



10

1971

# CHINESE LITERATURE



**Our great leader Chairman Mao and his close comrade-in-arms Vice-Chairman Lin Biao**

## Quotations From Chairman Mao Tsetung

This couplet from a poem by Lu Hsun should be our motto:

Fierce-browed I coolly defy a thousand pointing fingers,  
Head-bowed, like a willing ox I serve the children.

The “thousand pointing fingers” are our enemies, and we will never yield to them, no matter how ferocious. The “children” here symbolize the proletariat and the masses. All Communists, all revolutionaries, all revolutionary literary and art workers should learn from the example of Lu Hsun and be “oxen” for the proletariat and the masses, bending their backs to the task until their dying day.

— *Talks at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art*

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## A Madman's Diary

Two brothers, whose names I need not mention here, were both good friends of mine in high school; but after a separation of many years we gradually lost touch. Some time ago I happened to hear that one of them was seriously ill, and since I was going back to my old home I broke my journey to call on them. I saw only one of them, however, who told me that the invalid was his younger brother.

"I appreciate your coming such a long way to see us," he said, "but he recovered some time ago and has gone elsewhere to wait for an official appointment." Then, laughing, he produced two volumes of his brother's diary, saying that from these the nature of his past illness could be seen, and that there was no harm in showing them to an old friend. I took the diary home and read it through, and found that he had suffered from a form of persecution complex. The writing was most confused and incoherent, and he had made many wild statements; moreover he had omitted to give any dates, so that only by

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We publish in this issue a selection of Lu Hsun's writings together with an article on him by his brother Chou Chien-jen, in commemoration of the 90th anniversary of his birth which falls this year.

the colour of the ink and the differences in the writing could one tell that it was not written at one time. Certain sections, however, were not altogether disconnected, and I have copied out a part to serve as a subject for medical research. I have not altered a single illogicality in the diary and have changed only the names, even though the people referred to are all country folk, unknown to the world and of no consequence. As for the title, it was chosen by the diarist himself after his recovery, and I did not change it.

April 2, 1918

## 1

Tonight the moon is very bright.

I have not seen him for over thirty years, so today when I saw him I felt in unusually high spirits. I begin to realize that during the past thirty odd years I have been in the dark; but now I must be extremely careful. Otherwise why should that dog at the Chao house have looked at me several times?

I have reason for my fear.

## 2

Tonight there is no moon at all, I know that this bodes ill. This morning when I went out cautiously, Mr. Chao had a strange look in his eyes, as if he were afraid of me, as if he wanted to murder me. There were also seven or eight others, who discussed me in a whisper. And they were afraid of my seeing them. The people I passed by were all like that. The fiercest among them grinned at me; whereupon I shivered from head to foot, knowing that their preparations were complete.

I was not afraid, however, but continued on my way. A group of children in front were also discussing me, and the look in their eyes was just like that in Mr. Chao's, while their faces too were ghastly pale. I wondered what grudge these children could have against me to make them behave like this. I could not help calling out: "Tell me!" But then they ran away.

I wonder what grudge Mr. Chao can have against me, what grudge the people on the road can have against me. I can think of nothing except that twenty years ago I trod on Mr. Ku Chiu's\* account sheets for many years past, and Mr. Ku was very displeased. Although Mr. Chao does not know him, he must have heard talk of this and decided to avenge him, so he is conspiring with the people on the road against me. But then what of the children? At that time they were not yet born, so why should they have eyed me so strangely today, as if they were afraid of me, as if they wanted to murder me? This really frightens me, it is so bewildering and upsetting.

I know. They must have learnt this from their parents!

## 3

I can't sleep at night. Everything requires careful consideration if one is to understand it.

Those people—some of them have been pilloried by the magistrate, some slapped in the face by the local gentry, some have had their wives taken away by bailiffs, some have had their parents driven to death by creditors; yet they never looked as frightened and as fierce then as they did yesterday.

The most extraordinary thing was that woman on the street yesterday who was spanking her son and saying, "Little devil! I'd like to bite several mouthfuls out of you to work off my feelings!" Yet all the time she was looking at me. I gave a start, unable to control myself; then all those green-faced, long-toothed people began to laugh derisively. Then the Fifth hurried forward and dragged me home.

He dragged me home. The folk at home all pretended not to know me; they had the same look in their eyes as all the others. When I went into the study, they locked the door outside as if cooping up a chicken or a duck. This incident left me even more bewildered.

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\*Ku Chiu means "Ancient Times". Lu Hsun had in mind the long history of feudal oppression in China.

A few days ago a tenant of ours from Wolf Cub Village came to report the failure of the crops, and told my elder brother that a notorious character in their village had been beaten to death; then some people had taken out his heart and liver, fried them in oil and eaten them, as a means of increasing their courage. When I interrupted, the tenant and my brother both stared at me. Only today have I realized that they had exactly the same look in their eyes as those people outside.

Just to think of it sets me shivering from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet.

They eat human beings, so they may eat me.

One can see that woman's "bite several mouthfuls out of you", the laughter of those green-faced, long-toothed people and the tenant's story the other day are obviously secret signs. I realize all the poison in their speech, all the daggers in their laughter. Their teeth are white and glistening: they are all instruments for eating men.

It seems to me, although I am not a bad man, ever since I trod on Mr. Ku's accounts it has been touch-and-go. They seem to have secrets which I cannot guess, and once they are angry they will call anyone a bad character. I remember when my elder brother taught me to write compositions, no matter how good a man was, if I produced arguments to the contrary he would mark that passage to show approval; while if I excused evil-doers, he would say: "Good for you, that shows originality." How can I possibly guess their secret thoughts—especially when they are ready to eat people?

Everything requires careful consideration if one is to understand it. In ancient times, as I recollect, people often ate human beings, but I am rather hazy about it. I tried to look this up, but my history has no chronology, and scrawled all over each page are the words: "Virtue and Morality". Since I could not sleep anyway, I read hard half the night, until I began to see words between the lines, the whole book being filled with the two words—"Eat people".

All these words written in the book, all the words spoken by our tenant, gaze at me strangely with an enigmatic smile.

I too am a man, and they want to eat me!

In the morning I sat quietly for some time. Chen the Fifth brought lunch in: one bowl of vegetables, one bowl of steamed fish. The eyes of the fish were white and hard, and its mouth was open just like those people who want to eat human beings. After a few mouthfuls I could not tell whether the slippery morsels were fish or human flesh, so I brought it all up.

I said, "Chen the Fifth, tell my brother that I am feeling quite suffocated, and want to have a stroll in the garden." Chen the Fifth said nothing but went out, and presently he came back and opened the door.

I did not move, watching to see how they would treat me, knowing that they certainly would not let me go. Sure enough! My elder brother came slowly in, leading an old man. There was a murderous gleam in his eyes, and fearing that I would see it he lowered his head, stealing glances at me from the side of his spectacles.

"You seem to be very well today," said my brother.

"Yes," said I.

"I have invited Dr. Ho here today," said my brother, "to give you a medical check-up."

"All right," said I. But actually I know quite well that this old man was the executioner in disguise! He was simply using the pretext of feeling my pulse to see how fat I was; for by so doing he would be given a share of my flesh. Still I was not afraid. Although I do not eat men, my courage is greater than theirs. I held out my two fists, watching what he would do. The old man sat down, closed his eyes, fumbled for some time and remained still for some time; then he opened his shifty eyes and said, "Don't let your imagination run away with you. Rest quietly for a few days, and you will be all right."

Don't let my imagination run away with me! Rest quietly for a few days! When I have grown fat, naturally they will have more to eat; but what good will it do me, or how can it be "all right"? All these people wanting to eat human flesh and at the same time stealthily trying to keep up appearances, not daring to act promptly, really made me nearly die of laughter. I could not help roaring with

laughter, I felt so amused. I knew that in this laughter were courage and integrity. Both the old man and my brother turned pale, awed by my courage and integrity.

But just because I am brave they are the more eager to eat me, in order to acquire some of my courage. The old man went out of the door, but before he had gone far he said to my brother in a low voice, "To be eaten at once!" And my brother nodded. So you are in it too! This stupendous discovery, although it came as a shock, is yet no more than I had expected: the accomplice in eating me is my elder brother!

The man-eater is my elder brother!

I am the younger brother of a man-eater!

I myself will be eaten by others, but none the less I am the younger brother of a man-eater!

## 5

These few days I have been thinking again: suppose that old man were not an executioner in disguise, but a real doctor; he would be none the less a man-eater. In that book on herbs, written by his predecessor Li Shih-chen,\* it is clearly stated that men's flesh can be fried and eaten; so can he still say that he does not eat men?

As for my elder brother, I have also good reason to suspect him. When he was teaching me, he said with his own lips, "People exchange their sons to eat."\*\* And once, in discussing a bad man, he said that not only did he deserve to be killed, he should "have his flesh eaten and his hide slept on".\*\* I was still young then, and my heart beat faster for some time. And he was not at all surprised by the story about eating a man's heart and liver that our tenant from Wolf Cub Village told us the other day, but kept nodding his head. He is evidently just as cruel as before. Since it is possible to "exchange sons to eat", then anything can be exchanged, anyone can be eaten. In the past I simply listened to his explanations, and let it go at that;

\*A famous pharmacologist (1518-1593), author of *Pen-tsao-kang-mu*, the *Materia Medica*.

\*\*These are quotations from the old classic, *Tso Chuan*.

now I know that when he was explaining to me, not only was there human oil at the corner of his lips, but his whole heart was set on eating men.

## 6

Pitch dark. I don't know whether it is day or night. The Chao family dog has started barking again.

The fierceness of a lion, the timidity of a rabbit, the craftiness of a fox. . . .

## 7

I know their way; they are not willing to kill anyone outright, nor do they dare, for fear of the consequences. So they have all banded together and set traps everywhere, to force me to kill myself. Just look at the behaviour of the men and women in the street a few days ago, and my elder brother's attitude these last few days, it is quite obvious. What they like best is for a man to take off his belt, and hang himself from a beam; for then they can enjoy their heart's desire without being blamed for murder. Naturally that sets them roaring with morbid laughter. On the other hand, if a man is frightened or worried to death, although that makes him rather thin, they still nod in approval.

They will only eat dead flesh! I remember reading somewhere of a hideous beast, with an ugly look in its eyes and appearance, called "hyena" which often eats dead flesh. Even the largest bones it grinds into fragments and swallows: the mere thought of this is enough to terrify one. Hyenas are related to wolves, and wolves belong to the canine species. The other day the dog in the Chao house looked at me several times; obviously it is in the plot too and has become their accomplice. The old man's eyes were cast down, but how could that deceive me!

The most deplorable is my elder brother. He is also a man, so why is he not in the least afraid, even plotting with others to eat me?

Is it that he is used to it and no longer thinks it a crime? Or is it that he has hardened his heart to do something he knows is wrong?

In cursing man-eaters, I shall start with my brother, and in dissuading man-eaters, I shall start with him too.

## 8

Actually, such arguments should have convinced them long ago. . . .

Suddenly someone came in. He was only about twenty years old and I did not see his features very clearly. His face was wreathed in smiles, and when he nodded to me his smile did not seem genuine. Then I asked him: "Is it right to eat human beings?"

Still smiling, he replied, "When there is no famine how can one eat human beings?"

I realized at once, he was one of them; but still I summoned up courage to repeat my question:

"Is it right?"

"What makes you ask such a thing? You really are . . . fond of a joke. . . . It is very fine today."

"It is fine, and the moon is very bright. But I want to ask you: Is it right?"

He looked disconcerted, and muttered: "No. . . ."

"No? Then why do they still do it?"

"What are you talking about?"

"What am I talking about? They are eating men now in Wolf Cub Village, and you can see it written all over the books, in fresh red."

His expression changed, and he grew ghastly pale. "It may be so," he said, staring at me. "It has always been like that. . . ."

"Is it right because it has always been like that?"

"I refuse to discuss these things with you. Anyway, you shouldn't talk about it. Whoever talks about it is in the wrong!"

I leapt up and opened my eyes wide, but the man had vanished. I was soaked with perspiration. He was much younger than my elder brother, but even so he was in it. He must have been taught by his parents. And I am afraid he has already taught his son: that is why even the children look at me so fiercely.

## 9

Wanting to eat men, at the same time afraid of being eaten themselves, they all look at each other with the deepest suspicion. . . .

How comfortable life would be for them if they could get rid of such obsessions and go to work, walk, eat and sleep at ease. They have only this one step to take. And yet fathers and sons, husbands and wives, brothers, friends, teachers and students, sworn enemies and even strangers, have all joined in this conspiracy, discouraging and preventing each other from taking this step.

## 10

Early this morning I went to look for my elder brother. He was standing outside the hall door looking at the sky, when I walked up behind him, stood between him and the door, and with exceptional poise and politeness said to him:

"Brother, I have something to say to you."

"Well, what is it?" said he, quickly turning towards me and nodding.

"It is very little, but I find it difficult to say. Brother, probably all primitive people ate a little human flesh to begin with. Later, because their outlook changed, some of them stopped, and because they tried to be good they changed into men, changed into real men. But some are still eating — just like reptiles: some have changed into fish, birds, monkeys and finally men; but some do not try to be good, and remain reptiles still. When those who eat men compare themselves with those who do not, how ashamed they must be. Probably much more ashamed than the reptiles before the monkeys.

"In ancient times Yi Ya steamed his son for Chieh and Chou to eat; that is the old story.\* But actually since the creation of heaven and earth by Pan Ku men have been eating each other, from the time of

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\*According to ancient records, Yi Ya cooked his son and presented him to Duke Huan of Chi who reigned from 685 to 643 B.C. Chieh and Chou were tyrants of an earlier age. The madman has made a mistake here.

Yi Ya's son to the time of Hsu Hsi-lin,\* and from the time of Hsu Hsi-lin down to the man caught in Wolf Cub Village. Last year they executed a criminal in the city, and a consumptive soaked a piece of bread in his blood and sucked it.\*\*

"They want to eat me, and of course you can do nothing about it single-handed; but why should you join them? As man-eaters they are capable of anything. If they eat me, they can eat you as well; members of the same group can still eat each other. But if you will just change your ways immediately, then everyone will have peace. Although this has been going on since time immemorial, today we could make a special effort to be good, and say this can't be done! I'm sure you can say so, brother. The other day when the tenant wanted the rent reduced, you said it couldn't be done."

At first he only smiled cynically, then a murderous gleam came into his eyes, and when I spoke of their secret his face turned pale. Outside the gate stood a group of people, including Mr. Chao and his dog, all craning their necks and trying to edge themselves into the compound. I could not see all their faces, for they seemed to be masked in cloths; some of them looked pale and ghastly still, smiling in secret. I knew they were one band, all man-eaters. But I also knew that they did not all think alike by any means. Some of them thought that since it had always been so, men should be eaten. Some of them knew that they should not eat men, but still wanted to; and they were afraid people might disclose their secret; thus when they heard me they became angry, but they still smiled their cynical, tight-lipped smile.

Suddenly my brother looked furious, and shouted in a loud voice: "Get out of here, all of you! What is the point of looking at a madman?"

Then I realized part of their cunning. They would never be willing to change their stand, and their plans were all laid; they had stigmatized

\*A revolutionary at the end of the Ching Dynasty (1644-1911), Hsu Hsi-lin was executed in 1907 for assassinating a Ching official. His heart and liver were eaten.

\*\*It was believed that human blood cured consumption. Thus after the execution of a criminal, the executioner would sell steamed bread dipped in blood.

me as a madman. In future when I was eaten, not only would there be no trouble, but people would probably be grateful to them. When our tenant spoke of a bad character being eaten, it was exactly the same device. This is their old trick.

When the Fifth came in, in a great temper, but they could not stop my mouth, I had to speak to those people:

"You should change, change from the bottom of your hearts! You must know that in future there will be no place for man-eaters in the world.

"If you don't change, you may all be eaten by each other. Although so many are born, they will be wiped out by the real men, just like wolves killed by the hunters. Just like reptiles!"

When the Fifth drove everybody away. My brother had disappeared. When the Fifth advised me to go back to my room. The room was pitch dark. The beams and rafters shook above my head. After shaking for some time they grew larger. They piled on top of me.

The weight was so great, I could not move. They meant that I should die. I knew that the weight was false, so I struggled out, covered in perspiration. But I had to say:

"You should change at once, change from the bottom of your hearts! You must know that in future there will be no place for man-eaters in the world..."

## 11

The sun does not shine, the door is not opened, every day two meals.

I took up my chopsticks, then thought of my elder brother; I know now how my little sister died: it was all through him. My sister was only five at the time. I can still remember how lovable and pathetic she looked. Mother cried and cried, but he begged her not to cry, probably because he had eaten my sister himself, and so her crying made him feel ashamed. If he had any sense of shame...

My sister was eaten by my brother, but I don't know whether mother realized it or not.

I think mother must have known, but when she was crying she did not say so outright, probably because she thought it proper too. I remember when I was four or five years old, sitting in the cool of the hall, my brother told me that if a man's parents were ill he should cut off a piece of his flesh and boil it for them, if he wanted to be considered a good son; and mother did not contradict him. If one piece could be eaten, obviously so could the whole. And yet just to think of the mourning then still makes my heart bleed; that is the extraordinary thing about it!

## 12

I can't bear to think of it.

I have only just realized that I have been living all these years in a place where for four thousand years they have been eating human flesh. My brother had just taken over the charge of the house when our sister died, and he may well have used her flesh in our rice and dishes, making us eat it unwittingly.

It is possible that I ate several pieces of my sister's flesh unwittingly, and now it is my turn. . . .

How can a man like myself, after four thousand years of man-eating history — even though I knew nothing about it at first — ever hope to face real men?

## 13

Perhaps there are still children who have not eaten men?

Save the children. . . .

April 1918

## The New Year's Sacrifice

New Year's Eve of the old calendar\* seems after all more like the real New Year's Eve; for, to say nothing of the villages and towns, even in the air there is a feeling that New Year is coming. From the pale, lowering evening clouds issue frequent flashes of light, followed by a rumbling sound of firecrackers celebrating the departure of the Hearth God; while, nearer by, the firecrackers explode even more violently, and before the deafening report dies away the air is filled with a faint smell of powder. It was on such a night that I returned to my native place, Luchen. Although I call it my native place, I had had no home there for some time, so I had to put up temporarily with a certain Mr. Lu the Fourth. He is a member of our clan, and belongs to the generation before mine, so I ought to call him "Fourth Uncle". An old student of the imperial college\*\* who went in for Neo-Confucianism, I found him very little changed in any way, simply slightly older, but without any moustache as yet. When we met, after exchanging a few polite remarks he said I was fatter, and after

\*The Chinese lunar calendar.

\*\*The highest institute of learning in the Ching Dynasty.

saying I was fatter immediately started a violent attack on the reformists. I knew this was not meant personally, because the object of the attack was still Kang Yu-wei.\* Nevertheless, conversation proved difficult, so that in a short time I found myself alone in the study.

The next day I got up very late, and after lunch went out to see some relatives and friends. The day after I did the same. None of them was greatly changed, simply slightly older; but every family was busy preparing for "the sacrifice". This is the great end-of-year ceremony in Luchen, when people reverently welcome the God of Fortune and solicit good fortune for the coming year. They kill chickens and geese and buy pork, scouring and scrubbing until all the women's arms turn red in the water, some of them still wearing twisted silver bracelets. After the meat is cooked some chopsticks are thrust into it at random, and this is called the "offering". It is set out at dawn when incense and candles are lit, and they reverently invite the God of Fortune to come and partake of the offering. Only men can be worshippers, and after the sacrifice they naturally continue to let off firecrackers as before. This happens every year, in every family, provided they can afford to buy the offering and firecrackers; and this year they naturally followed the old custom.

The day grew overcast and in the afternoon it actually started to snow, the biggest snowflakes as large as plum blossom petals, fluttering about the sky; and this combined with the smoke and air of activity to make Luchen appear in a ferment. When I returned to my uncle's study the roof of the house was already white with snow and the room also appeared brighter, lighting up very clearly the great red stone rubbing of the character for Longevity hanging on the wall, written by the Taoist saint Chen Tuan.\*\* One of a pair of scrolls had fallen down and was lying loosely rolled up on the long table, but the other was still hanging there, bearing the words: "By understanding reason we achieve tranquillity of mind." Idly, I went to turn over the books on the table beneath the window, but all I could find was a pile of what

\*A famous reformist who lived from 1858 to 1927 and advocated constitutional monarchy.

\*\*A hermit at the beginning of the tenth century.

looked like an incomplete set of *Kang Hsi's Dictionary*,\* a volume of *Neo-Confucian Writings of the Sung Dynasty* and a volume of *Commentaries on the Four Books*\*\* At all events, I made up my mind to leave the next day.

Besides, the very thought of my meeting with Hsiang Lin's Wife the day before made me uncomfortable. It had happened in the afternoon. I had been visiting a friend in the eastern part of the town. As I came out I met her by the river, and seeing the way she fastened her eyes on me I knew very well she meant to speak to me. Of all the people I had seen this time at Luchen none had changed as much as she: her hair, which had been streaked with white five years before, was now completely white, quite unlike someone in her forties. Her face was fearfully thin and dark in its sallowness, and had moreover lost its former expression of sadness, looking as if carved out of wood. Only an occasional flicker of her eyes showed she was still a living creature. In one hand she carried a bamboo basket, in which was a broken bowl, empty; in the other she held a bamboo pole longer than herself, split at the bottom: it was clear she had become a beggar.

I stood still, waiting for her to come and ask for money.

"You have come back?" she asked me first.

"Yes."

"That is very good. You are a scholar, and have travelled too and seen a lot. I just want to ask you something." Her lustreless eyes suddenly gleamed.

I could never have guessed she would talk to me like this. I stood there taken by surprise.

"It is this." She drew two paces nearer, and whispered very confidentially: "After a person dies, does he turn into a ghost or not?"

I was seized with foreboding, seeing her fixing me with her eyes. A shiver ran down my spine and I felt more nervous than when an unexpected examination is sprung on me at school, and unfortunately the teacher stands by my side. Personally, I had never given the least thought to the question of the existence of spirits; but in this

\*A Chinese dictionary compiled under the auspices of Emperor Kang Hsi who reigned from 1662 to 1722.

\*\*Confucian classics.

emergency how should I answer her? Hesitating for a moment, I reflected: "It is the tradition here to believe in spirits, yet she, she seems to be sceptical — perhaps it would be better to say she hopes: hopes that there is ghost and yet hopes that there is not. Why increase the sufferings of the wretched? To give her something to look forward to, it would be better to say there is."

"There may be, I think," I told her hesitantly.

"Then, there must also be a Hell?"

"What, Hell?" Greatly startled, I could only try to evade the question. "Hell? According to reason there should be one too — but not necessarily. Who cares about it anyway?..."

"Then will all the people of one family who have died see each other again?"

"Well, as to whether they will see each other again or not..."

I realized now that I was still a complete fool; all my hesitation and reflection had been unable to stand up to the three questions. Immediately I lost confidence and wanted to say the exact opposite of what I had told her before. "In this case... as a matter of fact, I am not sure... Actually, regarding the question of ghosts, I am not sure either."

In order to avoid further importunate questions, I walked off, and beat a hasty retreat to my uncle's house, feeling exceedingly uncomfortable. I thought to myself: "My answer might prove dangerous to her. Probably it is just that when other people are celebrating she feels lonely by herself, but could there be any other reason? Could she have had some premonition? If there is any other reason, and something happens as a result, then, through my answer, I should be held responsible to a certain extent." Finally, however, I ended by laughing at myself, thinking that such a chance meeting could have no great significance, and yet I was taking it so to heart; no wonder certain educationalists called me a neurotic case. Moreover I had distinctly said, "I am not sure," contradicting my previous answer; so even if anything should happen, it would have nothing at all to do with me.

"I am not sure" is a most useful phrase.



*Hsiang Lin's Wife*

Woodcut by Ku Yuan

Inexperienced and rash young men often take it upon themselves to solve people's problems for them or choose doctors for them, and if by any chance things turn out badly, they are probably held to blame; but by simply concluding with this phrase "I am not sure," one can free oneself of all responsibility. At this time I felt even more strongly the necessity for such a phrase, since even in speaking with a beggar woman there was no dispensing with it.

However, I continued to feel uncomfortable, and even after a night's rest my mind kept running on this, as if I had a premonition of some untoward development. In that oppressive snowy weather, in the gloomy study, this discomfort kept increasing. It would be better to leave: I should go back to town the next day. The boiled shark's fins in the Fu Hsing Restaurant had cost a dollar for a large portion, and I wondered if this cheap and delicious dish had increased in price or not. Although the friends who had accompanied me in the old days had scattered, the shark's fins still had to be tasted, even if I was alone. At all events, I made up my mind to leave the next day.

Having had many experiences when things which I hoped would not happen and felt should not happen invariably did happen, I was desperately afraid this would prove another such case. And, indeed, strange things did begin to happen. Towards evening I heard talking — it sounded like a discussion — in the inner room; but soon the conversation ended, and all I heard was my uncle saying loudly as he walked out: "Not earlier nor later, but just at this time — sure sign of a bad character!"

I felt first astonished, then very uncomfortable, thinking these words must refer to me. I looked outside the door, but no one was there. I contained myself with difficulty till their servant came in before supper to brew a pot of tea, when at last I had a chance to make some inquiries.

"With whom was Mr. Lu the Fourth angry just now?" I asked.

"Why, still with Hsiang Lin's Wife," he replied briefly.

"Hsiang Lin's Wife? How was that?" I asked again.

"She's dead."

"Dead?" My heart suddenly missed a beat. I started, and probably changed colour too. But all this time he did not raise his head, so he was quite unaware of how I felt. Then I controlled myself, and asked:

"When did she die?"

"When? Last night, or else today, I'm not sure."

"How did she die?"

"How did she die? Why, of poverty of course." He answered placidly and, still without having raised his head to look at me, went out.

However, my agitation was only short-lived, for now that something I had felt imminent had already taken place, I no longer had to take refuge in my "I'm not sure," or the servant's expression "dying of poverty" for comfort. My heart already felt lighter. Only from time to time did there still seem to be something weighing on it. Dinner was served, and my uncle accompanied me solemnly. I wanted to ask about Hsiang Lin's Wife, but knew that although he had read, "Ghosts and spirits are properties of Nature,"\* he had retained many taboos, and on the eve of this sacrifice it was out of the question to mention anything like death or illness. In case of necessity one could use veiled allusions, but unfortunately I did not know how to, so although questions kept rising to the tip of my tongue, I had to bite them back. From his solemn expression I suddenly suspected that he looked on me as choosing not earlier nor later but just this time to come and trouble him, and that I was also a bad character; therefore to set his mind at rest I told him at once that I intended to leave Luchen the next day and go back to the city. He did not press me greatly to stay. So we quietly finished the meal.

In winter the days are short and, now that it was snowing, darkness already enveloped the whole town. Everybody was busy beneath the lamplight, but outside the windows was very quiet. Snowflakes fell on the thickly piled snow as if with a faint pattering sound, making one feel even more lonely. I sat by myself under the yellow gleam of the vegetable oil lamp and thought, "This poor woman, abandoned

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\*A saying by the neo-Confucian scholar Chang Tsai of Sung Dynasty (960-1279).

by people in the dust as a tiresome and worn-out toy, once left her own imprint in the dust, and those who enjoy life must have wondered why she should have existed at all; but now at least she has been swept clear by eternity. Whether spirits exist or not I do not know; but in the present world when a meaningless existence ends, so that someone whom others are tired of seeing is no longer seen, it is just as well, both for the individual concerned and for others." I listened quietly and heard the snow falling outside the window, still pursuing this train of thought, until gradually I felt less ill at ease.

Yet fragments of her life, seen or heard before, now combined to form one whole.

She did not belong to Luchen. One year at the beginning of winter, when Fourth Uncle's family wanted to change their maid-servant, Old Mrs. Wei, who acted as introducer, brought her in. Her hair was tied with white bands, she wore a black skirt, blue jacket and pale green bodice, and was about twenty-six, with a pale face but rosy cheeks. Old Mrs. Wei called her Hsiang Lin's Wife, and said that she was a neighbour of her mother's family, and because her husband was dead she wanted to come out to work. My uncle knitted his brows and my aunt immediately understood that he disapproved of her because she was a widow. She looked very suitable, though, with big strong feet and hands, and a meek expression; and she had not said a word but showed every sign of being tractable and hard-working. So my aunt paid no attention to my uncle's frown, but kept her. During the period of probation she worked from morning till night, as if she found resting dull, and she was so strong that she could do a man's work; accordingly on the third day it was settled, and each month she was to be paid five hundred cash.

Everybody called her Hsiang Lin's Wife. They did not ask her her own name; but since she was introduced by someone from Wei Village who said she was a neighbour, presumably her name was also Wei. She was not very talkative, only answering when other people spoke to her, and her answers were brief. It was not until a dozen days or so had passed that they learned little by little that she still had a severe mother-in-law at home and a younger brother-in-law more than ten years old, who could cut wood. Her husband,

who had been a woodcutter too, had died in the spring. He had been ten years younger than she. This little was all that people learned from her.

The days passed quickly, but she worked as hard as ever; she would eat anything, and did not spare herself. Everybody agreed that the Lu family had found a very good maid-servant, who really got through more work than a hard-working man. At the end of the year she swept, mopped, killed chickens and geese and sat up to boil the sacrificial meat, single-handed, so the family did not have to hire extra help. Nevertheless she, on her side, was satisfied; gradually the trace of a smile appeared at the corner of her mouth, and her face became whiter and plumper.

New Year was scarcely over when she came back from washing rice by the river, looking pale, and said that she had just seen in the distance a man wandering on the opposite bank who looked very like her husband's cousin, and probably he had come to look for her. My aunt, much alarmed, made detailed inquiries, but failed to get any further information. As soon as my uncle learned of it he frowned and said, "This is bad. She must have run away from her husband's family."

Before long this inference that she had run away was confirmed.

About a fortnight later, just as everybody was beginning to forget what had happened, Old Mrs. Wei suddenly called, bringing with her a woman in her thirties who, she said, was the maid-servant's mother-in-law. Although the woman looked like a villager from the mountain district she behaved with great self-possession and had a ready tongue in her head. After the usual polite remarks she apologized for coming to take her daughter-in-law home, saying there was a great deal to be done at the beginning of spring, and since there were only old people and children at home they were short-handed.

"Since it is her mother-in-law who wants her to go back, what is there to be said?" was my uncle's comment.

Thereupon her wages were reckoned up. They amounted to one thousand seven hundred and fifty cash, all of which she had left with her mistress without using a single coin; and now my aunt gave the entire amount to her mother-in-law. The latter also took her

clothes, thanked Mr. and Mrs. Lu and went out. By this time it was already noon.

"Oh, the rice! Didn't Hsiang Lin's Wife go to wash the rice?" my aunt exclaimed some time later. Probably she was rather hungry, so that she remembered lunch.

Thereupon everybody set about looking for the rice basket. My aunt went first to the kitchen, then to the hall, then to the bedroom; but not a trace of it was to be seen anywhere. My uncle went outside, but could not find it either; only when he went right up to the riverside did he see it, set down fair and square on the bank, with a bundle of vegetables at the side.

Some people there told him that a boat with a white awning had moored there in the morning, but since the awning covered the boat completely they did not know who was inside, and before this incident no one had paid any attention to it. But when Hsiang Lin's Wife came out to wash rice, two men looking like mountain folk jumped off the boat just as she was kneeling down and, seizing hold of her, carried her on board. After several shouts and cries, Hsiang Lin's Wife became silent: they had probably stopped her mouth. Then two women walked up, one of them a stranger and the other Old Mrs. Wei. When the people who told this story tried to peep into the boat they could not see very clearly, but she seemed to be lying bound on the floor of the boat.

"Disgraceful! Still..." said my uncle.

That day my aunt cooked the midday meal herself, and my cousin Ah Niu lit the fire.

After lunch Old Mrs. Wei came again.

"Disgraceful!" said my uncle.

"What is the meaning of this? How dare you come here again!" My aunt, who was washing dishes, started scolding as soon as she saw her. "You recommended her yourself, and then plotted to have her carried off, causing all this upstir. What will people think? Are you trying to make a laughing stock of our family?"

"*Aiya*, I was really taken in! Now I have come specially to clear this business up. When she asked me to find her work, how was I to know that she had left home without her mother-in-law's consent?"

I am very sorry, Mr. Lu, Mrs. Lu. Because I am so old and foolish and careless, I have offended my patrons. However, it is lucky for me that your family is always so generous and kind, and unwilling to be hard on your inferiors. This time I promise to find you someone good to make up for my mistake."

"Still . . ." said my uncle.

Thereupon Hsiang Lin's Wife's business was concluded, and before long it was also forgotten.

Only my aunt still often spoke of Hsiang Lin's Wife because the maid-servants taken on afterwards were all lazy or greedy for food, or else both lazy and greedy, with not a good one in the lot. On such occasions she would always say to herself. "I wonder what has become of her now?" meaning that she would like to have her back. But by the following New Year she too gave up hope.

The New Year's holiday was nearly over when Old Mrs. Wei, already half tipsy, came to pay her respects, and said it was because she had been back to the Wei Village to visit her mother's family and stayed a few days that she had come late. During the course of conversation they naturally came to speak of Hsiang Lin's Wife.

"She?" said Mrs. Wei cheerfully. "She is in luck now. When her mother-in-law dragged her home, she had already promised her to the sixth son of the Ho family in Ho Village; so not long after she reached home they put her in the bridal chair and sent her off."

"*Aiya!* What a mother-in-law!" exclaimed my aunt in amazement.

"Ah, madam, you really talk like a great lady! We country folk, poor people, think nothing of that. She still had a younger brother-in-law who had to get married. And if they hadn't found her a husband, where would they have got the money for his wedding? But her mother-in-law is a clever and capable woman, who knows how to drive a good bargain, so she married her off into the deep mountains. If she had married her to someone in the same village, she wouldn't have got so much money; because very few women are willing to marry someone living in the depth of the mountains, so she got eighty thousand cash. Now the second son has got married, only costing her fifty thousand for the presents, and after paying the

wedding expenses she has still over ten thousand left. Just think, doesn't this show she knows how to drive a good bargain? . . ."

"But was Hsiang Lin's Wife willing?"

"It wasn't a question of being willing or not. Of course anyone would have protested. But they just tied her up with a rope, stuffed her into the bridal chair, carried her to the man's house, forced her to put on the bridal head-dress, performed the ceremony in the hall and locked them into their room; and that was that. But Hsiang Lin's Wife is quite a character. I heard she really put up a great struggle, and everybody said it must be because she had worked in a scholar's family that she was different from other people. Madam, I've seen a great deal. When widows remarry, some cry and shout, some threaten to commit suicide, some when they have been carried to the man's house won't go through the ceremony, and some even smash the wedding candlesticks. But Hsiang Lin's Wife was different from the rest. They said she shouted and cursed all the way, so that by the time they had carried her to Ho Village she was completely hoarse. When they dragged her out of the chair, although two men and her young brother-in-law used all their strength, they couldn't force her to go through the ceremony. The moment they were careless enough to loosen their grip — gracious Buddha! — she threw herself against a corner of the table and knocked a big hole in her head. The blood poured out and although they used two handfuls of incense ashes and bandaged her with two pieces of red cloth, they still couldn't stop the bleeding. Finally it took all of them together to get her shut up with her husband in the bridal chamber, where she went on cursing. Oh, it was really . . ." she shook her head, cast down her eyes and said no more.

"And after that what happened?" asked my aunt.

"They said the next day she still didn't get up," said Old Mrs. Wei, raising her eyes.

"And after?"

"After? She got up. At the end of the year she had a baby, a boy, who was two this New Year.\* These few days when I was

\*It was the custom in old China to reckon a child as one year old at birth, and to add another year to his age at New Year.

at home some people went to Ho Village, and when they came back they said they had seen her and her son, and that both mother and baby are fat. There is no mother-in-law over her, the man is a strong fellow who can earn a living, and the house is their own. Well, well, she is really in luck."

After this even my aunt gave up talking of Hsiang Lin's Wife.

But one autumn, two New Years after they heard how lucky Hsiang Lin's Wife had been, she actually reappeared at the threshold of my uncle's house. On the table she placed a round bulb-shaped basket, and under the eaves a small roll of bedding. Her hair was still wrapped in white bands, and she wore a black skirt, blue jacket and pale green bodice. But her face was sallow and her cheeks had lost their colour; she kept her eyes downcast, and her eyes, with their tear-stained rims, were no longer bright. Just as before, it was Old Mrs. Wei, looking very benevolent, who brought her in, and who explained at length to my aunt:

"It was really a bolt from the blue. Her husband was so strong nobody could have guessed that a young fellow like that would die of typhoid fever. First he seemed better, but then he ate a bowl of cold rice and the sickness came back. Luckily she had the boy, and she can work, whether it is gathering firewood, picking tea-leaves or raising silkworms; so at first she was able to carry on. But then who could know that the child, too, would be carried off by a wolf? Although it was nearly the end of spring, still wolves came to the village — how could anyone have guessed that? Now she is all on her own. Her brother-in-law came to take the house, and turned her out; so she has really no way open to her but to come and ask help from her former mistress. Luckily this time there is nobody to stop her, and you happen to be wanting a new servant, so I have brought her here. I think someone who is used to your ways is much better than a new hand..."

"I was really stupid, really..." Hsiang Lin's Wife raised her listless eyes to say. "I only knew that when it snows the wild beasts in the glen have nothing to eat and may come to the villages; I didn't know that in spring they could come too. I got up at dawn and opened

the door, filled a small basket with beans and called our Ah Mao to go and sit at the threshold and shell the beans. He was very obedient and always did as I told him: he went out. Then I chopped wood at the back of the house and washed the rice, and when the rice was in the pan and I wanted to boil the beans I called Ah Mao, but there was no answer; and when I went out to look, all I could see was beans scattered on the ground, but no Ah Mao. He never went to other families to play; and in fact at each place that I went to ask, there was no sign of him. I became desperate, and begged people to go to look for him. Only in the afternoon, after looking everywhere else, did they go to look in the glen and see one of his little shoes caught on a bramble. 'That's bad,' they said, 'he must have met a wolf.' And sure enough when they went further in there he was, lying in the grass, with all his entrails eaten away, his hand still tightly clutching that little basket..." At this point she started crying, and was unable to complete the sentence.

My aunt had been undecided at first, but by the end of this story the rims of her eyes were rather red. After thinking for a moment she told her to take the round basket and bedding into the servants' quarters. Old Mrs. Wei heaved a long sigh as if relieved of a great burden. Hsiang Lin's Wife looked a little more at ease than when first she came and, without having to be told the way, quietly took away her bedding. From this time on she worked again as a maid-servant in Luchen.

Everybody still called her Hsiang Lin's Wife.

However, she had changed a great deal. She had not been there more than three days before her master and mistress realized that she was not as quick as before, her memory was much worse, and her impassive face never showed the least trace of a smile; thus my aunt already expressed herself not so much satisfied. When the woman first arrived, although my uncle frowned as before, still, they invariably had such difficulty in finding servants that he did not object very strongly, only secretly warned my aunt that while such people may seem very pitiful they exert a bad moral influence. Thus although it would be all right for her to do ordinary work she must not join in the preparations for sacrifice; they would have to prepare

all the dishes themselves, for otherwise they would be unclean and the ancestors would not accept them.

The most important event in my uncle's household was ancestral sacrifice, and formerly this had been Hsiang Lin's Wife's busiest time; but now she had very little to do. When the table was placed in the centre of the hall and the curtain fastened, she still remembered how to set out the winecups and chopsticks in the old way.

"Hsiang Lin's Wife, put those down!" said my aunt hastily. "I'll do it!"

She sheepishly withdrew her hand and went to get the candlesticks.

"Hsiang Lin's Wife, put those down!" cried my aunt hastily again. "I'll fetch them."

After walking round several times without finding anything to do, she could only go hesitantly away. All she could do that day was to sit by the stove and feed the fire.

The people in the town still called her Hsiang Lin's Wife, but in a different tone from before; and although they talked to her still, their manner was colder. She did not mind this in the least, only, looking straight in front of her, she would tell everybody her story, which was never out of her mind day or night.

"I was really stupid, really," she would say. "I only knew that when it snows the wild beasts in the glen have nothing to eat and may come to the villages; I didn't know that in spring they could come too. One day I got up at dawn and opened the door, filled a small basket with beans and called our Ah Mao to go and sit at the threshold and shell them. He was very obedient and always did as I told him: he went out. Then I chopped wood at the back of the house and washed the rice, and when the rice was in the pan and I wanted to boil the beans I called Ah Mao, but there was no answer; and when I went out to look, all I could see was beans scattered on the ground, but no Ah Mao. At each place that I went to ask, there was no sign of him. I became desperate, and begged people to go to look for him. Only in the afternoon did they see one of his little shoes caught on a bramble in the glen. 'That's bad,' they said, 'he must have met a wolf.' And sure enough when they went further in there he was, lying in the grass, with all his entrails eaten away,

his hand still tightly clutching that small basket. . . ." At this point she would start crying and her voice would trail away.

This story was rather effective, and when men heard it they often stopped smiling and walked away disconcerted, while the women not only seemed to forgive her but their faces immediately lost their contemptuous look and they added their tears to hers. There were some old women who had not heard her speaking in the street, who went specially to look for her, to hear her sad tale. When her voice trailed away and she started to cry, they joined in, shedding the tears which had gathered in their eyes. Then they sighed, and went away satisfied, exchanging comments.

She asked nothing better than to tell her sad story over and over again, often gathering three or four hearers. But before long everybody knew it by heart, until even in the eyes of the most kindly, Buddha-fearing old ladies not a trace of tears could be seen. In the end, almost everyone in the town could recite her tale, and it bored and exasperated them to hear it.

"I was really stupid, really . . ." she would begin.

"Yes, you only knew that in snowy weather the wild beasts in the mountains had nothing to eat and might come down to the villages." Promptly cutting short her recital, they walked away.

She would stand there open-mouthed, looking at them with a dazed expression, and then go away too, as if she also felt disconcerted. But she still brooded over it, hoping from other topics such as small baskets, beans and other people's children, to lead up to the story of her Ah Mao. If she saw a child of two or three, she would say, "Oh dear, if my Ah Mao were still alive, he would be just so big. . . ."

Children seeing the look in her eyes would take fright and, clutching the hems of their mothers' clothes, try to tug them away. Thereupon she would be left by herself again, and finally walk away disconcerted. Later everybody knew what she was like, and it only needed a child present for them to ask her with an artificial smile, "Hsiang Lin's Wife, if your Ah Mao were alive, wouldn't he be just as big as that?"

She probably did not realize that her story, after having been turned over and tasted by people for so many days, had long since

become stale, only exciting disgust and contempt; but from the way people smiled she seemed to know that they were cold and sarcastic, and that there was no need for her to say any more. She would simply look at them, not answering a word.

At Luchen people celebrate New Year in a big way: from the twentieth day of the twelfth lunar month onwards preparations start. This time my uncle's household found it necessary to hire a temporary manservant, but since there was still a great deal to do they also called in another maid-servant, Aunt Liu, to help. Chickens and geese had to be killed; but Aunt Liu was a devout woman who abstained from meat, did not kill living things, and would only wash the sacrificial dishes. Hsiang Lin's Wife had nothing to do but feed the fire. She sat there, resting, watching Aunt Liu as she washed the sacrificial dishes. A light snow began to fall.

"Dear me, I was really stupid," said Hsiang Lin's Wife, as if to herself, looking at the sky and sighing.

"Hsiang Lin's Wife, there you go again," said Aunt Liu, looking at her impatiently. "I ask you: that wound on your forehead, wasn't it then you got it?"

"Uh, huh," she answered vaguely.

"Let me ask you: what made you willing after all?"

"Me?"

"Yes. What I think is, you must have been willing; otherwise. . . ."

"Oh dear, you don't know how strong he was."

"I don't believe it. I don't believe he was so strong that you really couldn't keep him off. You must have been willing, only you put the blame on his being so strong."

"Oh dear, you . . . you try for yourself and see." She smiled.

Aunt Liu's lined face broke into a smile too, making it wrinkled like a walnut; her small beady eyes swept Hsiang Lin's Wife's forehead and fastened on her eyes. As if rather embarrassed, Hsiang Lin's Wife immediately stopped smiling, averted her eyes and looked at the snowflakes.

"Hsiang Lin's Wife, that was really a bad bargain," said Aunt Liu mysteriously. "If you had held out longer or knocked yourself to death, it would have been better. As it is, after living with your

second husband for less than two years, you are guilty of a great crime. Just think: when you go down to the lower world in future, these two men's ghosts will still fight over you. To which will you go? The King of Hell will have no choice but to cut you in two and divide you between them. I think, really. . . ."

Then terror showed in her face. This was something she had never heard in the mountains.

"I think you had better take precautions beforehand. Go to the Tutelary God's Temple and buy a threshold to be your substitute, so that thousands of people can walk over it and trample on it, in order to atone for your sins in this life and avoid torment after death."

At the time Hsiang Lin's Wife said nothing, but she must have taken this to heart, for the next morning when she got up there were dark circles beneath her eyes. And after breakfast she went to the Tutelary God's Temple at the west end of the village, and asked to contribute a threshold. The temple priest would not agree at first, and only when she shed tears did he give a grudging consent. The price was twelve thousand cash.

She had long since given up talking to people, because Ah Mao's story had been received with such contempt; but news of her conversation with Aunt Liu that day spread, and many people took a fresh interest in her and came again to tease her into talking. As for the subject, that had naturally changed to deal with the wound on her forehead.

"Hsiang Lin's Wife, I ask you: what made you willing after all that time?" one would say.

"Oh, what a pity, to have had this knock for nothing," another looking at her scar would agree.

Probably she knew from their smiles and tone of voice that they were making fun of her, for she always looked steadily at them without saying a word, and finally did not even turn her head. All day long she kept her lips tightly closed, bearing on her head the scar which everyone considered a mark of shame, silently shopping, sweeping the floor, washing vegetables, preparing rice. Only after nearly a year did she take from my aunt her wages which had been accumulating, which she changed for twelve silver dollars, and asking for leave

she went to the west end of the town. But in less time than it takes for a meal she was back again, looking much comforted, and with an unaccustomed light in her eyes; and she told my aunt happily that she had paid for a threshold in the Tutelary God's Temple.

When the time came for the ancestral sacrifice at the winter solstice, she worked harder than ever, and seeing my aunt take out the sacrificial dishes and carry the table with Ah Niu into the middle of the hall, she went confidently to fetch winecups and chopsticks.

"Put those down, Hsiang Lin's Wife!" my aunt called out hastily.

She withdrew her hand as if scorched, her face turned ashen-grey, and not daring to fetch the candlesticks she just stood there dazed. Only when my uncle came to burn incense and told her to go, did she walk away. This time the change in her was very great, for the next day not only were her eyes sunken, but even her spirit seemed broken. Moreover she became very timid, not only afraid of the dark and shadows, but also of the sight of anyone. Even her own master or mistress made her look as frightened as a little mouse that has come out of its hole in the daytime. For the rest, she would sit stupidly, like a wooden statue. In less than half a year her hair began to turn grey, and her memory became much worse, reaching a point when she was constantly forgetting to go and prepare the rice.

"What has come over Hsiang Lin's Wife? It would really have been better not to have kept her that time." My aunt would sometimes speak like this in front of her, as if to warn her.

However, she remained this way, so that it was impossible to see any hope of her improving. Then they decided to get rid of her and tell her to go back to Old Mrs. Wei. While I was at Luchen they were still only talking of this; but judging by what happened later, it is evident that this was what they must have done. But whether after leaving my uncle's household she became a beggar, or whether she went first to Old Mrs. Wei's house and later became a beggar, I do not know.

I was woken up by firecrackers exploding noisily close at hand, saw the glow of the yellow oil lamp as large as a bean, and heard

the splutter of fireworks as my uncle's household celebrated the sacrifice. I knew that it was nearly dawn. I heard vaguely as in a dream the confused continuous sound of distant crackers, which seemed to form one dense cloud of noise in the sky, joining with the whirling snowflakes to envelop the whole town. Enveloped in this medley of sound, relaxed and at ease, the doubt which had preyed on me from dawn to early night was swept clean away by the atmosphere of celebration, and I felt only that the saints of heaven and earth had accepted the sacrifice and incense and were all reeling with intoxication in the sky, preparing to give the people of Luchen boundless good fortune.

February 7, 1924

## In Memory of Miss Liu Ho-chen

On March the twenty-fifth in the fifteenth year of the Republic,\* the National Peking Women's Normal College held a memorial service for two girls, Liu Ho-chen and Yang Teh-chun,\*\* who were killed on the eighteenth in front of Tuan Chi-jui's Government House.\*\*\* I was pacing alone outside the hall, when Miss Cheng came up to me.

"Have you written anything, sir, for Liu Ho-chen?" she asked.

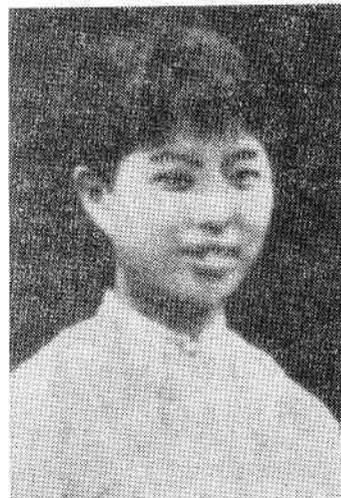
I answered, "No."

"I think you should, sir," she urged. "Liu Ho-chen always liked to read your essays."

\*1926.

\*\*Both were students of the National Peking Women's Normal College.

\*\*\*On March 12, 1926 Japanese gunboats steamed into the port of Taku and shelled the Chinese fort there, which fired back. On March 16 the Japanese, in conjunction with other imperialist countries, demanded that the Chinese government dismantle the fort. The people of Peking held a demonstration on March 18 at Tien An Men Square in protest against this brazen infringement of Chinese sovereignty. They marched with a mass petition to the Government House. Tuan Chi-jui, a warlord who was the president of the Provisional Government, ordered the police to fire at the demonstrators. Two hundred of them were killed.



Liu Ho-chen

I was aware of this. All the magazines I edit have a very poor circulation, quite likely because they often cease publication suddenly. Yet in spite of financial difficulties, she was one of those who ordered *Thorny Plain*\* quite generously for a whole year. And I have felt for some days that I should write something, for though this has no effect on the dead, it seems to be all the living can do. Of course, if I could believe that "the spirit lives on after death," that would give me greater comfort — but, as it is, this seems to be all I can do.

I really have nothing to say, though. I just feel that we are not living in the world of men. In a welter of more than forty young people's blood, I can barely see, hear or breathe, so what can I say? We can make no long lament till after our pain is dulled. And the insidious talk of some so-called scholars since this incident has added to my sense of desolation. I am beyond indignation. I shall sup deeply of the dark desolation which is not of the world of men, and present my deepest grief to this world which is not of men, letting it delight in my pain. This shall be the poor offering of one still living before the shrine of the dead.

## II

True fighters dare face the sorrows of humanity, and look unflinchingly at bloodshed. What sorrow and joy are theirs! But the Creator's common device for ordinary people is to let the passage of time wash away old traces, leaving only pale-red bloodstains and a vague pain;

\*A short-lived weekly edited by Lu Hsun from April to November, 1925.

and he lets men live on ignobly amid these, to keep this quasi-human world going. When will such a state of affairs come to an end?

We are still living in such a world, and some time ago I felt I must write something. A fortnight has passed since March the eighteenth, and soon the forgotten Saviour will be descending. I must write something now.

### III

Miss Liu Ho-chen, one of the more than forty young people killed, was my pupil. So I used to call her, and so I thought of her. But now I hesitate to call her my pupil, for now I should present to her my sorrow and my respect. She is no pupil now of one dragging on an ignoble existence like myself. She is a Chinese girl who has died for China.

I first saw her name early last summer, when Miss Yang Yin-yu as president of the Women's Normal College dismissed six members of the students' union. She was one of the six, but I did not know her. Only later — it may have been after Liu Pai-chao\* led his men and women lieutenants to drag the students out of the college — did someone point out one of the students to me and tell me that was Liu Ho-chen. When I knew who she was, I secretly marvelled. I had always imagined that any student who could stand up to the authorities and oppose a powerful president and her accomplices must be rather bold and intractable; but she nearly always had a smile on her face, and her manner was very gentle. After we found temporary lodgings at Tsungmao Hutung and started classes again, she began attending my

\*In the autumn of 1924, the students of the Women's Normal College rose against their reactionary principal Yang Yin-yu and kept up this struggle until 1925 when Chang Shih-chao, Minister of Education of the warlords' government, disbanded the college. Liu Pai-chao, a department head of the Ministry of Education who was sent to take over, employed hooligans and women beggars to beat up and carry off students, and established a new Women's University instead in the same premises. This aroused strong opposition in educational circles. After Chang Shih-chao's dismissal from office in November the students of the Women's Normal College moved back. Then Chen Yuan wrote articles inciting the students of the Women's University to drive them out. Together with some other reactionary professors, he set up a Society to Maintain Justice which supported the Women's University set up by Chang Shih-chao and exerted pressure on the students of the Women's Normal College and progressives in the field of education.

lectures, and so I saw more of her. She still always had a smile on her face, and her manner was very gentle. When the college was recovered, and the former members of the staff who felt they had now done their duty prepared to resign, I first noticed her in tears through concern for the college's future. After that, I believe, I never saw her again. At least, as far as I remember, that was our last meeting.

### IV

On the morning of the eighteenth I knew there was a mass petition before Government House; and that afternoon I heard the fearful news that the guards had actually opened fire, that there had been several hundred casualties, and that Liu Ho-chen was one of the dead. I was rather sceptical, though, about these reports. I am always ready to think the worst of my fellow-countrymen, but I could neither conceive nor believe that they could stoop to such despicable barbarism. Besides, how could smiling, gentle Liu Ho-chen have been slaughtered for no reason in front of Government House?

Yet on that same day it proved to be true — the evidence was her body. There was another body, Yang Teh-chun's. Moreover these made clear that this was not only murder but brutal murder, for their bodies bore the marks of clubs also.

The Tuan government, however, issued a decree declaring them "rioters".

But this was followed by a rumour that they were the tools of other people.

I could not bear to look at this cruel sight. Even more, I could not bear to hear these rumours. What else is there I can say? I understand why a dying race remains silent. Silence, silence! Unless we burst out, we shall perish in this silence!

### V

But I have more to say.

I did not see this, but I hear that she — Liu Ho-chen — went forward gaily. Of course, it was only a petition, and no one with any

conscience could imagine such a trap. But then she was shot before Government House, shot from behind, and the bullet pierced her lung and heart. A mortal wound, but she did not die immediately. When Miss Chang Ching-shu\* who was with her tried to lift her up, she was pierced by four shots, one from a pistol, and fell. And when Miss Yang Teh-chun who was with them tried to lift her up, she was shot too: the bullet entered her left shoulder and came out to the right of her heart, and she also fell. She was able to sit up, but a soldier clubbed her savagely over her head and her breast, and so she died.

So gentle Liu Ho-chen who was always smiling has really died. It is true: her body is the evidence. Yang Teh-chun, a brave and true friend, has also died; her body is the evidence. Only Chang Ching-shu, just as brave and true a friend, is still groaning in hospital. How magnificent of these three girls to fall so calmly, pierced by the bullets invented by civilized men! The valour shown by Chinese soldiers in butchering women and children and the martial prowess of the Allied troops\*\* in teaching students a lesson have unfortunately been eclipsed by these few streaks of blood.

But Chinese and foreign murderers are still holding their heads high, unaware of the bloodstains on their faces. . . .

## VI

Time flows eternally on: the streets are peaceful again, for a few lives count for nothing in China. At most, they give good-natured idlers something to talk about, or provide malicious idlers with material for "rumours". As for any deeper significance, I think there is very little; for this was only a peaceful petition. The history of mankind's battle forward through bloodshed is like the formation of coal, where a great deal of wood is needed to produce a small amount of coal. But petition do not serve any purpose, especially unarmed ones.

Since blood was shed, however, the affair will naturally make itself more felt. At least it will permeate the hearts of the kinsmen, teach-

\*A student of the National Peking Women's Normal College.

\*\*The joint forces of Britain, the United States, Japan, tsarist Russia, Germany, France, Austria and Italy, which attacked China in 1900.

ers, friends and lovers of the dead. And even if with the flight of time the bloodstains fade, the image of a gentle girl who was always smiling will live on for ever amid the vague sorrow. The poet Tao Chien\* wrote:

*My kinsmen may still be grieving,*

*While others have started singing.*

*I am dead and gone — what more is there to say?*

*My body is buried in the mountains.*

And this is quite enough.

## VII

As I have said before, I am always willing to think the worst of my fellow-countrymen. Still, quite a few things have surprised me this time. One is that the authorities could act so barbarously, another that the rumour-mongers could sink so low, yet another that Chinese girls could face death so bravely.

Only last year did I begin to notice how Chinese women manage public affairs. Though they are few, I have often been impressed by their ability, determination and indomitable spirit. The attempt of these girls to rescue each other amid a hail of bullets, regardless of their own safety, is a clearer indication of the courage of Chinese women which has persisted through the thousands of years of conspiracies against them and suppression. If we are looking for the significance of this casualty for the future, it probably lies here.

Those who drag on an ignoble existence will catch a vague glimpse of hope amid the pale bloodstains, while true fighters will advance with greater resolution.

Alas, I can say no more. But I have written this in memory of Miss Liu Ho-chen.

April 1, 1926

\*A well-known poet (372-427).

## “Fair Play” Should Be Put Off for the Time Being

### I. Broaching the Subject

In Number 57 of *Yu Ssu (The Tatler)* Mr. Lin Yu-tang\* refers to fair play, and remarks that since this spirit is extremely rare in China we should do our best to encourage it. He adds that “Don’t beat a dog in the water” supplements the meaning of fair play. Not knowing English, I do not understand the full connotation of this term; but if “Don’t beat a dog in the water” represents one aspect of the spirit of fair play, then I must beg to differ. In order not to offend the eye — not to “add false antlers to my head”,\*\* I mean — I did not state this explicitly in my title. What I mean, anyway, is this: a dog in the water may — or rather should — be beaten.

\*A reactionary writer of the comprador class who later died in the United States.

\*\*Chen Yuan, a reactionary professor, wrote in an article: “Everyone likes flowers and hates the devil, but some people go so far as to put colour on flower petals and add false antlers to the devil’s head in order to please others. This seems to us not only pointless but quite nauseating.” By this, he was insinuating that Lu Hsun’s writings were popular merely because he was posing as a fighter. Here Lu Hsun exposes him in passing and hits back.

### II. On Three Kinds of Dogs in the Water Which Should Be Beaten

Modern critics often compare “beating a dead tiger” with “beating a dog in the water”, considering both as somewhat cowardly. I find those who pose as brave by beating dead tigers rather amusing. They may be cowards, but in an engaging way. Beating a dog in the water is not such a simple issue, however. You must first see what sort of dog it is and how it fell in. There are three chief reasons for a dog’s falling into the water:

1. It may fall in by accident.
2. It may be pushed in by someone.
3. It may be pushed in by you.

In the first two cases, of course, it is pointless if not cowardly to join in beating the dog. But if you are in a fight with a dog and have pushed it into the water yourself, even to go on belabouring it with a bamboo pole is not too much, for this is different from the two other cases.

They say that a brave prize-fighter never hits his opponent when he is down, and that this sets a fine example for us all. But I agree to this only on condition that the opponent is a brave pugilist too; for then once he is beaten he will be ashamed to come back, or will come back openly to take his revenge, either of which is all right. But this does not apply to dogs, who cannot be considered in the same class; for however wildly they may bark, they really have no sense of “propriety”. Besides, a dog can swim, and will certainly swim ashore. If you are not careful, it will shake itself, spattering water all over you, then run away with its tail between its legs. But next time it will do exactly the same. Simple souls may think that falling into the water is a kind of baptism, after which a dog will surely repent of its sins and never bite men again. They could hardly be more mistaken.

So I think all dogs that bite men should be beaten, whether they are on the land or in the water.

### III. Pugs, in Particular, Must Be Pushed into the Water and Soundly Beaten

Pugs or pekes are called Western dogs in south China, but I understand this is a special Chinese breed. At international dog shows they often win gold medals, and a number of the photographs of dogs in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* are pictures of our Chinese pugs. This is also a national honour. Now dogs and cats are mortal enemies, but this pug, although a dog, looks very much like a cat, so eclectic, just, conciliatory and fair, its smug air seeming to proclaim: "Everyone else goes to extremes, but I practise the Doctrine of the Mean." That is why it is such a favourite with influential persons, eunuchs, and the wives and daughters of rich men, why its line remains unbroken. It is kept by toffs because it looks so cute, with a tiny chain attached to its neck, and its function is to patter after Chinese or foreign ladies when they go shopping.

These dogs should be pushed into the water, then soundly beaten. If they fall into the water themselves, there is no harm in beating them either. Of course, if you are over-scrupulous, you need not beat them; but neither need you feel sorry for them. If you can forgive these dogs, there is no call for you to beat any other dogs; for though the others are also snobs they at least look something like wolves and are rather wild — not such fence-sitters as these pugs.

But this is just a digression, which may not have much bearing on the main subject.

### IV. On the Harm Done to Posterity by Not Beating Dogs in the Water

So whether or not a dog in the water should be beaten depends first of all on its attitude after it crawls ashore.

The nature of a dog cannot be changed. Things may be different ten thousand years later, but we are talking about the present. If you regard those in the water as very pitiful, then there are many harmful creatures that look pitiful. Even cholera germs, though they breed

quickly, seem simple in nature. But a physician definitely will not let them go.

Present-day officials and Chinese or foreign-style gentlemen call everything that does not suit them "Red" or "Bolshevik". Before 1912 it was slightly different: first they referred to such people as Kang Yu-wei's partisans,\* then as members of the revolutionary party,\*\* and even informed against them. They were trying, for one thing, to keep their dignity, but they may also have wanted "to stain their cap button red with human blood".\*\*\* But at last the revolution came, and those gentlemen with their high and mighty airs suddenly panicked like homeless curs and wound up their little queues\*\*\*\* on their heads. And the revolutionaries were very up-to-date, which was what these gentlemen used to detest. They were so very "civilized". They said: "The revolution is for all. We will not beat a dog in the water. Let it crawl ashore." This was just what the others did. They lay low till the second half of 1913 and the time of the Second Revolution,\*\*\*\*\* then suddenly came forward to help Yuan Shih-kai kill many revolutionaries, so that things became daily worse in China again. Thus now, besides the old die-hards, there are many young ones. This is thanks to those martyrs who were too kind to these snakes in the grass and allowed them to multiply. The young people who understand this will have to strive much harder and sacrifice many more lives to oppose the forces of darkness.

\*Referring to those who participated in or supported the 1898 Reform Movement led by Kang Yu-wei at the end of Ching Dynasty (1644-1911).

\*\*Referring to those who participated in or supported the revolution against the Ching government.

\*\*\*In the Ching Dynasty, the mandarins' ranks were distinguished by the colour of the beads on their caps. The first rank wore a coral bead. Some officials arrested or killed revolutionaries in order to gain promotion, hence this saying.

\*\*\*\*Men wore queues in the Ching Dynasty.

\*\*\*\*\*The revolution of 1911 in China converted the Ching monarchy into a republic, of which Yuan Shih-kai was made the president. Shortly after, however, Yuan tried to suppress the revolutionaries and establish his personal dictatorship. In 1913 a campaign against him was launched in Kiangsi, Kiangsu, Anhwei, Hunan, Fukien and Kwangtung Provinces. It was known as the Second Revolution.

Chiu Chin\* died at the hands of informers. Just after the revolution she was called a heroine, but this title is rarely heard now. When the revolution started, a general came to her district — what we would call a “warlord” today — and he was her comrade. His name was Wang Chin-fa.\*\* He arrested the man\*\*\* responsible for her death and collected evidence to avenge her. But in the end he let the informer go because — so they say — the Republic had been founded and by-gones should be by-gones. When the Second Revolution was defeated, however, Wang was shot by Yuan Shih-kai’s stooge; and the man who brought about Chiu Chin’s death and whom Wang had set free had a great deal to do with this.

Since then this informer has died peacefully in bed. But because there are still many of his sort lording it in that district, Chiu Chin’s native place has remained unchanged from year to year and made no progress at all. From this point of view, Miss Yang Yin-yu\*\*\*\* and Professor Chen Yuan are really supremely fortunate to come from China’s “model district”\*\*\*\*\*

## V. Those Who Have Fallen from Power Are Not the Same as Dogs in the Water

“To be wronged but not to seek revenge” is forgiving. “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth” is just. In China, however, most things are topsy-turvy: instead of beating dogs in the water, we let

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\*1875-1907. A woman revolutionary who was one of the leaders of the movement against the Ching monarchy. She was arrested in 1907 and killed in her home town Shaohsing, Chekiang Province.

\*\*The commander in charge of Shaohsing Prefecture after the 1911 Revolution who was killed by Yuan Shih-kai’s stooge Chu Jui, a general in control of Chekiang Province.

\*\*\*Referring to Chang Chieh-mei, a big landlord in Shaohsing.

\*\*\*\*In 1924, Yang Yin-yu was appointed principal of the Peking Women’s Normal College. Relying on the feudal forces, she brutally oppressed the students. She was a representative of those who advocated a slavish feudal and colonialist education.

\*\*\*\*\*Wusih, Yang Yin-yu’s native county, described as “a model district” by Chen Yuan.

ourselves be bitten by them. This is no more, though, than what simple souls deserve.

“Kindness is another name for folly,” says the proverb. This may be going too far. Yet if you think carefully, this is not intended to lead men astray, but is the conclusion reached after many bitter experiences. Thus there may be two reasons for the reluctance to beat a dog in the water. It is either because we are not strong enough, or because we have made a false analogy. We need not go into the first possibility. As regards the second, we can find two serious flaws. First, we make the mistake of considering dogs in the water as the same as men who have fallen from power. Secondly, we make the mistake of considering all those who have fallen from power as alike, without drawing a distinction between the good and the bad. The result is that evil-doers go unpunished. At present, for instance, since the political situation is unstable, men rise and fall all the time. Relying on some short-lived authority, a bad man may commit any crime he pleases until one day he falls and has to beg for mercy. Then simple souls who have known him or suffered at his hands consider him a dog in the water, and instead of beating him feel sorry for him. They imagine justice has already been done and they may as well be magnanimous, unaware that the dog is not really in the water but has long since prepared its hide-out and laid in food in the foreign concessions. Sometimes it may look hurt, but this is put on: it pretends to limp to enlist sympathy, so that it can go into hiding comfortably. It will come out later and make a fresh start by biting simple souls, then go on to “throw stones at someone who has fallen into a well” and commit all manner of crimes. And the reason for this is partly that those simple souls would not beat a dog in the water. So, strictly speaking, they are digging their own graves, and they have no right to blame fate or other people.

## VI. We Cannot Yet Afford to Be Too Fair

Humanitarians may ask: In that case, don’t we want fair play at all? I can answer this at once: Of course we do, but not yet. This is using their own argument. Though humanitarians may not be

willing to use it, I can make out a case for it. Do not Chinese and foreign-style gentlemen often say that China's special features make foreign ideas of liberty and equality unsuitable for us? I take this to include fair play. Otherwise, if a man is unfair to you but you are fair to him, you will suffer for it in the end: not only will you fail to get fair treatment, but it will be too late to be unfair yourself. So before being fair, you have to know your opponent. If he does not deserve fair treatment, you had better not be polite. Only when he is fair can you talk to him of fair play.

This sounds rather like a proposal for a dual morality, but I cannot help it; for without this China will never have a better future. The dual morality in China takes many forms: different standards for masters and for slaves, for men and for women. It would be going to extremes and premature simply to treat dogs in the water and men in the water as the same. This is the argument of those gentlemen who say that while freedom and equality are good, in China it is still too early for them. So if anyone wants indiscriminate fair play, I suggest we wait till those so-called "dogs in the water" are more human. Of course, this does not mean that fair play cannot be practised at all at present; the important thing, as I have just said, is first to know your opponent. And a certain discrimination is required. In other words, your fairness must depend on who your opponent is. Never mind how he has fallen into the water, if he is a man we should help him; if a dog, we should ignore him; if a bad dog, we should beat him. In brief, we should befriend our own kind and attack our enemies.

We need not trouble ourselves just now with the aphorisms of those gentlemen who have justice on their lips but self-interest in their hearts. Even the justice so loudly demanded by honest folk cannot help good people in China today, but may actually protect the bad instead. For when bad men are in power and ill-treat the good, however loudly someone calls for justice, they will certainly not listen to him. His cry is simply a cry, and the good continue to suffer. But if the good happen for once to come out on top while the bad fall into the water, those honest upholders of justice shout: "Don't take vengeance! . . . Be magnanimous! . . . Don't oppose evil with evil! . . ." And this time their outcry takes effect instead of going unheeded; for the good

agree with them, and the bad are spared. After being spared, though, they simply congratulate themselves on their luck instead of repenting. Besides, they have prepared hide-outs in advance and are good at worming their way into favour; so in no time they become as powerful and as vicious as before. When this happens, the upholders of justice may raise another outcry, but this time it will not be heard.

Nevertheless it is true that when reformers are "being too harsh in hating evil" and over-zealous, like the scholars at the end of the Han Dynasty or those of the Ming Dynasty, they defeat their own ends. Indeed, this is the criticism usually levelled against them. But though the other side "hate good folk as if they were enemies", nobody reproaches them for it. If there is no fight to the finish between darkness and light, and simple souls go on making the mistake of confusing mercy with giving rein to evil, and continue pardoning wicked men, then the present state of chaos will last for ever.

## VII. On Dealing with Them as They Deal with Others

Some Chinese believe in traditional Chinese medicine, others in Western medicine, and both types of doctors can now be found in our larger towns so that patients may take their choice. I thoroughly approve of this. If this were applied more generally, I am sure there would be fewer complaints and perhaps we could even secure peace and prosperity. For instance, the usual form of greeting in the Republic is to bow; but if anyone disapproves of this he can kowtow instead. The new penal code has no punishment by bastinado; but if anyone approves of corporal punishment, when he breaks the law he can have his bottom specially spanked. Bowls, chopsticks and cooked food are the custom today; but if anyone hankers after ancient times he can eat raw meat. We can also build several thousand thatched huts and move all those fine gentlemen who so admire the age of Yao and Shun\* out of their big houses to live there, while those who oppose material civilization should certainly not be compelled

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\*Two legendary Chinese rulers of the earliest times, described in old books as living in thatched huts.

to travel in cars. When this is done there will be no more complaints, for everyone will be satisfied and we shall enjoy peace and quiet.

But the pity is that nobody will do this. Instead they judge others by themselves, and hence there is all this trouble in the world. Fair play is particularly liable to cause trouble, and may even be made use of by the forces of evil. For example, when Liu Pai-chao\* beat up and carried off students of the Women's Normal College there was not so much as a squeak from *Modern Review*.\*\* But when the buildings were recovered and Professor Chen Yuan encouraged the students of the Women's University to stay on in the dormitories, the journal said: "Suppose they don't want to go? Surely you aren't going to carry off their things by force?" If they remained silent the first time when Liu Pai-chao beat up students and carried things away, how was it that this time they felt it would not do? It was because they felt there was fair play in the Women's Normal College. But this fair play had become a bad thing, since it was utilized to protect the followers of Chang Shih-chao.

### VIII. Conclusion

I may be accused of stirring up trouble by this argument between the old and the new or some other schools of thought, and of aggravating their enmity and sharpening the conflict between them. But I can state with certainty that those who oppose reform have never relaxed their efforts to injure reformers, and have always done their worst. It is only the reformers who are asleep and always suffer for it. That is why China has never had reforms. From now on we should modify our attitude and our tactics.

December 29, 1925

\*See the footnote on page 36.

\*\*A weekly edited by Chen Yuan and his clique.

## Thoughts on the League of Left-wing Writers

— *A Talk Given at the Inaugural Meeting of the League of  
Left-wing Writers on March 2*

I need not speak about subjects already dealt with in detail by others. In my view, it is very easy for "Left-wing" writers today to turn into "Right-wing" writers. First of all, if you simply shut yourself up behind glass windows to write or study instead of keeping in touch with actual social conflicts, it is easy for you to be extremely radical or "Left". But the moment you come up against reality all your ideas are shattered. Behind closed doors it is very easy to spout radical ideas, but equally easy to turn "Rightist". This is what is meant in the West by "salon-socialist". A salon is a sitting-room, and it is most artistic and refined to sit discussing socialism — with no idea of bringing it into being. Socialists like this are quite unreliable.

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The League of Left-wing Writers was founded in Shanghai on March 2, 1930 and dissolved at the beginning of 1936. Lu Hsun was one of its founders and chief leader. This talk given in 1930 became the fighting programme of Left-wing writers.

Indeed today, with the exception of Mussolini who is not a literary man, it is rare to find writers or artists without any socialist ideas at all, who say workers and peasants ought to be enslaved, killed and exploited. (Of course, we cannot say there are none whatsoever, as witness the literati of China's Crescent Moon\* clique and D'Annunzio, the favourite of the aforesaid Mussolini.)

Secondly, it is also easy to become "Right-wing" if you do not understand the actual nature of revolution. Revolution is a bitter thing, mixed with filth and blood, not as lovely or perfect as poets think. It is eminently down-to-earth, entailing many humble, tiresome tasks, not as romantic as the poets think. Of course there is destruction in a revolution, but construction is even more necessary to it; and while destruction is straightforward, construction is troublesome. So it is easy for all who have romantic dreams about revolution to become disillusioned on closer acquaintance, or when a revolution is actually carried out. The Russian poet Yesenin is said to have welcomed the October Revolution at first with all his heart, shouting: "Long live the revolution in heaven and on earth! . . . I am a Bolshevik!" But afterwards, when the reality proved completely different from what he had imagined, he grew disillusioned and decadent. And they say this disillusionment was one of the reasons for his subsequent suicide. Pilnyak and Ehrenburg are other cases in point. And we find similar instances during our 1911 Revolution. Writers like those of the South Society\*\* started as most revolutionary; but they cherished the illusion that once the Manchus were driven out there would be a complete return to the "good old days", and they could all wear wide sleeves, high hats and broad girdles, and tread with majestic strides. To their surprise, though, after the Manchu emperor was driven out and the Republic set up it was all quite different. So they were disillusioned and some of them even

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\*A literary and political clique formed by a few bourgeois intellectuals representing the interests of the reactionary bourgeoisie. They published a politico-literary monthly, *Crescent Moon* in the early thirties.

\*\*A literary organization formed in 1908. The members wrote articles and poems advocating a revolution against the monarchy of Ching, the last imperial dynasty (1644-1911) in China, founded by the Manchus.

opposed the new movement. Unless we understand the true nature of revolution, it will be easy for us to do the same.

Another mistaken view is this notion that poets or writers are superior beings, and their work nobler than any other work. For example, Heine thought since poets were the noblest beings and God was infinitely just, when poets died they went up to sit by God who offered them light refreshments. Today, of course, no one believes that about God offering refreshments, but some still believe that the poets and writers who support the labouring people's revolution today will be richly rewarded by the working class when the revolution is accomplished, enjoying special treatment, riding in special cars, and eating special food. The workers may even offer them bread and butter, saying: "Help yourself, you are our poets!" This is another illusion: it simply could not happen. Probably things will be harder after the revolution than they are now. There may not even be black bread, let alone bread and butter, as happened for a year or two after the Russian revolution. If we fail to understand this, it is easy for us to become "Right-wing". The fact is that no workers, unless they are the type described as "deserving" by Mr. Liang Shih-chiu,\* feel any special respect for intellectuals. Look at Metik, an intellectual in Fadeyev's *The Nineteen* which I translated, who was often laughed at by the miners. Needless to say, intellectuals have their own tasks which we should not belittle; but it is certainly not the duty of the working class to give poets or writers any preferential treatment.

Now let me mention a few points to which we must pay attention.

First, in the struggle against the old society and old forces, it is necessary to be firm, enduring and to pay attention to strength. The roots of the old society go deep, and we cannot shake it unless our new movement is even stronger. Besides, the old society has good means of making our new forces compromise, although it will never compromise itself. There have been many new movements in China, yet each has succumbed to the old, largely because they lacked definite, general aims, their demands were too modest, and they were too easily

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\*A writer of the Crescent Moon clique.

satisfied. Take the movement for the vernacular, which was desperately opposed at the start by the forces of the old society. Before long they sanctioned writing in the vernacular, granted it a wretched sort of status and allowed essays written in the vernacular to appear in odd corners of newspapers, because from their point of view they could permit this new thing to exist as it was perfectly harmless, and the new for its part was content now that the vernacular had the right to live. It has been much the same with the proletarian literary movement of the last couple of years. The old society has sanctioned working-class writing because it is no menace — in fact some of the diehards have tried their hand at it themselves and used it as an ornament, for putting a workman's coarse bowl beside the old porcelain and antiques in the sitting-room seems so exotic. And once proletarian writers had their small corner in the world of letters and were able to sell their manuscripts, they stopped struggling and the critics sang paeans of triumph: "Proletarian literature has conquered!" But apart from the success of a few individuals, what has proletarian literature itself achieved? It should be an intrinsic part of the proletarian struggle for liberation, growing apace with the social strength of the working class. The fact that proletarian literature has a high position in the world of letters while the social status of the proletariat is so low only goes to show that the writers of proletarian literature have become divorced from the proletariat and gone over to the old society.

Secondly, I think we should broaden our battlefront. Last year and the year before we did have some battles in literature, but on too limited a scale. Instead of dealing with the old literature and old ideas, our new writers started scrapping with each other in one corner, allowing the old school to watch in comfort from the side.

Thirdly, we ought to bring up a host of new fighters, for today we are really short-handed. We have several magazines, and quite a few books are published; but because they all have the same few writers, the contents are bound to be thin. Nobody specializes, each dabbles in everything — translation, story-writing, criticism, even poetry. Of course the result is poor. But the reason for this is the dearth of writers. If we had more, translators could concentrate on translating, writers on writing, critics on criticism; then when we

engaged the enemy our forces would be strong enough to overcome them easily. Let me give an illustration of this in passing. The year before last when the Creation Society and the Sun Society\* attacked me, they were actually so weak that even I lost interest later on and there seemed no point in making a counter-attack, for I realized they were using "empty city tactics".\*\* The enemy devoted their strength to raising a din instead of drilling troops. And though there were many articles abusing me, you could tell at once that they were written under pseudonyms — all the abuse boiled down to the same few remarks. I was waiting to be attacked by someone who had mastered the Marxist method of criticism, but no such man appeared. I have always thought it important to train a younger generation of fighters, and have formed several literary groups in my time, though none of them amounted to much. But we must pay more attention to this in future.

While we urgently need to create a host of new fighters, those of us now on the literary front must also be "tenacious". By tenacious I mean we should not be like those Ching Dynasty scholars who used the eight-legged examination essays\*\*\* as "a brick to open the door". These essays were the means by which scholars passed the examinations and became officials in the Ching Dynasty. Once you passed the examinations on the strength of this "presentation, amplification, argument and conclusion" you could then throw it aside and never use it again for the rest of your life. That is why it was called a "brick", for it was used only to open the door, after which it could be thrown aside instead of being carried around. Similar methods

\*Two petty bourgeois progressive literary organizations; some of their members at one time opposed Lu Hsun.

\*\*Chuko Liang, the famous strategist of the Three Kingdoms period (220-280) is said to have invited the enemy into an undefended city. The enemy, fearing a trap, dared not go in.

\*\*\*A special form of essay prescribed in the imperial examinations under China's feudal dynasties from the 15th to the 19th centuries; it consisted in juggling with words, concentrated only on form and was devoid of content. Structurally the main body of the essay had eight parts — presentation, amplification, preliminary exposition, initial argument, inceptive paragraphs, middle paragraphs, rear paragraphs and concluding paragraphs, and the fifth to eighth parts each had to have two "leg", i.e., two antithetical paragraphs, hence the name "eight-legged essay".

are still being used today. We notice that after men have published one or two volumes of verse or short stories they often disappear for ever. Where do they go? After winning a greater or lesser amount of fame by publishing a couple of books, they become professors or find some other job. Since their name is made and they need not write any more, they disappear for ever. This is why China has so little to show in literature and science. But we need some works, for they would come in useful. (Lunacharsky even proposed preserving Russia's peasant art because foreigners would buy what the peasants make, and the money would come in useful. I believe if we had some contribution to make in literature and science, it might even help us in our political movement to free ourselves from the imperialists.) But to achieve anything in literature, we must be "tenacious".

Last of all, I think it essential for a united front that we have a common aim. I seem to remember hearing someone say: "The reactionaries already have their united front, but we have not yet united." In fact, theirs is not a deliberate united front, but because they have a common aim and act consistently they seem to us to have one. And the fact that we cannot unite shows that we are divided in our aims — some of us are working for a little clique, some for themselves. If all of us wanted to serve the broad masses of workers and peasants, our battlefield would naturally be united.

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*The Red Army Led by Chairman Mao Arrives in North  
Shensi After the Long March* (oil painting) ►  
by artists of Chekiang Province Gallery



## Lu Hsun — Pioneer of China's Cultural Revolution

September 25 is the 90th anniversary of the birth of Lu Hsun (1881-1936), pioneer in China's cultural revolution.

More than 30 years ago in his article *On New Democracy* Chairman Mao, the great leader of the Chinese people, pointed out, **"The chief commander of China's cultural revolution, he was not only a great man of letters but a great thinker and revolutionary. Lu Hsun was a man of unyielding integrity, free from all sycophancy or obsequiousness; this quality is invaluable among colonial and semi-colonial peoples. Representing the great majority of the nation, Lu Hsun breached and stormed the enemy citadel; on the cultural front he was the bravest and most correct, the firmest, the most loyal and the most ardent national hero, a hero without parallel in our history."**

Chairman Mao not only highly evaluated Lu Hsun's contribution in the ideological and cultural fronts, but more important, his com-

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Chou Chien-jen, brother of Lu Hsun and his close comrade-in-arms, is a vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and a vice-chairman of the Revolutionary Committee of Chekiang Province.

munist world outlook. Lu Hsun was not born a Communist, nor was his communist outlook formed apart from social practice. It gradually grew steadfast with the development of the Chinese revolution, through actual struggle and conscientious study and mastery of Marxism. But reactionaries within and without the country have always tried to deny this fact. This article can be counted as an answer to this question.

### Searching for the Truth and the Path of Revolution

Lu Hsun, originally named Chou Shu-jen, was born in a family which did not have to worry about its livelihood, in the town of Shaohsing, Chekiang Province, in 1881. It was a time when imperialism, after the Opium War of 1840, had stepped up its aggression in China and society had sunk into the abyss of semi-feudalism and semi-colonialism. Because our family conditions declined, and father became ill, Lu Hsun as a boy had to go almost every day to the pawnshop to get money for father's medicine. He began to taste poverty. Soon

Shaohsing, birthplace of Lu Hsun



after father died, he went to live with a relative in the countryside. Here among children of labouring people, in a life different from that of his own family, he gradually began to understand peasant suffering and see the injustice and darkness of society.

The rise of bourgeois reformist ideas in China prompted in the young Lu Hsun a desire to search for truth. Unwilling to become a dependent of an official or go into business as many people wanted, Lu Hsun decided to go out into the world in search of truth. As he had no money, he had to take examinations to win a scholarship in a foreign-style school\* in spite of people's ridicule. There, influenced by the theory of evolution of the English biologist Darwin (1809-1882), he believed that the future would definitely be better than the present and that young people would definitely be better than the old. This gave him confidence and hope, making him feel that there was meaning in struggle.

He carved two seals. On one were the words "Letters misled me", meaning that studying old feudal books and writing in the old feudal style had wasted his youth. On the other he cut the words "Man drawing a sword", meaning that now he would draw his sword and join the fight. Though the bourgeois theory of evolution stirred enthusiasm in Lu Hsun for a time, it was not based on historical materialism and was not a true ideological weapon for the proletariat.

After graduating from the school, Lu Hsun was sent to Japan to study. He studied medicine, thinking that he would relieve the sick from suffering after his return to China. He wanted to save the motherland through medicine. Success in his studies made some Japanese students with narrow nationalist ideas jealous of him. In their eyes China was a weak country, the Chinese were of course clodhoppers, and if a Chinese made the mark in his studies, it could not be from his own ability. Their insulting treatment made Lu Hsun feel the misery of being a citizen of a weak country. On the other hand, it strengthened his nationalist feeling and a revolutionary spirit of striving to make China strong.

\*Foreign-style schools were set up by the Ching Dynasty in the 1860's in imitation of schools in capitalist countries.

In a film about the Russo-Japanese War, Lu Hsun saw a Chinese, accused of serving tsarist Russia as a spy, being captured and beheaded by the Japanese army while other Chinese stood by watching apathetically. Now Lu Hsun felt that medicine was not very important. Without ideological consciousness, he realized, no matter how strong their health, a people can still be either show objects before the crowd or be indifferent spectators. From that moment on, he believed that the thing of first importance was to change people's thinking — and what could change people's thinking was literature and art. He decided to give up medicine for literature and art.

With enthusiasm he went about putting out a magazine called *New Life*, translating literary works by writers from oppressed nationalities, published two volumes of *Stories from Other Lands*, wrote especially on rebel poets in small weak nations, and important essays on politics, literature and art such as *On the Demonic Poets*. All this he did to arouse the people against the despotic rule of feudalism and imperialism.

In 1909 Lu Hsun returned to China from Japan. In October 1911, the revolution led by Sun Yat-sen to overthrow the feudal rule of the Ching Dynasty broke out. Then teaching in Shaohsing Middle School, Lu Hsun earnestly organized the students and, holding broad swords, they went into the streets to speak to the masses. "What if some people try to stop us?" one asked him. "What's the broad sword in your hand for?" Lu Hsun replied.

Lu Hsun hoped that the 1911 revolution, which converted the monarchy into a republic, would bring changes. However, as a democratic revolution of the old type led by the bourgeoisie, it only succeeded in chasing away an emperor. The new government was still made up of warlords, old-regime officials, landlords and rich gentlemen. The foreign powers stepped up their aggression, the warlords continued their fighting, the condition of the country grew worse and the people found it hard just to stay alive.

Greatly disappointed, Lu Hsun pondered the lessons to be learned from the 1911 revolution. What struck him sharply were its weakness, compromise and lack of thoroughness. But since Marxism had not yet spread to China, it was not possible for the revolutionary



Lu Hsun in September 1930

democrat Lu Hsun to have a correct understanding of the fundamental reason for the failure of the 1911 revolution, nor was it possible for him to find a new path for China's revolution. Thus from revolutionary enthusiasm he now turned to deep contemplation.

During this period, a demand to change reality and an eagerness to resist the forces of evil inspired Lu Hsun to intense revolutionary action. But the bitterness of disappointment and the depression born of a lack of understanding brought hesitation in his struggle. Both the ideological weapon and the political program of the bourgeoisie had failed to solve Lu Hsun's problem of finding a way for China's revolution.

### **Learning and Changing in Revolutionary Struggle**

As Chairman Mao pointed out, **"The salvoes of the October Revolution brought us Marxism-Leninism."** The call of the October Revolution sparked the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal May Fourth Movement\* in 1919. China entered the stage of the new democratic revolution led by the proletariat. On the cultural front, an entirely new force came into being. Guided by Marxism and forming a united front with all possible allies, the new cultural force launched a heroic and fierce attack on imperialist and feudal culture.

As other advanced people in China then, Lu Hsun was encouraged by the victory of the October Revolution. He saw the "dawn of the new century" and hope of destroying the "iron house" of the old world. He began to find an answer to his long-contemplated problem

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\*The May Fourth Movement was a revolutionary movement against imperialism and feudalism which broke out on May 4, 1919. It was the end of World War I and at the Conference of Paris the victorious imperialist countries had agreed to hand over to Japan all the special privileges which Germany had had in China's Shantung Province. The people throughout China were enraged. Peking students were the first to protest. Their strike on May 4 sparked an anti-imperialist, anti-feudal movement throughout the country, which developed into a patriotic movement embracing the proletariat, the petty bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie. Pressed by the people's opposition, the northern warlord government dismissed the traitorous official concerned and refused to sign the Treaty of Versailles. The movement later developed into a broad, magnificent revolutionary cultural movement devoted mainly to spreading Marxism-Leninism.

of a way for China's revolution. With new vigour he threw himself into the ranks of battle and consciously followed the communist pioneers. He made a call to arms and himself stormed the enemy's positions in the great struggle against imperialism and feudalism.

He wrote many militant stories, essays and articles criticizing certain ideas, all rapier thrusts into the heart of imperialism and feudalism. He hated, exposed, lashed at and swept away all old ideas and cultures that oppressed, poisoned or deceived the people. He wrote *A Madman's Diary*, China's first story written in the everyday spoken language, ruthlessly tearing off the mask of "humanity, justice and morality" worn by Chinese feudal society for thousands of years and exposed its sanguinary man-eat-man nature. It was the first burst of spring thunder in China's cultural revolution. It was because Lu Hsun consciously accepted the leadership of the communist pioneers and served the masses' revolutionary struggle against imperialism and feudalism that he could bring his incomparable fighting force into play and become the great standard-bearer of China's new cultural movement.

As the revolutionary movement developed, there came an open split in the cultural united front of the May Fourth period. The bourgeois Right wing, fearing and hating Marxism, went over further to the imperialists and increased their collusion with the feudal forces. Among those who had once been revolutionaries, some "rose on the social ladder" and some "went into retirement".

Lu Hsun was perplexed with new contradictions as he saw the dispersal of the cultural forces and the breakup of the battle array. He could not understand why such a change should have taken place. But instead of evading the contradictions, he placed his hope in making continuous progress through struggle. The birth of the Communist Party of China ushered in a new epoch in the development of Chinese history. Lu Hsun continued to throw himself heart and soul into the revolutionary struggle led by the proletariat.

In 1925, students of the Peking Women's Normal College started a revolutionary students' movement protesting the northern warlords' unreasonable expulsion of six students. Lu Hsun was the first to support and join them against the reactionaries. When reactionary



Lu Hsun speaking to students of the Teachers College in Peking in November 1932

literary men trumpeted "fair play", i.e., that one should not continue to attack the defeated, Lu Hsun published "*Fair Play*" *Should Be Put Off for the Time Being*, in which he stated his famous principle of continuing to strike the "dog in the water". The nature of the dog cannot change, he pointed out, and if you do not strike the dog in the water until it is completely beaten, it will climb on shore and continue to bite men. The kind-hearted man who treats wicked men with magnanimity makes a grave mistake.

After 1924, promoted by the Chinese Communist Party, a united front of Kuomintang and Communist co-operation was formed which brought great development in the revolutionary armed struggle against the northern warlords. In the beginning of 1927, Lu Hsun went to Kwangchow (Canton), then centre of the revolution. On April 12, 1927, Chiang Kai-shek, autocrat and traitor to the people, who represented in the Kuomintang the interests of the big landlords and big bourgeoisie, betrayed the revolution and began a bloody massacre of the Communists and revolutionary masses.

At the height of his indignation Lu Hsun attempted to rescue arrested revolutionaries, but repeated efforts brought no result what-

soever. During the counter-revolutionary coup d'état, he saw with his own eyes the cruelty with which reactionaries killed the people. Even young men informed the officials and had their former companions arrested, a method of killing not less inhuman than middle-aged counter-revolutionaries used. The cruel actualities of class struggle were a tremendous shock to Lu Hsun and spurred him to more intensive study of Marxism in order to solve the contradictions in his mind.

In October 1927 Lu Hsun chose Shanghai, then centre of the cultural struggle, as his fighting base. Here he eagerly studied Marxist theory while waging a struggle against imperialism and its running dogs, the Kuomintang reactionaries. At a time when even the possession of a red-covered book would land one in prison, Lu Hsun, at the risk of his life, rented a room under the name of a staff member of the Uchiyama Bookstore\* where he could keep the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. Here he studied in order to solve problems encountered in struggle. Around 1928, he studied such works as the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* and works on problems of the Chinese revolution. Combining theory with practice, he used Marxism to guide revolutionary practice and to purge his own soul of the bourgeois "air of poison and ghostliness". "It is true," he said, "I dissect others all the time, but what I do more is dissect myself even more mercilessly." He saw how ridiculous it was to apply Darwin's theory of evolution to human class society. He now understood that in class society, class struggle is an objective reality independent of man's will, that the history of civilization for thousands of years is a history of class struggle, that one can see the complicated phenomena of class society clearly only by applying the Marxist theory of classes. He understood that in the present stage of social development, only by overthrowing reactionary rule through armed struggle can the proletariat and labouring people establish the dictatorship of the proletariat and finally achieve a classless society.

Studying the great teachings of Marxism and throwing himself into the heat of class struggle of the masses finally changed Lu Hsun

\*The Uchiyama Bookstore was run by a Japanese named Uchiyama in Shanghai.

from a revolutionary democrat into a great communist. The path of revolution taken by him was the path of the integration of Marxist study with revolutionary practice.

### **Making Revolution to the End**

In the early thirties the Kuomintang reactionaries stepped up their armed encirclement and suppression of the rural bases led by the Chinese Communist Party. At the same time, they carried out a ruthless encirclement and suppression of Communist-led revolutionary culture and all other progressive culture in areas under Kuomintang rule. White terror struck throughout the country. Many Communist Party members and other revolutionaries were killed. The people had no democracy or freedom. Lu Hsun was surrounded and attacked by reactionary men of letters, tailed by special agents, and even put on the authorities' wanted list. Under such dangerous circumstances, he fought unswervingly and selflessly, knowing the truth, seeing hope and sure of victory.

To get around the ban or censorship of his writings or the closing of publications printing his writings, Lu Hsun used more than 100 pen names and varied styles to expose the dark rule of the Kuomintang. His essays were like javelins hurled straight at the enemy's heart. In 1931 he wrote *The Present Condition of Art in Darkest China* to accuse the reactionary rulers of their criminal persecution of the revolutionary cultural movement. Not one paper or periodical in the country dared to publish it. But Lu Hsun thought: the more the reactionaries try to prevent the people from speaking, the more I will put up a cry for the people. He had the article translated into English and sent abroad for publication. "The more they want to keep things secret, the more I'll expose them by sending my writing abroad."

In 1933 Kuomintang special agents assassinated the patriot Yang Chuan. Filled with anger, Lu Hsun went to Yang Chuan's funeral, knowing full well that he himself was on the special agents' blacklist. Locking the door of his home and not taking the key, he went straight to the funeral to protest the Kuomintang's fascist atroc-

ities. Even though he might lose his life, he believed the sacrifice would help to expose all the more the enemy's brutality and encourage the people to continue the struggle. This fearless heroism struck terror into the enemy and greatly inspired the people. Chairman Mao thus described him as **"a man of unyielding integrity, free from all sycophancy or obsequiousness; this quality is invaluable among colonial and semi-colonial peoples"**.

In the great struggle against encirclement and suppression, Lu Hsun bravely charged forward while uniting with the large numbers of revolutionary literary and art workers in the fight. He believed that struggle against the old society and old forces must be firm and protracted and that attention must be paid to the actual strength of these forces and the training of large numbers of new fighters.

In the struggle, Lu Hsun drew a clear distinction between the enemy and our friends and ourselves. He paid great attention to uniting with all the forces that could be united. He was for gradually forming a fine army in the course of struggle, not only uniting with the temporary "fellow travellers" but also "calling the onlookers by the way to advance together". He criticized and refuted the view that we must build up a fine army before we can fight as big and empty talk, a problem impossible to solve, a sweet dose poisonous to the revolution.

This point was proved by his attitude toward the progressive literary groups of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie. Though certain members of such groups flung abuse at him, he held the interest of the revolution above all else. Therefore he united with them in the common struggle while criticizing them for their tendency to waver and compromise. Thus he demonstrated the largeness of mind of a proletarian revolutionary who gave his all to the liberation of mankind.

In 1935, Japanese imperialism pushed its aggression from the northeast into north China. The Kuomintang's compromise and capitulation intensified the contradiction between the two nations and brought a new change in class relations within the country. Chairman Mao put forward the policy of establishing a broad national united front to resist the aggressors.

At this historical turning point, the struggle between two lines within the Communist Party was extremely acute. Chou Yang, Hsia Yen, Tien Han and Yang Han-sheng had usurped Party leadership in Shanghai cultural circles and opposed Chairman Mao's revolutionary line by co-ordinating with the Kuomintang reactionaries in their cultural encirclement and suppression. Putting on an appearance of being revolutionary and using radical language, they covertly charged anyone they pleased with being "enemy agents", "counter-revolutionaries", "Trotskyites" and even "traitors", an insidious way to kill the revolutionary forces of the nation.

Lu Hsun was not fooled by this bunch of "directors" who covered themselves with a tiger skin to intimidate people. With the keen political insight of a Marxist, he saw them not as "men of moral integrity" but suspected that they had been sent by the enemy. He despised these hypocrites more than he despised the obvious enemies, calling them the "four villains" in foreign suits and cars.

In 1936, Chou Yang's group, actively pushing the Right opportunist line of sham Marxist political swindlers like Wang Ming, proposed the slogan "national defence literature" to cover up class contradiction and class struggle. They actually practised class and national capitulation under the pretext of "national defence".

Lu Hsun stood firm on the side of Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line. He exposed the reactionary nature of the slogan "national defence literature" as discarding proletarian leadership and carrying out a capitulationist line. Following Chairman Mao's policy of a national united front against Japanese aggression, he put forward the proletarian slogan of "mass literature for the national revolutionary war" and insisted on independence and initiative for the proletariat within the united front, thus defending the leadership of the Communist Party and the proletariat in the cultural front against Japanese aggression. This dealt a hard blow at the capitulationist line of Wang Ming, Chou Yang and company. It demonstrated Lu Hsun's grasp of Marxism and his deep consciousness in carrying out Chairman Mao's revolutionary line.

Lu Hsun's revolutionary will and youthful vitality grew with the years. To his last breath he fought for the practice and defence of



Lu Hsun in his study in Shanghai

Chairman Mao's revolutionary line on the cultural front. Though the last few years of his life were the most difficult years of the revolution, Lu Hsun firmly believed that the people's revolution led by Chairman Mao would triumph. In October 1935 when the Red Army completed its 12,500-kilometre Long March and triumphantly reached north Shensi, Lu Hsun was ill but filled with exaltation. In a telegram to the Central Committee of the Communist Party he wrote with deep feeling: "On you is placed the hope of China and mankind."

In 1936 when the Trotskyites tried to sow dissension between Lu Hsun and the Party and viciously attacked Chairman Mao's policy of a national united front against Japanese aggression, Lu Hsun openly declared in his *Reply to a Letter from the Trotskyites*: "I count it an honour to have as my comrades those who are now doing solid work, treading firmly on the ground, fighting and shedding their blood in the defence of the Chinese people."

Long and intense struggle and persecution by reactionaries ruined Lu Hsun's health. His illness became more and more serious, but he persisted in the fight, manifesting the true revolutionary spirit which comes out in his lines:

*Fierce-browed, I coolly defy a thousand pointing fingers,  
Head bowed, like a willing ox I serve the children.*

He preferred to work faster and live a few years less than do no work and live a few years more. He fought as long as he had a breath in him, writing until the day before he died. He bent himself to the task unto death for the cause of the proletarian revolution.

Lu Hsun's life was a fighting life, a revolutionary life. His thought, action and works shine with a light inextinguishable to this day. He left us more than seven million words in writings and translations, recording the footsteps of his advance in battle and reflecting the course of development of the Chinese cultural revolution.

Chairman Mao said, "**All Communists, all revolutionaries, all revolutionary literary and art workers should learn from the example of Lu Hsun and be 'oxen' for the proletariat and the masses, bending their backs to the task until their dying day.**"

Lu Hsun's revolutionary spirit of constantly arming himself with Marxism and fighting to the end for the liberation of the proletariat will live in our hearts for ever and inspire us to go forward.

What the revolutionary people cherish, the class enemy inevitably hates. For half a century, reactionaries and revisionists both within and without the country have tried to distort and slander Lu Hsun and make him out as a bourgeois humanist. Eliminating Lu Hsun's clear-cut Marxist class viewpoint, the renegades of Marxism talk about his "humanism" and negate the decisive role Marxism played in transforming his world outlook. This is not merely a distortion of Lu Hsun. What is more insidious, it opposes Marxism. Is this not another big exposure of these renegades' true features?

It is only in the unprecedented Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution initiated and led by Chairman Mao that Lu Hsun, who had been distorted by the class enemy, was restored to his true height as a Communist.

*Chen Pei*

## Aunt Tangerine

Clouds of red spread over the mountainside,  
Quite absorbed, with wide eyes I stared.  
A wood-cutter waved and greeted me,  
"It's the tangerine grove of our commune," he said.

In astonishment, joyously I exclaimed:  
"Tangerines like a crimson cloud!"  
A peal of laughter echoed in the woods,  
"Shall I tell you the story of that grove?"

"Kuomintang dogs came on a 'mop-up' drive,  
And gunshots through the dense forest rang;  
Hotly they hunted our guerrillas,  
The peasants all were much concerned.

"Seven full days without a bowl of gruel,  
Our guerrillas lived on bark and herbs.  
On her back a hamper full of tangerines,  
Aunt Chu, a Communist, went to them one night.

"Refreshed, the guerrillas charged with a will,  
The enemy dogs ran for their lives.  
And the tangerine pips sprouted into seedlings,  
While the tale of the magic tangerines spread.

"From the saplings little cowherds kept their cattle,  
Herb gatherers took care not to trample.  
Aunt Chu tended the young trees in secret,  
Weeding, loosening the soil and pruning.

"In four years the trees blossomed and bore fruit,  
And our army marched south to smash the tottering foe.  
Aunt Chu, smiling, stood by the roadside,  
Handing out to the fighters red tangerines.

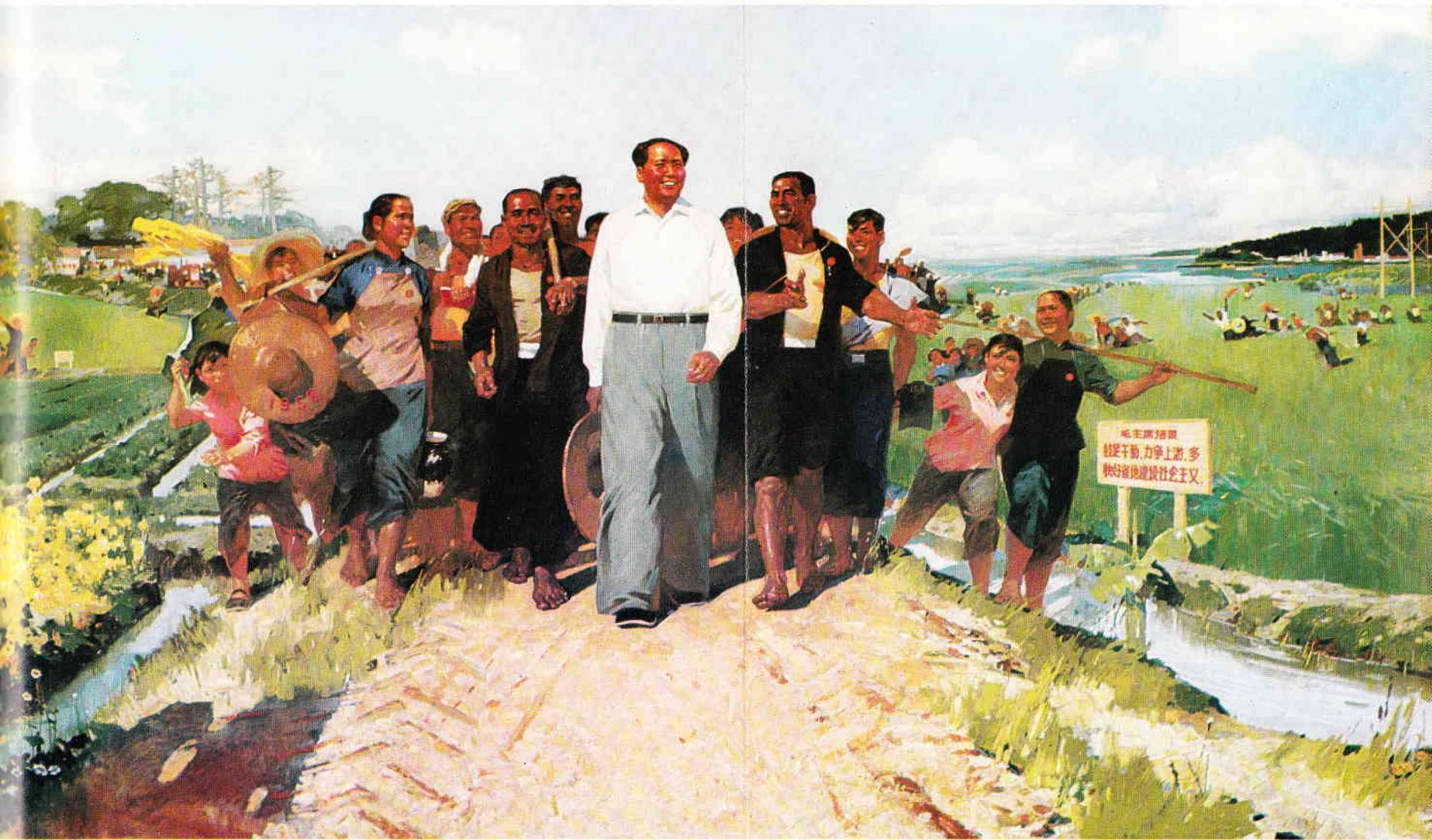
"Now our commune has expanded the grove,  
And Aunt Chu has been put in charge.  
The hill where they grow is called Tangerine Hill,  
Aunt Chu now is called Aunt Tangerine.

"The mountain stream winds gurgling along,  
Aunt Tangerine is very fond of her orchard.  
She studies Chairman Mao's works beneath the trees,  
Their lush leaves and red fruit symbolize her revolutionary  
spirit!

“When you pass through that tangerine grove,  
Take care not to trample a single sapling.  
Aunt Tangerine cherishes them like babes,  
For which she’s respected by one and all.”

After hearing this moving story,  
A wave of warmth rose within my heart.  
I raised my head and gazed at the red cloud again,  
Overcome with admiration for dear Aunt Chu.





## A Book Marker

The radiant morning sun tinged the curtain with red,  
And lit up the book upon the desk,  
Fiery letters gleaming on its cover —  
*Manifesto of the Communist Party.*

There was in the book a queer marker,  
A thin piece of shell fragment!  
Out of common run, this splinter,  
It witnessed a story of great significance:

When Chairman Mao called on us to fight the Japanese,  
Our corps commander, then a warrior under Comrade Lin Piao's  
command,

Fought bravely in the battle of Pinghsingkuan,\*  
This criminal splinter piercing his chest.

He woke to find himself lying in the Wutai Mountains,  
And Doctor Bethune\*\* standing at his bedside;  
The old surgeon, admiring his courage and loyalty,  
Sent him this *Manifesto of the Communist Party*.

From his chest the splinter was taken,  
In his mind Comrade Bethune's words imprinted:  
Take up the sharp weapon of Marxism-Leninism,  
Follow Chairman Mao and fight for communism!

Keeping in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*  
This shell fragment stained with his blood,  
Carrying always these precious keepsakes,  
North and south he fought for thirty years.

The flames by the Yalu, smoke over the Wusuli,  
On this splinter were all reflected.  
Drums of the Great Leap Forward, thunders of the Cultural  
Revolution,  
All echoed between the lines of the famous book!

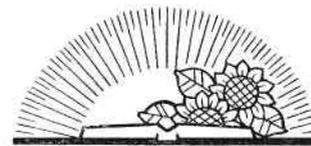
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\*An important stronghold in northeastern Shansi Province. In September, 1937, the 115th Division of the Eighth Route Army commanded by Comrade Lin Piao defeated the crack Itagaki Division of the Japanese invaders, scoring our first big victory in the War of Resistance Against Japan.

\*\*A member of the Canadian Communist Party and a distinguished surgeon. After the outbreak of the War of Resistance Against Japan in 1937, he came to China's liberated areas at the head of a medical team of Canadians and Americans to treat sick and wounded fighters. He died at his post in November, 1939.

In the struggles between the two classes and two lines,  
By lamplight he meditated, by camp-fire he studied;  
Brilliant truth dispelled evil mist and cloud,  
Lofty ideals inspired him with firm fighting will.

A revolutionary, he studied hard and fought valiantly,  
A Communist full of vitality, he charged ever forward;  
Studying, in defence of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line,  
Fighting, to reach communism's bright goals.



*Peng Mao-hai*

## Underground Treasures

Red flags flutter atop mountains green,  
Little paths wind through mist and cloud,  
Big hammers everywhere clanging ring,  
Startled birds from the forest take wing.

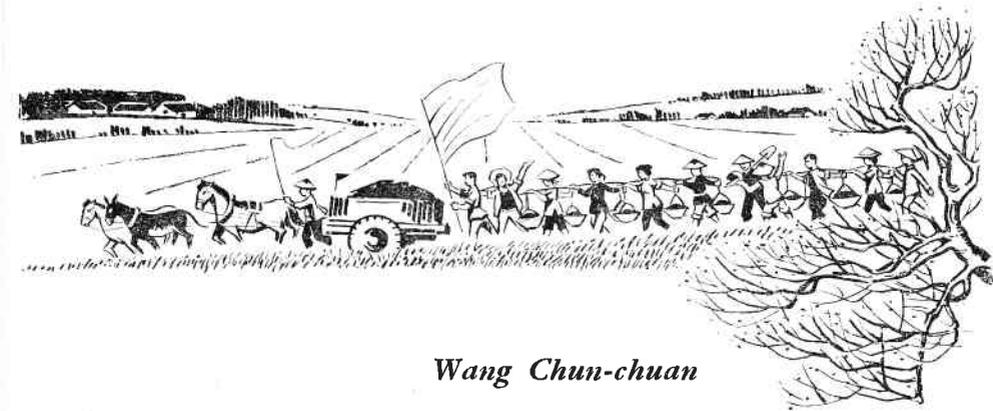
Like wildfire good tidings spread,  
Many a face is wreathed in smiles,  
Brightly shines the just-drilled core,  
“We’ve struck ore, hey, we’ve struck ore!”

A once poor peasant ambles round the drill,  
Happy tears streaming down his cheeks;  
Children, hearing we’ve hit a lode,  
Flock to see the “stones of gold”.

The leader of the prospecting team  
Warmly grips the peasant’s hand.  
“Thanks, your leading us here was fine.  
Without you we’d never have found the mine.”

“Chairman Mao tells us to develop mining,  
Ahead of us the road is bright.”  
“We’ll drench through the mountains with our sweat,  
Those underground treasures will be ours yet!”





*Wang Chun-chuan*

## A Basket of Sand

Early spring. In the foothills of the White Cloud Mountains wheat sprouted and the tea bushes put forth buds. A big gleaming sign hung at the entrance to the village of Team Five, part of the White Cloud Brigade. It read: **"In agriculture, learn from Tachai."**

Chen, secretary of the brigade Party branch, returned around noon. He had been attending a conference of activists in the living study and application of Mao Tsetung Thought in the county town. In his forties, he walked briskly along a ridge between two fields, a worn People's Liberation Army cap on his head, dressed in a padded tunic and trousers of faded black.

He gazed with pleasure at the broad fields. He had been gone only about two weeks, but everything looked new. Piles of manure dotted the fields like stars in the summer sky. Even Team Five, which ordinarily was short of fertilizer, now had plenty.

Originally Chen had intended to spend a few more days in town and attend to a few things. But then he heard a broadcast urging that the mass movement to learn from Tachai be brought "to a new high tide". He couldn't wait to get home and, with the whole brigade, pitched into the latest drive.

Whenever he went away, it was his habit on returning not to go home first but go directly to the fields.

Experience had taught him that this was the best place for keeping abreast of new developments.

"It's you, Old Chen!" a familiar voice hailed him.

"Hi, you brash young devil." Chen walked over to Yu-hua, leader of Team Five, who was standing beside a pond. "Why haven't you gone home for lunch?"

"I wanted to feel around the bottom of this thing." Yu-hua washed the mud off his hands.

Chen observed the weariness around the young team leader's eyes. "Up before dawn again today?"

Yu-hua laughed. "When a dwarf walks with a giant he's got to take a lot of extra steps."

"Brash devil." Chen thumped him on the shoulder. "You're going to be a pillar that holds up the sky. What's this talk about dwarfs?"

Yu-hua knew what he meant. But he said: "We haven't any reserve push in this team. We won't prop up the sky just relying on a team leader like me."

"I suppose by 'push' you mean this?" Chen pointed at the pond.

Yu-hua nodded. The two sat down on the ground and continued their conversation.

According to the younger man, the broadcast the previous day had aroused the whole brigade. Everyone was eager to pitch into learning more from Tachai and doing a first-rate job of spring planting. People who had been poor and lower-middle peasants in the old society said the men in the county Party committee who were opposed to socialism had done their utmost to restore private enterprise as advocated by Liu Shao-chi. They fought against Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, sabotaged the movement to learn from Tachai and tried to drag us back to capitalism.

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution had restored power to the people. In the countryside they were determined to model their methods after Tachai's. And so Yu-hua had been quite excited by the broadcast. But his ardour cooled by half when he thought of

the state Team Five was in. Last year all the other eight teams in the brigade had exceeded their grain production quota. Only Team Five had fallen behind.

Situated on a row of bare hills with neither mountain above nor lake below to draw upon, they had the worst terrain in the brigade. The soil turned to mire when it rained and was hard as stones when it was dry. Their sources of fertilizer were limited. How could they raise good crops without fertilizer? It was a real headache.

Yu-hua poured out all his troubles to the Party secretary. Chen listened, his eyes on the reeds just emerging on the far side of the pond, two vertical lines of concentration between his brows. But he made no reply.

"What do you say?" Yu-hua urged. "Am I talking sense or not?"

"They're problems, I know. But..."

Ordinarily, Chen's "but" would be followed by a series of other questions. Before the Party secretary could continue, however, he was interrupted by a woman's voice, hailing:

"Secretary Chen, the minute you come back you help people with their thinking."

The men turned. "Ah, Aunt Chang," they said. Though over fifty, she was lively, youthful and very healthy. She was carrying a heavy basket which pulled her to one side.

"Where are you coming from?" Chen asked.

"My married daughter's given birth. I went to look after her for a couple of days."

"Aha," cried Yu-hua, as if he had discovered a secret. "You go for two days and come back with a basket of goodies. If you stayed a month you'd probably need a cart to bring back all the gifts they gave you."

"Very funny. All right. You're in luck today. I've roasted peanuts here and deep-fried soy-beans. Help yourself." Aunt Chang thumped the basket down on the edge of the pond next to Yu-hua.

The young man grinned. "People say the mythical Monkey King with one leap could cross three mountains, and see through three

brick walls at a glance. I'm even sharper." He shoved his hand into the basket. His grin faded and his eyes popped, as if his fingers were being nipped by pincers.

"Sand," he gasped.

All three roared with laughter, Aunt Chang the loudest of all. Abruptly, she stopped and said to Chen in a serious voice: "You've just come back. I'm sure you have a lot to tell Yu-hua about what the higher leadership is thinking. I've interrupted you. Yu-hua, I'll drop by your house a little later. There's something important I want to talk to you about."

She picked up her basket and walked away.

"Right," Yu-hua shouted after her. "Only don't come visiting empty-handed. Bring some puffed rice."

Aunt Chang's merry laughter floated back.

"Speaking of sand," Yu-hua said to Chen, "that reminds me of our problem. We've sticky soil in Team Five that forms a hard crust when it's dry. It needs to be mixed with sand to keep it porous. I was hoping sand would form at the bottom of this pond by now, but it's still nothing but yellow mud. It doesn't give us a bit of push."

"So it's push you're digging for here," Chen said jestingly, shaking his finger.

Yu-hua laughed. "I know you'll say my thinking is in a rut. But, Party secretary, the cleverest wife can't cook rice without grain."

Chen looked at the young team leader, his trousers rolled up, his legs spattered with mud, and he recalled the Land Reform period in the early fifties, when he and Yu-hua's father were working together in the peasants' association. Yu-hua was still a child.

Once, after a struggle meeting against a despotic landlord, little Yu-hua walked into the office of the land reform team and announced: "I want to go up on the stage and expose that dog of a landlord too."

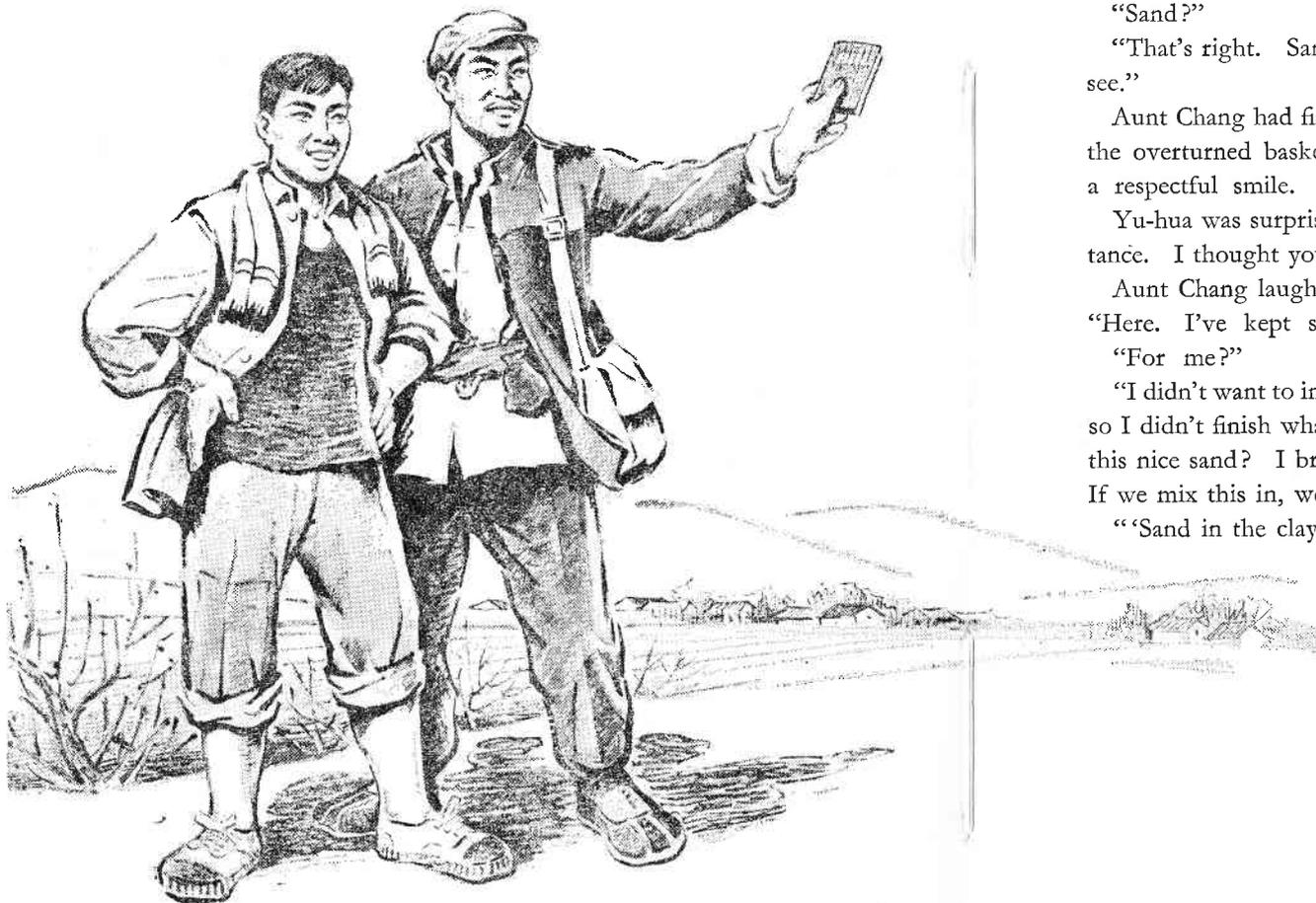
"There's real promise in this lad," the team leader said approvingly. "He's a true son of our poor peasants and hired hands."

Sure enough, when Yu-hua graduated from junior middle school, he returned to his native village. Loyal to Chairman Mao, he was resolved to till the fields and wage revolution in the countryside. Later, he was elected leader of Team Five. He was young, full of

revolutionary enthusiasm, and capable. But "even a fine drum should be hit hard."

"Yu-hua," said Chen, "the cultural revolution has won a big victory. But would you say the struggle between the socialist and capitalist roads, between the proletarian and revisionist lines, are over?"

The young man was surprised that he should ask such a simple question. While he was considering how to reply, Chen went on: "Why do we want to learn from Tachai? Because they have good farming methods, or because of the way they carry out Chairman Mao's revolutionary line and stick to socialism? You're a team leader. You don't want to just keep dragging the cart with your head down. Look up and see the road. The new high tide in learning from Tachai is part of the struggle between the two lines, the two ideologies.



One relies on the weather, on aid from the state, on help from others; it is interested only in soil quality, fertilizer and high output. The other. . . ."

Yu-hua was listening with interest when Chen suddenly grabbed his arm.

"Yu-hua, look!"

The team leader gazed in the direction in which the Party secretary was pointing.

"I thought at least a star had fallen from the sky," Yu-hua said negligently. "It's only Aunt Chang."

"Look carefully. What's she doing?"

"Seems to be —" Yu-hua stood on tiptoe. "She seems to be spreading something."

"It's sand."

"Sand?"

"That's right. Sand," Chen said excitedly. "Come on. Let's go see."

Aunt Chang had finished dumping her sand, and now was rapping the overturned basket sharply against the ground. Chen gave her a respectful smile.

Yu-hua was surprised. "You brought this bit of sand all that distance. I thought you wanted it for making puffed rice."

Aunt Chang laughed and picked up a bulging sack at her feet. "Here. I've kept some for you."

"For me?"

"I didn't want to interrupt you two just now when you were talking, so I didn't finish what I have to say." She opened the bag. "Isn't this nice sand? I brought it back so the team could think about it. If we mix this in, we can change the quality of our clayey soil."

"'Sand in the clay is like salt in the soup,' as the old saw goes,"

Chen agreed.

The night before while in the village of her married daughter, Aunt Chang had listened attentively to the broadcast. What impressed her most was the explanation of what China's commune

members should learn from Tachai. The Tachai people follow Chairman Mao's teachings and are self-reliant and fight hard. With this spirit, even the most backward brigade in the most adverse conditions can win out.

Her daughter had given her a basket of peanuts. As she started home, she skirted Chaochia Lake. She noticed that the shore was all fine dark sand. "I must bring a basket of this stuff home," she thought. "Every little bit counts — that's the Tachai spirit. Besides, I can show the team leader this sand and urge him to send the team to fetch some more." She returned the peanuts to her daughter and filled the basket with sand.

Chen nodded as she talked. Yu-hua was moved.

"A long distance to carry such a load," he said sympathetically. "You must be exhausted."

Aunt Chang gurgled her jolly laugh. "Only twenty *li*. Nothing to it. To learn from Tachai we need the stubbornness of The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains. He and his sons and his grandsons all shovelled away until they levelled two big mountains that blocked the way in front of their house. The Tachai people changed their soil through hard, persistent work, and now are bringing in high yields. That's the spirit we need in Team Five. For instance, if every man, woman and child brings home a basket of sand any place they see it, before long we'll be able to transform all the ten thousand *mu* of our sticky soil."

Aunt Chang's lively vigorous manner completely belied her fifty years.

Chen and Yu-hua, standing on a field ridge, gazed after her as she walked away. In her Chen could see the strength and intelligence of the members of Team Five, he could hear their steps marching down Chairman Mao's revolutionary road.

"There's the push you're looking for," he said to Yu-hua. "Its potential is limitless. That's what we mean by learning from Tachai. The Tachai people put politics firmly in command, they follow Chairman Mao's principles of self-reliance and hard work, they cherish their country and their collective in a communist manner. If we want to benefit from their revolutionary experience, we who are

the leaders must first revolutionize our own thinking. We must stress class struggle and the struggle between the two lines."

Yu-hua grasped Chen's hand. "I've got straightened out," he said fervently.

"Straightened out where?"

"In here." Yu-hua tapped his head. "Aunt Chang has made me realize that people armed with Mao Tsetung Thought provide the biggest push." He paused. "Plants need fertilizer like humans need food. Crops can't do without it. But even more important is a grasp of Mao Tsetung Thought by the crop-tenders. We must be more conscious of the two line struggle."

Like a veteran mariner, Chen used Mao Tsetung Thought as his compass, skilfully guiding his craft on a revolutionary course.

"What do you propose to do?" he quizzed Yu-hua.

"Call a meeting on learning from Tachai and ask Aunt Chang to speak on her understanding of *The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains*. Also ask everyone to talk on what they think the fundamental spirit of Tachai is, and how our team should apply it."

"Good." Chen nodded. "I'll sit in on your meeting. You'd better tell Aunt Chang about it first, so she can prepare."

"Right." Yu-hua set off at a trot for Aunt Chang's house.

Chen watched the energetic young team leader go. "A good lad, that," he thought.

The next morning, when the horizon had just turned a fish-belly white, nearly a hundred members of Team Five, men and women, set forth in a long line, carrying their tools, a red flag in the lead. Singing Chairman Mao's quotations set to music, they swung along towards Chaochia Lake.

The previous night by the time their meeting ended, Yu-hua was so stirred by the determination of the team members to learn from Tachai that he couldn't sleep. He lit his lamp and studied Chairman Mao's works, pondering as he read. Only at cock's crow did he finally doze off.

When he awoke, it was broad daylight. He leaped from his bed, grabbed a shovel and dashed out of the village. Hurriedly crossing

a small hill, he saw the team ahead of him on the highway. Chen was leading. Yu-hua ran to catch up.

"I've fallen behind again," he apologized.

"Not at all," Chen smiled. "Your team members were just saying that your speech last night caught the very essence of Tachai."

Yu-hua shook his head. "If it weren't for the help of the Party branch and the masses I'd still be wandering down the wrong path. I hope you'll prod me more often in the future."

"That's only half the story. 'The team leader has to lead.' Isn't that what everybody says? Besides waging revolution yourself, according to Chairman Mao's teachings, you also have to lead the masses along Chairman Mao's revolutionary road."

"Right. Absolutely right," Yu-hua exclaimed cheerfully.

"Right. Absolutely right," Chen mimicked. "Brash young devil. Get up in front, take the red flag and set the pace."

"Certainly!" Yu-hua gaily snapped to attention, then raced to the head of the column, grasped the red flag and held it high.

The sun climbed in the east, gilding the clouds and bathing the land in a rosy light. Along the highway cutting through the broad fields, Team Five strode briskly forward.

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*Red Flag Canal* (painting in the traditional style) ►  
by Pu Sung-chuang

The canal winds through the rocky Taihang Mountains of Linhsien County, Honan Province, drawing its water from the Chang River. More than 70 kilometres long, it consists of three trunk canals and 480 smaller canals, totalling 1,000 kilometres, and irrigates the entire county.



## A Letter

I was told to learn to cook.

I said nothing when the Party branch secretary told me the decision, but at heart, I was reluctant. As if knowing what was on my mind, he said kindly, "Finish your business at the commune first. We can discuss the matter thoroughly when you get back."

I set off early the next morning. On the way to the bus stop, the Party secretary hailed me. He caught up with me and thrust a letter into my hand.

"Young Lin, when you pass Liuchiawan on your way back, would you please deliver this? The address is on the front." Unfortunately the bus had just hooted away as I got to the bus stop.

I stuffed the letter into my pocket, and set out on foot. The commune was about twenty-four miles away from the county seat and I had never been there before. But I figured that even on foot I could easily get there before dark.

After covering about six miles, ominous dark clouds began to gather and before long heavy snow began to fall. In no time at all the whole area was clad in milky-white. Even worse, a piercing north-



wester had whipped up the snow, so that it was hard to breathe. Every step was a struggle.

My feet were as heavy as lead and large blisters had risen on the soles. I had a headache and despite the chill of the storm, felt hot all over. Although it was already past noon and I'd only travelled half the distance, I had no wish to go any further.

As luck would have it, a village was in sight! Carts and people came and went busily. I trudged up to a few thatched huts. A sign on a gate read "Dawn Inn". I decided to rest there.

The little inn was animated. A large eye-catching slogan "**Serve the People**" stood out in bright red paper-cut characters on the whitewashed wall. Guests were busily talking and eating their fried flat cakes and beancurd with chilli sauce. I took a seat in a corner.

"This inn really serves us poor and lower-middle peasants well," a guest commented.

"Yes, it is run well. Grandpa Shen works hard at this job," the other agreed.

As they spoke, an old man over fifty, apron round his waist and a white towel over his shoulder, bustled about serving everyone. They all called him Grandpa Shen.

With half-closed eyes I relaxed against the wall.

"I say, young man," Grandpa Shen's genial voice broke my reverie. "Why do you eat cold food in such weather? You shouldn't be so careless about your health!" Reproachfully he took away the young fellow's plate and soon returned with a bowl of steaming hot beancurd and a plate of warm toast.

The young fellow was quite moved, "I'm sorry to have bothered you again, Grandpa Shen."

"Not at all. You can't do revolutionary work well if you're not healthy. In future don't eat any cold food in weather like this." The old man was very serious.

Gradually, the guests left and now the inn was quiet. The grandpa ambled over to me and after a brief glance said, "You're very pale, comrade. Is there anything wrong?"

"A bit of a headache," I replied.

Very apologetically he ushered me into another room. "I've been so busy that I didn't notice you weren't well. Come in here!"

He helped me onto the *kang* bed where two other men were sleeping. "They've been to the commune hospital," he said. "They live quite a distance away, so they are spending the night here."

Grandpa Shen felt my forehead with his hand, "My, you are running a fever! You must have caught cold. The hospital is not far away, I'll go for the doctor."

"Don't trouble yourself, grandpa." I gripped his arm to prevent him from leaving. "If I drink some hot water and sweat it out on the warm *kang*, I'll be all right."

"How about trying a bit of needle treatment? It certainly won't do you any harm." He enthusiastically suggested and went off to get his equipment.

After the treatment Grandpa Shen brought me a bowl of ginger broth. "If you drink this down while it's hot, and have a sleep on the warm *kang*, you'll soon recover."

Sure enough, after downing the broth I felt a bit better and soon fell asleep.

It seemed much later when I awoke to a warm sensation in my feet. The old man had been washing them with warm water. Now he began to prick the blisters with a needle. His concern moved me greatly. Despite my protests he firmly pressed me back down onto the *kang* when I tried to get up.

"If you quit moving around I can finish quickly and your feet won't trouble you on your journey tomorrow." His mock severity made me lie still.

"Please, Grandpa Shen," I said. "You must get some rest."

However he paid no attention, and went out to get me a bowl of gruel. "Drink it all," he ordered. "You need strength to fight this illness." He tucked the quilts snugly around the other two sleepers and slipped away.

After a short while I heard a dull grinding sound. Propping myself up I peered out of the window across the courtyard. Although it was already late and rather dark outside, Grandpa Shen was still working in the opposite wing, industriously grinding soy-beans on a millstone. He stopped only a moment to peep in my door to check on his charges and immediately went back to his task.

I couldn't sleep any more. The other two comrades were now awake too and we started chatting. Naturally, our conversation turned to Grandpa Shen.

They told me he had distinguished himself many times during the War of Resistance Against Japan and in the War of Liberation. He had been a jack of all trades, having served at one time or another in our army as a cook, a medical orderly and a groom. He was always earnest and conscientious about his work. He had three sons, two were in the army, one was a worker in a factory. His worker son asked him to live with him in town, but the old man refused. He said he was used to the life in the forests and mountains and felt more at ease serving the people in a place where he had fought the enemy.

We all fell silent, each lost in thought, impressed by the old man's lifelong devotion to serving the people.

It was darker outside now and it had begun to snow again. I put on my clothes and went out to give grandpa a hand.

"You're much too ill to be out here helping me," he protested. "I can't just lie in there doing nothing and watch you working so hard," I retorted.

Since I stubbornly insisted, he gave me a light task. Before long, however, he knit his brows and stooped to pick up a few soy-beans I had dropped on the ground.

"Young people . . . always so careless," he muttered.

"It's only a few grains, hardly even a mouthful," I said casually.

Grandpa Shen bristled. "Only a few grains! Imagine what would happen if seven hundred million people all took that attitude. It's no easy job to grow grain, young man. What with the fields irrigated with the sweat of many poor and lower-middle peasants, how can we afford to waste even a single grain?"

He paused to catch his breath. Pointing to a scar on his head, he said, "When I was fourteen, my mother was seriously ill. One day she wanted to have some beancurd. We didn't own any land, so I collected some wild plants and a handful of soy-beans which had fallen in the road. The landlord's bailiff saw me and accused me of theft. When I answered him back he became so furious that he beat me unconscious with a stick. When I finally came to I crawled back home only to find that my mother, the only dear one I had left, had died."

On hearing this story from grandpa's bitter past, I felt ashamed of my wrong attitude and paid more attention to my task.

The old man insisted that I'd done enough and ushered me back to the inner room. Before long the grinding stopped and he too finished his work. He tiptoed into the room, thinking I was asleep, and drew his chair up to his table. Taking notes while reading, he began to study Chairman Mao's Three Constantly Read Articles.

It was nearly midnight but I wasn't a bit sleepy. Suddenly I remembered the letter the Party secretary had asked me to deliver. I took it from my pocket and made out the name, "To Comrade Shen Teh-wen, Dawn Inn."

"Grandpa Shen," I cried. "This letter is for you. I hadn't looked to see who it was addressed to before now."

The old man, surprised that I was still awake, turned around and took it from me, "A letter for me, eh?"

"Why don't you go to bed?" I asked as he opened the letter.

"Me?" Pointing to his grey-haired head he chuckled, "I'm getting rid of the rust. A man's brain gets rusty if he doesn't constantly study Chairman Mao's works." He held the letter under the light and read in a low voice:

"My old comrade, I was very pleased to learn that Dawn Inn has been cited as 'Red Flag Inn' — obviously you work as well as you did when you were young. . . . I'd like our cooks to go and learn from you, but at present they can't be spared and you are too busy to leave the inn. Fortunately, this young comrade, Lin, is going to a commune on some business and will pass your place. I've told him to see you and I hope you will tell him of some of your experiences, so we can learn from you. . . ."

The old man smiled in embarrassment, "What experiences have I to tell about?"

Though I pleaded with him, he wouldn't admit he had any experiences worth telling. Suddenly I had an idea. Taking up his political study note-book I asked, "I suppose this is where you record a lot of your experiences?"

When he mumbled his assent I continued, "Suppose you lend it to us for a while. . . ."

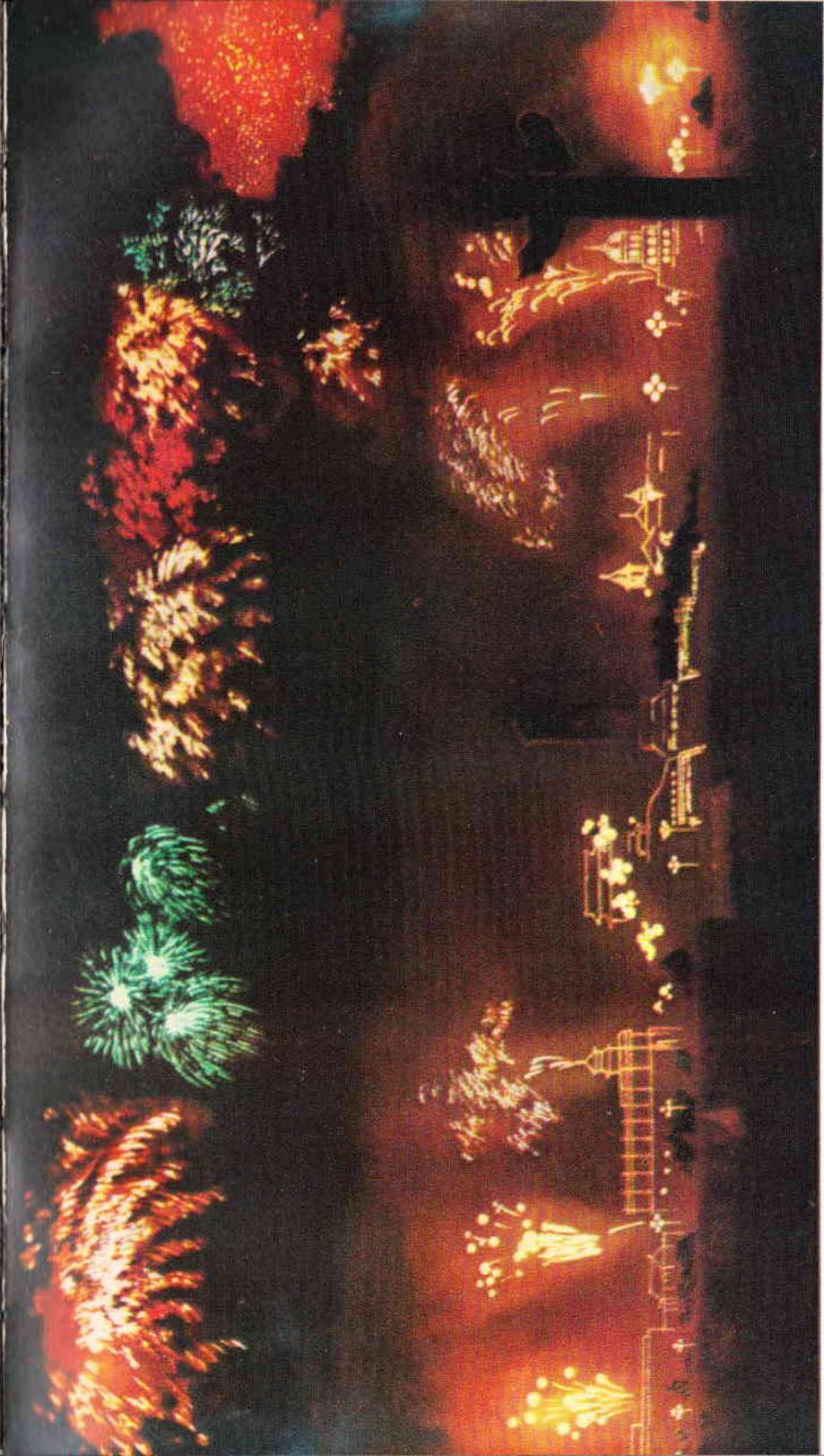
"All right," he agreed reluctantly. "But I haven't done my work well, so please give me your suggestions and criticisms after reading it over."

It was very late at night by the time I finished reading the book, but it gave me the courage and inspiration I needed to decide to become a cook.

*Illustrated by Tsai Jung*

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*Night over Tien An Men (lacquer painting) ▶*



*Chung Wen*

## “National Defence Literature” and Its Representative Works

Thirty-five years ago the Chinese literary world was astir with a heated debate over two slogans: “national defence literature” and “mass literature for the national revolutionary war”. A re-assessment of this historical event has still topical significance today. The counter-revolutionary revisionist line which had come into existence in Chinese literature and art after the liberation of the country in 1949 is the lineal descendant of the “national defence literature”, both ideologically and politically. During his life time Lu Hsun had waged principled struggles against Chou Yang, who concocted this slogan. Today, on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the great writer’s birth, it is all the more of topical significance to review this problem.

In the middle of the thirties the Japanese aggressors rode roughshod over China. To tackle this critical situation Chairman Mao published in December 1935, *On Tactics Against Japanese Imperialism*, outlining the principles and tactics of the Chinese Communist Party in the great war of national liberation. **“It is none other than to form a broad revolutionary national united front.”** With the

revolutionary workers and peasants as its chief component, this united front also included petty bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie.

The Chinese national bourgeoisie was marked with a dual quality: While favouring resistance against Japan it tended to waver or fall in with the enemy at crucial moments. This dual character decided its inability to play a leading role in the united front. To ensure complete victory in the struggle, Chairman Mao laid great stress on **“the leading role of the Communist Party and the Red Army in the national united front”**. Time and again he taught the Communists that, in the united front, they must stick to the principle of the Party's independence, insist on the leading role of the proletariat, and keep the stand of both uniting and struggling with the bourgeoisie. Who was responsible for leadership? Chairman Mao pointed out, **“This question of responsibility for leadership in the Chinese revolution is the linchpin upon which the success or failure of the revolution depends.”**

In opposition to this proletarian revolutionary line, Wang Ming and Liu Shao-chi, both renegades who had usurped the leadership of the Party, pushed to the best of their ability a Right opportunist line. In the various articles he wrote, Wang Ming denied the leading position of the proletariat and its stand of both uniting and struggling with the bourgeoisie in the anti-Japanese national united front. Instead he pattered fervidly about the “common interest” of the “whole people”. The renegade Liu Shao-chi, under the pseudonym of Mo Wen-hua, also urged in a series of articles, “You must rope in whatever individuals you can get hold of, no matter what party or organization they belong to,” and “Be more audacious and freely to receive whoever comes our way.”

The “four villains”, Chou Yang, Hsia Yen, Tien Han and Yang Han-sheng, implemented this line in the field of literature and art by putting out the counter-revolutionary slogan “national defence literature” in the spring of 1936 under the pretext that literature and art must serve “national defence”. They argued that the leading role played by the proletariat in literature and art should be relegated completely to the Kuomintang reactionaries. “We mustn't pin any particular label on the proletariat,” ranted Chou Yang, “since national

defence literature is the literature of the whole nation,” endowed with “the quality of the whole people”. In this way the “four villains” conspired to extend “national defence literature” into various branches of the arts. Hence the so-called “national defence drama”, “national defence music”, “national defence cinema” and so on.

China was facing perdition in the teeth of Japanese invasion. The proletariat and the broad masses demanded resistance against Japan. Under the leadership of Chairman Mao and the Chinese Communist Party they enkindled a nation-wide war of resistance against Japan. But Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang that represented the interests of the big landlord and comprador bourgeois classes, advocated non-resistance. They begged for a humiliating “peace” from the invaders, and let them occupy large parts of our territory. “War” or “peace”, therefore, was the question on which the Chinese Communist Party and the broad masses held entirely different views from the Kuomintang and all the reactionaries. It also became the yardstick by which everyone's political attitude was measured.

Which class's interest did the coiners of “national defence literature” represent? The question can be answered by the few specimens of the so-called “national defence drama” fabricated by the “four villains”. Let's see what kind of stuff they are:

Hsia Yen tossed out a play called *Sai Chin-bua* (literally, “More Beautiful Than a Golden Flower”) — the name of the heroine. Chou Yang praised it as a model “national defence drama”, which, according to him, had “blazed a new path for the genre”. It was written in 1936, the eve of the War of Resistance Against Japan which broke out in 1937. By then the Japanese invaders had already occupied the vast area of our northeastern provinces, and were moving to encroach upon the whole country. Instead of arousing the people to fight the aggressors, the play indirectly showered praise on the Kuomintang's reactionary policy of capitulation and heaped slanders on the anti-Japanese armed forces led by the Communist Party.

The play took as its background the Yi Ho Tuan Movement which broke out in 1900 in north China. The movement worked for armed resistance against the imperialist aggression perpetrated by the joint forces under the command of a German general von Waldersee and

composed of troops from the United States, Britain, Japan, Germany, Russia, France, Italy and Austria then invading China. The broad revolutionary masses who joined the movement fought valiantly in the resistance. But the playwright, instead of eulogizing their great deeds, took the stand of the imperialist aggressors, vilifying the patriots as "Boxer bandits" and their heroic exploits as "Boxer riots". Actually he was attacking by historical analogy the fiery anti-Japanese war led by the Communist Party. By blaming the "riots" of the "Boxer bandits" as the cause of the invasion of China by the eight imperialist countries, he was in fact indicating that resistance against the Japanese was the cause of their invasion. By these absurd arguments he tried to justify and create public opinion for Chiang Kai-shek's fallacy that "the others come to ruin you because you have ruined yourselves first" and therefore the "invasion is logical" and "it is a crime to resist the Japanese". The author's praise of the heroine Sai Chin-hua had the aim of defending the Kuomintang reactionaries who raked in huge personal profits by selling the country to the enemy.

Sai Chin-hua was the wife of the Chinese minister to Germany during the reign of the last monarch of the feudal Ching Dynasty (1644-1911). She was also the owner of a Peking brothel, and later became the mistress of the German general von Waldersee, who commanded the joint forces of the eight imperialist countries then invading China. Hsia Yen portrays this traitress turned prostitute as a veritable "Goddess of Mercy". When the foreign occupation army has no food supplies, she suggests a way to procure some, saying that once they stop killing the people, the merchants would come and "then you'll have no trouble with the supplies." She gives the enemy a good tip: If you want to stay in China, the best way is not to kill a lot of people but to purchase a few souls.

As a condition for a peace settlement, von Waldersee wants to decapitate the empress dowager on the altar of the German minister to the Ching court. (He had been killed in the turmoil of the invasion.) Again Sai Chin-hua presents a "compromise", advising that it is of "far greater significance" "to erect the largest memorial arch in China for the minister" at the place where the diplomat lost his life. She meant what matters is not so much the punishment of the empress

dowager as the destruction of the national pride of the Chinese people. But such shameless betrayal of the country and fawning upon the enemy is described in the play as "patriotic deeds".

The gist of the play is that it is futile to organize the broad masses and mobilize revolutionary troops to fight the Japanese invaders, nor is it necessary to insist on the leadership of the Party and the proletariat in the anti-Japanese national united front. Peace can be secured through a handful of servile people like Sai Chin-hua who are capable of "offering plans" and "negotiating" with the Japanese aggressors. The play was staged at a time when the Kuomintang reactionaries were peddling their doctrine of "perdition with war, survival with peace". Hsia Yen's play caters exactly to this line of betrayal.

In 1937 Hsia Yen published another play *Under the Eaves of Shanghai* which he styled as a work of "serious realism". The resistance against Japan was then in full swing. Holding high the banner of national liberation, the great leader Chairman Mao led the entire Party and the entire people to form a national united front and laid down the Marxist-Leninist line, "**boldly mobilize the masses and expand the people's forces so that, under the leadership of our Party, they will defeat the Japanese aggressors, liberate the whole people and build a new-democratic China.**" But Wang Ming and Liu Shao-chi adhered obstinately to their line of capitulation. Selling out the revolutionary interest of the proletariat, they shamelessly acclaimed Chiang Kai-shek as "the leader" in the war of resistance and trumpeted that his leadership must be obeyed unreservedly in everything.

And that was not all. Liu Shao-chi also prepared to usurp control of the Party and the government so as to be able later to impose capitalism on China. He instructed the Communists incarcerated by the Kuomintang to publish "anti-Communist announcements" in the press so that they could be freed. When those who did so crawled out of the jails, he immediately gave them posts in the Party. Thus a clique of renegades was formed within the Party, with himself at the head. *Under the Eaves of Shanghai* was written with this political intrigue as the background.

The play centres on an episode of a sordid "triangular relationship" with Kuang Fu, a renegade, as the hero. An ex-prisoner who barterers

his faith for freedom, he spreads defeatism after he comes out of the prison. "I am a mere survivor vanquished on the battlefield of life," he says, "and have lost all interest in life." The only thing he is interested in is to find his best friend and through him his wife. But to his disappointment he discovers that this friend and his wife have long been living together. He leaves "in bewilderment and grief".

This decadent grey figure, who bent his knees before the enemy, was the object of veneration for Hsia Yen the playwright, who had his own axe to grind. Through the "misfortunes" of this character he tried to show how much "happiness" had been ruined by the War of Resistance Against Japan the Chinese people were waging under the guidance of Chairman Mao and the Communist Party. The play also diffused "the spirit of non-resistance towards the evil", in an attempt to whitewash a renegade's betrayal of the revolution. The underlying idea was that in the face of the Japanese invasion and massacre the Chinese people should have laid down their arms and stopped resisting, because only in this way could "happiness" be preserved.

Tien Han, another of the "four villains", produced a play of the same type, *Lukouchiao*, almost at the same time. *Lukouchiao* is a bridge on the outskirts of Peking where Japanese troops attacked the Chinese garrison on July 7, 1937. The Chinese people resisted heroically, thereby setting off the eight-year War of Resistance Against Japan. An anti-Japanese national liberation movement swept the country on an unprecedented scale. But Chiang Kai-shek carried on secret negotiations with the invaders and finally accepted the "peace settlement" dictated by the Japanese.

Chairman Mao pointed out, "As everyone knows, Chiang Kai-shek, the political representative of China's big landlords and big bourgeoisie, is a most brutal and treacherous fellow"; "he was passive in resisting Japan but active in anti-communism. He was a stumbling-block in the people's War of Resistance."

Under Tien Han's pen history is distorted. The corrupt, cowardly, lawless Kuomintang troops who always took to their heels whenever the enemy attacked, are prettified as "the flower of the common people". The profiteering Kuomintang officials, who made fortunes out of "the national salvation contributions", are praised as "representing

China's destiny". The defeatist generals who sought peace from the enemy at the expense of the country are qualified as brave men who might go their own way sometimes but who would nevertheless dash to the front "like whirlwinds" to fight the invaders. In this way Chiang Kai-shek is masked as a hero resisting the Japanese although he was actually a servile traitor.

The numerous "national defence dramas" exemplified by the above specimens and so highly esteemed by the "four villains" all serve the treacherous capitulationist line of the Kuomintang reactionaries. When Chiang Kai-shek was peddling the policy of capitulation to the Japanese, the authors of the "national defence literature" co-ordinated it with *Sai Chin-bua*; when he was practising his theory of flight before the advance of the enemy, they justified it with *Death of Li Hsin-cheng* (see the article *Hero or Renegade?* in *Chinese Literature*, No. 7, 1971); when he was preaching national defeatism, they responded with *Under the Eaves of Shanghai*; when he was trying to earn the title of a hero in the War of Resistance, they offered him *Lukouchiao*. That is why the Kuomintang reactionaries were so satisfied with "national defence literature" and "acquiesced either openly or tacitly with its existence". "National defence literature" is in essence a literature of treachery.

Lu Hsun, chief commander of China's cultural revolution, saw through the reactionary nature of "national defence literature". In accordance with Chairman Mao's policy on the formation of an anti-Japanese national united front, he put out the slogan "mass literature for the national revolutionary war" in opposition to "national defence literature". "Mass literature for the national revolutionary war," he said, "is a development of proletarian revolutionary literature, a real, amplified embodiment of proletarian literature during the present period." In refutation of the vicious proposal of the "four villains" that the proletariat should give up its leadership, Lu Hsun pointed out that the new slogan "does not by any means signify that the proletariat should give up its responsibility of leadership. On the contrary it means that the responsibility has become much heavier and more amplified."

Here is a comment by Lu Hsun on the authors of "national defence literature": "Now that they have 'the central theme' for their writing,

they confer even the title of 'Goddess of the Ninth Heaven' on Sai Chin-hua, who once slept with the German commander of the joint forces during the Yi Ho Tuan period."

Based on his long-term observation, Lu Hsun revealed that Chou Yang and his gang were "the kind of 'revolutionary writers' who had stepped to the side of the enemy". As "they have been skilfully trying to strangle the revolutionary vitality of the nation", "frankly I suspect that they have been sent by the enemy." If one probes into the history of these authors of "national defence literature", one will find that not a few of them are renegades and enemy agents. Therefore it is not surprising that being "sent by the enemy" they were so willing to serve Kuomintang's anti-Communist rule of dictatorship through literature and art.

Such being the case, it is no wonder that Chou Yang and gang have hated Lu Hsun to the marrow of their bones. In concert with the counter-revolutionary "encirclement and suppression" campaign, they slandered and attacked Lu Hsun furiously. Fearless, Lu Hsun carried on resolute struggles with them. In letters, articles and interviews he elucidated the significance of the revolutionary slogan "mass literature for the national revolutionary war" while exposing and criticizing the "national defence literature" which, being discredited, failed completely to complement Chiang Kai-shek's "encirclement and suppression" campaign in the field of culture.

Reactionary ideologies never step down of their own accord from the stage of history. Although "national defence literature" was denounced by the great communist Lu Hsun and then sentenced to death by the great victory of the War of Resistance Against Japan and the War of Liberation, its creators Chou Yang and company were not reconciled to their defeat. After the establishment of New China, abiding by the will of the counter-revolutionary revisionist clique headed by Liu Shao-chi, they tried to revive their criminal activities by creating public opinion for the restoration of capitalism in the field of literature and art. They resumed their attack on Lu Hsun, and after careful deliberation and plotting tossed out another reactionary slogan, "literature and art of the whole people".

They misled the public with a whole set of sophistry such as "our literature and art belong to the whole people", "our culture belongs to the whole people", literature and art "must be enjoyed by people of all classes" and "must be able to evoke a sympathetic response from all the people", and so on. This was an attempt to substitute the "whole people" for the distinct class nature of literature and art and the orientation that literature and art must serve workers, peasants and soldiers. They flooded the market with a horde of anti-Party, counter-revolutionary literary and art works to poison the people's minds. They tried their best to undermine socialist revolution and socialist construction and convert the field of literature and art into a hotbed for the restoration of capitalism.

So it is obvious their so-called "literature and art of the whole people" is but a development, a new variety of "national defence literature" under the new historical conditions. The former served in the thirties the Kuomintang reactionaries and Wang Ming and Liu Shao-chi's Right opportunist line under the banner of "resistance against Japan", while the latter worked in the sixties, under the cover of "the whole people", for a handful of renegades, agents, landlords, rich peasants, reactionaries and bad elements within the country, and a handful of imperialists, revisionists and reactionaries abroad.

Karl Marx pointed out: **History itself is the judge while the proletariat is the executor of the sentence.** The magnificent, sweeping Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution has now cast the arch-renegade Liu Shao-chi and his agents in the literary and art field, "the four villains", into the dustbin of history. The so-called "national defence literature" and "literature and art of the whole people" are of course also meeting the same fate.

### Comrades Chou En-lai and Chiang Ching Meet Dutch Film Director and French Film Worker

On August 1 Comrade Chou En-lai, Member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, and Comrade Chiang Ching, Member of the Political Bureau of the C.P.C. Central Committee, met the internationally known Dutch film director Joris Ivens and French film worker Marceline Loridan, and had a cordial and friendly conversation with them. That same evening, accompanied by Comrade Chiang Ching and two other members of the Political Bureau of the C.P.C. Central Committee, Comrades Chang Chun-chiao and Yao Wen-yuan, the distinguished guests attended an experimental performance of the modern revolutionary Peking opera *Red Detachment of Women*.

On the evening of August 3, Comrades Chiang Ching, Chang Chun-chiao and Yao Wen-yuan accompanied Joris Ivens, Marceline Loridan, woman writer Han Suyin and Mr. Vincent Ruthnaswamy to an experimental performance of a modern revolutionary dance drama, *Ode to Yimeng*.

### Korean Films Shown in China

To mark the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Sino-Korean Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance, several

Korean films have been shown in Peking and other parts of China from July 11 this year. They are colour documentaries *Fraternal Chinese People's Envoy* and *Chinese People's Friendship Delegation Visits Korea*, and feature films *Comrades-in-arms*, *Invisible Frontline* and *Women of Namgang Village*.

*Fraternal Chinese People's Envoy* records the friendly visit of Comrade Chou En-lai, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in April last year at the invitation of Comrade Kim Il Sung, Premier of the Cabinet of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The film warmly praises the militant friendship between the people of Korea and China, a friendship which was sealed in blood in the course of the protracted struggle against their common enemies, the U.S. and Japanese imperialists.

The *Chinese People's Friendship Delegation Visits Korea* features the visit to Korea last October of the Chinese People's Friendship Delegation.

Photo from *Invisible Frontline*



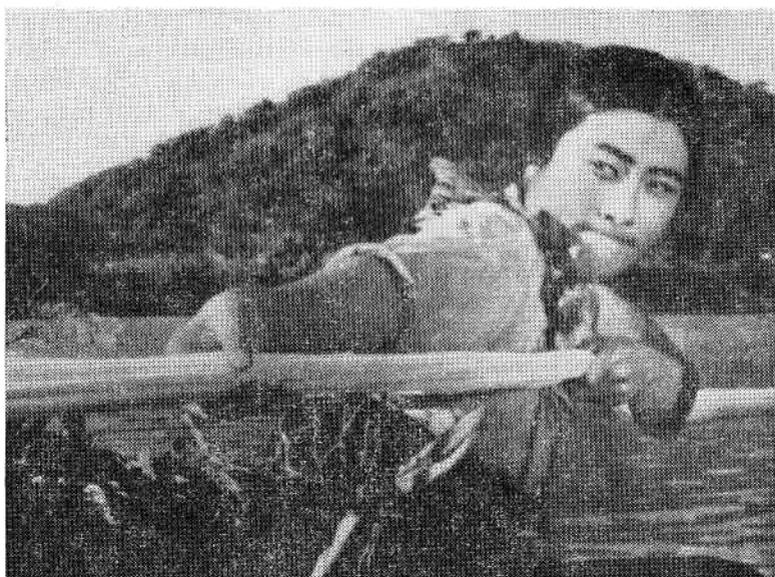


Photo from *Women of Namgang Village*

tion with Comrade Tseng Ssu-yu as its head and Comrade Chen Hsien-jui as its deputy head.

Set in the war years of the fight against the U.S. aggressors in Korea, *Comrades-in-arms* shows how a profound friendship between the people of Korea and China was forged. Portraying the determination of the Korean people to defend their proletarian dictatorship and highlighting their revolutionary vigilance, *Invisible Frontline* tells the story of how the Korean people captured spies sent by the U.S. imperialists and their lackey, the Pak Jung Hi puppet regime. *Women of Namgang Village* depicts the heroic role of the Korean women in the face of U.S. aggression and shows how they undertook all the tasks left when the men went to the battlefield.

### Model Revolutionary Theatrical Works Popularized in Peking

Recently, members of worker-peasant-soldier spare-time propaganda teams of various organizations in Peking participated in a festival of

the model revolutionary theatrical works. They performed scenes, passages and arias from the modern revolutionary Peking operas as well as ballets.

From the later part of last year a high tide in learning and popularizing the model revolutionary theatrical works began in the countryside, factories and schools. The present Peking festival serves to further extend the popularization work. In order to exchange experience and raise technical level, a series of discussions by the performers, the worker-peasant-soldier audience, who sponsored the festival, and professional art workers were held during the festival.

### Criticism of "War and Men"

On July 6 this year, *Renmin Ribao* (*People's Daily*) devoted a full page to excerpts from articles originally published in Japanese progressive papers *Choshu Shimbun* and *Jinmin Shimbun* criticizing the reactionary film *War and Men*.

*War and Men* was based on a script by Yamamoto Satsuo and produced by the Nikkatsu Film Studio. The makers proclaim that the film "attempts to describe the increasing expansion of Japanese militarism between 1928 and 1932, so as to serve as a warning against the revival of militarism in Japan".

*Choshu Shimbun* first raised the question, "Is *War and Men* an anti-war film or a war-like film? Does it oppose the revival of Japanese militarism, or does it step up this revival?" Then it answers quite correctly, "In writing about the aggressive war by Japanese militarism, one must firmly stand on the side of the people, not on the side of the rulers. He must stand with the oppressed and not with the aggressors."

This is where the film failed. It portrays China as decadent and the Chinese people as weak and powerless and comes to the conclusion that China must be ruled by Japan. Instead of criticizing aggression, *Choshu Shimbun* points out, it upholds the "logic" of the ruling class.

"From beginning to end the film slanders the common people, particularly those of China and Korea. Even the Japanese workers and peasants are described as war-like mob," the article continues.

“The aggressive war by Japanese militarism was defeated by the heroic efforts of the people, but one cannot find in the film a single Japanese or Chinese or Korean who opposed Japanese militarism. Without such people, how could the Japanese warlords be vanquished? The history of the Japanese aggressive war, then, is not portrayed from the viewpoint of the people, but from the viewpoint of the contemporary bourgeoisie.”

The *Jinmin Shimbun* article points out that the film makers who serve the interests of Japanese militarism try to prettify aggressive war by presenting it as a harmless farce. “The real aim of the film is to stir up enmity in the Japanese people against the people of China and Korea and to propagate aggressive war in Asia under the signboard of a ‘Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere.’” But this fond dream, the article warns the Japanese reactionaries, will, together with their U.S. masters, be thoroughly smashed by the people of the world.

## Red Guards from the Grasslands See Chairman Mao

Words by Li Teh-chuan  
Music by Kao Chih-heng

Allegretto

1. We are the Red Guards of Chair - man Mao,  
2. The bril - liant red sun ris - es in the east,

Come from the grass - lands to Tien An Men.  
Bright gold - en rays spread all ov - er the earth.

Vast seas of flam - ing red flags wave,  
Why do we feel so warm in our hearts,

Songs of bat - tle soar to the skies. Our great  
Why hap - py tears, come stream - ing down? Be - cause



lead - er Chair - man Mao Guides us in rev - o - lu - tion.  
we've seen Chair - man Mao, He is right here in our midst.



Ah ha ho, ah ha ho! Chair - man Mao Tse -



tung; ne'er set-ting red sun, The grass-lands' peo - ple are



loy - al to you, Staunch-ly mak - ing rev - o - lu - tion.



We wish you a long, long life! Ah ha ho,



ah ha ho! Chair - man Mao Tse - tung,



ne'er set-ting red sun, The grass-lands' peo - ple sing in your



praise: Long live Chair-man Mao Tse - tung!

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中国文学

英文月刊 1971 年第 10 期

本刊代号 2—916