights League (女子運動同盟會) were founded in Peking. Both organizations demanded constitutional equality for women. However, the demand for women's suffrage, and for equal rights for men and women, were not in fact to be realized for a long time to come: Not indeed until the adoption of the constitution of the Republic of China (adopted by the National Assembly on December 25, 1946, promulgated by the National Government on January 1, 1947 and effective from December 25, 1947). In Communist China, a separate

a. Article 7: All citizens of the Republic of China, irrespective of sex, religion, race, class, or party affiliation, shall be equal before the law. Article 130: Any citizen of the Republic of China who has attained the age of twenty years shall have the right of election in accordance with law. Except as otherwise provided by this Constitution or by law, any citizen who has attained the age of 23 years shall have the right of being elected in accordance with law. Article 134: In the various kinds of elections, the number of women to be elected, shall be fixed, and measures pertaining thereto shall be prescribed by law.
Constitution was promulgated (adopted on September 20, 1954 by the First National People's Congress at its first session) under which women enjoy equal rights with men.

As a result of this emancipation, Chinese women have come to play a significant part in Chinese political life. In Taiwan, at present, women are among the members of the Legislative Yüan, the National Assembly and local assemblies; while in Communist China, many important positions are held by women: examples are Li Teh-chuan (李德全), who is Minister for Health, and Shih Liang (史良), the Minister for Justice. Chinese women also have their own political organizations of which the most famous are the Chinese Women's Anti-aggression League (中華婦女反共抗俄聯合會) in Taiwan and All-China Women's Democratic Federation in mainland China (中華全國民主婦女聯合會). The activities of the first of these organizations include technical training, assistance to the armed forces and publicity, while the purpose of the latter is to enable women to participate on terms of full equality in the various drives, campaigns and other activities of the Communist state. Modern Chinese women also play their part in international women's activities. The Republic of China is a member of the United

a. Article 96: Women in the People's Republic of China enjoy equal rights with men in all spheres of political, economic, cultural, social and domestic life. The State protects marriage, the family and the mother and child. And in the Electoral Law of Communist China, all citizens who have reached the age of eighteen shall have the right to elect and to be elected irrespective of nationality or race, sex, occupation, social origin, religion, education, property status, or residence. Women shall have the right to elect and to be elected on equal terms with men.
Nations Committee on the Status of Women. Chinese delegates attend the congresses of the International Alliance of Women, the International Conference on Families, etc. Women representatives from Communist China participate in the International Federation of Democratic Women.

When we compare the status of Chinese women today with that of forty years ago, we see plainly the immense contribution made to present day Chinese society by Hu Shih and his contemporaries.

Hu Shih, a scholar of world repute, never joined any political party. Apart from a brief diplomatic career as China's wartime Ambassador to Washington, his activities were confined to education and scholarly research. He was convinced that a stable political settlement in China could be achieved only after the social patterns and intellectual assumptions of the past had been swept away. Female emancipation was one of the goals toward which he pressed. He always hoped that China could become a strong, independent and democratic country, and again one of the foremost among the civilized nations of the world. In spite of her difficult circumstances, and regardless of political pressures and intellectual frustrations, he never forsook his ideal of helping to lead Chinese education and society into a new world. In the last years of his life he was, nevertheless, regarded as an intellectual émigré, and bitterly attacked by the Communists. As the latter saw him, his teaching would lead people "to disdain their fatherland, paralyse youth and escape from tradition." They castigated him as "an enemy of the people of China" on the grounds that, ever since the May Fourth
Movement, he had been the leading influence in Chinese academic life spreading "the poison of capitalist and reactionary ideas". As "the accomplice of John Dewey, representing the right wing of the capitalist class during the May Fourth Movement, he had influenced Chinese youth and his ideas still darken and confuse the thinking of many scholars." This account of one aspect only of his thought and its influence on the emancipation of Chinese womanhood, is, I think, refutation enough of such charges.
ABBREVIATION

1. HSWT: Hu Shih Wen Ts'un 胡適文存

2. TLC: Chung-kuo fu-nü wen-ti t'ao-lun chi 中國婦女問題討論集

3. SPPY: Ssü-pu pei-yao 四部備要

4. SPTK: Ssü-pu ts'ung-k'an 四部叢刊
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