

把野兽关进笼子

Caging a Monster

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Translated by Jane Weizhen Pan and Martin Merz

我是一个中国作家，在这里向你介绍一下我的国家。正如你们所知，在过去的三十年里，这个国家建造了无数高楼，修了无数机场，铺平了无数道路，它的GDP位居全球第二，它制造的商品造销往全世界每一个角落。在伦敦、在纽约、在东京，到处可见身穿昂贵西装的中国游客，他们大声谈笑，出手不凡，他们占领了大多数赌场，疯狂抢购LV皮包。人们惊诧于这样的场面，说中国强大了，中国人有钱了。可我要说，在这表面的强大和富足之下，中国还有许多不为人知的细节，而正是这些细节，让中国变成了一个极为奇怪的国家。

I am a Chinese writer. Allow me to say a few words about my country. Everyone knows that in the past thirty years China has built countless skyscrapers, commissioned countless airports, and paved countless freeways. My country's GDP is the world's second largest and her products are sold in every corner of the planet. My compatriots can be seen in London, New York and Tokyo wearing expensive clothes, chattering raucously. My compatriots also fill up casinos and line up to buy Louis Vuitton bags. People exclaim in amazement: China is rising, the Chinese are rich! But behind this facade of power and prosperity there are details of which many people are unaware, and it is precisely these details that make my country a very strange place.

生活在中国，就像坐在一个巨大的戏院里，随时可以看到荒唐的故事、离奇的情节，超过每一个作家的想象。

Living in China is like watching a play in a giant theatre. The plots are absurd and the scenarios are unbelievable—so absurd, so unbelievable that they are beyond any writer's imagination.

这个国家有含有三聚氰胺的奶粉、用避孕药喂大的鱼鳖虾蟹、用工业酒精勾兑的假酒、用大粪熏制的臭豆腐，还有著名的地沟油，这是一种从下水道中提炼出的食用油，它出现在每个家庭的餐桌上。

My country manufactures powdered milk containing melamine, feeds fish and shrimp contraceptive medications to enhance their growth, uses industrial alcohol in fake wine, preserves beancurd with human excrement, and produces "gutter oil," the product of a notorious practice in which waste oil from gutters outside restaurants is recycled for human consumption.

这个国家的法律系统是这样运作的：先制定无数法律，然后制定无数精密的程序，然后制定无数实施细则，然后制定无数司法解释，最后……由领导决定案子输赢。

在这个国家，有许多事不能起诉，即使起诉了，法院也不会受理，即使受理了，也会毫无疑问地败诉。

In my country, the legal system works like this: countless laws are enacted, and then countless procedures are created, followed by countless enforcement regulations and detailed judicial interpretations, but ultimately it is up to the political leaders to decide who wins and who loses a case.

In my country, many cases cannot be pursued in the courts. Even if legal action is taken, courts can refuse to hear a case. Even if the case is heard in court, the judgement is made well before the hearing starts.

在这个国家，有一些人会无缘无故地消失，有一些人未经审判就失去了自由。还有一些人冤屈难申，按照法律规定的程序寻求公平，这些人被称作“上访人员”，这个词在中文里的含义是讨厌鬼、精神病人和恐怖分子。为了对付他们，我们的政府动用了大量人力物力，有时把他们赶回老家，有时把他们关进监牢，最聪明的是把他们关进疯人院。

In my country, many innocent people disappear, and some people lose their freedom without ever being sentenced by a court. Some people attempt to have their grievances addressed at a higher level by following procedures prescribed in law. These people are branded “petitioners.” In my country, the word petitioner conveys the sense of a nuisance, a mentally ill person, a terrorist. To deal with these petitioners, the government mobilises a huge amount of resources to herd them home, jail them, and in a particularly creative measure, incarcerate them in insane asylums.

最近有一位上访者引起了广泛关注，他是一位盲人律师，名叫陈光诚，他曾经为了别人的利益呼喊奔走，而此刻，他正被严密地看管在自己的家中，任何人都不能接近，许多人，包括我在内曾冒着危险前去探望他，可无一例外，全都被政府雇用的打手打了出来。

Recently a famous petitioner, a blind lawyer called Chen Guangcheng has attracted a lot of attention. Chen is an advocate for people’s rights and dignity. At this very moment, he is a prisoner in his own home. Many people, including myself, have attempted to visit Chen but all have been chased away by government-employed thugs.

这个国家有各种各样的离奇死法，在看守所内，如果有人无故死去，官方会给出各种富有想象力的解释，说他们因捉迷藏而死，因做梦而死，因发狂而死，还有人仅仅因为喝了一口水就会死，但是毫无例外，这些死去的人都带着满身的伤痕。

In my country, there are many peculiar ways to die in detention and officials are more creative than a novelist like me in coming up with explanations: died playing hide-and-peek; died while dreaming; died of psychosis; died sipping water. But in all cases the bodies of those who die in custody are covered in bruises and wounds.

在这个国家，每个城市都有拆迁队，他们的标准装备是铲车和棍棒，铲车用来拆除别人的房子，棍棒用来殴打和驱赶那些不听话的人。为了保卫自己的家园，有人痛哭，有人下跪，有人把汽油泼在身上点火自焚，但无论他们做什么，都不会影响到拆迁队的工程进度。许多人因此而死，却从来没有人为他们的死亡负责。

In my country, every city has demolition crews equipped with bulldozers and truncheons. The bulldozers are for levelling people's homes and the truncheons are for bludgeoning stubborn homeowners. To protect their homes, some homeowners beg on their knees, others cry, and some threaten to kill themselves or even actually self immolate. But nothing can stand in the way of the demolition crews and no official is ever brought to account when demolitions result in deaths.

在这个国家，选举是一场奇怪的游戏，最终结果由上级决定，上级需要哪个人当选，哪个人就一定会当选，很少出现误差。在很多时候，人们需要从两个人中选出两个人来，还有些时候，这种选举甚至会违背数学原理，要求选民们从两个人中选出三个人来。每过五年，会有一次全国范围的选举，选上的人被称为人民代表，而事实上，他们几乎不能代表人民，只能算政府雇员，也只会帮政府说话。

In my country, elections are a charade—the government decides the results in advance. Their candidates are always elected. Very often people are asked to elect two out of two candidates. Other times, elections even defy basic math—three winners can be elected from two candidates. Every five years there is a national election and the winners are called people's representatives but the majority of them only represent the government.

他们的典型人物是一位七十多岁的老女士，她当了五十几年代表，从没反对过任何提案，也从来不曾弃权，她的工作非常简单，只是举手，并因此过上了舒适的生活。最近情况有所变化，有些人未经政府同意就想参选，但他们几乎全都失败，还有一些人因此过上了悲惨的生活。

One woman in her seventies, for example, has been a people's representative for over fifty years and yet she has never tabled a motion, and never once voted against a motion. Her job is simple. All she has to do is raise her hand and she can live a comfortable life for performing this task. In recent years some people have attempted to compete in these elections without receiving government approval. These people almost always lose and often suffer miserably for their actions.

在这个国家，政府开办的救济机构会公开地买卖人口，有智力智碍的病人会被当成奴隶，在工厂和矿井中过着暗无天日的生活。在这个国家，怀孕的妇女会被强迫堕胎，一些婴儿会被强迫送进孤儿院，如果他们的父母不能及时凑够钱把他们买回去，这些孩子很可能会被卖到外地，甚至外国。

In my country, government-run relief organisations engage in human trafficking; intellectually-disabled people slave away in factories and mines; pregnant women are coerced to have abortions and infants are taken by force to be handed over to orphanages. These infants then are sold to other regions and even foreign countries if their parents cannot come up with the cash to buy them back.

在这个国家，报纸和电视的责任不是报道真相，而是为政府做广告。教育的目的不是传授知识，而是教人愚蠢，教人效忠政府。这种教育和宣传，让许多人都活在未成年状态，他们有成年人的身体，但在精神上，就像是世事懵懂的孩子，时至今日，还有许多人在怀念文革，鼓吹个人崇拜，还有一些人认为那场空前绝后的大饥荒纯属

子虚乌有，只是某些阴险小人阴险的编造。

In my country, the job of the press and electronic media is to promote the government, not to report the truth. The education system is tasked with instructing the people to be loyal to the government and keeping the people ignorant, not with disseminating knowledge. As a result, many people have never grown up intellectually even though they are adults. Even today, many people in my country still are nostalgic for the catastrophic Cultural Revolution that ended over thirty years ago and still promote the cult of personality. Some people still deny that the unprecedented great famine of the early 1960s ever occurred, and insist that the millions of deaths by starvation is a fabrication.

在这个国家，每一种学问都必须为政治服务，政治需要什么样的历史，学者就会创作什么样的历史；政治需要有什么样的经济学，学者就会发明什么样的经济学；大人物可以随意发明真理，这些真理适用于任何一个领域，能够指导这个国家的政治工作、经济工作、文化工作，甚至能够指导动物交配。

In my country, every academic undertaking must serve the interests of the government. Academics must fabricate history in accordance with the government's political interests. Economists must develop economic theories to support the government's political agenda. In my country, leaders invent truths and their pronouncements are applied to every field of human endeavor, be it political, economic, cultural, or even animal husbandry.

这个国家号称消灭了阶级，事实上，一个壁垒森严的阶级社会已经形成，上等人吃特供食品，下等人只能吃肮脏而有害的食品。第一等级的人就读豪华而昂贵的贵族学校，第二等级的人就读普通学校，第三等级的人就读简陋的民工学校，第四等级的人基本没机会读书。

In my country, the government claims to have eradicated classes, but in reality, class divisions are glaringly obvious. The highest class enjoys exclusively produced foods while the lower classes are left to consume contaminated and dangerous products. Children of the dominant class study at opulent private schools, while children of the second-class study at ordinary schools. The third class attend shabby schools for migrant workers and the fourth class, well, they don't get to go to school at all.

这个国家最喜欢干的事就是买飞机，经常慷慨地对外援助，但在自己的国土上，乞丐四处流浪，许多人看不起病，许多孩子读不起书，还有许多人正活在可耻的贫穷之中。

My country takes delight importing the latest jet airplanes and providing aid to foreign countries, despite destitute beggars roaming the land at home, despite many of her people being unable to afford medical care, despite many children being too poor to go to school and despite a huge number of people living in poverty.

这个国家鼓励告密，政府为每个人都建立了一份秘密档案，档案中记录了从生到死的每一个变化、别人的评价以及许多当事人自己都不知道的事。在工厂、在学校、在街头，密探们正秘密地观察每个人的言行。这里的空气压抑而紧张，民众不相信政

府，员工不相信老板，学生不相信老师，妻子不相信丈夫。

In my country, informing on others is encouraged. The government has a secret dossier on every single citizen which records everything about us until the day we die—from innocent remarks about us to unsubstantiated accusations as well as many things we don't even know about ourselves. Secret agents in factories, schools and residential neighbourhoods covertly record everything people say and do. The atmosphere is oppressive—people do not trust the government, employees do not trust employers, students don't trust teachers, and wives do not trust husbands.

这个国家有一种奇怪的制度，总是让说谎者得到奖赏，久而久之，每个人都对谎言习以为常，每个人都主动说谎，说谎甚至成了一种美德。

In my country, there is a strange system that rewards liars, and with the passage of time, people have become accustomed to lying. People lie as naturally as they breathe, to the point that lying has become a virtue.

在这个国家，写作成了一种危险的事业—有人因为写文章而入狱，有人因为说了某句真话而入狱。作家不能评述历史，不能批判现实，更不能幻想未来。许多字不能写，许多话不能说，许多事件不能提及，每一本书的出版都要经过严格的政治审查，许多书被查禁，然后它们就会成为国外的畅销书。

In my country, writing is a dangerous occupation. People are sent to prison for writing essays, or saying a few words of truth. Writers are not allowed to talk about history, or to criticise the present, let alone fantasise about the future. Many words cannot be written, many things cannot be spoken, and many issues cannot be mentioned. Every book has to go through a rigid censorship regime before it can be published. Many books are banned in my country, and then become bestsellers overseas.

这个国家可以把卫星送入太空，却造不好一座桥。这个国家可以把政府大楼造成金碧辉煌的宫殿，却让孩子们坐在摇摇欲倒的危房之中。这个国家有无数豪华的行政座驾，却没有一辆坚固的校车。就在两天之前，在中国甘肃，一辆只有坐9个人的校车塞进了64个孩子，然后很不幸地遇到了车祸，19个孩子因此而死。这些孩子大多来自最贫穷的家庭，他们还没有吃过一次麦当劳和肯德基，还没有去过一次动物园，他们的人生还没有开始，却已经过早地结束了。

My country is capable of launching a satellite into space but not of building a safe bridge across a river. My country is capable of building palatial government offices yet condemns children to substandard schoolhouses. My country provides millions of luxury cars to government official yet few safe school buses for children. Only two days ago in Gansu province in China's northwest, 64 children were crammed into a nine-seat school bus. Then there was an accident and nineteen of them died. Most of these children came from poor families. They had never been to a McDonald's, a KFC, or a zoo. Their lives ended tragically before they even started.

这个国家最近几年举办了多次盛会，为此建造了大量美仑美奂的场馆，然而每次开幕之前，都会有许多“危险分子”眼含热泪离开自己的家，官方发言人说：他们自愿离开，没有人强迫他们。

In my country, extravagant structures have been built one after another to host one extravagant event after another. However, many citizens considered “dangerous elements” are forced to leave their own homes in tears whenever such an event is held. Yet, government officials insist that these people leave their homes voluntarily.

这个国家有全世界是庞大的官僚队伍，他们中的绝大多数都在贪污或受贿，每一种权力都被污染，成为致富的法宝或伤人的利器。根据公开的报道，每年有大量的财富用于这些官僚的吃喝、旅游和公车消费（每年九千亿人民币）。或许有人会问：纳税人为什么不反对？抱歉，在这个国家，没有纳税人这个词，有的只是“人民”。

My country has one of the largest bureaucracies in the world. Most of these bureaucrats are either bribing or taking bribes. Power is being abused in every way imaginable and turned into a money-generating tool. According to publicly available reports, enormous amounts of public funds are wasted on sumptuous banquets, luxury trips and expensive cars provided to these bureaucrats. We are talking about 900 billion yuan or over US\$140 billion a year. Some may ask: Why don't the taxpayers say no to this practice? I'm sorry, the concept of taxpayers' rights doesn't exist in my country. All we have is the term “the people.”

有人会说，这些事不足为奇，任何一个国家都会有，任何一个国家都曾经有过。我承认，但还是要说，如果腐败可以分度数，那么 5 度腐败和 100 度腐败的差别不仅是个数字，前者还可以算是瑕疵，而后者已经成了灾难。我还要说，不能因为别的国家有腐败，就认为中国人应该忍受这种腐败。

Some may say, well, this is nothing to get excited about, because corruption exists in every country, at any time. I agree. But still, I want to say that if there were degrees to measure the rampancy of corruption, then the difference between five degrees and a hundred degrees is not merely a difference in readings—the former shows minor defects, but my country's rampant corruption means disaster. I also want to add: It's wrong to suggest my compatriots should put up with corruption simply because corruption exists elsewhere.

难道因为中国人的素质太低，所以不配享有更美好的生活吗？请你相信，说这话的人，他自己的素质就很低；难道因为中国的独特国情，所以不能给民众以太多自由吗？请你相信，说这话的人，他自己就是国情；难道中国最需要的真的不是自由，也不是人权，而是稳定吗？在这里，我请你相信，说这话的人，他自己就是不稳定的因素。

Chinese people don't deserve a better life because “the quality of the Chinese people” is low. Believe me, people who say this are themselves of low quality. The Chinese people should not be given too much freedom due to China's “unique situation.” Believe me, people who say this are themselves perpetuating China's “unique situation”. Stability is what China needs the most, not freedom, not human rights. Believe me, people who say this are themselves contributing to instability.

2009 年底，我混进了一个传销团伙，在其中生活了一段时间之后，我发现传销团伙几乎就是中国社会的缩影，一位中国学者曾经对此做过精准的论述，他把这种社会称为“前现代社会”，主要有三种人构成：骗子、傻子和哑巴。不过令人高兴的是，中国已经进步了，情况发生了深刻的变化，那就是：骗子越来越多，傻子和哑巴都快不够用了。

At the end of 2009 I infiltrated a gang of pyramid scammers. After spending some time living with them, I realised that the world of pyramid selling is Chinese society in miniature. A Chinese scholar once defined this kind of society as being in a “primitive state,” a society that is comprised of three kinds of people: liars, the deaf and the mutes. The good news is that Chinese society is moving forward —now there are more and more liars and we’re running out of the deaf and the mute.

英国学者亨利·梅因先生曾把从身份到契约的转变视为现代文明社会的标志。按这个标准，中国还有很长的路要走。

The English scholar Henry Maine refers to the transition from individuals bound by social status or belonging to traditional social castes, to a modern world where people are independent entities free to make contracts on their own, as the progression of "from status to contract." If this progression is the benchmark for entering a modern civilised society, then China is still a nation in a primitive state.

就在二十多年前，中国还是一个完全的身份主导型社会，在那个社会中，一个人能做什么，能做出什么成绩，不是取决于他本人的能力和素质，而是取决于他爸爸是谁。如果某人是个王八蛋，他的儿子也必是个王八蛋，很多年后，他的孙子依然是个王八蛋。

My country was entirely a status-oriented society just over twenty years ago. What a person could do depended not on that person’s intelligence and competency. Rather, it depended on *who* that person’s father was. During the Cultural Revolution, if someone was deemed a “son of a bitch,” then his son would be deemed a “son of a bitch,” and many years later his grandson would also be deemed a “son of a bitch.”

在二十多年之后，情况有了什么变化？我要说，有所进步，可是进步不大。

Twenty years on, is there any progress? Yes, there is, but not much.

在这个国家，政府官员的儿子、孙子依然做官，民工二代、民工三代依然是民工。到今天，中国社会已经成了一个以身份为主导的板结型社会，每一种权力、每一门生意、每一项资源都被彻底垄断，平民子弟几乎没有希望，他绝对没机会能成为奥巴马或乔布斯。

In my country, the sons and grandsons of officials are still officials while second and third generation migrant workers are still migrant workers. All power, all business and all resources are monopolised. There is almost no hope for the sons of ordinary citizens to move up. There is no possibility of them ever becoming an Obama or a Steve Jobs.

在这个国家，人们即使只想过正常的生活也无比艰难。最近的几年，中国市民阶层的生活正日益艰难，沉重的税负、昂贵的房价，日益上涨的物价和微薄的工资。在这个国家，开出租车可就在几个月之前，有位司机亲口告诉我：他已经有几个月没吃过肉了。当我们经过一片豪华住宅区，他这样感慨：这里的大楼越建越多，为什么我的日子却一天比一天艰难？

In my country, just striving for a normal life is difficult. In fact, in recent years life has become much harder for the urban population due to the heavy tax burden, exorbitant housing prices, high inflation and low wages. Driving a taxi previously provided a good income, but a taxi driver recently told me he had not eaten meat for several months. He sighed as we passed a luxury residential estate. "More and more skyscrapers are going up," the driver said. "But why is my life getting harder and harder?"

中国已经成了奢侈品消费大国，但更令人高兴的是，在这个国家，连死亡本身都已经成了昂贵的奢侈品。有一首歌谣极为生动地描述了人们的忧虑：“生不起，剖腹一刀五千几；读不起，选个学校三万起；住不起，一万多元一平米；娶不起，没房没车谁跟你；病不起，药费让人脱层皮；死不起，火化下葬一万几。”

My country has become the world's largest consumer of luxury goods. And now, even living and dying in my country have become a luxury. A popular song encapsulates people's anxieties:

Can't afford to have children—caesarians cost five thousand and more

Can't afford to go to school—a good school costs at least thirty K

Can't afford an apartment—more than ten thousand for a meter of floor

Can't afford to get married—no house, no car, no wedding, she'll say

Can't afford to get sick—medicine costs an arm and a leg

Can't afford to die—cremation costs are through the sky

一个以身份为主导的社会，必然是一个缺乏创造力的社会，所以我们看到，无论在工业、农业、商业还是在文化艺术领域，中国人都绝少创新，有的只是抄袭和模仿。我相信，如果不改革这糟糕的制度，在未来的几十年间，中国仍将是一个缺乏创新与发明的国度，它或许会有很多钱，但一定不会有太多文化；或许会有强大的武力，但一定不会让它的国民感觉平安。

Creativity never flourishes in a status-driven society. That's why in every field of endeavor—industry, agriculture, commerce and culture—my country contributes few innovations and new ideas, but excels at counterfeits and imitations. I believe that without reforming this rotten system, China will continue to be a nation that contributes few innovations and new ideas to mankind. It may have a lot of money but there won't be much

culture left. It may become a mighty military power but it will still be incapable of making its people feel secure.

谈到中国的种种问题，人们有各种各样的解释，恋权者说那是因为中国人的素质太低，保守者说那是因为伦理道德的缺失，某些宗教人士说那是因为中国人没有信仰。

People in China have come up with a multitude of explanations for my country's numerous problems. Those who want to hold onto power say China has problems because the Chinese are just a "low quality people." Therefore, they have to be controlled and managed. Conservatives say China's current problems result from the Chinese people abandoning traditional moral values. Some religious groups say China's problems result from the Chinese not having any faith, and consequently commit evil because they do not fear the wrath of god.

但在我看来，这一切都是因为我们有一个糟糕的制度，在这种制度之下，权力不受约束，只能渐趋腐败；法律形同虚设，它是权贵的利器，更是平民的枷锁；在这种制度之下，警察和军队最大的作用是维护统治，只会让人们感觉更加恐惧，而不是更加安全；在这种制度之下，没人对历史负责，所以也就没人对现在负责，更不会有人对未来负责。

In my view, everything stems from the rotten system. A system with no restraints on power can only lead to corruption; a system in which the law exists in name only turns the law into a deadly weapon high officials use to oppress the citizenry. In this system, the primary purpose of the police and the military is to maintain the political rulers in power and inspire terror, not for making people feel secure. In this system, no one takes responsibility for the past, present and future.

在这种制度之下，人们只关心眼前的利益。在这种制度之下，不守规矩成了最大的规矩，不择手段成了最好的手段，在官场，在商场，大多数竞争其实都是底线的竞争，总是让卑鄙的人胜出；在这种制度之下，人人都在犯罪，却没人需要忏悔；在这种制度之下，每个人都会感觉屈辱，不管身边有多少“和谐社会”的广告，大多数人想的都是同一件事：离开这里，到平安的地方去。

In this system, people only care about short-term profits. In this system, not following the rules *is* the rule, and unscrupulous means are the *only* means in government and business so only the dirtiest players emerge victorious. In this system, everyone is a criminal so no one needs to repent. In this system, humiliation is felt by everyone, so no matter how much a "harmonious society" is promoted, the majority of people dream of escaping to a safe place.

这糟糕的制度，斯大林—毛泽东主义和中国王朝政治的不伦之子，丛林法则、儒家权谋和共产主义的混血产品，经过几十年的发育，已经成长为一个又大又丑的怪物，它虚荣、蛮横、自视甚高、从来不会认错，它打倒一个人是因为正义，给这个人平反，还是因为正义。一切好事都是它领导的，一切坏事都是因为背叛了它的领导。它主宰一切，只允许一种信仰，那就是信仰它；只允许一种感谢，那就是感谢它；它拥

有每一份报纸、每一所学校、每一座寺庙，没有它的允许，连花朵都不能随便开放。

This rotten system is the mongrel of Stalinist-Maoism and Imperial Chinese political culture, a cross-breed of the rule of the jungle with traditional Chinese trickery *and* communism. Decades later, this creature now has become a monster. This monster is vain, tyrannical and arrogant. It never admits to mistakes. It destroys people in the name of justice and rehabilitates them, also in the name of justice. It takes credit for everything positive, and blames others for all failures. It wants to lord over everything and only tolerates one faith, faith in itself. This monster only allows praise to one thing, praise to itself. It owns every newspaper, every school, and every temple. Without its permission, even flowers may not bloom.

这个怪物既强壮又脆弱，既身患重病，却有着强大的杀伤力；既异常笨拙，又有着无比敏感的神经，一点风吹草动就能让它神经紧张，一件微不足道的小事就能让它怒火中烧。这糟糕的制度，就像一个越来越大的毒瘤，毒害着每一滴血液、每一根神经，并将最终把整个国家拖入可怕的灾难之中。

This monster may be frail, but it is still resilient. It is terminally ill, yet it still possesses lethal power. It is dumb yet is also extremely sensitive—the slightest breeze can set off anxiety attacks, trivial matters can ignite a towering rage. This rotten system is like a festering tumor that is poisoning every drop of blood and every nerve cell of my country, and will ultimately drag the entire nation towards catastrophe.

几千年的战争和杀戮之后，人类终于明白了一个道理：权力如同猛兽，随时可能暴起伤人。因此，必须把它关到笼子里。但在中国，大多数人总盼望迷信明君贤相式的统治，总希望有一只不那么残暴的猛兽来统治他们。我觉得这是不可能实现的愿望，因为猛兽的野性尚存，随时准备择人而噬。

Wars and man-made catastrophes over thousands of years have taught people one thing: Power is a monster that kills. Therefore, it must be caged. But rather than striving for a better system, many Chinese people are still dreaming of a wise and kind-hearted ruler—a not-so-vicious monster. I believe this dream will remain a dream because a monster will attack as long as it is not caged—it is the nature of the beast.

当权力的野兽在身边咆哮，人们会变得格外谨慎，只要日子还能过得下去，他们就绝不会多说一句话。他们漠视自己的权利，也漠视别人的权利，邻居的房子被拆，他们若无其事地看着，等到他们自己的房子被拆，邻居们也在旁边若无其事地看着。

When this powerful monster roars, people become timid. They are content to be mute as long as they can survive. They neglect their own rights, and the rights of others. They stand by idly when their neighbour's home is bulldozed. When their own homes are bulldozed, other people stand by idly.

一个月前，我在一次演讲中谈到中国人的责任。我说，作为现代公民，我们应该知道，这国家有你的一份，它好，有你的一份，它不好，也有你的一份，我们不能假装自己可以避开了这些问题。人类社会是一个整体，没人可以置身事外。一人不自由

，则人人不自由。一人不安全，则人人不安全。有人说，中国是一个没有底线的国家，这话不对，这国家并非没有低线，它以你我为低线。这糟糕的制度能够运行，是因为我们都曾经为之出过力，我们就是制度。如果它越来越好，是因为我们都曾为之努力，如果它越来越坏，也是因为我们的努力。

In a speech I delivered a month ago I spoke about the responsibilities of the Chinese people. I said: As citizens of our country, we must know that every one of us is an owner of our country. We are responsible for both its goodness and its flaws. We must not pretend we have nothing to do with China's problems. We all live on the same planet and no one can stand by idly. When one person's freedom is deprived, no one is free; when one person's safety is jeopardised, no one is safe. Some people say China is a nation that behaves as if it doesn't have a bottom line. I disagree. I believe there is a bottom line—we are the bottom line. This rotten system persists because we all have contributed to it, in one way or another—we are the system. If the system improves, that's because we have worked on it. If the system gets worse, that's also because we have contributed.

要想这个国家变好，首先要做的是让自己变好。一个美好的国家不是一群奴隶能够建成的，她需要许多聪明而有担当的人，这就是“公民”二字的含义。他们不仅爱自己，还爱国家；不仅关心自己的权利，也关心别人的权利；不仅捍卫自己的自由，也捍卫别人的自由。不仅捍卫自己的房子，也勇于捍卫邻居的房子。他们在大众沉默之时敢于发出声音，他们在大众踟蹰之时敢于迈出脚步。把自己变好是一场光荣而艰难的事业，注定要经历挫折和磨难，但我们看到，有越来越多的中国人开始明白自己的责任，他们从沉默中走出，诚实地说话，温和地建言，有些人因此而遭受不幸，但他们还在坚持，坚持在黑暗中发出孤独的声音。

To make this country a better country, we first must make ourselves better. A group of slaves can never build a great nation, but modern citizens can—citizens who are intelligent and responsible. They not only love themselves, but also their country. They not only care about their own rights but also the rights of others; they not only defend their own freedom, but also the freedom of others; they not only defend their houses, but also their neighbour's houses. They will never evade their responsibilities and will speak out when everyone else is silenced; they will never stop advancing when everyone else halts in hesitation. To make ourselves better is an honourable process and we are bound to encounter setbacks and hardship. Despite hardship, more and more Chinese people now are aware of their responsibilities. They break the silence, speak the truth, and calmly make suggestions. Some are suffering for their actions but refuse to be cowered or silenced.

两千多年前，孔夫子说过一句话：邦有道则仕，邦无道则隐。但作为一个现代公民，我们更应该这么说：邦无道，我们应该批评它，监督它，使之有道。邦有道，我们应该批评它，监督它，使之更加有道。这是我的理想，也是我的事业，我将终生为之努力。

Over two thousand years ago, Confucius said one should only serve the state if it is righteous, otherwise one should eschew serving the state. However, to become citizens of a modern society, I say we should criticize the government if it does not do the right thing, and we should also keep an eye on the government even if it is already doing the right thing. This is my belief and this is what will I do for the rest of my life.

最后我要说，我不是阶级敌人，不是颠覆分子，我只是想把怪物关进笼子里。没错，我是在批评自己的国家，但这并不表示我恨这个国家，相反，我爱我的祖国，我爱她壮丽的山河、辉煌的文明，也爱她的苦难，并将因为这苦难而加倍爱它。没错，我是在批评这糟糕的制度，但在这个制度变好的过程中我绝不希望看到流血，我只希望可以使这制度温柔地变好。我有一个梦想，希望在不久的将来，花朵能在我的祖国自由绽放，中国的孩子可以尽情欢笑，中国，这古老的国家，苦难钟爱之地，能够变成富足、和平而自由的国家。

Finally, I hope you believe me that I am not a class enemy, nor an over-thrower of governments. All I want is to cage the monster. Yes, I am criticizing my country, but that doesn't mean I hate my country. Rather, I love my country. I love her splendid mountains and rivers and her great civilization. I appreciate the suffering she has experienced. In fact, I love my country even more because of the suffering she has been through. Yes, I am criticizing her rotten system, but I do not want to see bloodshed while my country is improving herself. I hope the system will improve gracefully. I hope in the near future, in my country, flowers of freedom will blossom and children will smile without fear. I hope in the near future, my country, an ancient civilization, a land of suffering, will become a nation of prosperity, peace and freedom, for all.