

Chapter 2

The “Third Party” and *Jie Xi*

As a result of years of wars and the unstable domestic political situation, the National Government was too busy to focus on the press and publication, which was most notable in the primary stage of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression. Especially because of the rise of the partial war of resistance and the struggles between the KMT and CCP, and the intensification of the social gap between the rich and poor in China and class contradictions, the National Government could not afford to surveil the press and publications.¹ In this historical context, hundreds of publications came and went in China in the primary stage of the war, including some that published four or five issues and then closed due to wars, human-generated accidents or political reasons, and some only published one issue before being closed as a “one-off” journal, which is unheard-of in both literary and news histories around the world.

Among these journals, *Jie Xi*, which published only two issues, is especially.

The reason for *Jie Xi*’s especially status is that the journal has little exposure in research community but has high popularity among the broad masses of young students in mainland China. It is important to note that the popularity among broad masses of young students and exposure in academic circle are two different concepts; the latter emphasizes the level of concern of this journal, while the former focuses on degree of knowledge of young students of this journal. The high popularity among young students is because the journal title once appeared in the works of Qian Liqun and Wen Rumin. The following is a section in their representative works, *30 Years of Modern Chinese Literature*:

¹Throughout the history of modern Chinese journalism, the National Government had always implemented a policy of “suppressing and utilizing” the news media. On the one hand, the National Government expanded freedom of the press many times when attempting to use the public opinions from local news to resist the Communist Party and the Japanese invaders to serve its purposes; on the other hand, the left-wing and even the Chinese Communist Party news media also grew vigorously and conflicted with the National Government’s mainstream ideology. As a result, the National Government had to inspect news books and journals. “Sometimes intensifying” was the news policy implemented by the National Government in mainland China when it was in power.

In September 1929, the central propaganda department of the KMT called a national propaganda meeting to propose the slogan of “Three Principles of Literature”, launched the Chinese Art Society in Nanjing at the propaganda department’s expense, and published Arts Monthly Magazine. The department also launched arts weekly magazine Republic Daily, the supplement Awareness and a monthly magazine entitled “Jie Xi”. The department publicly declared the defeat of “revolutionary literature”, “proletarian literature” and “construction of the three people’s principles of new literature” [1].

I believe that after *30 Years of Modern Chinese Literature* became the “key textbook” or “required reading” of the department of Chinese at colleges and universities across mainland China, many researchers of modern literature and even students in Chinese departments will be exposed to *Jie Xi*, the strange journal. The combination of the two words are strange: one is a rarely used Chinese character (契), and the other is polyphonous Chinese character (茜), so they are easily misread by many people. For many people, such a word formation is easy to remember at a glance, but *30 Years of Modern Chinese Literature* did not include detailed information on the magazine. Therefore, for most researchers of modern literature, it is a literary periodical that is familiar but difficult to name.

It is noteworthy that the judgment not only appears in the first edition (1987) and the second edition (1997) of *30 Years of Modern Chinese Literature*; not one word was amended in the last edition (2004), which serves as “Common Higher Education” ‘Ninth Five-Year Plan’ key teaching material of the Ministry of Education (refer to p. 192 in the last edition). It can thus be seen that the qualifications of *Jie Xi* have not been altered through the decades.

The journal’s “legendary” status is that apart from the research community of literary history, there is a controversy in the evaluation of the journal among the research community on contemporary and modern history and the CCP history according to historical materials.

If we judge the journal only based on the relevant research content of the history of literature, we can judge the trend and literary significance of the journal: it supported right-wing politics and its background involves the central propaganda department of the KMT. Its quality is not great; however, the author saw a passage in another historical work:

On November 29th, 1931, after Deng Yanda was killed by Chiang Kai-shek, the provisional actions committee of the KMT (Author’s note: later changed to the Chinese Peasants’ and Workers’ Democratic Party) suffered a major setback; the local organization of all provinces and cities came apart, and the organization of Peking is no exception. One afternoon in the early fall of 1932, Yang Yunhong accompanied a lady of approximately 40 years of age to come to my residence. Mr. Yang is a member of the Shanghai actions committee, and he established *Jie Xi* with another member, Dingding, whose alias is Ding Yeying in Shanghai. He was introduced by Ji Fang and became acquainted with Wan Sinian (my brother), who is a member of the Peking action committee. They launched the *Jie Xi* branch office in Peking and found an art periodical, Fei Pu, which stopped publishing after several issues. Yang Yunhong first said that Ji Fang was still fighting in isolation and kept fighting; later, he introduced a lady named Ren Rui, the widow of martyr Sun Bingwen. She was preparing to start a middle school. She had just come to Peking and was unfamiliar with the area and people, so she hoped that someone could help her. Mr. Ji thought of me and hoped that I could assist her in starting the school.....[2]

Boling Broke believed that based on the lack of verification of other historical documents, when history texts of later generations conflict with oral history from those who experienced the events, oral history is trusted more [3]. Therefore, the above historical material is undoubtedly of important reference significance. The editor of this article, Wan Hongnian, was the editor of a popular bookstore at that time. He had held the post of the first, second, and third commissioner of the Working Committee in the Xuanwu District of Beijing of the Chinese Peasants and Workers Democratic Party. Ji Fang, who is mentioned above, became the vice president of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference later and was the founder of the Peasants and Workers Democratic Party. Sun Weishi, a performance artist, the daughter of Sun Bingwen and Ren Rui, and Jin Shan’s wife, is also the adopted daughter of Zhou Enlai. Yang Yunhong was a political prisoner of the national government, having been detained by the authorities, and was a more progressive intellectual at that time. Another chief editor, “Ding Ding”, of whom Wang Hongnian has spoken, is not called “Ding Yeying” (suspected to be a mistaken pronunciation of “Xia Ying”) but the pen name of another author, Ding Jiashu.²

From the passage, we can see that *Jie Xi* is a “progressive” periodical and was also co-founded by Yang Yunhong, a member of the Chinese Peasants and Workers Democratic Party, as a “controller”. Its chief director behind the scenes was Ji Fang, who is called the “veteran of New Fourth Army” by the Chinese communist regime. In this case, why was the magazine rejected by *30 Years of Modern Chinese Literature*?

Certainly, the author still can provide sporadic historical data to make the question more difficult to understand. One of founders of the magazine, Zhang Ziping, is a typical example of the “traitor scholar” that Mao Zedong denounced; some mainland scholars even used the language of war, saying that some magazines such as *Jie Xi* henceforth coordinated with military “encirclement and suppression” in the Central Soviet area; the KMT conducted calculated and organized cultural “encirclement and suppression” [4] of revolutionary literature and art. The journal published some manuscript on the difficult life of workers and peasants, and it declared in a commissioning letter that “the works on the subject of the suffering of workers and peasants should be published preferentially”,³ but the left-wing theorist Tang Tao issued criticism: “this is a so-called ‘Jie Xi school’, editing *Jie Xi*, opposing Porro art” [5].

²Ding Jiashu (1907–1990), author and publisher, his pen names included Ding Miao, Ding Ding, Lin Fan, Ma Keba, Lingyun, Yema, Jinma, and Xiaying. He received his primary education in Shanghai and later graduated from Shanghai University. In 1926, his *Literary Theory on Revolution* was published by Taidong Publishing House and was influential in literary circles. He served as the principal of a middle school, professor of a university, chief commentator and editor-in-chief of a newspaper office. In 1948, he brought his wife (writer He Baolan) and son to Hong Kong and served as the principal of the Nanyang middle school of Singapore. His main works include poetry, *Red Autumnal Leaves*, and the novel *Romantic Love History*.

³“From the Editor”, *Jie Xi*, 1931.12.21(1).

2.1 Three Zhang Zipings

To interpret *Jie Xi*, we must first interpret Zhang Ziping, the founder of the magazine, core editor and main contributing writer.

In recent years, along with “re-interpreting two Zhangs” (the other Zhang refers to Eileen Chang) becoming an upsurge in the modern literature study field, the popularity of Zhang Ziping in the modern literature field gradually improved as he is one of two “traitor intellectuals” (the other is Lu Xun’s elder brother Zhou Zuoren) described by Mao Zedong. The author does not repeat his life story here, but academia is currently focusing on “the third Zhang Ziping”—the one who joined the “Revitalization of Asia National Construction Association” in 1937 and took the position of director of a publishing group of the Sino-Japanese Cultural Association. However, the fact that he turned traitor and went to the enemy was revealed by his former friend Yu Dafu on *Sin Chew Daily Morning Star* on April 19, 1940. In the article, Yu Dafu stated that Zhang’s behavior of committing to the Japanese cause is “unethical behavior”. Then-CCP leader Mao Zedong named and criticized him again in *Talks at the Yanan Forum on Literature and Art*,⁴ which spread the reputation of Zhang Ziping as a traitor from home and abroad and made him the target of public criticism such that he was not only criticized by the CCP and cast aside by the public but was also investigated by the National Government. Even Hu Shih and Chen Lifu, who had socialized with him, refused to intercede for him at the end of the war. Finally, he was nearly thrown into jail for “treachery” and became a transient in Shanghai. Not long after 1949, he was imprisoned for “treachery” and died in jail.

I believe that the writing career of Zhang Ziping before going over to the enemy can be roughly into two stages. The first stage is from 1922, when he published the first novel *Alluvial Period Fossils* in Modern Chinese literature history when he was one of founders of the Creation Society to 1930 when he finished novel *Daughter of Tension*. In this stage, Zhang Ziping is among the supreme sentimental fiction writers in Shanghai, and his representative works *Spring of Mei Mountain*, *Erosion*, *Youth* and more are popular among boys and girls at that time; thus, he can be called originator of “Youth Literature”. He had studied in Japan, so his style of writing is affected by many Japanese aesthetic writers such as Jun’ichiro Tanizaki and Kuriyagawa Hakuson and is thus decadent, mournful but flowery. His works

⁴Mao Zedong criticized the fact that “literature and art are in the imperialist service. Zhou Zuoren and Zhang Ziping are examples of this, and it is therefore called traitor literature and art” [6]. After the Yan’an forum of art and literature, the publication of CCP named Zhang Ziping again and criticized him and “Nationalist Literature”. The National Government stated: “these opinionated authors think that they wrote for all humanity, which is indeed objectively expressed in their works, when they only wrote for some people and a given class”. The traitor literature and art of Zhou Zuoren and Zhang Ziping, the Rose and Butterfly ‘Nationalist literature’, regardless of their efforts to conceal the fact, cannot conceal the identity of their master; they wrote for invaders and rulers”. “Brief Introduction of Dialogue in Yan’an forum of art and literature”, *Xinhua Daily*, 1944.1.1(6).

were collected in several editions, and his name was known by Shanghai literature circles. He became rich quickly, even purchasing a villa as his special studio.

In 1930, Zhang Ziping joined the “Third Party”⁵ (the other name of Provisional Actions Committee of KMT; Deng Yanda was assassinated by the national government in the second year) upon the recommendation of Deng Yanda. This was the start of the creative life of “the Second Zhang Ziping”. His medium-term representative work *Daughter of Tension* changed from a previously mournful but flowery style and included the sentiment of “deal with a man as he addresses you”. He used Japanese aestheticism to bitterly satirize oppression, provinciality, fornication and the foolishness of Japanese army, members of whom rode roughshod over the daughter of their general when they were sex-crazed. At that time,⁶ the “September 18th Incident” had not occurred, and his works are considered the origin of resistance literature in China. In the face of the tyranny of the Japanese, Zhang Ziping said in sackcloth and ashes, “what I am aggrieved about mostly is that we allowed the Japanese to be rude and unreasonable in our land” [8].

When the book was published, it was reprinted five times over three years and was even translated into Japanese, which caused strong dissatisfaction within Japanese society. The Japanese media even published photo of Zhang Ziping, intending to call on the Japanese in China to “avenge” the insult. For a long time, Zhang Ziping dared not appear in the Japanese concession area, which was located

⁵The official name of the “Third Party” is “the provisional actions committee of KMT”. This political party is different from the KMT-Communist cooperative relationship and between the KMT and CCP; it appeared after the failure of the Great Revolution. Its exploration of an exit from China is reflected in a series of articles published by Deng Yanda such as *Political Proposition of the Provisional Actions Committee of KMT* and *Where Does China Go*. In 1935, the party changed its name to the Chinese Nation Liberation Action Committee. In March 1941, the committee organized the China Federation of Democratic Political Groups. After the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression succeeded, it actively participated in fighting for peace and democracy and opposing civil war and dictatorship. In February 1947, its name changed to the Chinese Peasants and Workers Democratic Party, one of democratic parties of mainland China. For convenience, the chapter unified the name as the “Third Party”, except for special references.

⁶Su Xuelin was caustic about the book; she commented that reflections of poor character are present in the works of Zhang Ziping. One is the lack of patience; i.e., he hated the Japanese and had no praise of them, and he tried to insult them in *Daughter of Tension*. The name of the character also has a contemptuous meaning: the name of the heroine, “Flower”, is also “Ahua”. Her mother had secret communications with others, and her name is “chastity”; her father’s name is “Suzuki Cow Taro”, and uncle’s name is “Pig Taro”. The plot of the book is that the daughter of a major general came down in China and became a dancing girl and unlicensed prostitute. College students had illicit intercourse at the beginning and deserted a girl of good birth at the end; an imperial soldier raped a maid via fraud and became a human trafficker; a patrolman froze children to death in the snow; the ugly and promiscuous facets of the procurer are ignored by people. It is said that the book was translated into Japanese and published in the Shanghai Daily of Yu Hewen and was detested by the Japanese. For fear of being beaten by the Japanese, Mr. Zhang was afraid of going to N. Sichuan Road of Shanghai. Later, it was rumored that he was beaten to death by an alcoholic Japanese sailor. I am not willing to defend the Japanese, but I think that Zhang’s death at the hands of the Japanese is reason for celebration. His emotion includes the spirit-winning method of the “Mr. Q style” [7].

on N. Sichuan Road in Shanghai for fear of assassination. In 1933, Japanese troops attacked Shanhai Pass (Shanhaiguan), and Zhang Ziping wrote his novel *Red Malus Spectabilis* based on the “January 28th Incident” of 1932, narrating the pain that Shanghai citizens suffered from the war. The publishing of the novel inspired people greatly and made Zhang Ziping into a prestigious “writer of the war of resistance against Japan” at that time. In 1936, he described the Japanese intention of invading China in *Eastern Miscellany*: “First step: plundering Manchuria to control Inner Mongolia; second step: plundering Inner Mongolia to control North China; third step: occupying North China, looking over Yangtze river basin, claiming the Yellow River as a habitat” [9]. During the period, he also wrote two resistance novels—*Huanxituo* and *Toilet* and *Men without Soul*—and received written and verbal warnings from the intelligence department of the Japanese Embassy in Shanghai and the Japanese marine corps [10].

In this way, Zhang Ziping became a leading figure of “Resistance Literature”. During war of resistance, he was of nationally high repute, having served as a teacher in Guangxi University with other famous scholars such as Zhu Kezhen, Li Siguang, Li Da, Chen Wangdao, Wang Li, and Chen Yinke. However, Zhang Ziping was not socially adept; he was pushed out by colleagues and was dismissed by Guangxi University when Japanese troops bombed Guangxi. He had to leave Guangxi for Vietnam and then quickly returned to Shanghai by ship. Zhang Ziping choosing to return to Shanghai logically ended his life as a “writer of the resistance”. The “third Zhang Ziping” went on the stage; the title of “traitor” far surpassed the reputation that all his contributions to literature brought him.

After Zhang Ziping returned to Shanghai, he began to experience harassment, intimidation and blackmail from “No. 76 Jessfield Road”, the secret service of Japan and the Wang Ching-Wei Puppet Government. Japanese troops hoped to overthrow the Chinese Intellectuals’ Camp of Resistance to War with his “betrayal”. In the beginning, he firmly refused, but later, he could not tolerate the harassment and surrendered, adopting the virtual position of puppet “technician (engineer) of the ministry of agriculture and mining”. Thereafter, Zhang Ziping, weak by nature, went the wrong way. On the one hand, he was troubled by the torment of his conscience (he once quit as director of a publishing group of the Japan and China cultural association); on the other hand, he faced threats to his life and was gradually coerced more deeply. Although he wielded less harm than did Wang Ching-Wei, Zhou Fohai and others, his previous popularity was too great; he became a famous “cultural traitor”. The author detailed the creative activity and dividing line of Zhang Ziping before and after the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression to explain the creative background of *Jie Xi* and its ideological stance.

Jie Xi was founded on January 15, 1932. From the experiences of Zhang Ziping above, we can see that Zhang Ziping was at his creative pinnacle because of his famous work *Daughter of Tension*; at the political level, he was a new member of the “Third Party”. His friend, who recommended him to the Party, Deng Yanda, was assassinated by the authorities on November 29, a month before the establishment of the periodical. He even prepared a posthumous manuscript on Deng

Yanda to foreshadow the “third issue” of the periodical, which stopped publication. Due to the cause and his emotions, Zheng Ziping, the chief editor of *Jie Xi*, could not be a “kept writer”; he was too discontented for National Government authority.

Thus, the interpretation of *Jie Xi* should start by “uncovering” the history of literature of Zhang Ziping.

For a long time, China’s modern literature research community has held that “Nationalist literature”, “Three People’s Principles in Literature” and “Nationalist Literature” advocated by the “Striker club” represent the opinion of the National Government; they bear some similarity and overlap in theory building, literature proposition, and writing style and played a role in “helping” the National Government. We should be aware that “Nationalist Literature” and “Nationalist Literature and Art” have been notorious terms in modern Chinese literature study filed in mainland China for a long time. Although few papers spoke of *Jie Xi*, it was considered a periodical of “Nationalist Literature”. Based on detailed historical data, Zhang Ziping had a close relationship with a number of authors of “Nationalist Literature”; this is an unquestioned historical fact. The posthumous manuscript of Li Zanhua, chief editor of *the Modern Literature Review*, which is a core periodical of “Nationalist Literature”, had almost disappeared, but Li Zanhua’s critical article “Heart of Woman” and the works of main authors of the *Modern Literature Review* such as Yang Changxi, Zhao Jingshen and others, can be seen in the monthly periodical *Jie Xi*, which only published two issues.

Certainly, we think that the magazine has an “official background” and even believe that it was bought by the National Government only based on a few articles, which is unfair. There is a passage in the first issue of the journal, which is not only the first paragraph of commissioning letter but also the propaganda slogan of the periodical.

Our periodical does not idly talk about doctrine, and it is a pure literary publication. The selection of works is premised on artistic value, but we believe that people in the era can neither be a crazy old person nor an obstinate lagger, so it is accordance with the demand of time as a standard in the inner awareness of a word. We should believe that old writers can compose beautiful works. New writer can also write beautiful works, so the periodical welcomes the contributions of anyone apart from guest writer and all the members of the Jie Xi Association. We hope that the periodical is a common resource for all literature and art enthusiasts for cultivation and appreciation.⁷

Certainly, the speech of an advertisement may not be trusted. There is another passage that “solicits contribution correspondence” in the first issue of the periodical:

The periodical has pushed through difficulties and come into being, and we plan to publish on schedule later. We hope that readers who are genuine literature and art lovers can give us sincere criticism and advice as well as sympathy and care so that the periodical can bloom in an objective environment and on the depressed Chinese soil that Porro art has declined and where nationalist art has made no further progress for the public to appreciate.⁸

⁷“From the Editor”, *Jie Xi*, 1931.12.21(1).

⁸“From the Editor”, *Jie Xi*, 1931.12.21(1).

The passage is the reason that later Chinese researchers denounced and criticized *Jie Xi*. Zhang Dalin even incorporates the passage into “the KMT’s literature and art”—indeed, because Chinese ideological circles were long ruled by dualism, “either the CCP or KMT” dichotomy is ingrained, especially in 1930s. In view of the sharp opposition of conflict between the KMT and CCP, *Jie Xi* was not a left-wing journal under the leadership of the CCP, and it has certain relationship with “Nationalist literature” that was denigrated by many scholars from mainland China, so it is not surprising that the periodical has been demoted, ignored and even “forgotten”.

On the surface, however, the periodical is only an “association periodical” like *Sphinx* and *Yu Si*. As the “Jie Xi Association” said in a slogan, it is the group that edits the periodical. Additionally, the first issue of the periodical expressly published the “general regulation of Jie Xi Association”; the second article of the regulation “purpose” was declared to be the purpose of studying literature and art and advocating the culture of the common people. Just as Zhang Daming summarized based on an analysis of articles published in *Jie Xi*, the periodical has two obvious characteristics: one is “literature and art of common people”, and the other is “new peasants’ literature”.

In that respect, what is the core value system of “Nationalist literature and art”?

A passage on *Nationalist literature and art activity declaration* is the programmatic document of “Nationalist literature and art”:

Art, from its initial historical record, has expressed to us its mission. We clearly know that a work of art is in its original condition — not generated from individual awareness but from a life consciousness formed in the national position. What artwork displays is not only talent, technology, style and the form of artists; it demonstrated national products belonging to artists. We have been obviously told about it in art history..... (Ellipsis is added by inducers). The national element of literature exists as art. Presently, it is difficult for us to judge the primitive form of literature, but we are convinced that it is definitively based on a general awareness of nationality. We have known about this in the Iliad and Odyssey of Greece, the Nibelungen of Germany, Pihuaerfu of England, The Song of Roland of France and the Book of Song of our country..... (Ellipsis is added by inducers). For this reason, we can comprehend the origin of arts from these records of literature and art — it is the highest mission of art, displaying the national spirit and the awareness it possesses. In other words, the highest meaning of art is nationalism.⁹

The reason for quoting such long sentences is to generalize the core value system of “Nationalist literature and art”: “primitive for literature” is general awareness based on nationality, “the national product that an artist is part of”, which is emphasized here, is not “talent, technology, style and the form of artists”. In other words, the creation of the author himself is also integrated into the broad, empty and large concept of “nationality”.

Hence, from the logic of literary theory, the proposition of “Nationalist literature and art” indeed goes against the idea that “our periodical does not idly talk about

⁹The specific article refers to the second and third issues of *Forward Weekly* on June 29th, 1930 and July 6th, 1930.

doctrine”, “pure literature and art”, and the “premise of artistic value”, as written in the introduction of *Jie Xi*. For the core purpose of the periodical, we can still see in the passage above: “*Porro art has declined, and nationalist art has made no further progress*”.

“Disclose the secret” means that *Jie Xi* neither tended toward left-wing literature that “speaks for politics”, “*Porro art*”, nor was it interested in the “paramount nature of nationalism” in government-run literature, Nationalist literature and art. In other words, the former has declined, and the latter “has made no further progress”.

In this way, if we still say that *Jie Xi* is a “nationalist periodical” that speaks as an authority, this may appear excessive. Does it willingly enter into the “Nationalist literature and art” system “without further progress”?

What type of periodical is *Jie Xi*?

There is a passage in the *History of Chinese Democratic Party* by Qiu Qianmu:

In addition, the local organization of the provisional actions committee of the KMT also called upon *Jie Xi*, *Fei Pu*, *Di Chao* and others to advocate the struggle against Chiang Kai-shek [11].

It is important to note that among the publications above, *Jie Xi* is the most influential one for three reasons. The first is that the periodical was edited by the famous writer Zhang Ziping, which ensures that it has a place in modern Chinese literature; the second is that in the publications above founded by the “Third Party”, only *Jie Xi* is an official publication and a literary periodical that is a representative literary periodicals in the primary stage of anti-war. The third reason is that *Jie Xi* once published a literary programmatic document of the “Third Party” and comprehensively reflected the cultural selection of the “Third Party” in the earlier stage of the war, which is of important research significance.

According to the contributions desired for the periodical, *Jie Xi* once published four issues of semimonthly periodicals, which should at least have the same core as *Jie Xi*, which is Zhang Ziping¹⁰ (the “chief editor” of the final issue of *Jie Xi* changed from Zhang Ziping to Ding Ding. This issue will be discussed in the postamble).

From the historical data that we have assessed so far, the reputation of semi *Jie Xi* is slightly higher than *Jie Xi* because the semimonthly periodical was once referred to by Mao Dun, leader of the continental literary community. A passage in the “collected works of Mao Dun” is as follows.

¹⁰The periodical sponsored by the literary clubs in modern China rarely changed editors-in-chief. For example, *Critical Review*, *Conversation by Writing*, *Analects of Confucius*, *Threads*, *Crescent*, *Contradiction*, *Wilderness Overgrown with Grass* and others are edited by sponsors from beginning to end. The only relatively obvious “core replacement” is the magazine “Lion’s Roar” sponsored by the “Lion’s Roar Club”. It had to change editors-in-chief because of objective reasons such as expenditure and core members going abroad. Given the political status, popularity and economic strength of Zhang Ziping at that time, semi *Jie Xi* should not have changed to a monthly periodical or even “changed editors”.

Only after I saw four volumes of semi *Jie Xi* did I know that the “literature and art of the common people develops working class’ body and mind under the ruling class!” This is completely a trick of the Sinicism Social Democratic Party! [12]

Mao Dun hit the mark. The so-called social democratic party refers in particular to a political party with the nature of the Communist Party, which was founded by Karl August Ferdinand Liebknecht (1871–1919), a German socialism activist in 1869 in light of political science. In a political system, the party advocates implementing “democratic socialism”, and it had strong political influence around the world at that time as a founding member of the Second International. On this issue, the author has written a rough introduction in “Introduction”, and the specific content remains to be detailed in following articles. What is noteworthy is that China has never founded a party named the “Social Democratic Party”.²¹

Both the semi *Jie Xi* and *Jie Xi* traveled in one continuous line. There is a passage “from the editor”:

We once published four issues of Semimonthly *Jie Xi*, but because of financial difficulties and a variety of inconveniences and troubles with publishing house and releases, it was handed over by the publishing company (inducer: mass book company), and it has been turned over to the monthly periodical to expand and enrich itself.¹¹

Although Mao Dun was caustic about *Jie Xi*, he neither claimed that the periodical was a mouthpiece for the National Government, nor did he connect it with “Three people’s principles in Literature and art” and nationalism literature and art. He only denounced that it was the “tricks of Sinicism from the social democratic party”. It can thus be seen from the text that *Jie Xi* has a relationship with the authority of the National Government, and Zhang Daming even noted this with regard to the KMT literary thinking, the three people’s principles and Nationalist literature and art, which is questionable.

Forty-two works were published in just two issues of *Jie Xi*. Similar to other periodicals, they include many literary forms such as translation introductions, novels, essays, poems, book reviews, correspondences and theory criticism, in which the two issues published 21 works (these do not include correspondence and the section *From the Editor*).

The biggest change of two issues of the periodical is that the chief editor of the second issue changed to Ding Ding and the name of Zhang Ziping disappeared. The reason for stopping publication is that the date of publication of the second issue is September 15, 1932, when the “January 28th Incident” just finished and the “conciliation” from international forces of imperialism resulted in Japanese troops being fearless in Shanghai. The accident caused a large number of literature periodicals in Shanghai to change their addresses or even stop or suspend publication. The first and second issues of *Jie Xi* are separated by nine months. We cannot help but ask what the removal Zhang Ziping’s name signifies.¹²

¹¹“From the Editor”, *Jie Xi*, 1931.12.21(1).

¹²This does not mean that Chinese intellectuals had not attempted theoretical discussions on “Democratic Socialism” or similar political ideologies. Earlier, before the Revolution of 1911,

In *Chronicle Biography of Zhang Ziping*, we find subtle information. In October 1931, Zhang Ziping was elected as a central committee member and a central propaganda committee member of the provisional actions committee of the KMT, which was responsible for the propaganda work of the “Third Party”. Because Deng Yanda was assassinated at the end of year, Zhang Ziping had planned to turn sorrow into strength, but he unexpectedly decided to withdraw from the party and moved to a Shanghai suburb where he specialized in composition because he could not tolerate the harassment and threats of the KMT secret service and the Shanghai “No.1 Spy Section” of the Japanese embassy.

It is obvious that the first issue of *Jie Xi* is a contribution to “standing on the blood of martyrs” that Zhang Ziping composed when he was still courageous. When the second issue was published, Zhang Ziping has become a “hermit” who feared revenge from the authorities and being involved in war, so he fled and left the whole periodical to Ding Jiashu.

A passage in Zeng Jinke’s essay “in the War” reads as follows:

In the afternoon, Ding Ding accompanied his girlfriend to visit me and said “the cinemas have all closed; it is distressing!” Then, he told me that Zhang Ziping fled to Soochow [14].

In fact, Zhang Ziping relied on the wrong person as Ding Jiashu did, who was remembered as watching a movie with his girlfriend during the war and was not a doughty man; and his cowardice even surpassed Zhang Ziping’s. At the end of the second volume, Ding Jiashu was unwilling to stop the publication in this way and announced a blustorous “advance notice of the main content of the third issue” and hurried to publish a *Special Notice from Dingding* in which he declared an end to the publication; the ending is amusing:

The saddest is that I received a thousand letters from several girlfriends in six to seven years, and I treasured them very much, but they were also lost. Ah, our country is so disappointing that the common people have to mourn themselves with aggrieved tears [15].

2.2 “Scream Poem” as Discourse Practice

To sum up, although *Jie Xi* as a publication of the “Third Party” is not “left-leaning”, it was not seen as “reactionary”. Objectively speaking, in the two issues that were published, the discourse practice “Scream poem” and poetical works of this type that it published had played a positive role at that time. Although the works are not significant or are masterpieces, they have distinct characteristics and drawbacks, whatever the poetics or poetical works were based on the overall

reformists scholar Jiang Kanghu and Canadian doctor William E. Macklin not only founded the “Chinese Socialist Party” together and even developed “Land tax going to public testing ground” in a suburb of Nanking; in the early Republic of China, Liu Shifu also founded “Anarchism village” in Chi’an of Xin’an, etc. [13].

quality; they synthetically reflect a poetic view, the literary and political position of the periodical and even the “Third Party”. Therefore, this section will specifically research this issue even proposition and historical influence of “literature and arts of the common people”.

As for two issues of *Jie Xi*, only in the second issue was a poetry section entitled *Scream Poems and Narrative Novels*, which had no name for the author when it was published. Additionally, in Vol. 3 of *Chinese Novel Theory Materials in the 20th Century* (Peking University Press, 1997) co-authored by Chen Pingyuan, Wu Fuhui and Xia Xiaohong, that article was referred to as an anonymous work, so according to the current research, the author of the article is pending further discussion.

In this article, the authors presented a distinct academic point: in China at that time, literature and art had to be combined with China’s national attributes to bear political significance. There is a paragraph that reads as follows:

It is a fact that in such a backward country as China, education is not universal; in particular, public education is so poor that we can say that all Chinese workers and peasants were illiterate with no ability to enjoy literature and art, so the so-called mass literature and art was targeted at bourgeois intellectuals in the minority. They thought it would be a terrific surprise for a journal to have 8000 or 10,000 copies sold, considering that was the need of the public, so they cheered onstage and bequeathed them with much ostentation, dazzling the people; such a view failed to take the reality into account and compare to a population of 400 million, even compared to thirty percent of the population, that the achievement was a failure; otherwise, why would it disappeared soon afterward such as a fever?¹³

Although it sounds harsh, the sentence is indeed reasonable. However, in the early 1930s, when the proletarian and civilian literature and art were prosperous and the masses of workers and peasants had just arrived in the political arena, it is no wonder that the author did not or dared not sign his or her name when publicly publishing such an article. Such blunt criticism was similar to a ringing slap on the face of writers and editors at that time. However, after that paragraph, the author switched the conversation:

However, if we were discouraged from making another attempt after a setback or even a failure, this would be a mistake. We should continue what we did with persistent effort, conduct self-reviews and self-criticism, redouble efforts to correct anything considered to be wrong, and forge a new path where there are any obstacles.¹⁴

According to the author, the problem that China was faced at that time was the “bureaucratization and capitalization of education”, that knowledge was in hands of “literary, overseas students” or “writers living in foreign-style houses”, and other minority groups of people with vested interests. In that case, only by following the principles of “general education” and “improvement of tastes and interests” could the political function of literature be achieved; after all, “pure literature” or “refined literature” serve the minority while politics is for most of the people.

¹³“Scream Poems and Narrative Novels”. *Jie Xi*, 1932.9.15(2).

¹⁴“Scream Poems and Narrative Novels”. *Jie Xi*, 1932.9.15(2).

However, it was no different than talking nonsense for the poor and weak country of China where there were frequent wars over vast territories and a large population to comprehensively educate in such a short time. When one cannot change society, one need only change oneself. From this perspective, the author proposed “Scream poems” and “Narrative novels”, which were, of course, based on the two principles mentioned above.

“The so-called Scream poems are those that give up all affectation of the past and reject popular oddness and jerkiness”. Under such a basic definition, the author discussed four workable aspects, namely, “language being popular and plain, words being candid and straight, the mood being compact and warm, thoughts being reasonable and accurate.”¹⁵ These four aspects contribute the writing mode of “Scream poems” from the outside to the inside at four levels.

From these claims, we can see that “Scream poems” are an extreme development of “proletarian literature”. Of course, in terms of the plain language, “Scream Poems” were in line with China’s national attributes at that time, and they could be handled more effectively while they were affecting the art of poetry. Just as “Narrative novels” were presented by the author subsequently, they are marked by “smooth narration with interest, clear and simple structures, and enlightenment of thoughts”.¹⁶ For either novels or poems, the claims of *Jie Xi* are in fact the same.

Moreover, in *Jie Xi*, the spirit of care for civilians were obvious and developed, which they held as their underlying feelings for those at the bottom of society and could not be found in other journals at that time. Both the declaration of publication and published articles reflected humanitarian care and love from the editors for lower class civilians. In commissioning letters, the editor-in-chief also emphasized that “works based on the hard life of workers and peasants should be given priority for publication.”¹⁷

In the terse and forceful article *Scream Poems and Narrative Novels*, we can see the author’s viewpoint on literary politics and knowledge about the literary appeals of disadvantaged people.

The devolution of literature to the majority of people required writers to create works loved by the masses, especially by the working classes who did not have a good education, which inherited and developed the “Spirits of May Fourth Movement” of “civilian literature” and the promotion of left-wing “proletarian literature”. Poetry in China has a far-reaching, broad and long standing folk cultural customs, but after the Song and Yuan dynasties when Neo-Confucianism grew and thrived, poetry gradually began to show elegance among elites, which the subverted folk consciousness of traditional Chinese poetics had developed since the Tang dynasty. However, “civilian literature” had been on the agenda for a short time more than ten years after the “New Culture Movement”, in an ideological trend of “going to the people”. What is discussed in the following section is a translation of

¹⁵“Scream Poems and Narrative Novels”.

¹⁶“Scream Poems and Narrative Novels”.

¹⁷“Editors’ Note”. *Jie Xi*, 1931.12.21(1).

many western “formalist literature theories” and related poetry works that led to immature imitation among a group of Chinese poets in the primary stage of writing. In this process, the new literature tradition set by new poetry was inevitably negatively impacted by ideas of focusing on form, neglecting content and even playing with words, which is apparently not conducive to the performance of the political function of literature.¹⁸

The poetic theory published in *Jie Xi* showed the political position of the “Third Party” to a large extent, but this was not widely known due to “marginalization” of this party and its publications in the history of modern Chinese thought. However, its literary view of paying attention to the bottom of society, objectively describing China’s social contradiction, and stressing “literary writing for the people” was shown distinctively in its published poems.

Aside from a small amount of translation, in two issues of *Jie Xi*, a total of nine original poems were published. The works published in the first issue were *Nanhai Sand* created by poetess Yu Xiuyun,¹⁹ *I Drifted to Hong Kong* by Luo Xiaohun, and *What Age In Front of You?* by Bai Tao; the works published in the second issue were *Morning* by Ding Jiahu (using the name Dingding), *On a Bed* by Zhao Shuquan, and Hou Ruhua’s *Plea*, as well as three anonymous pieces: *Sending*, *After Farewell* and *Rejection*.

As mentioned in the previous section, the journal’s first issue was chiefly edited by Zhang Ziping, and the second issue was chiefly edited by Ding Jiahu. As Zhang Ziping had sheltered in his house in Shanghai since the end of 1931, he could not be involved in soliciting contributions, and in the *Special Notice from Ding Ding* published in the second issue, Zhang Ziping was referred to as “Mr. Zhang Ziping”.

¹⁸Western literature theories that were previously introduced to China include formalism: “China’s interest in contemporary Western literature theories can be dated to as early as the 1930s, when new criticism was prosperous in the United Kingdom. China’s understanding of new criticism had much to do with the new British critics I.A. Richards and William Empson. Richards had taught at Tsinghua University (1929–1931) to promote a ‘Basic English’ he invented while teaching Comparative Literature and other courses. His view of literary criticism was then introduced to China.” It is not an exaggeration to say that there were many translations; for example, “Qian Zhongshu discussed his *Principles of Literary Criticism* (1924) in the early 1930s, and Cao Baohua translated his book *Science and Poetry* in 1937. Under his influence, William Empson taught at Peking University (1937, 1947–1952) and Southwest Associated University (1939).” The *Wuhan University Quarterly Journal of Liberal Arts* also published articles of Zhang Yuanchang and Chen Xiyang et al. regarding new criticism. Additionally, the poems of T.S. Eliot, I.A. Richards and I. Winters were translated and introduced to China [16]. In the period of 1930–1940, aestheticism, modernism and other western literature theories under the influence of formalist literary criticism were introduced to China. Several poets such as Sinmay Zau, Pien Chih-lin, Li Jinfa, and Zhu Xiang, et al. were all influenced by such thoughts, and they composed many poems.

¹⁹Yu Xiuyun (1910–?), from Shanghai, was the granddaughter of major Shanghai financial figure Yu Qiaqing, a poetess, drama actress, and socialite in Shanghai. She had published her photos and poems in the journal *Ling Long*. As she liked to express emotions in her poems, she was ironically called “Miss Ahaya” by Lu Xun in *Deng Long Shu Gleanings*. She published a collection of poems, *Hu Feng*, using the pen name “Yu Yan”.

All of these appear to indicate that the editing of the second issue of the journal had nothing to do with Zhang Ziping.

Moreover, the study conducted here on the poems published in these two issues may also provide evidence supporting the former theory.

First, in terms of content, the publication of the first issue included political poems, while the second issue included love poems. Although the former was created in the common language and the latter in private speech, both reflected two major principles of “Scream poems”, namely, “language being popular and plain” and “words being candid and straight”.

This type of writing is found in Yu Xiuyun’s *Nanhai Sand*:

Ah, when I first met you/I put you in my mind deeply/The ground was dressed in white snow last night/I reappear to you against the piercing wind/Your lovely face has been ravaged and blackened/Quiet and beautiful fragrance has been downtrodden with nothing left [17].

Of course, as a woman writer, Yu Xiuyun’s distinctive character inevitably used elegant and subtle words, which were converted into the internal representation of “Scream poems” here. *I Drifted to Hong Kong* by Luo Xiaohun showcased the passionate and popular styles of “Scream poems”, reflecting the poet’s gnashing of teeth and great hate of imperialism in the composition.

How gorgeous are these tall buildings/how broad are these roads/It is the palace of the imperialists/It is the prison of small and weak nations/imperialists are cruel such as tigers and wolves/weak nations are only lambs/Covered with bites and scratches/Losing flesh and blood to feed others’ stomachs!

Red flame lights the west/The east is beating war drums/We should rise up against the invaders/To overthrow these devils of humans/We are passionate and have a sword/We must do our utmost to seek liberation/To put the imperialists to death/And rebuild our land of freedom! [18]

Bai Tao’s *What Time in front of You?* is more enlightening. Although it is a “leftist” slogan poem, it is difficult to compare to the slogan-like “Screams”:

Listen! Loud voices of the oppressed throughout the universe/Are calling on the comrades under the heels at the bottom/Rise up and hold the flag, my friends/Go forward, forward, forward, and never look back! [19]

These three “Scream poems” concerning the then-current political situation are relatively short, but there are strong words that are full of emotion in clear and smooth sentences. We can see the authors’ efforts in practicing the principle of “Scream poems”. However, the other six love poems are “private speeches”. For these verses, there are characteristics of “Scream poems” in both content and form: simple in rhetoric and highly colloquial; for example, the anonymous *Beg for Love* is such a case:

I would such as to take a cloud-break arrow, to shoot down, shoot down the sun in the sky/to decorate, decorate your heart with dense dark night!²⁰

²⁰“Beg for Love”. *Jie Xi*, 1932.9.15(2).

Compared to the contemporary aestheticism and symbolism poetry, *Beg for Love* uses catchy sentences and a simple traditional delineation technique that help more readers understand the content of the poem. Additionally, Hou Ruhua’s *Plea* uses more popular sentences to show the love of a lovelorn individual to his lover:

I am lovesick at night/Shedding lots of tears/I’m so sad! How could you discard me?

Discard, discard, discard/It is hard to cure lovesickness [20].

If we say that *Plea* is straightforward to “common”, Zhao Shuquan’s *On the Bed* is straightforward to “kitsch”:

Slight movement of your soft lips/Your reddish cheeks/Your sleepy eyes/How can I prevent my enthusiastic mood/From surging such as waves? [21]

With regard to instinctive desires and the sensory stimulation of humans, there is no need to depend on literary attainment and reading ability for any judgment; anyone who is half-literate with normal psychological and physiological attributes can read and understand these works. When using such a straightforward level in poetry, for most readers who had some so-called “sense of shame” in China at that time, the problem is not the difficulty in understanding the work but the lack of courage to read it.

Whether *Jie Xi* published love or political poems, efforts were made to practice the concept of “Scream poems”. Regardless of the content, singly in terms of language and style, they are straightforward and plain. The sole purpose is to enable most people to read and understand the works, especially those at the most basic levels who received no education and had a low aesthetic level of understanding.

Social democracy that the “Third Party” attempted to implement, when reflected in the literature, was to introduce almost populist civilian literature and put it into practice, i.e., “Scream poems” and “Narrative novels”, while other poetry theories and viewpoints are embodied in “Scream poems”. Although Zhang Ziping favored political poetry and Ding Jiashu was interested in love poetry, they were in consensus with “Scream poems” when soliciting and collecting contributions.

There is no correlational research or final conclusion at present in academic circles on related theories on the background, significance and influence of “Scream poems”; of course, I have no knowledge of whether the famous “Scream poet” Ke Zhongping²¹ was affected by this in the Yan’an period. However, from the grand context of the Chinese history of modern poetry, “Scream poems” were generally unreadable and unwelcome. Although there are many “slogan poems” and “poster poems”, versions that truly complied with the four creation principles of “Scream poems” were rare.

²¹Ke Zhongping (1902–1964), from Baoning, Yunnan. Studied at the University of Political Science and Law in Beijing and was a famous poet and writer. After 1949, he successively served as Deputy Director of the Northwest Commission of Military Affairs and Politics Culture and Education Sector, Dean of the Northwest College of Art, and Vice Chairman of the China Writers Association.

Judging from the specific context at that time, "Scream poems" had a certain practical significance. Today, we observe the typical product in the history of the literature, which is an activity that is necessary and inevitable. In my opinion, the concept and creative attempt of "Scream poems" as proposed in *Jie Xi* has some suggestive meanings as follows, which deserve exploration and consideration.

First, although "Scream poems" did not follow the creation principles of poetry in the traditional sense, they complied with China's specific social and political context. This is a statement of poetry theories over the modern thought that the literature should cater to public reasoning.

From the perspective of the creation principles of poetry, "Scream poems" did not start from the intentions of the writers themselves but from the social context: simply writing for the purpose of poetry writing. The reasoning varies widely from ideas of "expressing ambitions" and "writing what one wants" advocated by Chinese traditional poetics and "poetry is the dress of thought" (Ezra Pound) to "The reason that a poet is a poet is that he is a man with pure and self-consciousness" (T.S. Eliot) in modern poetry theories. However, with the introduction of the concept of modern "public reason", the significance of literature gradually shifts from "writing strategies" to "transmission (acceptance) strategies"; that is, it does not lie in an intention of "how to write" but the purpose of "writing for whom". In particular, in China, where there were frequent wars and the national education was at a low level at that time, the significance of literature will certainly be replaced by political utilitarianism and pragmatism. Therefore, poetry in symbolism, aestheticism, expressionism and other forms was only that of poets themselves at that time instead of playing a role of "scream" in the public domain. Indeed, to gain a larger audience with their poems in China at that time and to have a greater impact, they had to "scream".

"Scream poems" do not disregard the literary nature of poetry; on the contrary, they are positive and require considerably literary and poetic skill.

As defined in *Scream Poems and Narrative Novels*, the reason that "Scream poems" were introduced then was in self-criticism of the "bullet, bayonet, fire and blood poetry as well as the so-called mass literature and art that was abuzz in the year before last and the year before", expecting to "create effective works where they failed."²² The author also believed that this type of literary and artistic work was not an error but only "imperfect".

As for the four principles of "Scream poems" mentioned above, they may appear simple, but it is quite difficult to practice the principles. For language being popular and plain, how does one measure the degree of popular but not vulgar? I believe that this is a question for all poets at all times all over the world. From the perspective of the writing, it is easy to be unclear in meaning while challenging to use popular sentences, and this is exactly what is called "Plain is the true".

The requirement for words to be candid and straight is another extremely difficult demand for poetry composition. On the one hand, the language is required to

²²"Scream Poems and Narrative Novels". *Jie Xi*, 1932.9.15(2).

be popular, yet on the other hand, the words have to be candid and straight. From a linguistic perspective, it is a “third language” between “literary language” (written language) and “life language” (oral language). For poets, this is a significant test of their language skills. For the goals of the “mood being compact and warm” and “thoughts being reasonable and accurate”, most poets, especially those in China influenced by western modernists and not fully mature in writings in the vernacular, felt it was impossible to achieve. At that time, for some of them, indecisive and sloppy, verbose, and even iterative sentences were considered to have aesthetic value.

In general, “having substance in speech, writing with refined words, being easy to understand” is as required by the four principles of “Scream poems”. This requirement for poetic circles in China at that time is a rebuttal to the imitation of European poetry by “seeking new ideas from abroad” and reflects the inheritance of traditional Chinese poetry theories, especially the spirit of “having substance in speech”. From this point of view, it has a positive side.

Finally, “Scream Poems” had a certain positive value and significance for presenting “literary utility”.

In the last paragraph of *Scream Poems and Narrative Novels*, the author made this speech:

And when we wrote scream poems or narrative novels, there is one thing to pay special attention to: the so-called revolutionary works in the past were no more than a crying sigh, hoping for people to offer sympathy and to arouse pity for the described sufferings; but now it is different. We cannot be that weak; we must be brave, we are to write about suffering, we do not merely want readers to express their sympathy but also inspire readers to push them toward the path of “practice”. We do not write about weakness; we have to write something powerful. We do not write anything to be saved; we have to write about self-rescue. We should powerfully direct the readers to the bright living road in our simple and straightforward performance.²³

As the “Third Party”, they had no military or government, and they even had difficulty raising money for activities, but what they had was the political ideal of “benefiting the world”; occasionally, this ideal turns out to be a daydream that cannot be achieved at all. Their political idea is a combination of traditional Chinese political views such as “a gentleman forming no clique”, “a gentleman being out of the office, little minds being in the office”, and “a government official living in the marketplace”, and the independence consciousness of modern western public intellectuals. With the implementation of this political idea and the promotion of social democracy “Scream poems” as the core of “civilian literature and art” became a “modified” tool to be used by the “Third Party” to carry out its political purposes like other political views—“directing readers to the bright living road”, which struggled with “left-wing literature and art” and “right-wing literature”.

After all, “Scream poems” took no concrete actions but to “scream”, but it was not easy to “scream” in the “iron house” of the dark and imprisoned political

²³“Scream Poems and Narrative Novels”. *Jie Xi*, 1932.9.15(2).

context at that time. However, from its roots, “Scream poems” were generated against special social and political background as the embodiment of “civilian literature and art” ideal that was promoted and pushed by *Jie Xi*. The above points are on the affirmative side of “Scream Poems”, but the “civilian literature and art” represented by “Scream poems” has its defects and fatal class limitations that cannot be ignored, as detailed in the following section.

2.3 Evaporation of “Popular Literature and Art” Ideal

In Chang-tai Hung’s *Going to the People: Chinese Intellectuals and Folk Literature Movement in 1918–1937*, the following passage is found:

The slogan “going to the people” gradually became a clarion call among intellectuals in the 1920s as more young Chinese became worried that their own country was being torn apart by internal strife and imperialist aggression. More articles concerning “going to the people” appeared in well-known newspapers and journals — *Chenbao Fukan* (Literary supplement to *Chenbao* [Morning news]), *Jingbao Fukan* (Literature supplement to *Jingbao* [Beijing news]) and *Nuli zhoubao* (*The Endeavor*) — calling for young students to devote their lives to the troubled rural areas. Most articles focused on the educational duty of the intellectuals towards peasants and favored gradual approaches to rural problems...First, we must rely on our hands, using the style of lecture and vernacular novels to compile popular pamphlets...Second, we must rely on our mouths, using plain and simple language to teach the peasants [22, pp. 11–12].

In the book, Hung also quoted Peter Lavrov²⁴; he “noted to idealistic Russian youth that they were guilty of living in a privilege-ridden society and that inequality only brought more social injustice and sufferings for the people...Social guilt could only be eliminated when the privileged sacrificed themselves for the sake of the people’s welfare.”²⁵ Therefore, Hung believed that this attitude was the inner psychological motivation of why Chinese intellectuals took the initiative to move “closer to the people”. Therefore, analyzing the literary thought of “civilian literature and art” promoted and pushed by *Jie Xi* in accordance with Hung’s theory has a reference meaning.

The running characteristics of *Jie Xi* have been discussed from two sides earlier; on the one hand, the journal was greatly supported by the “Third Party” and wanted to take action in the primary stage of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, hoping to “move forward by following the martyrs’ blood” and put forward the idea of “civilian literature and art” of “Scream poems”. In contrast, the editor, either Zhang Ziping or Ding Jiashu, at the “rich and leisured social stratum”

²⁴Peter Lavrov (ПётрЛавровичЛавров, 1823–1900), Russian philosopher and populist thinker. He graduated from Mikhailovsky Artillery School in 1842 and participated in the Paris Commune movement. He was the author of *Hegel and the Philosophy of Praxis* and other works and had an enormous impact on later generations.

²⁵Peter Lavrov. “Historical Letters” [22, p. 178].

had a mental defect that they were more mortally afraid of death and indulged more in pleasure than did “proletariat” workers and those formerly at the bottom (although they might have more or less “guilt” due to the sympathy that Lavrov discussed). In 1932, when the “January 28” warfare was the hottest, this journal publication was stopped hastily as the editors-in-chief fled one after another.

With the above facts, it cannot be overemphasized if we call the editors of *Jie Xi* “the greatest talkers but least doers”. In addition to “Scream Poems”, the manuscripts published in two issues of *Jie Xi* include novels, prose, translations, comments, communications, and articles in other styles. These articles, especially novels, fell under the category of “Narrative novels”, in which some are deliberately mystifying, but these so-called “Narrative novels”, in essence, have something in common with “Scream poems” in content, writing intention and social influence, only that “Narrative novels” seek more writing skills and are more readable in the plots.

In reality, this is all due to the combined action of both subjective and objective reasons. The subjective reason is that the people at the bottom in China at that time had no access to works with more profound connotations; only poems in popular language or novels with rich plots and simple rhetoric techniques could meet most readers’ needs. The objective reason is that, according to the ruling program of the “Third Party”, it was necessary to push “civilian literature and art” first to build an “equal rights society” of social democracy in China, where illiteracies were found across the country.

First, I discuss “civilian literature and art” theory and the creative practice of *Jie Xi* from two aspects.

On “civilian literature and art” theory, we must refer to the *Outline of Popular Literary and Art Principles* (signed “Zhong Kan”) that was personally written by Deng Yanda and published in the first issue of *Jie Xi* as an article in a special series of civilian literature and art that systematically reflected the relevant views of the “Third Party” on “civilian literature and art”.²⁶ In addition to this article, *From Popular Literary and Art to Nationalism*, signed “Zhong Liu”, and *From Nationalism to Three People’s Principles*, signed “Bo Da”, are included.

²⁶In the history of modern Chinese thought, the most famous work signed “Zhong Kan” is *Kang Sheng Critical Biography*, which was jointly created in the name of “Zhong Kan” by CCP history experts Ma Zhongyang and Li Kan. Ma Zhongyang and Li Kan were born in 1922, and they were only 9 years old by 1931, so it is obvious that *Outline of Populism Principles* has nothing to do with “Zhong Kan”, but in the memoir *Picking Up Footprints* by Ji Fang (signed as Fang Shu) (Chinese Peasants and Workers Democratic Party Central Committee, 1983, Page 42), the article “Life of Mr. Deng Yanda” specifically described that “from his returning to the country in May 1930 to August 1931, when arrested, there was only more than one year between; (Deng Yanda) wrote lots of articles, including the most important versions such as *Outline of Popular Literary and Art Principles*.....”. Qiu Ting and Guo Xiaochun [23] also mentioned that “(Deng Yanda) drafted more than 20 files and declarations, nearly 200,000 words, and most of these articles and files were published in *Revolutionary Action Monthly*, including the most of those such as *Outline of Popular Literary and Art Principles*...”. Therefore, “Zhong Kan” must be Deng Yanda’s pen name.

This *Outline of Popular Literary and Art Principles* can be called a programmatic document for the “Third Party” to showcase literary practices in the earlier stage of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression. In this article, Deng Yanda answered two questions: “What is civilian literature and art” and “What is the main theme of civilian literature and art”.

In the part of “What is civilian literature and art”, Deng Yanda said:

Popular literature and art represent the requirement of the general oppressed masses and represents the ideal of the oppressed common people to seek liberation. On the one hand, it criticizes the past and present systems as a criticism of real life. On the other hand, it creates a future by describing and pushing the general populace revolution toward the establishment of a classless society. Civilian literature and art is “romantic” because it resists all oppressions as well as a dark and hypocritical old social system with superb vibrant passion to realize the liberation of humanity. It also comes with “rationality” because it requires a reasonable life to replace a false or “fruitless” life to improve one’s life effectiveness and enrich life [24].

Here, Deng Yanda set the tone for the “Populism” advocated and pushed in the early period of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression by defining “civilian literature” as one that advocated for the “oppressed common people”, criticizing reality while creating the future, romantic while reasonable, aiming to build a “classless society”.

“The dark and hypocritical old social system” is the main object that the “civilian literature and art” criticized. Therefore, the “civilian literature and art” first plays a role in revealing reality and criticizing social injustice in theory. It is closely linked to the trends of “Going to the People” that prevailed in the intellectual circles in the 1920s and 1930s described by Chang-tai Hung. From the impact of time, the “civilian literature and art” was developed as a result of the social trends of “Going to the People”. However, where does the “civilian literature and art” spirit come from?

Regarding “What is civilian literature and art”, Deng Yanda also said:

Civilian literature and art is that of humans, not machines. It resists all privileged classes, including those that “treat people as slaves” and “enslave people”. So, civilian literature and art concerns the oppressed masses subjectively but concerns human to the greatest extent. The ideal of the civilian literature and art is creating work, liberty, equality and fraternity.²⁷

In fact, “civilian literature and art” spirit is descended from the “people’s literature” and “civilian literature” emphasized by Zhou Zuoren in the “New Culture Movement”. Zhou Zuoren noted that “civilian literature is not especially for common civilians, but the literature for studying civilians’ life is people’s life” [25]. Therefore, in Zhou Zuoren’s view, “civilian literature” is the “people’s literature”. It constitutes the main spirit trend of new literature after the “May Fourth Movement”. Here, *Jie Xi* also acknowledges that “civilian literature and art” is the “people’s literature”; in fact, it implies the inheritance of the spirit of the “New Culture Movement”.

²⁷Zhong Kan. “Outline of Popular Literary and Art Principles”.

Deng Yanda also believed that the focus of “civilian literature and art” on the theme should include some matters to be noted, namely, to clarify the relationship between the “description of the present society”, the “profound description of sorrow and hope for the vast poor masses in the period of transition”, “ethical criticism and positive affirmations”, “note on the text”, “attitudes to classic literature and art in China” and “civilian literature and art, proletarian literature and art and Nationalist literature and art”. Thus, the “civilian literature and art” proposed by Deng Yanda inherited good intellectual resources of the “New Culture Movement” while maintaining some unique perspectives that comply with social democracy.

In the section “Ethical Criticism and Positive Affirmations”, Deng Yanda said:

We believe that the old ethics of China as a whole were patriarchal and feudal. Christian ethics imposed by the comprador class at ports are the slave ethics of money worship. Therefore, we are “against Confucianism and against Christian” on the negative side [24].

In “Note on the Text”, Deng Yanda included another view as follows:

Our civilian literature and art naturally take the general common people as its main subject, so the text has to be simple and plain, with all non-everyday words and grammars avoided, but the text must keep those that are easy and can express subtle deep emotions. For foreign grammars, they should be introduced to the extent of being simple and plain the so that quality and quantity of Chinese characters can be improved that way.²⁸

For the “Nationalist literature” put forward by the government and the “proletarian literature and art” put forward by left-wing political powers, Deng Yanda also had his own differing views:

We believe that it still remains a question as to whether the proletarian literature and art itself can contribute a whole system. Even if it manages to contribute to a system, it could be no more than a symbol of transition — only a “slogan” to resist the bourgeois culture. How should it be explained like this? Because a socialist society is classless, proletarian literature and art have no subject there..... Pure Nationalist literature and art do not satisfy the request of Chinese society because it would automatically become the tool of the bourgeoisie (the most cases lie in Germany and France), and it is somewhat backward with a restoration trend.²⁹

These three paragraphs basically summarize the core ideas of Deng Yanda on implementing “civilian literature and art” in the *Outline of Popular Literary and Art Principles*. However, from that we also know that many ideas of “civilian literature and art” were not new at that time, such as the concern for subaltern classes, the emphasis on “human literature”, anti-Confucianism, the emphasis that the literature shall be popular and easy to understand and even introducing western grammars. Having been proposed by Zhou Zuoren, Hu Shih, and Chen Duxiu, among others, “anti-Christian” appears to have a new meaning; it was closely related to the

²⁸Zhong Kan. “Outline of Popular Literary and Art Principles”.

²⁹Zhong Kan. “Outline of Popular Literary and Art Principles”.

Anti-Christian Movement³⁰ popular among young students and patriotic intellectuals in the 1920s. This movement was against the spread of culturally invasive Christianity in China; they expelled Christianity from the schools and proposed the “indigenization” of Christianity in China, aiming to establish a localized Chinese church. Therefore, in the “Principle Outline” of “civilian literature and art”, the only visible original idea is the thought on “National literature and art” and “Proletarian literature”.

This opinion also shows the intention of “Civilian literature and art” put forward by the “Third Party” as a political party in the primary stage of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression. They were not only independent from the KMT and CCP on the political thought but were also the “third force” on literature and art. On the one hand, they did not agree with the official implementation of “National literature”; on the other hand, they did not recognize the “Proletarian literature” put forward by left-wing literature and art. Except for the *Principle outline of civilian literature and art* written by Deng Yanda, a second article, *From Civilian Literature and art to Nationalism* by Zhong Liu, also commented on the *Principle outline of civilian literature and art* in a certain sense.

Zhong Liu said the following:

For the outline of Mr. Zhong Kan, if it is reluctant to be interpreted with a certain doctrine, then it appears to be the Three People’s Principle literature which is the purest and the most right. It has clearly stated the disapprobation of Proletarian Literature in the second paragraph of Section six; moreover, it also explained the lack of completion of the National Literature, for nationalism is only a part of the Three People’s Principle.²

If the civilian literature and art put forward by Deng Yanda is an independent and emerging literary form rather than the Nationalist literature and art and Proletarian literature, then this article written by Zhong Liu appears to place Deng Yanda’s point of view as returning to the old style of the Three People’s Principles in the form. What we must pay attention to is that this sentence of Zhong Liu is a rhetorical question, including “seems”, two “-est (most)” and a question mark at the end. Therefore, in Zhong Liu’s opinion, whether the Civilian Literature is the “Three People’s Principles” remains to be determined.

³⁰Also called the “Anti-Christian Movement”, it was popular among Chinese youths and intellectuals in the twenties and thirties in the 20th century. Academic circles generally believed that the nature of this movement is a theocratic nationalism cultural movement, which is a continuous line of the “May Fourth Movement”. The movement began in 1922 when Zhou Zuoren, Qian Xuan, etc. opposed the fact that “the world Christian student’s union conference” was to be held at Tsinghua University; intellectuals demanded that the spread of Christianity in China need to go the way of “the indigenous church”, i.e., to align with Chinese characteristics and national conditions. For a long period after the “non-ground motion”, this movement has influenced and determined the indigenous spread of Christianity in China. Zhao Zichen, Cheng Jingyi, Wang Zhixin and Jia Yuming launched and established the indigenous churches in China successively. Other scholars think, according to the newly discovered files, that, “the non-ground motion” had a certain relationship with the support of the CCP at that time [26–28].

It is a concern that this is one of the reasons that scholars Qian Liquan, Wen Rumin and Zhang Daming believed that *Jie Xi* has the KMT official background. Here, we have to clarify the two concepts of the “Three People’s Principles” Literature; one is the “Three People’s Principles” Literature put forward by Zhong Liu, and the other is the policy of the “Three People’s Principles” Literature advocated by the Nanking National Government. In fact, these two concepts are entirely different.

In the *Encyclopedia of New China*, under the entry of “Nationalist literature and art”, the following sentence is found:

(The Nationalist literature and art) are a type of literary idea and literary school. In 1929, the central propaganda department of the KMT Government formulated the policy on the “literature and art of the Three People’s Principles” and implemented the so-called “party-government culture”. In 1930, facing the rise of the proletarian revolutionary literature, the KMT organization in Shanghai organized a group of politicians and scholars such as Wang Pingling, Zhu Yingpeng, Fan Zhengbo and Huang Zhenxia. Additionally, they introduced the nationalism literature and art movement. They issued *Qianfeng Weekly* and *Qianfeng Monthly* successively, and published an article called the Declaration on Nationalist Literature and Art Movement in June 1930. The Declaration listed the proletarian literature and art movement and the literature and art of “maintaining the remnants of feudal ideology” as “two extreme thoughts”; the Declaration also thought that the proletarian revolutionary literature movement would draw the new literature and art “into an inevitable collision”. Therefore, the Declaration posited that to break through the crisis of the “new literature and art”, it was necessary to work harder in the “formation of the central consciousness”. The “central consciousness” or the so-called “the supreme significance of literature and art”, is nationalism [29].

Although these words included some political ideology, we can still see that the policy for “literature and art of the Three People’s Principles” was the herald of “the Nationalist literature and art”. Looking from a common sense perspective, *Jie Xi*, which was the magazine used for the Third Party to oppose Chiang Kai-shek would not consider itself the megaphone of “literature and art of the Three People’s Principles”. “Zhong Liu” rejected the opinion that “civilian literature and art” was “literature and art of the Three People’s Principles”. Additionally, it is worth nothing that as the magazine that proposed resistance at the beginning of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, *Jie Xi* did not avoid attention and reflection for the Japanese invaders. Thus, “Zhong Liu” said this in the article *From Civilian Literature and Art to Nationalism*:

Separately advocating nationalism literature, in any case, was easier than embourgeoisement and militarization. If the revolution (which should be the victory of the Northern Expedition) was started before the Meiji Reform, it would be a complete mistake. During the Meiji Reform, thus after advocating nationalism, the Sino-Japanese war and the Russo-Japanese War, nationalism would turn into chauvinism (which means an obsession with chauvinism). For a long time, Japan was rejected by all the countries of the world. Until the end of the Taisho period (1912–1926) and the beginning of Showa period (1926–1989), Japanese politicians began to understand its economic relationship to the world and gave up its tradition. The attitude of chauvinism, such as the name change “adherent of the republic” to “republic of China”, we certainly did not care about this – or more than that, America’s concession and the gradual decreasing of the Americans’ speeches. Anyway, we do not believe that the Three People’s Principles will have a strong relationship with the

Chinese bourgeois liberalization in the future and militarization. The true three people’s principles should be used for liberating the thoughts of civilians. However, our civilian literature and art is not the literature of the Three People’s Principles because we do not approve of the literature with the purpose of consciousness [30].

Here, “Zhong Liu” thought that “Nationalist literature and art” is desirable because Japanese shifted nationalism to non-rational and fanatical “chauvinism”. At the same time, he also stated that “it is not the literature of the Three People’s Principles”. After all, the “Third Party” “did not approve of the literature with the purpose of consciousness”. It is certain that *Jie Xi* was born at the beginning of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, and its writers and editors did not stop studying and explaining the historic project about the nationwide war of resistance against Japan. For example, Zhang Ziping proposed this project in 1931 for WWII. However, it is unfortunate that the poetic theory for “screaming poetry” and the literature proposition of “civilian literature and art” did not have positive roles in the “screaming” of literature of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression.

Through a further analysis of “Civilian Literature and art”, we can see that *Jie Xi* “took two fists”. The political view of China’s two big political powers at that time, i.e., the CCP on behalf of the left-wing political power and the ruling party of the National government, the KMT, were both denied by *Jie Xi*. This obviously does not conform to the social reality needed to establish the social reality needs of “the Resistance against Japanese Aggression United Front”. Although *Jie Xi* wanted to project its own voice about independence, this concept, “the civilian literature and art”, is derived from types of social ideological trends at that time (such as the Anti-Christian Movement, Rural Movement, and New Culture Movement) and lacked original theory construction. This was the same with Social democracy, which hesitated between the “Left and Right”.

The “Third Party” had published a program file, “*Political Views*”, when they were proponents of “social democracy”. Their basic proposition was “civilian revolution”, overthrow of the Nanking government rule, the establishment of a country with “civilian power”, and finally, “the realization of socialism”. Of course, the “socialism” was “social democracy”, which was highly praised by the “Third Party”. On social policy, the “Third Party” noticed the improvement in the understratum’s status, proposed to improve the lives of the workers, and determined an eight-hour workday system. The rights from the workers’ strike allowed the workers to participate in production management gradually. Additionally, *Political Views* paid close attention to the land problems of peasants. Its land policy was “in principle, advocating the state-owned land and that tillers have their own land in a transition fashion” [31]. From this, the literary proposition of “the civilian literature and art” is subordinate to the supporting platform of *Political Views*.

After discussing several claims in the literary theory of *Jie Xi*, I analyze the creative practice of “the civilian literature and art” from the literature published on *Jie Xi*. From a historical perspective, with the spread of the realism literature’s ideological trend, the “narrative of subaltern classes” was reflected in all types of literature and literary thinking in 1920–30s, and *Jie Xi* was the first to become one

of the older participants. Therefore, in addition to the movement of the rural area “to the folk”, a number of specific, objective trends of guidance appeared, which had been accounted for by Vera Schwarcz:

By the 1930s, it was no longer possible for the educated elite to speak to the commoners, the “pingmin”, with the same authority as they had in the 1910s. No longer so confident in their ability to interpret, much less direct, the course of history, the May Fourth veterans chose to focus on a much smaller sphere of cultural activity. Having accepted the limitations of their fragmentary insights, the intellectuals now calling themselves “knowledgeable elements” started to reach out, slowly and carefully, toward the “masses” (Da Zhong) [32].

Through the analysis of Vera Schwarcz, it is clear that the reason for the “intellectuals” at that time “to be close to the ‘public’” was to transfer the object of the enlightenment to the underlying civilians. Already seen in the text of the principle *Outline of Civilian Literature and Art*, the voice is also the original intention that *Jie Xi* put forward for “the civilian literature and art”.

In essence, the practice of “the civilian literature and art” that was emphasized by *Jie Xi* is a type of “enlightenment” for a “narrative of subaltern classes”; as a grand proposition and important concepts in Modern Chinese literature, the “narrative of the subaltern classes” had undergone the entire process and formation of the modernity of Chinese literature. Generally, modern literature’s “narrative of subaltern classes” has two major veins: One is the local literature represented by the works of Lu Xun, Xu Qinwen and Ye Shengtao, which mainly described the peasants’ survival problems in modern China’s rural modernization progress. The other is the urban literature represented by the works of Yu Dafu, Jiang Guangci and Cheng Fangwu, which mainly described how the industrial workers in Chinese cities and minor intellectuals faced the real life predicament of disillusionment and the gap between the polarization of the rich and the poor under foreign capital, and bureaucratic capital and coercion after *The Treaty of Nanking* was signed. The significance of this type of narrative was not only to attract “sympathy” from all social classes but also to complete the leaps “from the literary revolution to revolutionary literature” with simple but necessary language of shallow enlightenment and the attitude of enlightenment literature on the basis of “efforts to attain class consciousness”, being “close to peasants and workers’ language” and focusing on the masses of workers and peasants as the target audience [33].

The main form of the realization of the Chinese “literature of subaltern classes” in the 1930s was “Proletarian literature”. It emphasized the content and function of the literary narrative’s class attributes. We can see from the published novels on 2 issues of *Jie Xi*, “civilian literature and art”, that they especially proposed “new peasants’ literature”, which had their own characteristics. To be exact, they were the literary practices proposed by the “Third Party”. For example, the serial novel *Crucifixus* published in the first issue of *Jie Xi* was typical, being Zhang Ziping’s work.⁸ The protagonist Lei Binxing in this novel is a foolish hero from a bureaucratic family in village. He was rogue and traitorous from childhood. With this character, the author continued to look for, query, and even attempt to disrupt his conditions later in life.

The author had original opinions about “civilian consciousness”, especially peasants’ ideologies.

Binxing’s brother forgot that his father was a merchant seeking wealth. He proposed to advocate the philosophy of Confucius intensely, saw the merchant and peasants as low class, and did not allow their children and grandchildren to trade or be peasants. They thought businessmen, workers and peasants existed for the noble gentlemen. They did not realize their lives were all mastered by peasants [34].

It is not rare to see these words about the public peasants in *Jie Xi*. For example, in *Pasture* by Li Zegang, the protagonist cowboy pronounced this slogan regarding the exploitation and punishment from the master:

Why do we look after cows? Why do we look after cows instead of others? Must the cows be looked after? Do we only get meals for looking after the cows? Do the other sons look after cows like us? Will they suffer from the wind and rain like us? What will the world be like if we do not look after the cows? What will the world be like if we all look after cows? [35]

The slogan with parallelism has such breadth of spirit that says “there is nothing different in the world”, but the two writers have no intention of disrupting the world. Zhang Ziping believed that the “bourgeoisie” was the magic weapon to change society, and Li Zegang used a “thoughtful and simple conclusion”³¹ for “the cows are looked after by a person, and we should look after cows” to solve the problem.

It is not the same message for *Crucifixus* and *Pasture* in *Jie Xi*. In the other novel *Tobacco tax*, its author Yang Changxi used modernism to show single-line and single-scene narrative writing. The plot has difficulties, and the rhetoric is shallow. The story is about a conversation about tobacco tax by the commander Zhang Huanting concerning the new warlord and senator Wu Bailin. In the novel, Wu Bailin was a hot-blooded youngster influenced by spirit of the “May Fourth Movement” but later became the accomplice of new warlord and mistakenly was involved into political corruption. Even Zhang Huanting, born a bandit, also added a “tobacco tax” to rob the public based on Wu Bailin’s suggestion. However, in the discussion, Wu Bailin began self-examination about what he did, and Zhang Huanting entered a dream in a subconscious state with his existing conscience. He saw that he was killed by the riotous peasants. Therefore, Zhang Huanting slept lightly because of the dream and decided to abolish the “tobacco tax”.

The conflict was about “yesterday” and “today” regarding Zhang Huanting and Wu Bailin. Wu Bailin, which means “yesterday”, was the “revolutionary youth of XX party” and “is willing to be the flunky of a warlord to exploit the public”, but he finally turned against his idea. He was finally “dominated by the betrayer” and then became the “malfeasant”. He “looked askance at everything about XX party” and was “ashamed to be with the local tyrants and evil gentry and malfeasants”. Additionally, the reason for the degeneration was “he could not be rid of the

³¹Li Zegang. “Pasture”.

awareness of the petty bourgeois. Finally, he was contradictory within himself concerning his thoughts” [36].

Under an oil lamp, Wu Bailin made the following self-observation and critique:

The human is an inexplicable thing and more ridiculous than playing tricks for monkeys. They show different evil looks with different masks. Do I also have any intelligence? Oh, do I also have humanity? I almost cannot answer ... what is bourgeois and Protogoras? I am tired of distinguishing them because the bourgeoisie and proletariat all must attain the basic necessities of life; only the desire is not same. In fact, the motivations are the same. Earlier, I also fought for the XX class, but I still would not sacrifice for the revolution. I am only a fellow traveler and am sympathetic to them. However, I still do not believe that I fought for the revolution. Once I am in the opposite class, everything will fall through. I think that many would not rebel for my situation!³²

Instead of saying that this is Wu Bailin’s self-knowledge and analysis, it was the self-knowledge and analysis of the intelligentsia for the “Third Party”. However, Zhang Huanting, being born a bandit, had no such deep thoughts. In his dream, he was killed by the rebelling peasants. When he woke up, he finally realized that he “should not ignore the present peasants” and that “it is easy for them to rise up once they are incited by some revolution parties. Additionally, they have weapons as you do, only they have not rallied yet”. Finally, Zhang Huanting admitted that “I must save my armed forces from damage, even without the dirty money”.³³

There is no doubt that Yang Changxi had realized the revolutionary character of the squeezed peasants. However, he could not solve the problem with a mild and compromising strategy. This means putting faith in the germination of the warlords’ humanity and then “raise hands high in mercy”. This is also the political views of “social improvement” for the social democrats.

In addition to the description of the poor peasants, *Jie Xi* focused on the civilians at the bottom of society in urban areas. In the second issue, it published a short story *Fu Fu* without a signature. This story concerns six Shanghai citizens on the bottom of society, called B, C, E, K, H and G. They were so poor and desperate that they risked danger to conduct a robbery together. The story is short but flexural. At the beginning, C came up with the idea to rob, so he went to discuss this idea with B. However, C assumed that B would betray him, so he hesitated to agree. Without any committed candidates, C convinced the other five persons to follow B. After the six people determined the target, C admitted to having a sore foot. Therefore, the group decided to let C stay at home. Additionally, C was willing to stay home, though he regretted it. C waited for a long time but did not see them return, so he thought that they had divided the money and run away. Therefore, he cursed them from home. In the next morning’s newspaper, he saw that the others had been killed by policemen during the robbery. C became very sorry for his friends. Finally, he unconsciously broke his right fingers and fainted due to being frightened.

³²Yang Changxi. “Tobacco tax”.

³³Yang Changxi. “Tobacco tax”.

The modernism rhetorical device was used in this novel; at the beginning, the novel used the montage lens of a flashback narrative. This was novel at that time. Certainly we can take this novel as a renewal of spirit in our traditional literature about “being oppressed by officials”. These works with “revolt consciousness” are not rare in Chinese literature. *Walk for East Gate* of Han Dynasty’s *Yue-fu Poems* and the “suppressing rebellion” and “heroism” novels in the Ming and Qing dynasties and outlaw “Rise outraged” and “leading a lawless life” themes were an important pulse in the literary narration themes of national light literature.

However, *Fu Fu* was a different text; its author wrote a tragic end for the protagonist. The conflict for this story came from the contradiction advanced by the inner thoughts of the civilian. First, C proposed a robbery, thinking that B would betray him. Additionally, C remained at home, still distrusting the other five persons. Although they came from the bottom of society, they still distrusted and took precautions against each other. Finally, they were killed by the police, and C fainted from being frightened. This appears to predict that it was necessary result for the public at the bottom of society to choose a “sword in hand he starts back to the eastern gate” (translated by Yang Xianyi) in a legal and civilized urban society.

The significance of the novel is that six robbers had some opinions on Chinese society at that time. For example, K thought that “the present world is completely a contradictory world. Additionally, society is completely made of thousands of contradictory facts” and holds the view that “this society must be reformed!”³⁴

When discussing whether to rob, E said the following:

Fuck, personality, reputation and morality are all lies; they are lies that permanently placed us under authority and refused to let us move or revolt. We have no meals to eat or money to use. If moving or revolting is not moral, I would like to ask the rich men where their money comes from? Are not they exploited from the men in the street? They are so immoral; why are we immoral when we rob them? We do not want personality, reputation or morality; these are drugs for the bourgeoisie to narcotize their nerves, and we must root out them and do our best to root out them!³⁵

In the published articles in *Jie Xi*, the above is not rare in famous works; there are many unfair speeches caused by exploitation, oppression and cheating. This reflected that they did their best to practice “civilian art” literature theory. In these work that reflected the civilians at the bottom of society, what we can see is that the theme comes from the diversifications in territory, not only in villages and towns but also in urban or suburban areas.

It can be seen from the “landscape theory” of cultural geography whether the country or city is “cultural landscape”. In *The Country and the City* by Raymond Williams, the contradictory relation between country and city was defined. The nature of the paradox is the different context that came from the confrontation between ideology and rights [37].

³⁴“Fu Fu”, *Jie Xi*, 1932.9.15 (2).

³⁵“Fu Fu”, *Jie Xi*.

Thus, the difference between the city and country is the difference caused by the social construction.¹⁷

As defined in the essence of rhetoric, the editors and writers of *Jie Xi* all focused on “who” but not “where”; both the country and city are the “difference caused by the construction of society and ideology”, as noted by Raymond Williams.¹⁸ Under the same social centralized system, both city and country cannot avoid the construction of the system—this means the social conflicts caused by exploitation, oppression, cheating, and even suppression. Except for the above texts, *Urban Sadness* (written by Yang Dahuang) published in the first issue of *Jie Xi* used line drawing to tell a story about “Wuxi Guy” and his lover “Amy”, who came from country to work in Shanghai. “Amy” was willing in a tavern to be the plaything of malfeasants and inferior officers as a livelihood; “Wuxi Guy” also came to a bad end.

According to the analysis of the different texts on *Jie Xi* above, I have three conclusions. First, all these articles have same character, which is the literary practice of “civilian literature and art”. The authors attempted to criticize government corruption, disclose the class contradictions and bitterly rebuke the unfairness of society; the efforts were obvious. However, the articles did not provide a feasible outlet, violent or non-violent. Almost all the endings are negative. Some civilians were “forced to lose”, and others were put to death or attained small improvements in life due to “giving someone a pass”. Therefore, although the articles were simple or popular in content, they still do not have any positive propaganda significance.

In fact, in nature, the works are literary explanations for the “Social Democratic Party” to solve methods to social problems, and the social democracy emphasized by the social democratic party has realized the gap of wealth and social crisis in a capitalist society. It does not agree with the “violent revolution” and Karl Marx’s “Caudine Forks” (*Furculae Caudinae*) but advocates fully experiencing capitalism and then socialism [38]. Before the opportunity arrived, the subaltern civilians only have the right to accuse, defend, or even curse. However, in practice, they can only “tolerate”. Because the primary importance in society is to obey the constitutions, laws and management of government, they have no right to overthrow the government.

Meanwhile, *Jie Xi*’s aesthetic principle of “proposing theories” before “published works” is not illogical. The proposed theories must conform to the creation rules of literature and historical background and should be a scientific summary for the creation and experience of specific literary practices. However, “civilian literature and art” proposed by the *Jie Xi* has few relationships with the above. It is understandable that the theory “civilian literature and art” would not go far.

As Friedrich Engels said, if “the essayists or poets all lack the necessary talent equipped by the storyteller, this is because their whole world outlooks are vague” [39]. The literary theorist of the Qing dynasty, Yuan Mei, also holds the view that “poets should have some talents; if someone wants to be opportunistic, he will not get what he want” [40]. Another literary theorist of Russian formalism,

Dobrolyubov,³⁶ presented a corresponding explanation for the relationship between literary theoretical criticism and creation; he thought that the existing significance for the literary theoretical criticism is to “explain the significance hidden in the artists’ creation” and had “no right to be entangled in the poets’ theoretical opinion” [41].

It can be seen that the world outlook, personal experiences and inspirations of the writers decide the creative practices. Although some “theories” can be used to create excellent works, these theories must be in accordance with the rules of literary creation and the historical background. These should be the scientific conclusions to specific literary writing. However, the “Third Party”, whose main leader was Deng Yanda, attempted to first present the literature theory “civilian literature and art”. As they obeyed some political views of social democracy, it caused the *Outline of the Principle of Civilian Literature and Art* to be submitted to the “secondary program” of *Political Views*. Additionally, they looked forward to having skilled writers, given the antecedent and doctrinaire theories, but it is known that Deng Yanda was not familiar with the literature rules. Moreover, the operation period of *Jie Xi* was short, and its authors were not skilled in China. For that reason, it was foreseeable that the theory would fall through.

To be fair, the published series of works on *Jie Xi* were at a certain level. Although the authors aside from Zhang Ziping did not have great reputations, it also demonstrated their endeavors. Therefore, they reflected some contradictions of social reality and had fine literature foundations from both “Scream poems” and “Narrative novels”, which discussed the life experiences about the subaltern civilians. Of course, it is remarkable but unfortunate that because of the misguidance of “theory goes first”, the limitations of thoughts on politics and single creation resources meant that “civilian literature and art” did not have the opportunity to make deeper developments.

Through the explanation above, I obtain the third conclusion: the main reason for the failure of “civilian literature and art” is that *Jie Xi* used an unrealistic theory to guide the literary writing; it shows that the “Third Party” ignored the objective law in literature and art and had limitations in politics.

Lu Hongshi’s view has some hint of apocalypse while narrating Chinese ideological history of 1930s; the “September 18th Incident” and the “January 28th Incident” caused China to be at the edge of death. At the same time, the political corruption and economic depression made the contradictions between the public and rulers increasingly acute. However, the fact is that the “national crisis motivated national patriotic consciousness and a wish to save the nation” pushed the “national conflict” beyond “class contradictions” to be the main contradiction of society.²⁴ As the Third Party went their separate way from the KMT and distanced itself from the

³⁶Dobrolyubov, (никтолай але ксандрович добролюбов, 1836–1861), the famous revolutionary democratic and literary critic in Russia in the 19th century, studied at the Peterburg Central Normal University. After graduating from the university in 1857, he joined the *Modern People* magazine for editorial work. He published a series of brilliant papers and had an extensive and far-reaching influence.

CCP, it had not shown prophetic changes of contradiction in *Jie Xi*. In 2 issues of this journal, what we can see is continuing class contradictions through articles and dissatisfaction with social inequality aside from a few words about fighting the invading army and saving the nation.

Throughout the history of the “Third Party”, from the beginning of foundation to the foundation of the “Chinese Peasants and Workers Democratic Party”, this party was still not popular in the KMT and CCP because it was composed of “the left wing of the KMT” and “right-wing Communists”. “The left wing of the KMT such as Deng Yanda and some leaders of the CCP even wanted to disband the CCP and planned to reorganize the KMT and organize the “Third Party”” [42]. Therefore, at the special historical time when the national conflict was at the primary stage of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, it was the trend for the regional war to turn to the comprehensive and nationwide war. Although the political views of the “Third Party” were independent, they still came apart in the stages, background and trend. At this time when a “national conflict” arose as the “main conflict”, it was irreversible in terms of emphasizing “class contradictions” excessively. Although the editors of *Jie Xi* had predicted the comprehensive War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, even that WWII would occur, they still did not focus on “literature and art of the Resistance against the Japanese”. Finally, the road for “civilian literature and art” was increasingly narrow; it caused a dead end in history.

In fact, it has some relations to the class limitation of the “Third Party”. Both Deng Yanda and Zhang Ziping were essentially revolutionaries with feelings of being the petite bourgeoisie. They were not equipped with the willpower and intelligence to be political leaders. Additionally, their revolutionary acts were not thorough and complete. At the time for saving nation, the “Third Party” and their magazines were guided by class limitations. They didn’t only put forward an unreliable slogan, but also mislead writers and their creation by dogmatism. Thus, it is not strange for them to be part of the vicious cycle of a short life jointly.

The petite bourgeoisie arose in the first half of the 19th century for modern industry and seeds of capitalism. They were specific persons made by society with steady salaries who obeyed the spirit and rules of industrial society and pursued a high quality of life, inner experiences and spiritual enjoyment. In *Die deutsche Reichsverfassungskampagne*, Friedrich Engels has defined and criticized the specific stage of “petty bourgeoisie”:

This class (it means the petite bourgeoisie) used to brag, speak sweet words, even insist on the most extreme standpoint while speaking; before they encountered few dangers; they would be timid and dodge once they faced some dangers; they would appear frightened and shaky. Once other classes had seriously responded and took part in the movement launched by them, they would be ready to sell the whole movement to save themselves. Once the movement took up weapons to struggle, they were always cheated and insulted once the reactionaries achieved victory because of their frailness [43].

At this point, Friedrich Engels pointed directly to a basic and prominent characteristic of the “petite bourgeoisie”: they loved to utter slogans and their essence was weak. Additionally, this reduced the significance of the “Third Party” and *Jie Xi*.

As the earlier propaganda leader of the “Third Party”, Zhang Ziping’s timid, swashbuckling and perfunctory nature was shown during the magazine’s running period. Therefore, as a literature conception constructed on hollow slogans, “civilian literature and art” are destined to fall through for class limitations of the “Third Party”.

2.4 Experiences and Lessons Learned from *Jie Xi*

If we say that the editor of *Jie Xi* was a “the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression irrelevant theorist” who “hides in a small building”, there may be a certain amount of leeway in criticizing him—after all, we cannot force literature to serve society and politics as “art for art’s sake” is, of course, another natural state of art. However, what we see is that *Jie Xi* is an “official literature publication” of a new political party. It is too narrow-minded for a party to ignore the interest of the whole nation for its own “class ideal”; and an insightful article *Condoling Today’s Battlefield* published anonymously in the second issue of *Jie Xi* shows that the editor of the journal did not lack political vision. But he did not reach a certain intensity of meaning and thus “selectively” avoided this social theme of resistance against Japan in some sense.³⁷

From a historical viewpoint, *Condoling Today’s Battlefield* accurately predicted that the “September 18th Incident” was one of “all steps that the Japanese imperialists plan to take to invade China” and further believed that the “January 28th Incident” was the result of “contradiction of capitalism” and the “inevitable phenomenon before collapse of it (capitalism)”, even “the first signal of WWII”.³⁸ At that time, it was the first voice to discuss “full-scale the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression” in literary and art circles, and thus it should have certain research significance.

This article, in prose style, described the tragic history of Shanghai during the war and when the refugees displaced after “January 28th Incident”, but the author did not abandon the expression form of “Scream poems” and literary pursuit of “civilian literature and art”. The issue worthy of study is that this article presented conscious foresight judgments about Japan’s invasion of China in the coming days, even a full view of the war of resistance, so it is an important piece of the resistance literature. This reflects the fact that the “Third Party” had a relatively correct understanding of the situation.

The first three paragraphs in the article *Condoling Today’s Battlefield* are:

On the night of January 28, 1932 A.D., the atrocious Japanese imperialist army invaded Shanghai, and our brave the 19th Route Army stationed there assumed the responsibility to

³⁷Another article, well-known in the history of modern Chinese literature entitled *Condoling Today’s Battlefield*, was written by Wang Tongzhao and was completed in 1937. Therefore, this version should not be related to the one written by Wang.

³⁸“Condoling Today’s Battlefield”, *Jie Xi*, 1932.9.15(2).

protect the nation and fought against the enemies. Japanese army moved more than 100,000 soldiers there in repeated failures and with countless new weapons. However, the 19th Route Army had only 30,000 soldiers, armed with old weapons to fight, with a great disparity in strength. Due to the corruption of the government authorities and under the slavery of weak diplomacy, the government held back the armed forces that were inspired by patriotism and intended to offer a helping hand instead of sending troops to assist. In the end, the 19th Route Army had to withdraw to the second defense on the night of February 1st and the next morning.

Here, our the 19th Route Army had a glorious victory in this historic stage of the semi-colony.

Here, our government, against the public's wishes, signed an armistice agreement under coercion, creating a national humiliation.³⁹

The editor and contributors of *Jie Xi* very much resented the Nanking National Government for its non-resistance policy in Shanghai. In particular, the *Songhu Armistice Agreement* signed with Japan under mediation by the UK, the US, France, Italy and other states was derided as “a treaty signed under coercion” and “a burning shame”. In this article, from their relatively accurate judgment of the international situation, we can see that they were talented but had no strategy: the “Third Party” attached too much “attention to the slogans” and lagged behind no one in shouting slogans when facing various social contradiction, but they were hesitant and weak to sacrifice themselves, thus eroding its basic characteristics as a political party.

It is worth noting that although *Condoling Today's Battlefield* had certain foresightedness, it is still written in the style of “Scream poems”, full of poetic paragraphs or short passionate sentences. For example, in the second part of the article “Hongkou Park”, there is a verse memorial to Korean resistance patriot Yun Bong-gil, including some paragraphs as follows:

Yun Bong-gil! You are not a Korean man/you are not a Korean soldier/Ah! You are a person of the world/you are a soldier for the oppressed class!

Yun Bong-gil! Brave Yun Bong-gil/You have created a miracle of human revolution!/A bomb you throw/has shocked the raging tide of revolutions across the world!⁴⁰

The author admitted that “I am full of emotions” before writing the poem. With such “Scream Poems” as this, easy to understand, and short slogan-like and parallel sentences similar to “Scream poems” can be found everywhere in *Condoling Today's Battlefield*. For example, in a paragraph “Battery” in the sixth part, the author wrote verses such as “I am extremely distressed in fits and starts! The Yangtze River will only always be howling wildly! The Huangpu River will only always be whining”.⁴¹ Again, for example, in the seventh chapter of “Shanghai University in Riverside”, angry at destruction of Shanghai University by the Japanese army, the author wrote “You developed with the revolution to the climax/

³⁹“Condoling Today's Battlefield”.

⁴⁰“Condoling Today's Battlefield”.

⁴¹“Condoling Today's Battlefield”.

And closed with the revolution suffering setbacks/Now you are bombed by capitalist and imperialist cannons/And create this miracle”.⁴²

These slogan-like poems and short passionate sentences are not rare in *Jie Xi*. As the main expressive forms of “civilian literature and art” theory, “Scream Poems” were also applied to new roles during the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression.

When viewed from its founding and ending, and according to the specific analysis of the text along with the context of the situation and historical influence at that time, *Jie Xi*, the primary resistance literature journal, presented some time significance as well as historical experience and lessons below as inspiration in the grand context of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression.

First, *Jie Xi* was acutely aware of Japanese intentions to invade the whole of China and made accurate judgments on this historical theme. However, because of its own class limitations, it still employed empty slogans and emphasized class contradictions when describing and becoming involved in this theme, which is the direct cause of its doomed failure.

As a primary resistance literature journal, *Jie Xi* published the article *Condoling Today's Battlefield*, which revealed the Japanese conspiracy to push forward the invasion of China and predicted that WWII would soon break out. It was an unprecedented harbinger in intellectual circles and was worthy of recognition. However, when the issue was discussed, the editor of *Jie Xi* failed to make use of its own vision and literature journal appeal to gather a group of writers who were influential and who had appeal and creative strength to write feature articles and push the “Resistance literature special issue”. Instead, they only published an article and then “abandoned the journal and fled.” From a historical point of view, this article did not produce the effect that it should have, which is unfortunate and is a historical tragedy as a result of the class limitations of the “Third Party”.

From the article *Condoling Today's Battlefield* itself, except for its “Scream poems”-like slogans, it presented clear viewpoints with a lack of depth when discussing the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression. Although the author was keen to capture the fact that the Japanese invasion of China occurred in stages from the Northeast to North and then to Shanghai and were different steps of the invasion, he realized that the so-called “mediation” performed by Europe and America on this matter was nothing but an appeasement policy to protect the interests of powers by sacrificing the interests of weak nations. The author also found that it was the political manifestation of the crisis of capitalism yet still did not do an extensive study on it. For example, the author made no predictions about the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression or put forward his own proposals on how to resist Japan's invasion, and he did not provide the causes or basis for viewpoints presented in the article, which is regrettable.

⁴²“Condoling Today's Battlefield”.

Second, the comprehensive analysis of the fate of *Jie Xi* proves that social democracy and its related platforms did not apply to specific national attributes of China, which is the essential reason for the failure of the publication.

As an early doer to attempt implementing social democracy in China, the “Third Party” proved that this road would not work in China with a lesson paid with blood in politics. *Jie Xi* offers proofs for this lesson from the perspective of literature and art. As previously mentioned, *Jie Xi* was hastily shut down after publishing only two issues, which in essence exposed the historic limitations of the early social democrats in China.

The founder, main contributors and the editor of *Jie Xi* were representatives of the petty bourgeoisie, who had profound knowledge and enjoyed a life of ease with a certain social status. However, for a long time, their self-proclaimed “elites” had grown into egoistic petty-bourgeois politicians swayed by considerations of gain and loss and pursuing pleasure with a lack of accountability. They should have known that “elites” representing minorities are a product of prosperity, but “pioneers” daring to be the first are needed in turbulent times. Being only good at shouting slogans, they must weigh the advantages and disadvantages when faced with the damage or ruin of their interests, and in the end, they must give up their social responsibility and ideals. This bearing determined that they were not destined to be “pioneers” of the time.

However, the political struggle or even national war is cruel. When the war threatened to damage their interests or when their lives were threatened, they would not hesitate to choose self-prevention. In the first issue of *Jie Xi*, Zhang Ziping even intended to step forward on the blood of the martyrs, but he transferred the publication work to Ding Jiashu in the second issue and hid in a Shanghai suburb to engage in full-time writing. It is obvious that his change was directly related to the increased fighting in Shanghai as a result of the “January 28th Incident”. However, what he did was indeed far from the standards of a leader in charge of the publicity work of a political party.

Here, a paragraph that Zhang Yihe wrote to describe Luo Longji (Luo Longji was not a member of the “Third Party”, but his “National Socialist Party” finally chose to be combined into the “China Democratic League” with the “Third Party”) can constitute a basic definition of the universal nature of the “petty-bourgeois politicians” in the 1920s and 1930s:

He has great talent and bold vision but likes showing off his ability; he cares for the fate of his nation but is swayed by considerations of gain and loss. He has a sharp mind and maneuvers among various political groupings but exposes his character with joy and anger visible on his face. He burns with an ambition. He is impassioned, talented in writing and debating and is narrowly tolerant and excessively mean in his dealings. He has overwhelming strategies and plays petty tricks. He is a calm and poised gentleman and a mean person who is often troubled at heart [44].

Jie Xi placed too much emphasis on “class contradiction” while neglecting “ethnic contradiction”, which is not because of their lack of foresight but because of the excess of pursuit of their own political beliefs to the extent that it caused

misjudgment of the selective treatment between “class contradiction” and “ethnic contradiction”.

This may appear paradoxical, but viewed from modern Chinese society, “ethnic contradiction” and “class contradiction” have been the two major contradictions that have taken turns, which alternately was the main theme of China prior to 1949. The KMT and CCP or the “Third Party” faced the trade-off between the two contradictions. On the one hand, the “Third Party” subtly saw the trend that the “ethnic contradiction” was about to be China’s main social contradiction; as victims of the “January 28th Incident”, there was no doubt that they hated Japanese imperialists, but on the other hand, as members of a political party emphasizing class character and intending to build an equal rights society in China, they had to focus on and criticize the objective fact that the class contradiction was increasingly sharp in China at that time. Thus, they had to show such inevitable fatal contradictions with selective treatment in publications. Therefore, the nationalistic position and historical insight held by *Jie Xi* to some extent are worthy of recognition, but the historical fact that the “Resistance literature and art” failed to contribute the strength that it should have due to its own limitations must also be faced up to and criticized.

As previously mentioned, the works of Zhang Ziping created before 1936 are mostly dominated by those appealing for resistance against Japan, such as *The Daughter of Tension* and *Red Begonia*, which were influential at the time. Additionally, the article *Condoling Today’s Battlefield* published in this journal was also acutely aware that the outbreak of the “September 18th Incident” marked the point where Japan began its full-scale invasion of China. Being limited by its class limitations, it focused too much on class contradiction when examining issues, while not devoting enough energy to the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression itself.

A series of articles published in *Jie Xi* showed dissatisfaction with the current regime while disapproving of violent revolutions because this publication served as a megaphone for social democracy related beliefs. However, such an aim of the publication drained the enthusiasm of Zhang Ziping and other leaders of the “Third Party” to some extent to save the nation. Agitating for factionalism reflected the narrow mind of the “Third Party” that just cared about its own interests while disregarding national interests.

Third, *Jie Xi* proved that the Chinese opposition parties (except the CCP) had intervened in the literary system before 1949, namely, the relationship between the “third political power” and the Modern Chinese literature system.

For a long time, the relationship between the “third force” symbolizing the democratic parties and the Modern Chinese literature system has been neglected in Chinese literature research circles because they had a short history of just a few years in the “modern literature history of China” (1917–1949). Most sizable democratic parties such as “Democratic Progressive Party” initiated by Ma Xulun and Xu Guangping, the “China Democratic National Construction Association” initiated by Huang Yanpei and Zhang Naiqi, and the “China Democratic League” initiated by Zhang Lan and Luo Longji were founded in the 1940s or even 1945,

when the final victory in the war of resistance was attained. However, they were founded considerably later than the “Third Party”—the “Chinese Peasants and Workers Democratic Party” was founded in 1930, establishing a time that was officially recognized in China.

As we know, only the “Third Party” had developed along alongside modern China for the longest time, and only it could have ample time to intervene in China’s modern literature system. However, there were few opposition parties in relation to the modern literature system because aside from the time reasons above, the KMT and CCP strongly opposed one another in the 1940s with extremely sharp social contradictions, and opposition parties at that time could only practice their political ideals through political comments, gatherings and other forms of political participation. However, the new literature system was largely shaped at that time. In such circumstances, the relationship between *Jie Xi* and the “Third Party” was likely to be ignored by followers, so for many modern literature researchers in China, the other journals are essentially reactionary in modern literature except for Red and left-wing publications.

The significance of literature is self-evident in China’s social and political modernization. The logical starting point of modernization of Chinese social thought is the new culture movement caused by literature revolution. Although the other opposition parties as a third political power did not directly intervene in the generation of Chinese literary modernity such as the KMT and CCP, the value in the study of the relationship between the two should not be overlooked. In particular, rereading *Jie Xi* amounts to rediscovering the relationship between democratic parties in China (other political powers apart from the KMT and CCP) and modern literature. Scholars acknowledge that either the KMT or CCP in essence is an important force that pushed social and political modernization in China. It is fair to say that a country’s social and political modernization does not simply rely on one or two political leaders or political parties but to rely on common endeavors of other parties, societies, organizations, and even individuals who play a role in the transition point.

Jie Xi is evidence that the democratic parties attempted to use literature to change China’s reality. Deng Yanda introducing Zhang Ziping to the “Third Party” and appointing him as a central publicity committee member to two publications of *Jie Xi* can be regarded as a cultural practice performed by the weakly influential “Third Party”, albeit with difficulty in the social context at that time; based on the historical fact that Zhang Ziping “quit the party” later and then left the publication duties to Ding Jiashu, Zhang Ziping was by no means a true believer of the “Third Party” but was a “political tool” used by Deng Yanda at a special time. Zhang Ziping’s indecisive personality and cowardice determined that he would be in a dilemma in political struggles, and he ended up bearing the title of traitor.

Fourth, although *Jie Xi* cared about suffering of civilians in the subaltern class and had a strong concern for hardships of the people, it failed to find intensification of class contradictions in China at that time, especially the sharp increase of poor people in Shanghai, which was a result of Japan’s invasion.

After the outbreak of the “January 28th Incident” in 1932, the local party branches of the KMT in Shanghai almost lost control over the whole city. Due to the “mixed residence of Chinese and foreigners” as well as disputes in power within the KMT, there were three different management authorities in Shanghai: the Municipal Council of Concession in charge of administrative affairs in concessions; the “Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce” jointly organized by the Green Gang in Shanghai and the local plutocrats; and the Shanghai Municipal Government was controlled by the executive committee of the KMT headquarter in Shanghai, each acting differently in their jurisdictions in Shanghai.

Three lords own a slave who should be a free man; so was Shanghai in the 1930s. After the “September 18th Incident”, especially after the “January 28th Incident”, some anti-Japan groups that were forcibly disbanded by the government re-surfaced, and they formed an alliance to fight the Japanese association for national salvation and launched a massive “boycott of Japanese goods” in Shanghai. However, for a city as well as its industry that had been forcedly dragged into globalization, the boycott of Japanese goods quickly hurt the fundamental interests of the national economy, and this move nearly pushed the economy in Shanghai into collapse with a sudden surge in the gap between the rich and poor. According to Christian Henriot’s research, “one-third of knitting workshops were forced to be closed” due to the movement, and Japanese capitalists “expelled tens of thousands of workers from factories.”

The boycott movement obviously caused massive unemployment in Shanghai. During 1931–1932, strikes continued in Shanghai. The editors of *Jie Xi* did not take these factors into account when practicing “civilian literature and art”. Admittedly, we cannot deny or evade evidence of the incompetence of the executive committee of the KMT in Shanghai,⁴³ but during that period, as the official literary journal of the “Third Party”, *Jie Xi* gave no due understanding and attention to the special intervention force of Japan.

As mentioned above, it is an established fact that *Jie Xi* always focused on social polarization, government incompetence, and muddleheaded officials rather than the social issue that the ethical contradiction, especially the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, had become the main theme. Because of its class limitations, it was hard to see this problem even it had some historical insight and judgment power. Among all literature works published in the two issues of the journal, apart

⁴³Because Shanghai Mayor Zhang Qun was unable to control the situation and gave way to Wu Tiecheng, the latter did not stop the outbreak of the “January 28th Incident”. After the incident, Wu Tiecheng, on behalf of the National Government, signed the *Songhu Armistice Agreement* of national betrayal and humiliation with Japan, ruining the results of the war of resistance against Japan that was achieved by the military in Shanghai for as long as 3 months. In April 1937, when Wu Tiecheng was transferred to the role of Guangdong Provincial Government President, Yu Hongjun was continued to resist the Japanese and organized the “August 13th” Songhu Campaign. In October 1937, after the defeat of the Songhu Campaign, the Japanese ministry, with agents from “Nishimura’s Office”, successively supported Su Xiwen, Fu Xiaolan, Zhou Fohai, and other traitorous politicians to serve as the puppet “Shanghai Dadao Government” Mayor and “supervising office” director. After two wars of resistance, Shanghai was completely occupied.

from *Condoling Today's Battlefield*, only Luo Xiaohun's poem *I Drifted to Hong Kong* expressed discontent with rampage of the international imperialists. These two articles that were related to the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression only accounted for 4.76% of the total of 42 articles published in two issues of *Jie Xi*. It is obvious that this percentage is insufficient for such a journal that was insufficient at the height of the “January 28th Incident”.

It can thus be seen at the point in history when the three northeast provinces of China were occupied that the North of China would soon be occupied and the “January 28th Incident” broke out. Aside from avoiding the ethnic contradiction and emphasizing class contradictions, *Jie Xi* could still not become correctly and fully aware of the grievous and irreparable damage that the Japanese invaders caused to the politics, economy and culture in China at all levels. This determined that the editors of *Jie Xi* would tragically abandon the publications and flee before the enemy arrived, indicating the timid and commonplace cultural characteristics of the journal and the “Third Party” as well as the historical certainty of their failure.

Finally, *Jie Xi* presents a fundamental reason why social democracy was doomed to failure in China: under the specific national attributes, political traditions and cultural background of China, there was no fertile political foundation, nor there was any such a political group.

According to works published in *Jie Xi*, views on “nation/class” contradictions as well as the founding and ending of the journal, we can easily see the “opening high and going low” fate of this journal that is so similar to the brief appearance of the political ideal of “social democracy” in China. Therefore, the tragedy of *Jie Xi* is that of the political ideal “social democracy” advocated by the “Third Party”.

It is true that the related theories of both “social democracy” and the following “democratic socialism” come from Marxism, and there were successful examples in some Nordic countries, such as Sweden, at that time. However, their success was inevitably linked to their specific national attributes, political background and cultural soil. To realize social democracy (or democratic socialism), efficient and incorrupt administration, competitive national economic strength, a perfect social welfare guarantee system, sound and developed non-public entity and non-government organizations (NGO) for coordination of social functions as well as broader classes of culturally advanced citizens with higher education and other prerequisite conditions, in addition to a long period of implementation of a capitalist system, industrialization and political democratization are needed as support for governance. It is no secret that it is difficult to meet these standards for today's China, let alone the Republic of China that was poor and weak in the primary stage of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression.

In a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country with owner peasants accounting for the vast majority of the population after feudal rule for thousands of years, it is purely ideal or utopian to attempt to bestow equality to all levels of society in accordance with the “nonviolence” transition theory of “social democracy”. Because *Jie Xi* was founded and ended in the primary stage of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, its meaning and historical value lie in the primary stage of the war. Apart from the KMT and CCP, there was a political power

that had a certain historical insight and that hoped to use the governance theory of social democracy to improve Chinese society and put it into literary practice, but due to its own limitations, coupled with other subjective and objective factors such as complete non-conformance of this theory to China's conditions, it eventually ended in failure. However, these lessons, for us as successors, have meanings that should not be forgotten.

References

1. Qian, L., Wen, R., & Wu, F. (1998). *30 years of modern Chinese literature* (p. 202). Beijing: Peking University Press.
2. Wan, H. (1990). I help Renrui run Beichen Middle School. In J. Fang (Ed.), *The Chinese peasants' and workers' Democratic Party* (p. 147). Beijing: The central party history research committee.
3. St. John, H. (1779). *Lard Viscount Bolingbroke, Letters on the study and use of history* (p. 99). London: Cadell Press.
4. Zhao, F., & Du, Y. (1992). *From new tide to flush* (p. 292). Kaifeng: Henan University Press.
5. Tang, T. (1989). *Western influence and national style* (p. 530). Beijing: People's Literature Publishing House.
6. Mao, Z. (1964). *Selected works of Mao Zedong* (Vol. 1). Beijing: People's Publishing House.
7. Su, X. (1934, June). Polygonal love novelist Zhang Ziping, *Youth Circle*, 2(6).
8. Juan, D. (1931). Zhang Ziping is afraid of walking on N. Sichuan Road. *Modern Literature Review*, (1).
9. Zhang, Z. (1937). Is there necessity and possibility of guidance and support between China and Japanese?. *Eastern Miscellany*, 1(34).
10. Zhang, Z. (1983). *Letter to Hu Shihh from Zhang Ziping*, referring to *The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences History Research*. Hu Shihh. *Selected Letters of Hu Shihh* (Vol. 3, p. 446). Hong Kong: Chinese Publishing House Hong Kong Branch.
11. Qiu, Q. (1987). *China's history of Democratic Parties* (p. 366). Hangzhou: Zhejiang Education Press.
12. Mao, D. (1988). *Complete works of Mao Dun* (Vol. 19, p. 32). Beijing: People's Literature Publishing House.
13. Pi, M. (1991). *Track of modern Chinese socialist ideological trend*. Changchun: Jilin Literature Press.
14. Zeng, J. (1932). In the war. *Reading Magazine*, (4).
15. Ding, D. (1932, September 15). Special note from Ding Ding. *Jie Xi*, (2).
16. Zhou, X., & Shen, D. (2006). China's acceptance of Western literary theories: Modern identification and reflection, *Comparative Literature in China*, (1), 100–114.
17. Yu, X. (1931, December 21). Nanhai Sand. *Jie Xi*, (1).
18. Luo, X. (1931, December 21). I drifted to Hong Kong. *Jie Xi*, (1).
19. Bai, T. (1931, December 21). What time in front of you? *Jie Xi*, (1).
20. Hou, R. (1931, December 21). Plea. *Jie Xi*, (1).
21. Zhao, S. (1931, December 21). On bed. *Jie Xi*, (1).
22. Hung, C. (1985). *Going to the people: Chinese intellectuals and folk literature movement in 1918–1937* (pp. 11–12). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
23. Qiu, T., & Guo, X. (1985). *Deng Yanda's life and thoughts* (p. 293). Lanzhou: Gansu People's Publishing House.
24. Zhong, K. (1931, December 21). Outline of popular literary and art principles. *Jie Xi*, (1).

25. Zhou, Z. (2003). Popular literature. In H. Shih (Ed.), *Chinese neo-literature florilegium-construction theory collection (1917–1927)* (p. 211). Shanghai: Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House.
26. Zhou, D. (2009). The “Anti-Christian Movement” of 1922 in open archives of the Soviet Communist Party (Bolshevik). *Religious Studies*, (2), 112–220.
27. Gu, W. (2003). *Chinese Catholic Chronicle (635–1949)*. Shanghai: Shanghai Bookstore Publishing House.
28. Wu Y., et al. (1998). *Modern social thoughts in China*. Changsha: Hunan Education Publishing House.
29. Lin, Z. The entry of “Nationalist literature and art”. *The Encyclopedia of China* (Internet version).
30. Zhong, L. (1931, December 21). From civilian literature and art to nationalism. *Jie Xi*, (1).
31. Political view. In X. Zeng & Y. Wan (Eds.), *Historical data of Deng Yanda* (p. 402). Wuhan: HUST Press.
32. Schwarcz, V. (1986). *The Chinese enlightenment: Intellectuals and the legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* (p. 197). Berkeley: University of California Press.
33. Cheng, F. (1986). From the literary revolution to revolutionary literature. In J. Lou (Ed.), *Collected papers of revolutionary literature* (pp. 121–134). Shanghai: Shanghai Bookstore Publishing House.
34. Zhang, Z. (1931, December 21). Crucifixus. *Jie Xi*, (1).
35. Li, Z. (1931, December 21). Pasture. *Jie Xi*, (1).
36. Yang, C. (1931, December 21). Tobacco tax. *Jie Xi*, (1).
37. William, R. (1973). *The country and the city* (p. 173). London: Chatto & Windus.
38. Xie, T. (2007). Democratic socialism mode and China’s future. *Yan-Huang Historical Review*, 2, 1–8.
39. Engels, F. (1957). German socialism in poetry and prose (1846–1847). In K. Marx & F. Engels (Eds.), *The complete works of Marx and Engels* (Vol. 4, p. 237). Beijing: People’s Publishing House.
40. Yuan, M. (1988). Comments on poetry of Suiyuan (Vol. 4). J. Hu (Ed.), *Chinese classical aesthetics series* (Vol. 2, pp. 479–480). Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company.
41. Dobrolyubov. (1959). When will the true daytime come?. In *Selected Works of Dobrolyubov* (Xin Weiai, Trans.) (Vol. 2, p. 262). Shanghai: Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House.
42. China’s Modern History Department of Beijing Normal University. (Ed.). (1983). *Contemporary Chinese history: 1919–1949* (Vol. 1, p. 286). Beijing: Beijing Normal University Press.
43. Engels, F. (1969). *Die deutsche Reichsverfassungskampagne* (p. 5). Berlin: Dietz Berlijin.
44. Zhang, Y. (2003). *The last aristocrats* (p. 301). Taipei: China Times Publishing Company.

Literature Journals in the War of Resistance against
Japanese Aggression in China (1931-1938)

Han, S.H.

2018, XI, 196 p. 1 illus. in color., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-981-10-6447-0