Pleading for Foucault: A Defense Against
Lu Hsün's "Diary of a Madman"
and "K'ung I-chi"

Wu Hsin-fa.*

Pol. . . . What do you read, my lord?
Haml. Words, words, words.
Pol. What is the matter, my lord?
Haml. Between who?
Pol. I mean the matter you read, my lord.
Haml. Slanders . . .

--Shakespeare, Hamlet, II. ii.

The history of literature, in China and abroad alike, has been
saturated not only with lawsuits but also with reopened cases, which
seem not to have any conclusive closure to the last trumpet. This fact
justifies exactly Plato's presumption (though itself not completely free
from loopholes): literature is dangerous. Indeed, as often as not our
ignorant children are fascinated with some popular literature so much
that they usually neglect their normal studies and are probably to be
led into wrong paths. Therefore, their patronizing parents and
teachers, incessantly on guard as they should be, have to correct,
stop, or punish these falling angels. The situation is even worse with
those learned scholars of literature, for the text is always ready to
bring its reader to lawsuit, to complain about the reader's distorting
its "truth." Secluded as it looks on the shelf, however, the text at
the same time can hardly escape the suspicion of temptation, since it
constantly displays itself to the public. The text is in reality a
debauched being--it rejects no one. But, unfortunately, no sooner
does a person lay hands upon the text than he is accused of peeping.
The worst fate is yet to come if the reader is unable to hold his
tongue. As soon as he gives tongue to what he saw, the text in the
same breath brings an action of libel against him.

This is an action of suspected libel on the ground that,
according to Harold Bloom, any reading is misreading and any
interpretation misinterpretation.1 If so, the reader should not be
alleged as the single suspect in this kind of crime; the text is, too,
because Bloom also told us that poets, especially those strong ones,
all have the anxiety of influence--the later poet always misreads his
precursor. (Before the late comer, "his Muse has whored with
many....")2 In other words, the text, like the reader, also misreads
its preceding text. Such being the case, even if the reader may not
speak well of the text, his behavior is nothing but an unaware, petit
traduce which must be well acquitted. Since the plaintiff and the

* Instructor, Department of Foreign Literature and Languages.
defendant here are both of similar suspicion or, to put it more generously, both innocent, the text should declare its *nolle prosequi,* otherwise the suit should be simply regarded as null and void. Anyway, it indeed hurts no one to hold the controversy, the act of reading or misreading, as a "freeplay," and let the plaintiff and the defendant each henceforth behave or misbehave himself in his own way.

The case also holds good in Michel Foucault's reading (not mine) Lu Hsün's "Diary of a Madman" and "K'ung I-chi." In Foucault's observation, there is neither meaning nor truth in the text proper--meaning exists between the text and its reader whereas "truth" is always manipulated by certain authority. Thus my paper is a plea for Foucault, its argument moving from Foucault's viewpoints about the relationship among language, representation, and discourse, to an investigation (archaeology) into the verbal discourse of these two texts--to prove that in them consists no truth, but some irreparable breaches.

(As a critic, I am here and now a pleader of Foucault the defendant. Involved in the debate as I appear in court to discharge my duty, I am in fact at once far detached from the suit itself, not implicated in Foucault's possible innocence or guilt. It goes without saying, too, that whether or not I "misread" my employer is another matter and should not be affiliated in the suit. All this admits no question. However, in order to prevent someone from misreading my standpoint, you are hereby notified of the above.)

To begin with the relationship between language and representation, can language itself--whether Chinese or English, written or colloquial language--represent truth or reality? Foucault does not think so. Using *Don Quixote* as an example, in his *The Order of Things,* Foucault points out that Quixote's successive absurdities all generate from his illusion with the verbal signs in romance, from his mixing the signifier with the signified, from his taking the shadow for the substance. That is to say, an irreconcilable discrepancy lies, ever and always, between the signifier and the signified in all languages--and Chinese is of course no exception. What the graphic signs of hieroglyph, like Chinese, present us is nothing but pictorial reproduction, which is far from reality or truth. Even worse is that, suggests Foucault, the student usually has to waste much time in learning how to write these graphic signs, an undue effort which severely retards and handicaps the analysis of ideas.

In the light of Foucault's postulate, Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* by the same token makes plain the implausibility of language as well. As properly designated by Harry Levin as a "Female Quixote," Emma falls from grace chiefly because she foists her blind belief in romance into reality and henceforth heads all through her
life for endless searches for romantic love and even romantic death—suicide. Clever readers may bring it to notice that Emma's husband, the middleheaded Charles, is the real romantic hero in this novel, for, after Emma's death, he happens to find his wife's love letters and on that account soon dies brokenhearted—he dies for love. My opinion is somewhat different. Now that Emma's romantic career is but an illusion, now that, accordingly, there is less truth in these letters, would Charles not twice stumble upon verbal signs to crucify himself? Maybe a romantic lover at his best, Charles is in fact a romantic fool from head to toe.

The innate inability of language to represent truth, to express fully what one means—as variously staged by Eugene Ionesco, Samuel Beckett, and Harold Pinter—has created for modern people, even those with the same language, a distressing predicament in communication. The perplexity may be traced back into the Bible: after Babel, Logos—the Word—was degraded into languages and truth shattered into pieces so that complete representation has become something in another galaxy. Nietzsche's—Foucault and Lu Hsün alike are Nietzsche's disciples?—dictum of God's death is degraded into a cliché by overuse, but its connotation remains fresh at this point: God is already dismembered into numerous pieces and dispersed in every corner so that human beings have to delve for Him, although what we may dig out are only fragments. What the Buddhist saying "The Moon reflects itself in ten thousand rivers" (yūeh yín wan ch'uan, 月印萬川) means comes quite close to Nietzsche's idea. It is indeed not the least surprising to find that our poet, like Li Po, should drown himself in trying to capture the moon in the river.

Probably we can trace back a step further. We should not forget that the word Logos is not God's word, but a Greek word, a word of human beings, and carries essentially a deep-seated sense of reason: "gathering, arranging, putting-in-order." ⁸ Reason is no doubt the foundation of knowledge, but it is man's original sin, too. When Adam and Eve were possessed with Satan's language and bit into the apple, their religious faith was already violated; that is, they in fact assumed a rational attitude. But Adam and Eve did not as the Tempter had said become equal to God—how can God be questioned by reason? It is thus reasonable indeed that human beings may have at best, instead of wisdom itself, only the love for it. (It is said that if Adam and Eve had been Chinese, human beings might not have fallen, for Chinese would have eaten the snake rather than the apple. This is of course a joke; yet according to Freud, there is no joke without hidden meaning. It is enough to point out here that the above joke sounds highly Taoistic because Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu alike harbor deep doubts upon language and reason. When Lao Tzu says that "The Tao that can be told of/ Is not the Absolute Tao," "Banish wisdom. discard knowledge, / And the people shall profit a hundredfold," or "Banish learning, and vexations end," ⁹ he is in fact indicating that truth or Tao is not to be attained through one's rational cognition. We shall return to this point later.)
Since language is unable to represent truth or Tao, by what, then, is discourse, the transmission of message, controlled? Power and desire, Foucault says. In discourse, Foucault finds, these two forces are constantly at work, but discourse is not unfolded in power and desire proper. Rather, discourse always unfolds itself in the form of our "will to truth" because discourse is essentially to "speak the truth"--the "truth" which is manipulated in one way or the other by some authority, by some "power to force conformity to social norms."

Thus we may in turn acquaint ourselves with the existence of another two operating forms transformed from "will to truth": "will to knowledge" and "will to power"--the former tends to echo what was said by certain authority while the latter takes itself to be the authority. In a word, any discourse of our behavior and speech is but the manifestation of these three motives, either combined or isolated.

But, one may ask further, how does discourse give token to itself? Is there any regulation holding the reins on discourse? In his lecture entitled "The Discourse on Language," Foucault offers us three groups of rules which govern the performance of discourse: A) rules of exclusion, including prohibited words, divisional rejection, and opposition between the true and false; B) rules concerning events and chance, or internal rules of rarefaction, including commentary, authorship, and discipline and punish; and C) rules of inclusion, or rules of selecting from among speaking subjects, including ritual, fellowship of discourse, doctrine, and social appropriation of discourse. These rules generally schematize the operation of power and desire in discourse, and, most time linked together, tend either to push away those inassimilable subjects or to bring those malleable ones to terms.

A substantial case, among many others, can be found in the educational system, Chinese and Western as well. As Foucault holds,

Education may well be, as of right, the instrument whereby every individual, in a society like our own, can gain access to any kind of discourse. But we well know that in its distribution, in what it permits and in what it prevents, it follows the well-trodden battle-lines of social conflict. Every educational system is a political means of maintaining or of modifying the appropriation of discourse, with the knowledge and powers it carries with it. We shall understand how true Foucault's observation is when we think of the multifarious examinations in our educational system, from the so-called kē-chū 科舉 (civil examination for government degrees) in ancient China to present TOEFL and oral examination for M.A. or Ph.D. The examination system is undoubtedly a threshold through which one can promote himself from a lower position to a higher one, and thus examination becomes a symbol of one's will to truth--to power, in fact. Furthermore, since the knowledge or the "truth" is
manipulated by the authority of the examiners, no one shall pass the
threshold unless he can master the discourse of certain texts and
can utter something desirable enough to justify his "fellowship of
discourse," to demonstrate his membership in this group.

Many critics have aptly asserted that it is such an educational
system in old China, an emblem of the Confucian tradition, that Lu
Hsün's "Diary of a Madman" and "K'ung I-chi" resolve to attack.13 As
a matter of fact, this avowement is worthy of our reconsideration
because such a viewpoint is rather too obsessed with the literal
meaning of these two texts. It is true that these short stories were
released respectively in 1918 and 1919, during a time of
"discontinuity"—to borrow one of Foucault's favorite words—in the
process of modernization in China. "Discontinuity is freedom."14 As a
vanguard of modern Chinese literature, "Diary of a Madman" and
"K'ung I-chi" naturally deserve some notice. It is even truer that the
Confucian tradition and its educational system constituted a powerful
discourse from which few could escape. But, as manifested through
Foucault's archaeology into the history of Western civilization, has
such a discourse not permeated the Western world from the ancient
time to the present? In addition, since Lu Hsün published his short
stories and miscellanies in colloquial language on the one hand and,
in privacy, at once kept composing traditional poems in archaisms on the
other, his attitude toward the past is in very truth rather
ambivalent.15 This fact may sound neither here nor there, but it also
greatly enhances our need to work on an intrinsic description of
these texts and to call their meaning into question.

"Diary of a Madman" certainly has its spellbinding charm
because, at the very beginning, the text immediately unfolds itself
with an incompatible conflict between two verbal discourses. As
already well known, this short story consists of a preface written in
archaic language and thirteen entries of colloquial diary. This
preface, in an authoritative and rational gesture, asserts that much
of the diary "made no sense at all."16 On the contrary, the
madman—in the beginning of the diary, too—concurrently pronounces
that he has penetrated into the "truth":

The moon is extremely bright tonight.
For nearly thirty years I have not been able to see the
moon and I find myself exceedingly pleased with it. I realize now
that all these thirty years I have wasted like an addlepated fool.
I must be careful, otherwise why did the dog in Chao's store
bark at me? My fears are well grounded. (p. 2)

The moon here betokens the truth in the madman's eyes, the truth
looming large only in the night but not allowed in broad daylight;
therefore, the madman is partly delighted with his own insight and
partly afraid of the oppression from the traditional authority. He is
quite aware of himself as the Other outside the normal discourse. The
villagers, including his own elder brother, Chao Kuei-weng, children,
and even the dog, are all a group of cannibalists who "not only go on eating the flesh of man but ... have already planned to make a madman" out of him (p. 11). Because of his hectic and pagan speech, he is segregated out of the rational world as a madman.

But his desire to speak the truth is so strong that he is unable to hold his tongue; he is determined to bend others to his own discourse and thus is rejected, suppressed, and punished again and again. Finding a group of children talking about him, for example, the madman cannot help shouting out "Tell me!" And they all run away. Why do the children also reject him? The madman arrives at a conclusion: "I understand now. Their parents must have taught them to be so!" (p. 3) In other words, these children have been brought to terms with the normal discourse through education. Similarly, when the madman persistently puts a question to a youth about the validity of cannibalism, the latter answers:

"They do no such thing!"
"No such thing? They ate flesh at Wolf Village only a few days ago and it is also freshly written in the book!"
His face fell and his eyes goggled. "Maybe it is so .... Maybe it's always been so ...."
"Does 'always' makes it right?"
"Don't ask me such questions. Anyway, you shouldn't talk. It's a great mistake for you to talk." (p. 8)

Not only is the madman prohibited to talk, but the doctor also wants him not to "bother thinking about anything" (p. 5). Here all the rules of exclusion are well vindicated. The thing which has always been so obviously conforms itself to the dogma of tradition and thus would admit no question, either in speech or in thought. Since the madman's will to truth violates the orthodox prohibition and discipline, reasonably he has to be punished—to be shut in the study, a place at once for educating, confining, and taming the speaking subject.

Another feature closely related to education is writing, an exercise of discourse in black and white. The madman mentions how his brother taught him to write essays: "whenever I criticized those regarded by others as worthy, he would mark that passage with circle[s] to show approval, and when I found excuse for bad people, he would say, 'Good! You show originality.' " (p. 4). Here a book may pop into our mind: Tung-lai po yi (東萊博議, the extensive remarks by Mr. Tung Lai), a rhetorical textbook in the past purposely designed to reverse the judgements previously held in Tso Chuan (左傳, the commentary on Springs and Autumnns, by Tso Ch'i'u-ming, 左丘明). To take as an example the opening chapter of both texts, Lord Cheng (Cheng Po, 鄭伯) in Tso Chuang is sanctified as a saint of filial piety and brotherly love, but in Tung-lai po yi, under Lü Tsu-ch'ien's (呂祖諤, Lü Tung-lai's) deliberate painting, he is turned into a "dauntless and crafty" (hsiung-ch'ai
yin-hen, 雄雌很) 17 demagogue. Almost like a sheer play on words, writing becomes one means of discourse, in which consists no absolute truth or wrong but absolute power and authority. As Foucault proposes, "What is 'writing' ... if not a similar form of subjection to that of education, perhaps taking rather different forms, but whose main stresses are nontheless analogous?" 18 Or as Claude Levi-Strauss observes in "A Writing Lesson" learned from his travel into the Nambikwara: "Writing ... had not been a question of acquiring knowledge, of remembering or understanding, but rather of increasing the authority and prestige of one individual--or function--at the expense of others." 19

That writing primarily betokens power and authority is also made clear in "K'ung I-chi." K'ung I-chi wants to teach the narrator, a child then, how to write the character hui 卯 (spice), saying that there are "four ways" of writing the character 'hui' 回 (return) under the grass radical (p. 29). It in fact does not matter that there are many ways to write a character because they have nothing to do with its signified at all. (Chinese calligraphy as an art is another matter not considered here.) What haunts K'ung I-chi is that if only the narrator is capable of writing, of keeping books, then he will be qualified for a barkeeper later, although the narrator has noticed that their barkeeper "never charged up spiced beans on the bills" (p. 29). Obviously, in K'ung I-chi's mental climate, education is but an approach to power; he is blinded by his will to power, without any will to knowledge, not to mention any will to truth. That also makes plain why he steals books only to sell, not to study. Even more ridiculous is his abusing the Confucian classic, quoting a fragmentary passage "Sit philosophus indigens" 20 to defend his theft. In other words, he is by no means really educated--he never gets the traditional discourse into his head. It is thereby justifiable that his kindness to teach the narrator is rejected, that he was unable to enter an official school--unable to pass the ritual of examination--and that he can only "earn a bowl of rice by copying out manuscripts for people" (pp. 27-28).

To get at the root of K'ung I-chi's wretched life, it is probably not because he "couldn't manage even half a degree" for himself (p. 28), but because he transgresses the role he should be, the role he is assigned. The customers at the Prosperity Wine Shop make up a microcosm in good order: the short-coated class, the laborers, can only stand up against the bar and "imbibe its comforting warm" whereas "the long-gowned gentlemen would step through to the inner adjoining room, order wine and meats, and sit down for a leisurely drink" (p. 25). But K'ung I-chi is the only long-gowned customer who stands at the bar to drink. He is refused, especially laughed at for his habitual archaism, by the laborers, and he is not a qualified scholar--although he assumes he is one. He is certainly not a madman, for K'ung I-chi's discourse, however archaic, can still be rationally understood; nor does he like the madman mentioned above
possess any will or gesture to fight against the convention, for he already behaves himself as the authority. But he is likewise the Other cast out by the society. Throughout his life, K'ung I-chi is a consummate thief, having stolen not only books but also the discourse of the classic, the verbal signs of the scholars, and the social rank represented by the long gown as well. Since he sets the rules of exclusion in discourse at naught, naturally he has to be punished—frequently given a thrashing and jeered at. Corporeal punishment and laughers, however, are not enough to bring K'ung I-chi to his knees. Finally, for his theft again, he is beaten to lameness in both legs by Ting Chü-jen (a provincial scholar), the real authority, and at the same time forced to submit a "confession" (fu-pien, 服辯, obedient discourse). This punishment is the most thoroughgoing education for K'ung I-chi and an inverted parody of the examination.

K'ung I-chi's misfortune, therefore, should be imputed to his being dim-witted but reluctant to ply his trade as he should. In reality, the narrator as a boy is also considered too stupid to wait on the gentleman customers and is thus given work on the outside. Although it is easy for him to get along with the shortcoat customers, he still finds it "extremely difficult to water the wine" (p. 26) because of their rigorous inspection. Fortunately, he was "recommended by an influential person"—granted a job by an authority higher than the barkeeper—and, on that account, he is not dismissed, but transferred to "the single uninteresting operation of warming up the wine" (p. 26), a job as unimaginative as K'ung I-chi's copying. The narrator's failure to water the wine may well indicate his mental inferiority or his disapproval of the wicked way of the barkeeper—his disbelief in the latter's doctrine. The narrator apparently teams up with the laborers. However monotonous and tiresome his job is, he never fails in his duty; as a submissive person, he accordingly belongs to the normal discourse.

Between K'ung I-chi and the narrator there is obviously a contrast or even conflict. Not only does the narrator join the public to thumb his nose at K'ung I-chi, but also he thinks, with contempt, that K'ung I-chi is unqualified to examine and teach him. This antipathy underlies the narration throughout, not the least reduced even to the very end—not a word of sympathy is revealed for K'ung I-chi's broken legs or his probable, wretched death. Even more noteworthy is that the narrator, as the narrator here, undoubtedly has considerable desire to speak the "truth" and, assuming the role of the authority, to prove K'ung I-chi's absurdities. The conflict between the two, of course, can be further evidenced by their different habits in speech—K'ung I-chi's archaism and the narrator's colloquial language.

Such a conflict finds a much stronger expression in "Diary of a Madman." In a brief but meaningful essay, Chang Han-liang has brought it to our notice that, in this short story, the device of the preface in written language discloses a new relationship between the
natural language in the infrastructure and the literary language in
the superstructure. Chang Han-liang went further to point out that
the preface narrator is challenged by the colloquial narration of the
diary, and that, in the conflict between the double narrators, "a new
device of superstructure is brought to light and, in contrast, the
customary convention thus seems fated to quit the field." These
observations, to the best of my knowledge, are Chang's
unprecedented insights into this text. But part of Chang's explication
on the double narrators seems also open to our reconsideration:

These two narrators are obviously competing with each other for
the reader's belief. The struggle between these two voices brings
about the uncertainty of this masterpiece's meaning,
including the reader's doubt about the madman's destiny. Should
the reader give credence to the preface narrator, who writes in
archaism, to his subsequent quotation from the madman's brother
that the madman "had long since recovered and was now a
candidate for civil position?" Or should the reader, through the
instantaneousness and illusion of some coming danger created in
the diary, believe that the madman is about to be or has been
eaten? This suspicion is even deepened because the preface
narrator also recovered from some illness before long.

As terse as a brief, the preface stands for the discourse of the
authority, trying to put the diary under a cloud, if not to hold down
the madman's vigorous desire to speak. The preface is too pregnant
with messages to be summarized:

Two brothers were both good friends of mine in middle school.
After a lengthy separation during which we never even
exchanged letters, I was shocked one day to hear that one of
them was seriously ill. On a trip back to my native village I
went out of my way to call on them. I found only the elder at
home. He thanked me for calling and told me that his brother
had long since recovered and was now a candidate for civil
position. With much laughter he pulled out two notebooks filled
with writing and offered them to me. He said they were his
brother's diary, kept during his illness. They would give me
some idea of just how sick he had been, the older brother told
me.

Upon reading them I realized that my friend must have been
temporarily insane. It was written entirely without order and
much of it made no sense at all. There were no dates. Only the
different-colored inks and the change in his scrawling characters
showed where the entries began and ended. Once in a while
there were paragraphs which seemed to be more intelligible and
continuous, and I've copied them down here for the study of
medical men. I have left all his mistakes unchanged. The names
of the locality and the persons involved, although of no
consequence, have been altered. The title was affixed by the
writer of the diary after his cure [and has been retained
unchanged as well].
April 2, 1918. 22

Indeed, the two narrators are competing for the reader's
credence, and the struggle between them is quite fierce. But the
uncertainty of meaning in this short story seems unlike Chang
Han-liang's assumption. It especially admits no question that the
madman has become "a candidate for civil position" and, at the same
time, "has been eaten"--"eaten" and even "digested" by the
traditional discourse--because the preface narrator shows no symptom
of illness at all. Chang's postulate that "the preface narrator also
recovered from some illness before long" probably results from a
misreading of the pen-jen 本人 (a reflexive personal pronoun itself
without clear reference to the pronoun unless indicated) in pien-jen
yü hou ssoo t'i 本人愈後所題 (affixed by the writer of the diary
himself after cure). A careful examination of the preface and the text
as a whole will prove that it is more accurate, and more meaningful,
to refer the term pen-jen to the madman.

The fact that the madman, probably more properly called the
diary narrator, entitles his notebooks as "Diary of a Madman" is too
revealing to be passed over, because the title is the last word of the
diary narrator's discourse in the face of the authority's discourse
betokened by the preface. It is only after the diary narrator's
confession of his past madness that he is able to be admitted into the
society again, to be "a candidate for civil position." Taking upon
himself as the spokesman of the authority, the preface narrator
asserts that the madman's notebooks are filled with delirium, and,
therefore, he not only arbitrarily cuts from the diary a small part
and reorders it into an understandable discursive formation but also
despotically gives a twist to the names of the persons involved. How
can the title affixed by the diary narrator escape the censorship?

The title "Diary of a Madman" and K'ung I-chi's "confession,"
expressed in different ways as they are, carry the same motif: the
change of the speaking subject's verbal signs usually points to the
change of his mental climate and social rank. Corporeal punishment,
as mentioned before, is insufficient to make K'ung I-chi acknowledge
his own theft; he protests eloquently: "The larceny of
books ... cannot be classed with stealing.... The larceny of
literature! ... That is a scholar's business. Can it be considered
theft?" (p. 27) And then his mouth is once again filled with archaism
which, like the word ch'ieh 竊 (larceny, to steal), is in K'ung
I-chi's ideology the almighty incantation of truth. But, after his
confession--very probably written in archaic style--to Mr. Ting,
K'ung I-chi is brought to his knees, and his habitual archaism, his
self-ordained sign of membership in the upper class, vanishes
henceforth. On the other hand, the madman's colloquial diary is
rejected by his old companions, either simply laughed away by
his brother or diagnosed as delirium by his friend. But the title, at least, is well accepted. We must not turn a blind eye to the archaic tincture of the title, *K'uang-zen jih-chi* (狂人日記), which, in colloquial expression, is usually added a possessive particle de (的) after *K'uang-zen*. Both the title of the diary and K'ung I-chi's confession, however, manifest themselves as an obedient discourse in front of the public. On the one hand, K'ung I-chi's confession naturally has its juristic effect; on the other hand, "Diary of the Madman," as the diary narrator calls it himself, is offered not only to a friend but also to unknown medical men for study--as a case of madness in the light of the normal discourse in the society.

However, the contrast between colloquial language and archaism revealed in these two stories should not be carried too far, because, as mentioned before, in language proper--colloquial as well as archaic--there is always an innate inability to represent truth or reality. In "Diary of a Madman," we can say that the history of China appears like a big text for the madman, just as romance does for Quixote; but the madman's absurdity is far from Quixote's. Unlike Quixote's illusion with romance, the madman on the contrary reads between the lines in the text and finds out the cannibalism hidden under the archaic expressions of virtues. Probably the madman has his own insight, for he has seen the inside of the trap of archaism and seen through the cleavage of the text. The poor K'ung I-chi, in comparison, is but a Quixote bewitched with archaism.

Now, we may ask, if the tradition embodied in archaism sounds untrustworthy, does the colloquial diary then really look unquestionable? This is probably the most uncertain, the most puzzling aspect of the text "Diary of a Madman." Put in the light of the internal rules of rarefaction postulated by Foucault, Lu Hsün's text may be properly regarded as a "commentary" and "interpretation" of Nikolai Gogol's preceding text with the same title as well as of other writers' texts.23 But, I think, even more revealing is to juxtapose the two verbal discourses in Lu Hsün's text as each other's "commentary." Viewed from the angle of the story time in this text, it goes without saying that the diary comes before the preface; that is, the preface manifests itself as a commentary of the diary and is thus more convincing. But, judging from the reader's reading experience at a stretch, the situation turns out quite the opposite--it is the diary that is the very commentary, the modified discourse and the last word. The problem here is: on which should the reader put his credence, the head or the end, the preface or the diary, the story time in the text or the time sequence of his own experience?

Most people probably will belive the diary, as most people in the past did, and as all of us usually do--we are usually too exhausted to turn back when we have arrived at an end, too lazy to look back into the steps we have gone through, to look back into ourselves. Probably some will suggest: how about turning the preface into an afterword, an epilogue, or even a note? Of course it may work to do
so, partly. By so doing, we have to prepare ourselves for a completely strange look of the text.

Besides, the problem does not end there, either. We should by no means forget that the diary, the thirteen entries available to us, is the result of the preface narrator's deletion, edition and even correction as well, not the complete, original two notebooks. Delirious utterances are by nature some chaotic voices beyond our comprehension. Yet, do we not understand quite well and even sympathize with the madman's voice? How can his muddled sounds convey messages to the reader in the form of knowable discourse? Here we are deeply indebted to the preface narrator; it is through a series of his efforts--his selecting from a chaotic world some intelligible fragments, putting these undated passages in order with precise numbers--that the madman becomes able to present an apprehendable discourse to us. Like a psychiatrist having listened to the madman's liberated speech, the preface narrator finally discovers among the shattered sounds a few discernible pieces which may indicate the madman's surviving rationality--it must be this surviving rationality that, fortunately, snatches the madman from the edge of total insanity. But, unfortunately on the other hand, these thirteen diary entries in the form of intelligible discourse are at the same time deprived of the totality of their origin. Truth probably exists in what has been wiped off the map by the preface narrator, never to be brought back again. From the Chaos God created for us a well-ordered world, a world containing the Tree of Knowledge which has ever and after been foretelling all men's inevitable falling.

Here and now we cannot but feel ourselves at sea. Our search for truth in the ordered diary is predestined to come to naught; the discourse of tradition seems never to give a slack rein on any speaking subject. Yet, "April 2, 1918," the last phrase of the preface--and the single note to the preface proper--exactly marks just the other way around the temporality of the authoritative discourse, as if the discourse itself will immediately look wrong. Not only does there exist the uncertainty of meaning in "Diary of a Madman," but the verbal discourses of the text are filled with irreparable breaches.

In The I Ching or Book of Changes, the most desirable hexagram Chi Chi 既濟 (After Completion), in which everything is in perfect equilibrium, can only signify "Success in small matters. Perseverance furthers. At the beginning good fortune, At the end disorder." That is to say, a state in perfect order always involves indefinite crises; therefore, the sixty-four hexagrams have to end with Wet Chi 未濟 (Before Completion) so that life and the world will move onward forever. Accordingly, it is natural and sound that, in the field of literary criticism, which was begun and has been
inflated with rational logos in the West, some conceptions like Jacques Derrida's difference and supplementality, George Poulet's point of departure, and Paul de Man's blindness have gradually come to the front stage. By the same token, it is quite understandable that Foucault, in the beginning of his lecture "The Discourse on Language," has to quote Beckett's Molly, saying repeatedly that "I must go on; I can't go on...." fo Foucault is aware that the more ordered his lecture or his theory of discourse is, the more likely it is about to change.

Language is limited and truth is far-reaching. This is the essential reason why Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu, especially the latter, intend to remove the line of demarcation between good and wrong, to pay little attention to debates and squabbles. The order constructed through logos, good-looking as it may be, is in a Taoistic perspective only to give rise to some "Benevolent 'Disorder'" at the sacrifice of Tao, the "Chaotic 'Order.'" But Taoism should not be carried too far; otherwise, Lao Tzu's remark that "He who knows does not speak; He who speaks does not know" (Lin, p. 257) would have put all wise men and himself to silence. Similarly, if the words "The five colors blind the eyes of man; The five musical notes deafen the ears of man" (Lin, p. 90) were held in excess, the arts of painting and music would have all become impossible.

Nevertheless, Taoism, especially with its teaching of one's involvement and detachment at once—as expressed in Chuang Tzu's dreaming himself as a butterfly, in an actor's playing his role on the stage, or in a lawyer's discharging his duty in court—is revealing and rewarding to the critics. "The Tao that can be told of/ Is not the Absolute Tao" can be rendered into another expression: the Absolute Tao can be told of in an unusual way or usual ways. The works of Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu as well as literature and literary criticism are all expressions in unusual ways. The Little Tradition composed of these unusual expressions no doubt is, as they have been, able to keep accord with the Great Tradition represented by Confucianism. The harmonious juxtaposition of these two traditions finds its evidence even in the Confucian text, too: the Book of Songs (Shih Ching, 詩經) heads the Six Confucian Classics; and, in Chapter Weitzu (Wei-tzu p'ien, 微子篇) of The Discourses and Sayings of Confucius (Lun-yü, 論語), the four Taoists, including the mad Chieh Yü 接軀, Ch'ang Chu 長沮, Chieh Ni 拘僂, and an old man, all speak some pagan words, but not a word from Confucius is uttered for rebuttal. Compared with the traditional discourse in the West with which Foucault has been constantly obsessed, the Confucian discourse should be held as much gentler and more embracing.

Notes

1 Harold Bloom, A Map of Misreading (New York: Oxford
University Press, 1975), passim.
3 The term is used here, not in a strictly Derridean sense, to suggest that in a court debate both the plaintiff and the defendant almost always argue for private profit rather than reality or truth.
5 Ibid., pp. 110-15. The conception of the inadequacy of Chinese language for analysis appeared in the West as early as in 1816, in Hegel's lectures on the history of philosophy at University of Heidelberg. Hegel's conception, however, has been powerfully challenged by Ch'ien Chung-shu 錢鍾書 in the latter's Kun chuei p'ien 管絶篇, Vol. I., pp. 1-8.
7 Nietzsche's influence upon Lu Hsün has been generally acknowledged and frequently referred to by critics. For example, see Chien Hou 侯健, Tz'ung wen-hsüeh kē-ming tao kē-ming wen-hsüeh 從文學革命到革命文學 (from literary revolution to revolutionary literature; Taipei: Chung-wai wen-hsüeh, 1974), pp. 6, 48, and 125. However, Lu Hsün accepts Nietzsche's iconoclasm, not the latter's attitudes towards reason and power--the reason and power Foucault has tried desperately to shake off. As J. D. Chinney observes in his "The Influence of Western Literature on Lű Xùn's 'Diary of a Madman,'" Bulletin of London University, School of Oriental & African Studies, Vol. XXIII, Part 2 (1960), 320:

Lű Xùn was unable to appreciate that Nietzsche's thought was a retreat from the ideas of science and reason which he sought to embrace, yet he was sufficiently discerning to reject Nietzsche's ethic of might and power. This doctrine conflicted with the very basis of Lű Xùn's outlook. Lű Xun defended the weak and helpless against cannibalism, while Nietzsche despised the weak and admired the conquerors and predators. Nietzsche looked to a future in which cannibalism would reign supreme, while Lű Xùn sought to abolish cannibalism.

8 Bloom, A Map of Misreading, p. 42.
12 Ibid., p. 227.
16 Harold R. Isaacs, ed., Straw Sandals (Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1974), p. 1. "Diary of a Madman" is translated by the editor(?) and "K'ung I-ch'i" by George A. Kenndy. Quotations from these two stories are henceforth noted in the text. However, the translation in this collection is hardly satisfactory, mostly because of several mistakes and omissions—some of them are adjusted in the paper. Lu Hsün's works are probably better done into English by Gladys Yang and Yang Hsien-yi 楊憲益, but their translation is not available to me now.
17 Lü Tzu-ch' ien 呂祖謙, Tung-lai po yì 東萊博議 (the extensive remarks by Lü Tung-lai; San-ch' uing City: Wen-ch' uan ch'u-pan-shè, 1973), p. 3.
18 Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge, p. 227.
20 Confucius's complete sentence reads as follows: "A wise man sometimes also meets with distress; but a fool, when in distress, becomes reckless." See Ku Hung-Ming 柯鴻銘, trans., The Discourse and Sayings of Confucius (rpt. Taipei: Prophet Press, 1976), p. 133.
22 Part of the preface has been purposely translated into rather stilted English by William A. Lydell, Jr. in his Lu Hsün's Vision of Reality (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), p. 270.
23 See Wang Jen-hua 王潤華, "The Influence of Western Literature on China's First Modern Story," Journal of Nan Yang University, Nos. 8-9, 144-56; or Wang's Chinese essay under the same title in Lu Hsün and "Ah Q cheng-ch' uan" 魯迅與阿 Q 正傳 (Lu

24 See Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge, p. 217.
26 Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge, p. 215.
29 The ideas of the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition were postulated by Robert Redfield and has been borrowed by Leo Ou-fan Lee 李歐梵 to elucidate the social backgrounds of Lu Hsün's thoughts. See Lee's "Lu Hsün net-chuan dê shang-ch'üeh yü t'an-t'ao" [魯迅內傳]的商榷與探討 (reconsideration and examination of the internal biography of Lu Hsün), in Ch'a Ling, p. 173; see note 23.

為福寇辯護：答魯迅的“狂人日記”與“孔乙己”

吳新發*

中文摘要

本文的主旨有二：主要在藐福寇的「言談」理論證明「狂人日記」和「孔乙己」兩篇正文本身並無意義或真理，次要在檢視閱者面對正文時應持的態度。

福寇以爲，所謂真理往往受制於某種權威，而正文的意義則遊移於正文和讀者之間。後一現象也部份見於布倫姆的「誤讀」理論。孔乙己的故事出自以權威自居的敘述者口中，其中真相相悖已可疑；狂人的日記已遭文言敘述者節改，更非全豹。這兩篇正文的「言談」形構其實破綻百出。

因此，讀者閱正文時，不應過於執著表面的文意，最好能入能出，如老莊所言。

* 外國語文學系講師。