

# CHINESE LITERATURE



7

1975

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## STORIES

*Fang Nan*

### A Change of Heart

As the Spring Festival approached, a holiday atmosphere enveloped Crest Village. It was then that the happy news of the successful holding of the Fourth National People's Congress swept through the island like a spring breeze. The whole place rang with laughter as the villagers went gaily about their tasks.

All the brigade members and cadres were anxiously awaiting the return of their fishing fleet, headed by Party Secretary Chung Ting-hsin. For there was a great deal to do: they had to sum up the previous year's work, draw up a new plan, and decide how to allocate their income. These matters were uppermost in the minds of all.

Early one morning, two white-bearded fishermen met on their way to the brigade office. Grandad Fu Hai was 79; Grandad Chang Sheng, 84. Being old cronies, they at once started chatting.

"Never in all my eight-four years have I seen such a good fishing season, Fu Hai. We owe it to the Communist Party and Chairman Mao." Chang Sheng spoke from the bottom of his heart.

"Right! Our life is getting better and better. Our old folk used to say: 'A man rarely reaches seventy.' But today seventy is the prime of life," quipped Fu Hai.

At that, both burst out laughing.

"Hey, let's set off some fire-crackers to celebrate our annual distribution of income," Grandad Fu Hai proposed.

"Why?"

"Because it's been a bumper year for us fishermen. I've heard our accountant's already worked out two budgets. When Party Secretary Chung and the rest come back, they'll decide which to adopt."

"What are these two budgets?" Grandad Chang Sheng demanded.

"The first is to set aside the same sum for the brigade reserve fund as last year and share out the rest. Every full-labour power would receive. . . ." Raising his calloused hand, he spread out his fingers and turned his hand over three times. That meant three times five — 1,500 yuan each.

"And the second one?"

"Put twenty per cent more into the reserve fund than last year. A full-time worker would still get one thousand yuan." Fu Hai paused a moment, then went on: "That's two hundred yuan more than last year!"

They continued walking along and talking, and soon reached Eastern Cove. Looking ahead, Grandad Fu Hai cried, "Hey, there's Old Chung's wife. Let's go and see what news she has." The two quickened their pace.

At the foot of a hill not far away, an old tile-roofed house looked out onto the sea. To the left of its courtyard, a building site had been cleared. There, a white-haired woman, over fifty, was busy spreading sand over the earth. Although beads of sweat ran down her face, she worked on without stop, hands flying as she moved backwards, sprinkling the ground with sand. Soon a yellow carpet stretched out before her.

As they approached, Grandad Fu Hai called out, "Hey, Aunt Chung, have you heard the news about this year's distribution of income?"

Aunt Chung raised her head and smiled. "Yes, uncle."

"Which proposal are you in favour of?"

"Sharing out more money, of course." She mopped the perspiration from her cheeks. "No doubt about it, I'm for the first proposal."

"That's just what we think." Grandad Fu Hai laughed. "But what's Old Chung's opinion? We're only waiting for his decision now." Before the others could speak he changed the subject. "This must be the foundation of the house you're going to build for Treasure and his bride. It looks fine, Aunt Chung. Well, when are we going to drink to their happiness?"

Aunt Chung replied cheerfully, "Don't worry, I won't forget to invite you two."

"We'll be looking forward to it," said Fu Hai.

Talking and laughing, the two men continued on their way.

All were impatiently waiting for the return of the fishing boats. But each had his own reason. Day and night, Aunt Chung eagerly awaited her husband and her son Treasure. Why? That's a long story.

Aunt Chung had had three children, but because of their wretched life before Liberation only Treasure had survived. His brother and sister had fallen ill and died, one after the other. The Chung family was so cruelly fleeced and ground down by the local despot that they didn't even have the means to build a home. They were reduced to living on a small boat. Treasure was born on a windy, rainy evening and for seven days and nights the boat tossed up and down in a storm. Ever since, Aunt Chung's health had been poor. Fortunately when the boy was three, Chairman Mao sent the People's Liberation Army to their island and saved them from that bitter life.

Now nearly twenty-eight, Treasure took after his father both in looks and in character. After graduation from school, he took up fishing too and became one of the first generation of educated fishermen. Aunt Chung thought the world of her son. Only one thing about him worried her: When Treasure turned twenty-five, he was still not engaged. Aunt Chung discussed the matter again and again with her husband and son but she always got the same answer: "There's no hurry." Two years had passed and still no sign of a fiancée. She had just made up her mind to fix up a match whether

they agreed or not, when Treasure was sent to the county town to take a technical course. There he met Li Ya-hung, daughter of an old brigade leader and a girl in a thousand. When Aunt Chung learned that they were engaged, she was so happy she couldn't sleep all that night. The next morning, she began planning for their marriage.

Her attitude bore out the old saying: "Fathers give little thought to a child's marriage, but it's never far from a mother's mind." The more Aunt Chung recalled the miserable life they'd led in the past, the more determined she was that her son should have a good wedding.

"After all," she reflected, "our life is getting better with each passing day. We can afford a good, well-furnished house for the young couple. Especially since last year's bumper catch." As the Spring Festival approached, she became more and more anxious for her husband and son to return.

"The boats are coming! They're back!" shouts rang out from the beach. All the villagers, men and women, old and young, rushed eagerly into the street and ran towards the wharf.

## 2

When Aunt Chung heard the shouts, she looked towards the sea. Twenty motorized fishing-boats were chugging into port, two by two, their masts stretching out like a long dragon. After a little while, the fishermen came hurrying ashore carrying their bags and fishing gear. As soon as Aunt Chung spotted her husband and son in the midst of a crowd of nearly five hundred, she rushed into the house to boil water and begin preparing a meal. When everything was ready, they still hadn't arrived. She went out into the courtyard again. They were nowhere to be seen. Where had they gone? Then a man stained with grease emerged from the machine factory. It was her husband. She dashed back into the house grumbling, "Look how messy he's got. I shall have to boil more water."

She soon heard familiar footsteps outside. An odour of fish intermingled with diesel oil came wafting into the room. Then a

robust fisherman of about fifty-eight appeared in the doorway. A pair of sharp eyes were set in that square face crowned by tousled hair greying after long years on the sea. Only his side-whiskers were still black. He was dressed in dark blue from his high-collared cotton-padded jacket to his wide-legged trousers. His tanned face, grimy with grease, expressed great energy and vitality.

As her husband came in, Aunt Chung carried a kettle of hot water to the wash-basin stand, then returned to the stove, demanding, "Why did you have to go to the factory? And why hasn't Treasure come home yet?"

Old Chung replied while pouring water into the basin. "A diesel engine's broken down. He's repairing it now so that we can use it on the big fishing-boat that's being built. The job's urgent."

After a short silence, Aunt Chung continued, "You've been away for a long time. With the Spring Festival so near, you should give some thought to family affairs!" Shooting a glance at him, she went on, "Treasure's wedding day is approaching, but you seem to have forgotten that completely. We've only the one child — not half a dozen sons and daughters. We need to give this matter some thought."

Scrubbing his face, Old Chung responded, "Yes, we need to give it some thought."

"I've got a plan worked out," Aunt Chung explained. "Now you're home, we can discuss it."

"Go ahead and tell me what you've got in mind."

"We had a wretched life after *we* were married, but now we're living in a fine new society. And besides, this has been a bumper year for our brigade. We ought to do the young people proud. Then we won't be letting them down."

When he'd finished washing, Old Chung fetched a bowl of rice and sat down at the table.

"Treasure's ma," he said quietly. "We don't see eye to eye on this."

Her heart sank. Plunking down a bowl of chowder before him, she protested, "We old folks should put our young people first."

Remember the old saying, 'The purpose of life is to raise sons and daughters.' Why else do parents work hard all their lives?"

Old Chung put his bowl down. "Old woman, you're wrong," he said gravely. "You're still thinking along old lines."

Aunt Chung was about to retort when she heard footsteps outside.

"Ma!" Treasure called affectionately as he entered the room.

Looking at her son smudged with oil, she ordered, "Wash up quickly. The food's getting cold."

As he cleaned up, he observed his father and mother — he could feel the tension in the air.

An awkward silence reigned as the three of them ate their meal.

Aunt Chung finally broke the silence, "Have you finished repairing the engine, Treasure?"

"Not yet, I'm going to take it apart and overhaul it completely," the young man replied.

"Does that mean you'll spend your Spring Festival holidays round that engine?" asked his mother.

Glancing at her, he asked, "What's the matter, ma?"

"Well, son, I hope you'll spend a few days helping out at home now that you and your father are back."

"What do you want him to do?" the old man broke in.

Aunt Chung shot a glance at her husband. "It'll only take two or three days. All right?"

"What is there to do that'll take that long?" Treasure asked with a smile.

For her husband's benefit, Aunt Chung spelled it out. "You aren't a child any longer, Treasure. Other young men your age are already married. But you're still hanging round your parents. Your wedding — such a big thing in your life — is only a few days off, yet you don't seem to give a thought to it."

Her son smiled sheepishly.

"Speak out!" Old Chung urged. "What do you want us to do?"

"Transport sand and finish the foundation for the new house."

"New house!" exclaimed Treasure.

"Yes, the brigade has allowed us enough land to build a three-room house," she explained.

"Why?" father and son demanded.

"Since Treasure will be getting married this spring, the brigade has agreed to help us out. . . ."

"But ma, we have plenty of room as it is," the young man interrupted. "Why do you want a new house?"

Glancing at her son, she shook her head. "You really *don't* understand."

Treasure bolted his rice, then jumped to his feet. "Ma, I don't agree with your idea of building a new house." With that he rushed off to the factory.

Her eyes on her son's receding back, she retorted, "I don't care whether you agree or not. After all, parents always do things for the good of their sons."

The old man broke in, "That's not always true. It depends on how you do it. Putting our own family's interests first and making plans along the old lines can be dangerous."

Aunt Chung retorted bluntly, "Don't try to frighten me. My concern for our son is something good and normal. The money comes from our earnings — not from speculation or any underhand dealings."

Old Chung was shocked. But before he could reply, the brigade leader's voice rang out from the courtyard, "Old Chung, shall we have a committee meeting this afternoon?"

"All right," he responded without moving.

"Then I'll go and inform the others." The brigade leader left without entering the room.

"What will you discuss at the meeting?" Aunt Chung asked eagerly.

"We'll study the documents of the Fourth People's Congress, sum up last year's experience, work out our new targets and production quota. . . ."

"And decide on the distribution of income!" Aunt Chung cut in before he could finish.

"Hmm." He nodded.

Aunt Chung decided to sound him out. "Everyone's been waiting for your return to make the final decision. The accountant's worked out two budgets. Which are you for?"

"What about you?" he countered.

Aunt Chung replied frankly, "I think you should decide on the first one. Since we've had a bumper year, it's only right to let everyone have more cash."

"Let's hear what's in your mind. I want to know your reasons," he urged, glancing at her sharply.

Then the words poured out as if a sluice-gate had been opened. "Old man, times are different today from before the Cultural Revolution or before Liberation. Our brigade's property amounts to over a million yuan. Not only do we have security, but our life is getting better and better. Now that the brigade is rich, it should consider how to raise the fishermen's living standards. You know the old saying, 'When the big boat brims over with fish, the small ones should be filled up too.' Now that the brigade is well off, every household should have more too..." She went on, her words flowing like running water, "As for our family, Treasure will be married this spring. We'll need money to build a house for the young couple. The larger the share of income we receive, the more we can spend on their wedding..."

A sudden clatter broke her flow of words. She saw that he'd dropped his chopsticks.

"Eh... you..." he began, then remained silent for a long time. He'd never dreamed that his own wife had such ideas about their son's marriage and the distribution of income. He'd been away at sea most of the time and didn't know just what was in her heart. When he returned to the island for a few days, she'd talk to him about these matters, but he hadn't paid much attention. Since his wife had had a bitter life in the past, he knew beyond the shadow of a doubt that she loved the new society and hated the class enemy. But now he realized she lacked revolutionary ideals and couldn't see far enough. She was too interested in her immediate family and couldn't remember the country's socialist construction. She'd even forgotten the need for diligence and frugality in running all enterprises. Old Chung felt strongly that he himself was responsible for this and resolved to do his best to help her. She had shared the

thick and the thin with him, and he must inspire her to continue to make revolution and march onwards.

Deep in thought, the old man remained silent. Aunt Chung said softly, "Marriage is an important event in our son's life. I hope this time you'll agree to my heart's desire."

Old Chung shook his head. "No, old woman, if I agreed with you I'd be compromising with the old ways, as if there were no need to go all out to develop socialism. That wouldn't really be looking out for the youngsters' good, would it?"

Aunt Chung pouted. "Don't you try to frighten me."

He jumped to his feet. "I'm going to the meeting now. We'll have a heart-to-heart talk when I get back." At that, he strode into the courtyard.

Her eyes fixed on her husband's squared shoulders, Aunt Chung shook her head and sighed.

### 3

After returning to the island, Old Chung put his whole heart into his work in the brigade office.

Work in fishing villages follows a quite different pattern from that of farming villages: the winter fishing season ends just before the lunar New Year. Then the brigade committee was snowed under with work; they met round the clock for two days and nights, summing up the experience of the past year, making plans and deciding on the distribution scheme.

Since falling out with her husband, Aunt Chung was troubled and angry. But she still bustled about all day preparing food for the New Year. Those special dishes proved the truth of the saying 'In the mountains, one lives on mountain products; along the coast, on sea products'. Aunt Chung was busy cleaning eels, cooking chickens and steaming crabs and glutinous rice cakes. Although angry with her old man, she gave herself wholly to these preparations. For a few days ago she had sent word to Treasure's girl friend Ya-hung to visit them during the holiday.

Now two days had flown by and, before she knew it, it was New Year's Eve. Dusk was falling; dinner was ready; but Old Chung was still in the brigade office.

When Aunt Chung had finished all her cooking she looked around, but there was nothing more to do. She sat down beside the net-weaving frame and began to fidget with the shuttle. While waiting for her husband, she wondered anxiously which of the proposals the brigade would adopt. Each time she heard passing footsteps, she pricked up her ears. Her patience was nearly at an end when suddenly a sonorous voice resounded from the loudspeaker in her room. As it was her husband, she listened all the more attentively.

The Party secretary pointed out that in 1974 the fishermen of Crest Island, guided by Chairman Mao's revolutionary line and spurred on by the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius, had won an outstandingly good total catch. Then he outlined the brigade's new production quota and projects. He also said that the people of the entire island, inspired by the Fourth National People's Congress and the favourable situation, were determined to carry on the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius and to continue learning from Tachai in their drive to further increase their output. Without outside help, they were building large motorized fishing-boats, and would be opening up more distant fishing grounds. This inspiring plan for a big leap forward warmed Aunt Chung's heart.

Then Old Chung went on to talk about the annual distribution. Since it was a bumper year, both accumulation for the collective and individual members' income would be higher than ever before. She was overjoyed at this good news. When she heard the exact figure allotted she realized it was the second proposal, and felt a little disappointed. But after some thought she decided it wasn't bad. "After all, an able-bodied man got 800 yuan last year, and this year it's 200 yuan more."

She was still lost in thought, when she heard her husband continue in a grave voice: "Comrades, neighbours! We've had a succession of good years and 1974 was a bumper one. But a few of our members have certain wrong ideas. They say, 'Since our brigade's wallowing in money, we can fall back on it. Everything's plain

sailing now. It doesn't matter if we put less in our accumulation fund.' They also say, 'When the big boat brims over with fish, the small ones should be filled up too. Now that our brigade has plenty, so should every household.' These people think only of their own family! Their children are getting married. Weddings and building new houses cost money. If each member gets a bigger income, they can spend more on the wedding.

"Do you think this sort of idea is correct, comrades? These people are contented with just their cosy little home but forget to look where they are heading. I hope they'll make a better study of Marxism-Leninism and Chairman Mao's works and concentrate on working for the revolution and the state."

These words made Aunt Chung's cheeks burn. "That old fool! Trumpeting everything I told him like that."

Of all things Aunt Chung hated to lose face. She had never thought her old man would quote her in a broadcast to the entire brigade and at a time when everyone was rejoicing over their bumper year.

"I've worried myself to death about the family, and all I get for it is a telling off," she fumed. "If I can't run the family my way I wash my hands of it."

In a huff she flopped down on the bed, fully dressed.

The clock struck ten. Old Chung still hadn't come home. Aunt Chung tossed and turned in bed, thinking about how hard her husband worked. The whole year round, through wind and storm, he led the fishing fleet. As soon as he returned to the island, he threw himself into work. It was so late now and he still wasn't back. While out fishing, he often ate cold meals since he worked the rudder. How could she have the heart to let him eat cold food now that he was home? Her anger began to wane. Although he'd broadcast her ideas without any consideration for her feelings, he devoted himself to the collective. Who would take care of him if she didn't? So she got out of bed, and began heating the meal for him.

She'd heated it twice, but Old Chung still hadn't turned up. She decided she had no choice but to go to the brigade office herself. She locked the door and set off.



The office was near Outside Cove. When Aunt Chung arrived, she saw it was brightly lit. She tiptoed up to the window and peeped in. The scene immediately engrossed her attention.

Old Chung was bending over the desk, a shabby padded coat draped over his shoulders. His powerful right hand gripped a slender red and blue pencil while his left palm held in place a large sheet of white paper. Lips compressed by thought, the old man was

sketching. He looked as awkward as a little schoolboy practising writing for the first time.

Now that she knew what her husband was doing, she couldn't help laughing in spite of her irritation. She shook her head, thinking: The older you get, the more energetic you are. Don't you know you're going on sixty, old man? But now you feel like learning to draw. Why don't you use some of your spare time to think about your son's marriage?

Peering into the room again, she decided he wasn't going to stop sketching for a while. She hurried back, intending to heat the rice cakes once again and bring them to him. She had just arrived home when she heard her husband's footsteps outside.

Old Chung grinned at her as he came in, carrying a roll of white paper and a small packet. He set them on the table. Before he'd turned round, Aunt Chung had already brought him the steamed cakes and sat down.

"What're you doing here?" She pulled a long face. "Why not spend your whole life in the office?"

He bolted the cakes and beamed at her. "Will you lend me a hand, old comrade?" He drew her closer to the table and opened the packet. There before her was a riot of colour — red, green, blue and yellow squares of paper that dazzled her eyes. Then he said gently, "Get out your small scissors."

Aunt Chung understood immediately what he was getting at. "What?" she protested. "After blasting off at me you bring me a chore. Nothing doing!"

"That blasting was to bring you to your senses," Old Chung explained with a twinkle. Then he unrolled the paper and told her earnestly, "Have a look at this first. The day before yesterday you told me your heart's desire — your small plan. Now let me tell you what's in my heart — a big plan. It's a project concerning the future of Crest Island. Inspired by the Fourth National People's Congress, all of us want to put out and explore the distant deep-sea fishing grounds. This year we'll build four large motorized fishing-boats and a dockyard, off our own bat. Look, the dockyard will be here

on the southern beach." With his calloused finger he pointed to a mark on the sketch-map. "Right here, do you see it?"

Aunt Chung bent forward and squinted to make it out, while Old Chung continued, "Large boats need a harbour, so we're going to build a one-thousand-metre breakwater along Eastern Cove. With that we won't have to fear wind and waves any longer." Aunt Chung listened, completely absorbed.

"As you know, large boats need large nets," Old Chung went on. "Since we'll have to change our net-making techniques, we're going to build a net factory. Net-weaving is just your line — this time you'll really be in your element." He cast a sidelong glance at her. "Look, the factory will be built here, to the left side of our courtyard. The level ground there is just the place for it. And see how near home it is too," he said with a laugh.

Aunt Chung listened with growing interest. When he mentioned the new factory, she was quite enthused. But when he pointed out the site chosen for the factory, she realized that he'd included the foundation of her new house in the project. After all the time it took me to level the ground, she thought, I wonder how you can ask me for the site!

But Old Chung changed the subject. "So will you help me make cutouts to illustrate what I've described? Once they're pasted on the map, I'll show it to our villagers, old and young, and ask for their opinions."

"But you know I'm no hand at sketching and that sort of thing. How can I do it?"

"Of course you can. You were known all over the island once for your fine embroidery," Old Chung encouraged her. "You've got to live up to your reputation!"

After a pause, Old Chung's tone became even more persuasive. "I think that in the last few years you've begun to forget your strong hatred of the old society and the hard times you went through. You think that since our life is better and our brigade has become rich, you can concentrate on your own little plan and feather our nest. You've forgotten the great aim of socialist revolution. You're like

a fisherman who doesn't give a thought to his course while he concentrates on fishing. He ends up straying off course and crashing into a reef. But we show our love for our children by keeping them on the *right* course. Understand?"

These words made her recall the bitterness of her past life. "Yes, he's right," she thought to herself. "There *has* been something wrong with my thinking lately." Without a word she fetched her scissors and began cutting. In the twinkling of an eye, the gaily coloured paper cutouts were lying on the table — motorized fishing-boats, breakwater, net factory, and dockyard.

"You may be old, but your hands are still deft," Old Chung approved.

"No," said Aunt Chung earnestly. "My hands may be deft, but they can't compare with yours."

"Don't say that! Why don't we work on this together?" Old Chung retorted.

They smiled at each other in understanding. Then they pasted the cutouts on the sketch-map one by one.

"You've made me see light, old man." Aunt Chung smiled warmly.

Old Chung smiled back. Then he went to open the window. A pleasant spring breeze wafted in. Before them stretched a magnificent view of the mighty ocean with its tossing breakers whose roar rejoiced their hearts. On the vast expanse of the sea a myriad silver stars were mirrored. They shimmered and danced on the waves rolling into the distance. At the horizon shone a dazzling light.

"Look over there! What's that light far out to sea?" Old Chung asked.

Aunt Chung stepped forward to stand by her husband. She gazed at the light for a while before answering, "It's a star."

"No, it's much brighter."

"Well then, it must be a lighthouse."

"Yes, it's the lighthouse on Breakers Hill that guides thousands of ships. It's the east gate of our motherland. Beyond that stretch the high seas, there're immense treasures out there just waiting for us. We must do our best to help develop our socialist fishery." Old



Chung paused. "Crest Island is so tiny that it isn't even on the map. But it's linked with all the mountains and rivers of our country, and has its part to play in building socialism."

His words were like a fresh breeze blowing the cobwebs from her mind. "Old man, I was near-sighted before; my whole world was limited to Crest Island," she said. "The household chores were all I thought about. From now on, I'll look farther. I may be old, but I can still do my bit for our socialist fishery by working in the new factory." She stopped an instant to take a breath. "I want to tell you that I agree with you and Treasure about the wedding. We won't build a new house. It'll be all right if we do up and whitewash the three old tile-roofed rooms in our courtyard. But I don't know what Ya-hung'll think of that..."

All of a sudden, the door opened with a creak. A gust of spring breeze carried in a whiff of diesel oil.

"Uncle! Aunt!" That clear voice preceded a robust girl with big eyes and two thick braids. She was clad in grease-stained overalls.

"Oh, Ya-hung!" Overjoyed, Aunt Chung drew the girl to her and looked her over. "New Year's at hand, why're you coming here dressed like that?"

"Treasure asked me to come." Ya-hung grinned.

Then Treasure strode in. "I wanted her to come and help us repair the engine." He turned

to his father. "After battling all night, we've got it working now."

"Wonderful!" Old Chung was very pleased.

"Ma," Treasure said, "we've decided to put off our wedding until after the spring fishing season."

"Why?" His mother was puzzled.

"We'll get married after we've opened up the new fishing grounds," Ya-hung put in.

The old couple beamed.

"Uncle, aunt," Ya-hung suggested, "the New Year's coming. We've had a discussion about our marriage. We're determined to break with traditional ideas and start a new custom. To forward the revolution, we're resolved to do our work well, to study Marxism-Leninism and Chairman Mao's works hard, and to keep on raising our consciousness of class struggle and the political line."

"Grand!" chorused the old couple. "You youngsters see eye to eye with us."

"By the way, we've another suggestion," said Treasure jubilantly. "We've calculated that after deducting the money for living expenses, we'll still have a lot left. Let's deposit this sum with our brigade. The new projects will need plenty of money, won't they?"

Treasure's father nodded in satisfaction. Their suggestion set Aunt Chung thinking for a second, then she turned and took a packet wrapped in blue-flowered cloth out of her box. She opened it and disclosed a little paper packet.

"This is some money I've put away these last few years without telling your father," she explained. "Let's put our money together and deposit it so that the brigade can build more large fishing-boats." She handed the packet to her son.

The young couple was elated.

"Splendid!" The old man beamed at his wife. "Your little plan's now part of the collective plan."

Aunt Chung smiled. "Old man," she said with emotion. "I feel that our family is closer than ever before."

Old Chung chuckled, greatly pleased.

The sun had risen and its light came pouring into the room. Suddenly fire-crackers exploded down on the beach, proclaiming the Spring Festival. The brilliant sunlight irradiated the vast sea and bathed the Chungs' courtyard and the fishing villages on Crest Island in a red glow.

*Illustrated by Lo Chung-hai  
and Chen Yu-hsien*

## New Blood for the Party

It was a bright spring morning in March.

The pines and cypresses in front of the plant's office building stood sturdy and green in the sunlight.

I'd worked here as an army representative during the tempestuous years of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. While battling shoulder to shoulder with the workers and cadres, I'd formed a deep friendship with them. In 1969 I was elected deputy secretary to the plant's new Party committee soon after the celebrations of the Ninth National Congress of the Party. But not long after this I was called back to the army to take on a new job. Though far from the plant, the clear thinking, fine working style and smiling faces of its cadres and workers had remained vivid in my mind.

Although I had always hoped to go back and see these old comrades-in-arms, I'd never had the opportunity. I'd been overjoyed on reading the recent newspaper articles about the plant's success in the movement criticizing Lin Piao and Confucius. Then the Party committee of my unit, in accordance with Chairman Mao's teaching

that the Liberation Army must learn from the people, decided to send me back to the plant.

Great changes had taken place: tall new buildings rose on one side; the tower cranes were steadily carrying heavy loads to and fro. The railway leading to the stockpile yard now had two tracks and the trains were shuttling back and forth. The sound of their piercing whistles rang in the air.

I slowed my step and was avidly taking in the panorama when suddenly a resonant voice called out behind me: "Hey, watch out, comrade!" I quickly jumped to one side, then turned round. It was Ko Hsin. Pearls of sweat streamed down his face. He was pushing a handcart at top speed in my direction. It was piled high with scrap iron topped off by a bundle of newspapers, their corners flapping in the wind.

"Ko Hsin!" I cried. "Don't you recognize me, young man?"

"Old Tsui!" He stopped short, then ran up to me, his hands extended in welcome and his face wreathed in smiles. He gripped my hands so tightly that I almost cried out in pain. I took a good look at him. He was wearing old overalls and was covered from head to foot with active-carbon dust. Guessing that he was just back from work, I asked:

"Still working in the same shop?"

"Yes." Then he grinned. "Haven't your ears been tingling? We talk about you every day."

I looked fondly at his short black hair. "I missed you too. I remember you all well. If my memory doesn't fail me, you're twenty-seven this year, aren't you?"

"That's right. You've certainly got a good memory!"

"Are you doing maintenance work now?"

"No. As you know, the movement to repudiate Lin Piao and Confucius has spurred production on. In our shop we're all working on another technical innovation."

"That's the stuff, young man!"

"Old Tsui, to do revolutionary work, we must go about it wholeheartedly, with no reserve whatsoever."

"That's the right spirit!"

I was about to ask him if Han Yuan, secretary of the plant's Party committee, was in his office when a voice boomed out behind us: "A welcome guest, very welcome indeed!" It was Old Han himself.

Since we had worked in close co-operation for a period of time, our greetings were particularly cordial. We grasped each other by the arm and scrutinized each other's face.

"You're still full of drive, mate!" I exclaimed. "You haven't changed a bit except for a few more grey hairs."

"Old Tsui, there's a saying: a person can't see his own ears. But when we two stand face to face, it's as if we were looking in a mirror. You see that I've got more grey hairs; well, I notice that you've got fewer black ones." Old Han beamed, then suddenly became serious. "But we're always optimistic. There's no reason not to be, right? See him?" He pointed to Ko Hsin. "Let me introduce him to you. He's..."

"Stop kidding," Ko Hsin cut him short. "There's no need for introductions." As he took up the shafts again, he turned to me: "Old Tsui, go with Old Han to the office and rest there. I'll be back in a few minutes. Don't be in a hurry to leave today. You must have lunch at my house. That way we'll be able to have a good long chat."

The cart started off with a creak along the wide road illuminated by the bright sunshine. Ko Hsin propelled the little cart forward so fast that he seemed a gust of wind.

In the office Old Han poured me a cup of water and asked, "What good wind brings you here, Old Tsui?"

"The east wind that brought the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius," I responded. "You've done your work well. This time I've come to learn from your fine experience." I wagged my finger at him and laughed. "And mind you don't keep any secrets from me."

"Young Ko Hsin is leading this movement. I'm only his assistant. He does a good job and we're all pleased with him."

These remarks made me realize why Old Han had wanted to introduce the young man to me. It wasn't to make fun of him — far from it.

"Ko Hsin's now deputy-secretary of our Party committee," Old Han added with a pleased smile.

"Did you recommend him for that post?"

"Well, you know, we must train successors for the revolutionary cause. The workers supported him, the Party committee approved and of course I recommended him highly. Since you know Young Ko very well, you must be happy to hear the news, Old Tsui."

"That's great!" I was elated. "Now we've new blood for our revolutionary cause."

"Yes. New blood indeed. Our Party will always need new blood of his kind."

Just then a man came in with some documents for Old Han. After urging me to take a good rest there, Old Han went off with him.

I looked out at the broad road and, once again, seemed to see that vigorous young man pushing the cart with the force of the east wind.

Old Han's remark about the need for new blood made me recall how Ko Hsin had become a Party member. . . .

## 1

It was during the consolidation and building of the Party organization — to be crowned by the setting up of the plant's new Party committee. The workers were all animatedly discussing the list of candidates applying for Party membership. After this period of discussion, a meeting was to be held to proclaim the new Party committee as well as the names of the new Party members. It was just at this critical moment that a big-character poster was put up right outside the office of the group in charge of the consolidation and building of the Party. It was entitled "Bombard Comrade Han Yuan Again". The gist of it was: Comrade Han Yuan, chairman of the revolutionary committee, has recently approved a deal with a machine tool factory to exchange the plant's materials for three centrifugal machines. Although this meets the urgent needs of the plant, it isn't in the interest of our socialist cause; these plastic materials, as strong as steel, are urgently needed in the construction of our country. This so-called 'exchange to serve mutual needs and help each other' doesn't

represent a correct over-all view of the situation. It's very dangerous bourgeois thinking. Only a few years ago this method was severely criticized, but now Comrade Han is using it again. This question must be tackled seriously. The poster ended: "Comrade Han Yuan must rectify his attitude once again. He can't join the new Party committee unless he sweeps these old ideas from his mind."

Its author was Ko Hsin, secretary of the Youth League branch and group leader of one of the workshops.

As soon as this poster appeared, workers crowded around to read it and a heated discussion broke out.

"Good for Ko Hsin!" exclaimed one. "He's launched another bomb!"

"Every word is true," put in another. "Young Ko studies hard and uses his head. That's why he's able to go to the heart of the matter."

"Yesterday, I still thought Old Han had done a good thing," remarked a third. "But according to this poster, it's bad."

"It's such a small matter, why criticize him so severely?" objected a fourth. "How else could we get those machines? Old Han is an old revolutionary, so what does a small fault count? He'll still be secretary of the new Party committee."

. . . . .

A few hours later more big-character posters were placarded alongside the first, most of them in support of Ko Hsin, saying that his criticism of Old Han was justified. But a few people disagreed and argued that he had gone much too far. Given the circumstances, I was quite concerned about Ko Hsin, so I went to see him that evening after a meeting.

The workshop was as brightly illuminated as if daylight were pouring in. All the machines and tools had been polished till they shone like new. Slogans hung along all the beams giving the shop a militant atmosphere: "Conscientiously carry out the struggle, criticism and transformation. . . . Greet the new Party committee with new achievements. . . ." Ko Hsin's group was busy working on a technical innovation. When Old Master Chang saw me he smiled. He obviously thought I had come to see the result of the experi-

ments, for he said: "It's too soon, Old Tsui. Come back tomorrow morning." When I told him I was looking for Ko Hsin, he nodded. "They're having their spare-time study in the reading-room."

I went directly there and found the room full of workers, both men and women, most of them quite young. Cheng Hsiu-fang, a member of the Youth League branch committee, was reading out some notes on how to study Chairman Mao's article *Where Do Correct Ideas Come from?* When she caught sight of me she blushed and became tongue-tied.

"Where's Ko Hsin?" I asked.

She pointed to the next room, saying in a low voice, "Big Ox is giving him a talk. See these notes? Ko Hsin prepared them and now I have to read them for him."

I wove my way through the crowd towards the next room where I heard a lively argument going on:

"If you don't like Old Han's work, tell him so to his face or criticize him through the Party branch and the army representative. Why write a big-character poster? You've put the leadership in a very awkward position." I recognized Big Ox's voice.

"Simple surface treatment won't remove a tumour. You've got to operate," Ko Hsin retorted. "I wanted to give him a jolt. That way he'll straighten out faster and everybody can learn from his mistake."

"That's fine talk! But are you helping by stirring up a rumpus in our plant just when the new Party committee is due to be set up? What good will come of it?"

"What rumpus? As far as I can see, everything seems to be normal," Ko Hsin countered calmly.

"It's not!" Big Ox shouted. "As soon as you put up your poster, lots of others followed your lead. In a few hours the whole wall was covered with posters."

"I think that's quite normal," Ko Hsin replied earnestly. "The existence of problems is nothing new. Our workers have sharp eyes and think clearly. After a full discussion they can tell what's right and what's wrong. So what's wrong with starting a discussion? It isn't right to cover up problems and pretend there aren't

differences. Why did Chairman Mao launch the great Cultural Revolution? Why do we rise in rebellion?"

"Rebellion! Rebellion! That's all you can think of. Don't you realize you have to pick the proper time to rise in rebellion? We rebelled against Liu Shao-chi's revisionist line, battling together day and night. But now Liu Shao-chi has been pushed down and his revisionist line criticized. After the purifying of class ranks and the consolidation of the Party, the new Party committee is waiting to be born. And now you begin to write big-character posters again. A fat lot of help that is! If you don't look out you'll go messing things up instead! Watch your step if you want to stay on the right track!"

"From what you say, there's no class struggle any more, no struggle between the two lines within the Party; our socialist revolution has been accomplished, and we can all take a nap. Well, I don't agree. Chairman Mao tells us that after the first Cultural Revolution there will be many more in the future. Whenever revisionism appears and class enemies make trouble, I'll fight and rebel against them."

"That's a dangerous way of thinking!"

"You don't have a trace of the Party's basic line in your thinking, comrade!"

Wonderful! As I listened at the door, I admired Ko Hsin's high political level in analysing a situation.

There was a sudden silence; only the buzzing of fluorescent lamps could be heard. Then just as suddenly the discussion waxed hot again.

"I never thought you could be so arrogant," Big Ox shouted at the top of his voice. The sound of a chair falling to the ground accompanied the next outburst: "Don't forget you're one of the candidates on the list of new Party members. The Party has its discipline!"

Another chair banged to the ground. Ko Hsin, greatly worked up, had got to his feet too quickly. "What do you mean by that?" he shouted back. "Are you trying to threaten me? If you think my criticism of an erroneous tendency is contrary to Party discipline, then you don't have to sponsor me for Party membership."

"How dare you say such a thing!" Big Ox exploded.

"I mean it!" Ko Hsin's voice rang with conviction. "Our disagreement isn't a small matter. It involves the question of how to judge our application for Party membership, how to understand our Party — the militant, revolutionary Chinese Communist Party." Too agitated to continue, he stopped for a moment, then went on forcefully: "It's true that the Party has its discipline. But discipline serves the implementation of the Party's correct political line."

"You . . . you . . ." Big Ox gasped with rage.

What a tense atmosphere! Though Ko Hsin and Big Ox had exchanged harsh words in the past, they had never had an argument like today's. Now nearly thirty, Big Ox was known throughout the plant as the "Big Chimney", for when he got worked up he fairly spouted abuse. I strode into the room.

His bushy eyebrows knit in a frown, Big Ox was glaring at Ko Hsin, who glared fiercely back. When Big Ox saw me, he took an even more provocative stance. With one foot on an overturned chair, he challenged Ko Hsin, "Now that the army representative is here, repeat what you said just now."

Grasping each of them by the shoulder I looked from one to the other, then said, "You seem to be at it hammer and tongs, young fellows. Sit down and tell me what all this is about."

"He won't listen to reason," Big Ox declared angrily.

"What are you calling reason?" Ko Hsin countered.

I tried to ease the tension between them but neither of them would give an inch. So I said bluntly: "What Ko Hsin did is right. We should learn from him, and as a Communist, Big Ox, you must give him your full support."

"Support! If he changes his ways, I'll support him. But not if he continues writing big-character posters at a time like this!"

"The big-character poster is a sharp weapon." Ko Hsin had calmed down a bit and his tone became grave. "We must use it to criticize wrong ideas and also let others use it to criticize us. This is my understanding of Chairman Mao's teachings concerning the role of big-character posters."

Knowing that Big Ox was not a man who could be persuaded easily, I asked him to come and see me the next morning. Then I led Ko Hsin away.

As we approached the door, we saw a man near the window, his head bent forward. He was stealthily slipping away when he caught sight of us. Since it was too dark to make out who it was, I called out, "Who's there?"

"Uh . . . er . . . it's me. You haven't turned in to rest yet, Army Representative Tsui?"

It was Liu Tsun-fu, a worker in Ko Hsin's group. Irritated by his toadying tone, I retorted: "Since *you* haven't turned in to rest, how can I?"

Liu Tsun-fu slunk away.

Standing motionless in the moonlight, Ko Hsin murmured to himself: "Why did he come here at this late hour?"

Under the vast starry sky lay the plant, all its machines humming and whirring in a magnificent chorus. There was activity everywhere; the night was not quiet.

## 2

The next morning the situation changed. Next to Ko Hsin's big-character poster two small posters had appeared. Though they were no bigger than a hand, they caught the eye immediately. One of them, headed "Resolutely Carry the Revolution Through to the End", declared that the writer fully supported Ko Hsin's poster and asserted: "Han Yuan is like a stone in a cesspool — hard and filthy. If he joins the new Party committee he'll disrupt it." It alleged that "the arrangement to put him in the Party committee is part of a plot," and concluded "Down with Han Yuan!" The other small-character poster, entitled "Catch the Rightists", denounced Ko Hsin as "a political swindler", "a dangerous character", "leftist in appearance but rightist in essence", who wanted to undermine the consolidation and building of the Party organization. . . . "His duplicity must be fully exposed." These two anonymous posters stirred up great



confusion and indignation in the plant. The problem had become more complex.

After talking the matter over, Old Han and I called a meeting of the leading group for the consolidation and building of the Party organization. At the meeting Old Han declared that he greatly appreciated Ko Hsin's revolutionary spirit of rebellion and was in complete agreement with him. He stressed the fact that Ko Hsin had written his poster to defend Chairman Mao's revolutionary line. Then he made a self-criticism, and I was very pleased with his honest attitude. I thought to myself: "The fact that Ko Hsin put up his poster on the eve of setting up the new Party committee is a chance too good to be missed. We must make full use of it to get the workers to help us rectify our working style once again." So I got up and made that proposal; and it won unanimous approval. At the end of the meeting the decision was taken to postpone setting up the new Party committee until the leadership had had time to hear the workers' opinions and criticisms.

"Different views are just beginning to come into the open," said Old Han. "When we go to the workshops we must be in no hurry to voice our own opinions. Let the workers air their views first."

Old Han and I were leaving the meeting room when, in the distance, we saw Ko Hsin carrying a big roll of paper under his arm. We beckoned him to come along to the office with us, then asked, "What have you written this time? May we have a look?"

"Of course. Posters are written for people to read." He bent down and unrolled it on the ground.

This big-character poster was entitled "A Clarification of My Stand". It declared: "The writer of 'Resolutely Carry the Revolution Through to the End' is taking a different road from mine. I absolutely refuse his so-called support and protest against this distortion of my ideas. . . . The two anonymous posters seem contradictory — one attacks Han Yuan, the other blasts Ko Hsin — but in fact they are complementary and serve the same purpose. Be on the alert, revolutionary comrades. We must be able to tell true from false. Watch out for people who fish in troubled waters."

Indicating this new poster, I asked Old Han, "What do you think of it?"

He looked rather embarrassed. After a moment's hesitation, he replied, "Ko Hsin's criticism of me was absolutely correct. But who is this fellow who wants to expose Young Ko? Just what is he up to? This, we must find out. As for the attack on me, though the writer's stand isn't the same as Young Ko's, let's pay no attention to it."

Ko Hsin abruptly raised his head. His brows tightly knit, he looked hard at Old Han. After a while, he said emphatically, "Old Han, I don't understand you!"

Old Han smiled. "Whoever wrote that small poster just wants to get rid of me. I pay no attention to that kind of thing."

"That shows you don't take my criticism seriously either." Ko Hsin cast him another stern look.

"No . . . no. That's not true," Old Han stammered, not knowing what to say. "You . . . you're too sensitive."

"No," responded Ko Hsin, "I'm not. You're thinking too much of yourself, of not getting involved."

The more I listened to Ko Hsin, the better pleased I was. "You're talking sense," I exclaimed. "Now put your words into action."

Ko Hsin stood up and turned to leave.

"Wait a minute!" Old Han stepped forward to stop him and urged, "Please don't take any notice of that small-character poster against me."

"Why?" Ko Hsin stared in surprise.

"The writer's only cursing me to try to get rid of me. That doesn't matter." Old Han smiled.

"Don't you understand why I'm counter-attacking?" Ko Hsin burst out. "You seem to think I'm doing it for my own sake or for you. No, Comrade Han Yuan. You don't understand my reasons. If it weren't in the interest of the revolution, I wouldn't have written either this poster or the first one criticizing you."

Old Han's honest face crinkled into a broad smile. "Big-character posters like your first one are good and we welcome them. They



help us in our work and in carrying out Chairman Mao's revolutionary line."

But Ko Hsin remained grave. "Old Han, you can't escape contradictions when they come up. If you try to, you'll swerve from Chairman Mao's revolutionary line. Well, having written this I'm going to put it up. . . ."

The poster in his hands, he strode off.

### 3

On the third day there were new developments. Rumours started spreading swift as the wind through the plant. But the workers were very vigilant and immediately reported these rumours to us.

"Ko Hsin was reprimanded by Army Representative Tsui."

"He's in for it now! Ko Hsin's application to join the Party will come to nothing."

"Old Han is organizing a counter-attack. Now Ko Hsin will have to look out!"

.....

These rumours came so thick and fast that I was wary. It meant a struggle. We had to get ready for it.

The next morning, before the shift began, the workers from Ko Hsin's shop crowded into my office. Cheng Hsiu-fang, a member of the Youth League branch committee, asked me indignantly: "Army Representative Tsui, the consolidation and building of the Party organization with the masses participating was called for by Chairman Mao and the Central Committee. Is it wrong to write big-character posters to criticize revisionist and bourgeois ideas? Is it right to oppose Ko Hsin's application for Party membership because of that poster? We can't understand this."

"What's wrong?" demanded the others. "Rumours and gossip are everywhere. What does it mean?"

This reminded me of what Big Ox had reported about Liu Tsun-fu. Liu had told him that many workers thought Ko Hsin had ulterior motives. Liu added: "Ko Hsin wrote that poster to attract attention, to become 'somebody'." Old Han and I had warned Big Ox

not to let himself be deceived, but he still had his doubts. However, he promised to take our advice and not let his personal feelings get the better of him.

Seeing that the workers who had come were mainly activists in the Party and the Youth League, I told them what the leading group thought of Ko Hsin's poster and asked for their help in discovering the source of the rumours without delay. As the others left, eager to do this, I kept Master Chang behind. He was a highly respected veteran worker whose words carried weight in the plant. I wanted to know what he thought of Ko Hsin's poster.

Master Chang needed no prodding. Knocking the ashes from his pipe he said: "As the saying goes, a fence needs three stakes and a man needs three people to help him. Young Ko wrote that poster to help Old Han. Quite right too. Because, before the Cultural Revolution, Old Han wasn't the way he is now. He hardly had a word to say to us workers and put on official airs. We criticized him and helped him during the Cultural Revolution, and after that he changed. Now he talks things over with us and works alongside us. We think that's fine. But some people don't like it. They're cursing him behind his back. Their fondest hope is that he'll make bad mistakes and come a cropper."

"Are there people like that in the plant?"

"Certainly. Take Liu Tsun-fu for example. When he learned that Old Han had agreed to exchange our plant's plastic materials for machines, he was overjoyed. He quickly spread the news and said that although Old Han had been criticized in the past, he was still carrying on in the same way as before. An honest man would have said this to Old Han's face. But not Liu. Instead he started rumours behind his back. Why? Because he wants him to go to the bad. Ko Hsin and I had a long talk the night before last. Ko Hsin said the veteran cadres are the Party's treasure. If we find their ideas are wrong and don't help them to change in time, it'll do harm not only to our cadres themselves but to the cause of the proletariat and socialism as well."

"That's right, Old Chang," I exclaimed.

"Though Ko Hsin's still very young, he's straight in his thinking," he went on. "He's both my apprentice and my neighbour, I've seen him grow up and I know his family well. His father was a worker too, but died young. His mother's health was so poor she couldn't work. The Party and government brought up Ko Hsin and his brothers and sisters. When Ko Hsin came to our plant, straight from middle school, he was still just a boy. During the Cultural Revolution, he made time every day to study the Marxist-Leninist classics and Chairman Mao's writings. The storms of class struggle toughened him. He was tempered by the Cultural Revolution"

A gust of wind blew the window open, revealing the majestic buildings and refining towers pointing to the sky.

#### 4

That afternoon I was working in the office with Old Han when suddenly drums and gongs sounded outside. Ko Hsin's group had come to report the success of their latest technical innovation. Holding high the red poster proclaiming these record achievements, Cheng Hsiu-fang and Master Chang marched jubilantly at the head of the procession. His sinewy arms flashing up and down, Ko Hsin beat a big red drum as excitedly as a child. Beads of sweat streamed down his forehead. Rows of beaming workers walked along behind them, their red flags fluttering in the wind. It was like a festival!

Old Han and I strode out to greet them in the midst of the deafening drums and gongs. After accepting the red poster, I addressed them: "On behalf of the leading group of the plant, I want to thank you, comrades, for your contribution to our movement to consolidate and build the Party organization. Your group has won victories both ideologically and materially."

Flourishing his drumsticks, Ko Hsin exclaimed: "Ideological and material victories are both the fruit of the Cultural Revolution. Long live the Cultural Revolution led by Chairman Mao!" Then he started drumming with even greater vigour. Looking at him, I could not help thinking: young men like him are the right people to beat the battle-drum of our time!

After they had left, I went to the various workshops of the plant to find out more about the two small posters and the rumours. By dark, I still hadn't got to the bottom of the matter. Some workers suspected Liu Tsun-fu, but they didn't have sufficient proof. It was close to midnight. Seeing the lights still on in Old Han's office, I hurried there to consult him.

His reading glasses perched on his nose, Old Han was sitting at his desk, absorbed in writing something, his jacket wide open. When he saw me come in, he took his glasses off and greeted me: "You've come at the right time. I need your advice."

"My advice?"

"Yes. It's clear to me now that I need to rectify my working style again. Before the new Party committee is set up, I want to make another self-criticism on the basis of the mistakes Ko Hsin pointed out in his poster. What do you think of calling a special mass meeting of the workers?"

I leafed through what he had written. "Fine!" I exclaimed. "You've improved your first outline a lot."

"That's because I had a long talk with Ko Hsin this afternoon. He's helped me broaden my outlook. Young people like him are a real challenge for us."

"We must accept the challenge," I retorted.

"That's right. Young Ko's got a deep understanding of the two 'ruptures'."\* Old Han stopped and smiled. "It is so important to break thoroughly with the traditional ideas of private ownership and to eliminate all traces of it in our minds."

We were deep in discussion when the telephone rang. It was Cheng Hsiu-fang. She blurted out: "Something's happened. Come to the workshop at once!" Old Han and I had just turned to leave when the door flew open. Big Ox rushed in like a whirlwind. He stamped his foot and punched his head repeatedly, gasping with anger.

"What's up? What's happened?" we asked.

\*In the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Marx and Engels said: "The Communist revolution is the most radical rupture with traditional property relations; no wonder that its development involves the most radical rupture with traditional ideas."

"Liu . . . Tsun-fu . . . that swine!" He plumped down on a chair. "Quick, tell us what's happened!" I sat down beside him.

"It's simple," Big Ox bellowed. "It was Liu who put up both small posters and spread the rumours. That double-faced scoundrel! I almost fell into his trap!"

"Can you prove that?" I demanded.

"Sure. Ko Hsin exposed his scheme when Liu tried to stir him up against Old Han. This is the way it happened. When Ko Hsin went to the washroom, Liu followed him. He said Old Han had told me to take Ko Hsin's name off the list of candidates for Party membership. Ko Hsin saw through him at once and grabbed the rat by his tail. . . ."

"Where's Ko Hsin now?"

"He's exposing that trick to the workers in our shop. They're furious."

Old Han, on first hearing this, seemed rooted to the ground. Then he paced the room restlessly. Finally he sat down. Hardly believing his ears he asked, "Liu Tsun-fu wrote *both* the small posters?"

Shooting a glance at him, Big Ox bellowed: "Can't you believe it? When we exposed his scheme, he came clean. He admitted to writing one poster with his right hand and the other with his left. You see how vicious he is, how poisonous!"

Old Han frowned. "It's a good lesson for me," he said frankly. "I never thought he'd attack us from both sides." His eyes fixed on the ceiling, he spoke slowly, lost in thought.

All of a sudden, I recalled a favourite phrase of his and broke the silence: "Old Han, you're always saying that struggle is complex; the main thing is to recognize its complexity."

"That's right! My main problem is here." Old Han tapped his forehead. "I should have got rid of the stale ideas in my mind and taken in fresh ones. Young Ko isn't a Party member yet, but already he's pumped some fresh air into my mind."

"That's true," I responded. "But transforming our thinking takes time. We've only just set off on this Long March. We must get ready to scale high peaks and cross wide seas. However, let's go to the workshop now and see how things are going there."

"Right. At the moment we haven't the time to sum up the lesson you learned. Let's hurry to the workshop." Big Ox eagerly jumped to his feet.

"Still want us to find someone else to sponsor Ko Hsin for Party membership?" I teased Big Ox as we strode off. He had come to our office the previous afternoon complaining that he did not want to sponsor Ko Hsin.

"Don't bring that up, Old Tsui," Big Ox pleaded. "I nearly did a foolish thing that would have played into the enemy's hands. You can blast me as hard as you like for that. I'll accept it."

Machines were humming in the brightly lit workshop. Ko Hsin was surrounded by dozens of workers laughing and talking together excitedly. I was rather puzzled.

"Why didn't you come a bit sooner?" Cheng Hsiu-fang asked with a chuckle when she caught sight of us.

"Yes, what a pity!" Old Master Chang chimed in. "You missed the act Liu Tsun-fu put on."

"But that's only one scene in a full-length drama, Master Chang," Ko Hsin boomed cheerfully. "Perhaps merely an interlude. The Cultural Revolution is just getting under way and the socialist revolution is continuing. The show's far from ended yet."

"Right!" shouted Old Han from the midst of the crowd. "We're all playing a part on this battlefield of class struggle and the struggle between the two lines."

"Where's the scoundrel who was fishing in troubled waters?" I asked.

"He's gone offstage," the workers shouted angrily.

"We mustn't be lenient with a rascal like this Liu Tsun-fu."

"He's a damned double-dealer." Master Chang put his pipe away, his eyes blazing with rage. Indicating Old Han and Ko Hsin who stood on either side of him he continued, "He hit you with this hand, him with that, starting fires to blacken you both." His eyes fixed on Old Han, he added with feeling: "The political line is of top importance, Old Han. You must always keep that in mind. The Party and people have given you a responsible position; you mustn't abuse it. Of course, people like Liu Tsun-fu hope you *will* abuse it,

because they want you to swerve from the right road. But they're wolves in sheep's clothing — out to harm our Party and our country."

Old Han's eyes were moist. He nodded gravely. "You're right, Master Chang. Ko Hsin put up posters rebelling against me — fine! What has happened since then has taught me a good lesson. I'll think it over carefully and learn from it." Turning to Ko Hsin he went on: "In the beginning I only half-heartedly supported your second poster making clear your stand. I now give it my full support. Is it too late?"

"Of course not," Ko Hsin cried. "There'll always be struggle in class society. There are more battles ahead."

Big Ox stepped forward and grasped Ko Hsin's hands, saying frankly, "That row we had has paid off. Next time problems crop up, let's tackle them the same way. Of course I need to raise my level in rowing. But through struggle we'll reach the truth, eh?"

These words from "Big Chimney" made everybody laugh.

"Very good!" chuckled Ko Hsin. "I'll be your sparring partner."

I looked at my watch, it was three o'clock in the morning. "Listen, comrades," I proposed. "Those on night shift, get on with your work here. You others, go back to your rooms to sleep. Only if we rest well can we make a good job of our work."

As I walked back with Old Han my thoughts turned to an important debate between him and Ko Hsin:

It happened in July 1966 when the Cultural Revolution had just started. One day Ko Hsin put up a poster challenging Old Han, then secretary of the plant's Party committee, to an open-air debate on the sports ground. Young Ko's audacity surprised many workers, so most of them decided to attend as spectators, adopting a wait-and-see attitude. Old Han, however, admired the young man's revolutionary spirit and took up the challenge, resolved to accept all criticisms. He went to the meeting place on time. A table and two stools had been set out on the basketball court; the two took their seats and the debate began. Though Old Han had adopted a correct attitude towards his challenger, he had underestimated his political level. Never had he imagined that this young fellow, little known in the plant, had such a good grasp of theory. Ko Hsin cited fifty-

nine cases to prove that Old Han had practised a revisionist line in his work. In the beginning, the on-lookers simply thought the debate something new and interesting. But as they heard more, they realized that the matter was serious, involving a question of political line. Many of them joined in, making the debate more lively. It had a tremendous influence in the plant. The fifty-nine cases were still listed in Old Han's notebook. Whenever he was reminded of them, he voiced his admiration of the young man.

When our PLA propaganda team arrived at the plant, Old Han described that debate to me. "How I sweated during the debate," he told me. "But it was worth it. It gave me some understanding of that young man. Ever since, I've kept my eye on him and watched his development."

"How did you wind up the debate?" I asked.

"Ko Hsin did it." Old Han put on his glasses, pulled out a notebook and leafed through it to find the notes he had jotted down that day. His voice strong, he solemnly read aloud Ko Hsin's concluding words. Sharp and powerful, each word hit the nail on the head. Shutting his notebook, Old Han looked up. "Old Tsui, others may see nothing special in these words, but I regard them as the fighting pledge of our younger generation. Ko Hsin spoke with such passion, he seemed a ball of fire! His fearless forceful voice resounded in my ears like the voice of our time, of our great working class. . . ."

I went on reflecting as we walked along. Turning to Old Han, I asked, "Can you guess what I'm thinking, old mate?"

He looked sideways at me and joked, "Old Tsui, how can you go in for idealism now?" After I told him what I had been thinking, he burst into laughter. "How could I have guessed that!" Then he became serious. "It's logical to call that to mind today after what's been happening here recently."

"Have you been watching Young Ko these last few days?"

"Of course. He's part of a new generation that is maturing quickly. He embodies the spirit of our time. We can draw strength from him." Old Han's firm voice rang with conviction.

In fact I shared Old Han's feeling. "Yes, it's very important for veteran revolutionaries like us to keep abreast of the times," I agreed. "We must never relax for a second in carrying out the task entrusted us by history."

"Nor forget to learn from the young people and get fresh ideas from their example," Old Han added.

Several days later, at a solemn Party meeting Ko Hsin's application for Party membership was unanimously approved. It was a magnificent occasion. Ko Hsin stood before the portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Chairman Mao, his face fired with excitement, red as an ear of sorghum, his chest heaving. When it came to his turn, he made an excellent speech:

"... There are people in the present world who've shamelessly betrayed the communist cause; that's why I first made up my mind to join the Party. My determination increased as time went by. Then came the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution launched and led by our great leader Chairman Mao. It's taught me a great deal. Now I have come to understand that only by persisting in continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat can we win victory after victory. I am joining the Party not to gain the name of a Communist, but for revolution and struggle. I'll fight for the defence of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line and the cause of communism. No matter how many difficulties and dangers I come across on my way, I'll never do anything to tarnish the glory of Marxism-Leninism and the Chinese Communist Party!"

The office door opened. Old Han was back.

"How many young cadres like Ko Hsin have been promoted now?" I asked him.

"Quite a few," Old Han said in reply. "They're holding various posts at different levels."

"Good work, Old Han!" I exclaimed.

"Comrade!" His voice rang with emotion. "We're responsible to the whole working class, to history, and to our ideal of communism. That's why we must take in new blood to renew our strength and place our hope in the younger generation."

"That's right. Those who don't or refuse to will be condemned by history."

Spreading out the latest newspaper on the desk he pointed to an article about the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius. "Progress or retrogression; worshipping or opposing Confucius; regeneration or stagnation — these are serious issues between two lines. We must do as Chairman Mao tells us: absorb fresh blood and eliminate waste."

I gazed out of the big bright windows. Among the tall green trees flanking the wide road, red flags fluttered like flames in the wind. A group of young workers, headed by Ko Hsin, were marching forward in the bright morning sunshine.

*Illustrated by Chen Yu-bsien*

## Advancing Through the Rapids

One early spring evening, the mountains on each side of the new port above the Yangtse Gorges were dotted with lights, from the peaks down to the waterside. The roar of trucks and cranes and the sirens of passing ships blended, filling the night air. It was February, when the river is at its lowest. Far out in mid-stream was anchored a huge tugboat, the *Yangtse*. Prow high, it looked like a prancing horse straining at the bit in its eagerness to gallop off.

The crew had just finished supper, the mess deck was lively. Some men were reading newspapers or playing chess, others singing to the accompaniment of a fiddle. Only Liu Tzu-chiang, the chief mate, was sitting quietly smoking beside the rail and staring at the endlessly flowing current. His ears were strained towards the dock, for a new captain was due to arrive that evening. What will he be like? Liu wondered. Our old captain's just retired, the political commissar's away for theoretical study at headquarters, and now it's said we're to make the trial run of towing three boats in low water ahead of schedule. A captain's load is as heavy as iron. We need a man with broad shoulders.

His thoughts were interrupted by the clear sound of a boat horn. An apple-green motor launch was cutting through wind and waves on its way towards the *Yangtse*. As its boat-hook hooked on to the rail of the tug, a vigorous young man leapt nimbly aboard. Before Chief Mate Liu could give him a hand, he had steadied himself.

"Master!"

Surprised, Liu stepped forward staring. It was Little Dragon, one of his former apprentices and the son of an old workmate. In the six years since he'd last seen him how strong the boy had grown!

"On your way to a meeting or on a trip?" Liu asked cheerfully. "Well, stay with me tonight anyway. We'll have a good chat and tomorrow morning we'll go and see the new Party secretary."

The young man Fu Chang-lung did not reply. Eyes shining with respect, he took a good look at his tall, spare master. Liu's closely cropped hair was now completely grey, but he was still hale and hearty.

He led the way to his cabin, poured Fu some tea and urged him to take a seat. Turning then, he noticed the bag Fu was carrying.

"Have you been transferred?" he asked, concerned.

"Yes."

"To which ship?"

"The *Yangtse*."

Only then did it dawn on him that Fu was the new captain. Liu's heart beat fast with elation. He thought: after the grooming I gave him, Little Dragon was promoted second mate. These last six years have passed as if in the twinkling of an eye, and now Little Dragon is a captain. Like the wind and waves of the Yangtse Gorges, the Cultural Revolution has tempered our young generation. . . . But Little Dragon is still in his twenties. Are his shoulders strong enough to carry a load of iron?

Fu threw his bag on to the bunk, and broke in upon Liu's thoughts. "Suppose we consult the crew about tomorrow morning's trip, Uncle Liu?"

"Tomorrow morning's trip?" Liu repeated blankly.

When he learned that the tug was to set off the next day to haul three boats to Kiangyang, Liu gaped. It was only a two-day run,

to be sure, but they would have to go through the gorges and past Cat's Paw Reef! The mere thought of it made Liu feel as if he were sitting on thorns. He remembered the saying:

Ching Reef and Hsieh Reef are no threat,  
But Kungling is where boats upset.  
Past that gate of Hell comes worse yet —  
By Cat's Paw you'll be wet with cold sweat!

He thought to himself: It'll be a good show if we manage to tug two boats through Cat's Paw in low water, let alone three.

He took a puff at his cigarette and said slowly, "You've only just arrived. Supposing I call up Party Secretary Chang at headquarters and suggest putting off this trial run till our next trip?"

His deep-set eyes flashing, Fu countered, "We can't wait, Uncle Liu! Don't you remember how the tons of oranges piled up along the shore went rotten last year during the low water season? The Party committee wants us to master low water navigation as quickly as possible. If I hadn't asked for the task at today's meeting, the crew of the *Yellow River* would have grabbed the chance."

The impassioned look on the young man's face made Liu sigh. "It's true that new brooms sweep clean," he told himself wryly. "If I let him have his way, it's too dangerous. But how can I dissuade him?" Liu could not make up his mind.

Fu was quick to notice his hesitation.

"Let's have a meeting and ask the crew what they think," he suggested. "The Party committee has stressed time and again the importance of safety first in navigation."

That was exactly what Liu was thinking. "Good," he nodded. "Since you're new here, it'll give you a chance to meet all the comrades as well."

They headed towards the ship's mess, talking and laughing. When the crew, fifty strong, caught sight of Fu behind the chief mate, a hush fell as all fixed their eyes on him.

Young quartermaster Hua Hsiao-hai gripped Old Hu's arm. Looking as if he'd just discovered a new sea route, he exclaimed in

a low voice, "Master Hu! Isn't he the daredevil captain we saw at headquarters at the rally?"

After a second look Hu decided it was Captain Fu. He recalled that rally attended by over a thousand people and the young man who'd leapt on to the platform the moment Party Secretary Chang finished his speech. "Yes, he's the one who asked the Party committee to approve, as quickly as possible, a trial run through the gorges in low water with three boats in tow."

"He must be a daredevil!" some listeners had commented then and one of them had told Hua and Master Hu a little about the speaker, a recently promoted young captain called Fu. While still second mate, he'd invented a method of predicting fog on the river and a way of towing difficult convoys.

Chief Mate Liu cleared his throat and announced, "Comrades, here's the new captain we've all been waiting for."

Warm, almost deafening applause broke out. Excited, Liu nudged Fu. The young man made a gesture and the din died down.

"I've come to learn from you and I hope you'll all help me in my work," Fu began. "Right now I've something I want to discuss with you. Our tug will set out for Kiangyang tomorrow, tugging three boats. Think we can make it? What difficulties do you suppose we'll meet with? Any suggestions? Speak up please."

"We made it in flood waters." As usual young Hua fired the first round. "Why should we be afraid of low water? No problem at all."

Fu cast him an approving glance.

"But the water's exceptionally low this year," Old Hu argued quietly. "I hear the tail of Cat's Paw Reef has emerged! It's going to be very tricky."

"If we put our heads together, we can turn soil into gold!" put in the old chief engineer who had sat stroking his beard until then. He went on eagerly, "We can work it out together. Of course, the men in charge of the boats being towed will have to take special care once we're under way. But Cat's Paw won't stop us. Even if it were a tiger, we'd tame it."

Enthusiasm ran high. Many nodded their approval. Fu jotted down all the suggestions. Then, seeing that the majority were in favour, he turned to the chief mate. "Any objections?"

After a moment's reflection, Liu replied, "Since everyone agrees, let's try it."

## 2

The mountains flanking the narrow Yangtse Gorges rise in sheer cliffs to pierce the clouds. Below, the rapids seethe like boiling water and the treacherous navigating channel there is just wide enough for one ship.

Like an arrow the *Yangtse*, with its three boats in tow, sped towards the gorges. Captain Fu stood intrepid at the wheel, intently scanning the water.

A radio operator hurried over and handed him a telegram. As the captain read it, his eyebrows knit. Weighing the telegram in his hand for a moment, he went straight to the second mate.

"We'll lay up for the night at the foot of Hsiaolung Mountain and put about at Cat's Paw Reef at dawn," Fu told him. "Headquarters wants us to take on emergency relief supplies there."

The second mate nodded and went back to his chart table where he began calculating how long it would take to round the reef.

This was not an ordinary trip. Before his watch, Liu was already at the prow. There, he carefully checked the windlass and inspected the cables and hawsers — for him all the equipment was precious. Suddenly, he noticed that the ship was heading for Hsiaolung Mountain! Still wearing his grease-stained gloves, he dashed towards the wheel-house. He snatched the telegram from Captain Fu and read it in a glance, then thrust it irritably back into Fu's hand.

"What a mess!" Exasperated, Liu kept shaking his head. Fancy a dispatcher issuing instructions without knowing the facts. Put about at Cat's Paw Reef! Our tugboat isn't going to sprout wings!

He turned to Fu. "Why not telegraph the control office that we'll pick up the goods on our next trip?"

Fu smiled at this, but when he spoke his voice was stern, "Head-quarters has made this decision because transporting relief supplies is of utmost importance. Relief supplies mean lives, Uncle Liu. This is something that can't wait no matter what the difficulties involved."

But Liu still shook his head. He took a step forward. "Don't you know the folk rhyme, Little Dragon?"

"Cat's Paw Reef twists first left and then right.

In high water it lurks out of sight.

But in low it fills dragons with fright."

The captain remained silent. Liu sighed and went on, "If anything should happen at Cat's Paw Reef, as captain you'll. . ."

It was such a terrible thought, he left it unsaid. But Captain Fu still did not utter a word. He looked up at the portrait of Chairman Mao on the wall, then spoke in ringing tones, "As Communists, we mustn't think only of ourselves, uncle!"

He leapt to the wheel and blew a long blast on the whistle.

"Get ready to moor!"

When the anchor was lowered and the cable made fast, Liu hurried back to the wheel-house again.

"It's decided then?" Liu asked the captain.

Looking out of the window, Fu replied firmly, "We'll have a Party committee meeting to discuss the problem after supper."

After a short discussion, nearly all the members of the Party committee agreed to put about at Cat's Paw. While expressing their resolve, they also proposed safety measures and steps to be taken. But Liu, chain-smoking, kept a surly silence.

The old boatswain, an impatient man, rapped his pipe against the palm of his hand and burst out, "We're bound to meet difficulties in putting about at Cat's Paw. But we're making revolution. Surely we can't be stopped by difficulties! Only if we carry heavier and heavier loads will our shoulders grow stronger. We deck-hands guarantee that come wind or waves we won't let our cables and hawser budge an inch." In conclusion he whacked his pipe against the table, knocking the ashes out.

Liu and Fu looked up. Their eyes met, but their thoughts were miles apart. Each hoped the other would change his mind without delay.

When Liu lowered his eyes the captain closed his notebook. His voice grave but earnest, he began, "Chairman Mao has said that, **'In given conditions, a bad thing can lead to good results. . .'** The Yangtse is now at its lowest. The current is swift. At Cat's Paw Reef, the river is shallow and the channel tortuous. It's obviously not a good place to put about. But I've noticed that when the mid-stream current is strong, so is the counter-current near the banks."

Here Fu stopped and led them all out on the deck. He threw a ball of crumpled paper into the middle of the river. It whirled downstream and soon vanished. Then they went to the opposite side where the captain again tossed in a ball of paper, near the shore this time. The counter-current carried it off in the opposite direction — upstream.

"This stiff counter-current will push the prow of our tugboat when we turn, thus increasing the ship's motive power," the captain explained back in the office. "That way we can obtain good results from a bad thing."

Chief Mate Liu didn't miss a word. The captain certainly has a point, he thought. But I know these gorges much better than he does. Naturally I'm more cautious.

He was still thinking hard when the chief engineer pounded the table and exclaimed, "If we can carry a hundred catties, we won't carry one catty less. What counts is following the correct line. Go into action, Little Dragon."

A cold rain was falling and a fierce wind tossed up white-crested waves. A sampan was fighting its way towards Cat's Paw Reef. At its bow Captain Fu stood erect, a sounding-pole in his hand. The light buoys dotting the river glimmered like torches in the murky night. That red line stretching far, far into the distance indicated the navigable channel.

Hua rowed slowly now, letting the boat drift towards Cat's Paw Reef. He caught hold of a rock and steadied the boat as Fu leapt on to it. Having crossed two ridges, Fu came to the reef's most

tortuous part where he kept probing with the sounding-pole. As he tapped it against the bottom, he bent close to the surface to listen. Despite the pounding of the water at his feet, he could make out a crisp sound. From experience, he knew it was sand. Lifting the pole out, he looked at the water mark — 2.4 metres deep. Exactly what the *Yangtse* drew! If only the rain were heavier! But it was merely drizzling. A wave broke over him as he was about to return to the sampan. He lost his footing, staggered and almost slipped into the river.

"That rain's trying to make fun of me," he joked.

Then Hua Hsiao-hai was again pulling hard at the oars, struggling to reach mid-stream. Erect at the bow, Captain Fu gripped the sounding-pole, now covered by a thin layer of ice. From time to time, he blew on his numbed fingers. Then, he wrapped a handkerchief round his hand so as to keep a firm grip on the pole. Suddenly the sampan rocked.

"Look out!" young Hua cried. Leaning down, one hand on the reef, Fu began sounding again. Then with a circle he marked the spot on his sketch-map.

They were struggling back to the water close to shore again, when the impact of the oar hitting a rock numbed Hua's hand.

"Captain, this stretch is full of rocks!" he exclaimed.

But Fu kept calm. He knew that the lower the water, the more the reef is uncovered. To gain first-hand information for tomorrow, Fu thought, we must find out the size, height and location of the whole reef. When they entered the most dangerous channel, Fu took over. Rowing to and fro, back and forth, to check the exact position of the hidden rocks, he suddenly remembered an idea he'd had some time ago.

Knocking the ice from the pole he shouted to Hua, "Have you ever seen a car turn in a narrow lane?"

"Lots of times," Hua replied glibly. "The driver always turns his steering wheel slowly."

"You have to back several times, right?"

"Yes, that's right." Hua was impressed by his captain's attention to details.

"Can't we use the same method for a boat?"

Only then did Hua realize Captain Fu was thinking about their own problem.

"Yes, of course!" he exclaimed, clapping his hand to his head. "Cars have steering wheels. We've a wheel too and a manoeuvring column. That should do just as well."

"Let me try with our sampan first." Straining at the oars, he tried to turn the boat round in the narrow, winding channel. But he just couldn't do it.

"There're still many technical problems to solve before we can apply that principle to a boat," Fu said encouragingly.

Fu started sounding again. Whenever he loosened his grip on the pole, it shot up. Everyone knows a bamboo pole floats in water, Fu thought. Why not lighten the tug so that it draws less water? His eyes lit up at this idea and he felt more confident.

After picking their way three times through the hidden reefs and rocks of the tortuous Cat's Paw, they had a clear idea of its dimensions.

"Hey, college graduate!" Fu called to Hua. "How much water must we empty from our tank if we want to raise our ship 20 cm?"

Hua racked his brains trying to figure out why Fu wanted to know that. As he looked at the small light shining atop one of the buoys, it dawned on him: with less water aboard the ship will draw less. That way, our tug will float in the shallowest places. Marvellous! Our captain's just given the *Yangtse* wings.

"We'll have less water for our daily needs, of course," Fu continued. "And we must keep enough for the machines. Let's go back now and see whether they've hit on a better plan."

"Right."

As Hua pulled hard at the oars, the sampan gained speed. The rain had let up by then. In the east, the sky was growing pale. Day was beginning to break.

The two men silently climbed up the rope ladder to the *Yangtse* deck. There they bumped into Liu who was sitting and smoking moodily. Liu sprang to his feet.

"Why didn't you take me along?"

"Better wait till next time. . . ." Hua said bluntly.



But Captain Fu put in gently, "You're getting on in age. We were afraid you might catch cold."

Liu hurried to the galley and came back with two bowls of piping hot ginger water. Hua downed his in one gulp. But Fu put his down asking, "Any new ideas from our comrades?"

Chuckling, Liu put his own padded overcoat round the captain's shoulders and replied, "We put our heads together while you were away. This task's urgent and time's short, so everyone is for emptying some of the water from our fresh water tank. If we lighten the ship, its draught will be less. I warned them that river water tastes pretty foul. Know what they said? 'It'll be worse if we make foul water and can't put about.' But it's up to you to make the final decision, Little Dragon."

"I'm going to report our findings to the whole crew right now," Fu replied earnestly. Then he strode towards the ship's mess, leaving a trail of gleaming footprints on the deck.

### 3

A shrill whistle broke the chill silence of dawn. Frightened magpies darted high over the wheel-house to take refuge in the tranquil woods on the mountain side.

His eyes intent on the river before him, Captain Fu stood erect at the wheel. At the prow Chief Mate Liu was busy directing his men as they checked the anchor chain and tightened the towing hawsers. Helmsmen off duty were milling about in the wheel-house, asking the captain for work.

Buoyed up by the enthusiasm around him, the captain felt added strength flow into his veins. He sent some more helmsmen and quartermasters to help steer the three boats in tow and had extra look-outs posted on both sides and at the stern. Then, he sounded the siren twice. The thunderous blasts rent the air, drowning the pounding of the waves. There was complete silence in the wheel-house.

"Hard a-port!" Hua relayed Fu's order while spinning the wheel round. The long string of boats, big as an island, began turning in the narrow channel.

"Stern 3 metres from the reef!" the second mate reported tensely. He knew that if the tug backed another metre or so into the reef, its propellers would be smashed and it might capsized.

"Continue at your post," was the terse reply as Fu steadily manoeuvred the craft. At times, the propellers churned up long, angry ridges of foaming water and, at times, only left a small wake. The tug was caught between the vertical cliff in front and the treacherous reef behind. One false move meant certain disaster.

Five minutes passed. The tug was half-way through the turn. Then it was caught by the main current — so rapid that it could not make it to the counter-current closer to shore. Pounded by the rapids, the convoy was swept downstream like leaves whirled away in a gale. There was dead silence in the wheel-house as they waited with bated breath. All that could be heard was the creak of the wheel and the clang of the engine bells. The hawsers linking the boats were pulled so taut they twanged. That sound stabbed at the hearts of each man in the crew.

To Chief Mate Liu, at the prow, it seemed they were done for.

"Drop anchor. . . ." he yelled.

But the wind swept away his cry. Huge waves crashed against the *Yangtse*, throwing up great columns of spray. Liu was wet through. He took off his padded jacket, rolled up his sleeves and gripped the handle of the anchor windlass. Foam swept across the deck. The boats behind plunged into the troughs of waves and then bobbed up again as they hurtled downstream. Liu heard the water pounding at his feet. They seemed to be completely surrounded by reefs. He had only to reach out his hand to touch one.

"Drop anchor! . . . Drop anchor!" he shouted at the top of his lungs, the veins standing out on his forehead.

Only Captain Fu heard this faint call above the roar of the rapids. All eyes were fixed on the signal poles on Cat's Paw. Hua's face was a raw red from the cold wind, but his eyes were fastened on that deadly reef and the boiling, tumbling water around it.

Captain Fu remained calm at this crucial moment, his whole being concentrated on one thing: Conquer Cat's Paw! He scanned the rapids and the banks. The current ran swift through these shoals.

If they anchored in this zigzagging channel they would run the risk of breaking the hawsers and scattering the boats. No, we can't drop anchor here, he decided. We must advance. Our only chance lies in reaching the counter-current close to shore. This decision was based on his findings of the previous night. Confident, he turned to Hua: "Put the tiller hard down! Full speed ahead!"

Then, stepping forward, he spoke calmly through the loudspeaker, "Attention, helmsmen! Keep a close watch on your hawsers."

Liu stamped his foot in annoyance. Why doesn't Little Dragon realize the danger? he wondered.

Another huge wave broke over them. For a moment, the chief mate and his men were obscured by the spray. The river was in a tumult. Captain Fu and his crew battled with the waves and the gusts of spray to avoid crashing into the steep cliffs and dark reefs.

Defying the seething water and threatening precipices, Captain Fu gripped the lever firmly. He had to shout his orders, sweat beaded his temples.

Hua's heart kept leaping so hard that it seemed to pop to his mouth. His hands gripping the wheel were moist. He could see almost nothing ahead. He steered, guided by the captain's clear instructions.

Can Little Dragon do it? Liu's mind was in a turmoil. He was waiting for Fu to give the order to lower the anchor. But the loudspeaker was silent. Suddenly the tug lurched forward, its prow cutting into the counter-current. The convoy stopped its dangerous course downstream.

"Hurray!" a young man shouted. "We've almost made it! Get ready to cast off the towing hawsers."

"Right!" a big robust man left the prow and raced towards the stern.

In the wheel-house, Captain Fu observed the banks through binoculars and ordered, "Full speed ahead!"

Like a fine steed spurred on in the heat of battle, the *Yangtse* proudly charged, ridges of white spray radiating from her bows.

"Hard a-port. Cut the engines!" the captain ordered.

The propellers came to a halt, but the tug continued advancing. Its prow propelled by the counter-current westward and its stern by

the downstream rapids, the *Yangtse* at last rounded Cat's Paw, almost scraping the rocks. Then she roared towards the waiting boats. After a short stop, no more than the time for a meal, the *Yangtse* was speeding down the river again now towing three boats loaded with relief supplies.

"Full speed ahead! Destination: Kiangyang." Captain Fu's untiring voice sounded again from the loudspeaker.

When his group had finished weighing anchor, Chief Mate Liu looked up at Captain Fu. High above in the wheel-house, Little Dragon seemed a towering rock piercing the clouds. Fired by Fu's militant spirit, Liu thought: To carry on the revolution we must have courage like this. Thanks to such daring, we've overcome every difficulty at Cat's Paw Reef. This is the spirit that enables us to march for ever forward! Yes, this spirit of advancing through the rapids is invaluable to revolutionaries. He broke into a run towards the wheel-house.

Behind the peaks of Fairy Mountain the sun was rising. Its brilliance illuminated the deck of the *Yangtse* and the three boats it towed. Long whistles rang out. Captain Fu and Chief Mate Liu, standing shoulder to shoulder, were scanning the river through binoculars. Between the undulating mountains, the mighty Yangtse River swept down towards the sea.

*Illustrated by Huang Ying-hao*

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**The Countryside Is Our Big Classroom** (woodcut) by *Chen Yi-ming*



## **Our Train Races Forward**

Everyone in the railway workers' reading-room was excited as they thronged round the record-breaker, Fang Hsiao-tang, a young engine-driver who had just succeeded in bringing in an exceptionally long train at record speed. They all had questions, especially some of the new drivers and firemen whose shouts drowned the others' voices. They wanted to know how Fang had managed to run the heavily laden cars so boldly across Fresh Water Bridge and the sharp gradients round Red Rock Mountain and arrive safely at his destination two hours ahead of schedule.

Old Yang, a member of the railway section's Party committee and head of the transportation department, was as overjoyed as the others, but insisted on their sitting down to let Fang tell them about it. After a while the hubbub died down. All attention was focused on Fang.

Though only twenty-eight, he was stalwart of build. His ruddy complexion contrasted with his jet-black hair and eyebrows. That face, beaded with sweat, reminded them of the nerve-racking task he had carried out.

He gazed round, but didn't speak. He seemed to have something on his mind. Notebook in hand, all were ready to listen and take notes. A moment passed, Fang remained silent.

Clang, clang! The clear sound of hammering suddenly rang out from the locomotive shed.

Fang started and ran to the window. He blew on the dim window-pane and rubbed it clean, then gazed out, listening breathlessly.

The others stared at him in bewilderment.

After a little while, Fang spun round and pointing excitedly at the shed blurted out:

"Hear that clanging? It's Master Lu Cheng-kang hammering bolts. I may as well start with that." Then he added, "But you must be wondering what connection there is between the hauling of this train and Master Lu. Well, let me tell you from the beginning.

"I first met Old Lu when I began learning to drive a locomotive. I had just graduated from the Railway Transportation School and was very happy to have been appointed to the steam locomotive, the *Vanguard*, well-known throughout the whole railway bureau. The first thing I did on arriving was to go to the locomotive shed.

"There it stood — glossy black and shining clean. As I was walking round it, I saw a man squatting beside the boiler. I approached and saw he was tinkering with a bolt. I looked him over from his jackboots to the cap that crowned his ruddy face. He had a string of nuts slung over his shoulder and two wrenches and a pair of pliers stuck in his belt. He was going over the whole engine carefully, now climbing on top, now crouching below, his nuts clinking as he moved. After tightening each bolt, he narrowed his eyes to examine it more closely, then gave it a final tap with his hammer.

"The clanging that filled the air seemed music to him. At each sound, a smile of satisfaction brightened his face.

"I supposed he was the veteran driver of the *Vanguard*. Thinking he must be my master, I addressed him with great respect.

"Excuse me, you're the driver of this locomotive, aren't you?"

"He looked me over before replying with a smile, 'No, I'm not an engine-driver, I'm a maintenance man.'



"Seeing my puzzled look, he pointed to a bolt and added, 'I overhaul these...'

"Bolts?"

"Yes, bolts! I loosen, change, repair and tighten them.'

"He said this proudly as if each tiny bolt was as big and as important as a wheel.

"I was disappointed to learn that he was not the veteran driver but only there to tinker with the bolts. But before I could react,

he had already grabbed me by the arm and was explaining the function of each bolt. In conclusion he tapped one. 'Listen...'

"Just then a train thundered past. The roar of the engine and the rumbling of wheels muffled the sound of his hammer. In my mind, too, the noise of the passing train effaced our conversation about the bolts. I looked at the train, lost in admiration."

As if to corroborate Fang's words, a train suddenly roared past. The thunder of the wheels resounded in the room, drowning all other sounds. The floor vibrated and the window-panes shook.

Only after the sound had faded away did Fang continue:

"My second impression of him dates from the day I became a full-fledged driver. After several years of study and then apprenticeship, you can imagine how excited I was. I put on brand-new overalls and, gleaming hammer in hand, went over the engine proudly. Every tap echoed loud and clear, like a song of congratulations.

"I was feeling pretty pleased with myself when someone behind me caught hold of my hammer. 'Hey, that's no way to check your engine!' he growled.

"I was stupefied. Couldn't imagine what was wrong. Turning round, I saw Master Lu. He pointed to a small hexagonal bolt.

"'Look what you've done to it,' he said reproachfully.

"At first I thought I must have ruined a very important part, but seeing it was only a tiny bolt set my mind at ease. I had hammered a little too hard and flattened one edge of the bolt head. Master Lu unscrewed the nut and pulled out the bolt. Setting it gently on the palm of his hand, he held it up to the sunlight and examined it carefully. From his expression I could see that for him it was not just a slightly flattened bolt — he looked as if a precious pearl had been damaged. I couldn't help chuckling at his attitude.

"At that he whirled round and gave me a piece of his mind.

"'Why make such a fuss about a tiny bolt?' I protested, quite unconcerned.

"'Huh? A tiny bolt you call it!' He glared at me, eyebrows knit in a frown. 'Don't you know when a bolt's loose it'll slow down the train? Sometimes, it can cause big trouble.'

"Although I didn't protest openly, I couldn't believe that a little bolt could cause big trouble. I was thinking: It can't be as serious as that. After all, an increase or decrease of speed depends solely on how the driver works the steam valve. Safety on a run is only a question of effectively operating the brake. This responsibility rests on our shoulders alone. An engine-driver's work is what's really important. Master Lu must find it boring just tinkering with bolts every day.

"However, my master, a first-rate engine-driver, always showed a great deal of respect for Master Lu when they were together. When Master Lu spoke, he listened attentively, nodding his head in agreement.

"To my surprise, when I told my master about this conversation with Master Lu, he said, 'All of us should learn from him. He's right; the bolt may be small, but it's vital.' As he looked at the brake, a reminiscent expression appeared on his face."

In the quiet reading-room, people whispered to each other. After the hum of talk had died down, Fang went on:

"Not long after this, I met Master Lu the third time. The first time, he hadn't made any impression at all on me. My second impression had been bad. This time his words went straight to my heart.

"I had teamed up with him to repair a bolt. He planted his foot on the wheel and fixed his wrench tightly round the bolt, I was to give the nut another turn. I exerted my full strength and yanked at the wrench. It slipped and hit his watch. I'd broken his watch! I remembered how he'd told me off for slightly flattening a bolt head. So I braced myself for a good dressing down.

"Seeing him glance at his watch with a frown, I felt truly sorry. Then he looked at the nut. His knit brows suddenly smoothed out and he said to himself, 'Luckily, it's not broken.' I wondered how he could say that with his watch crystal smashed to pieces. 'Master Lu, I... was too damn careless...' I bowed my head, ready to take the blame.

"'Of course, the crystal's broken, but that won't hurt our work.' Raising my eyes to meet his, I saw he was smiling. Patting me on

the shoulder, he said, 'Look, you've made the bolt good and tight. Don't worry about my watch; that doesn't matter. Come on, let's get on with the job. You're hauling a special train today, aren't you?'

"I was mystified. If he'd been so cut up by a dented bolt, how could he take his own watch being broken so lightly?"

"Whistles tooted. It was time to set off. Feeling disconcerted, I climbed up into the cab. Just as I was about to pull the lever to start, Master Lu shouted, 'Little Fang, don't worry about my watch. Keep your mind on the bolts, on the engine, on your thousands of tons of freight.'

"It was only after I'd assured him I would that he turned and strode towards the other locomotives. The wrenches and the string of nuts slung over his shoulder clinked at each step."

A tale about someone everyone knows often strikes a chord in each listener's heart. So it was that day. Master Lu's image loomed large in the minds of the engine-drivers and firemen. Different as their experiences were they all felt the same way: Although Master Lu, like the tiny bolts in an engine, attracted little attention, he was indispensable. He was one of the thousands upon thousands of bolts in the great locomotive of socialism and a brightly shining one at that!

"As I gazed after Master Lu," continued Fang, "his figure seemed to grow more distinct with each receding step. And before long something else happened that astonished me even more. The day before yesterday, it was. The Party committee had given me the difficult job of hauling a special train at record speed. That assignment bucked me no end — it was such an honour! To guarantee success, the firemen, my assistant and I decided to start work earlier and give our engine a final checking over. At midnight we went down to the locomotive shed.

"The whole shed was quiet. Brightly illuminated by a row of lamps, the locomotives stood abreast on the rails like battle steeds. Wisps of smoke streaking upwards had gathered under the ceiling like an umbrella covering the engines. The whole shed was misty. As we approached the *Vanguard*, voices sounded from the cab. That's strange, we thought. Who on earth is here at midnight?"

"Someone was saying, 'To illustrate this, let's take a bolt as an example. In an engine there're about a thousand cogs and bolts of various sizes. As the saying goes, 'A small lever can lift a thousand pounds.'" Small as a bolt is, it's vital. If it comes loose, a train can't run at full speed. Worse still, it can...'

"'It can overturn a train!' someone broke in. 'Before Liberation, didn't you loosen a bolt in the brake valve of a Kuomintang military train? Because of the defective brake, the train ran out of control going down Red Rock Mountain and plummeted into Fresh Water River. The ammunition on the train exploded and the big bridge across the river was blown up. That cut railway communications there for several months, helping the PLA to foil the enemy plan to invade the liberated area.' The speaker broke into laughter at the thought.

"I had heard that story long ago, but had never thought the hero of it was right here on our locomotive. Judging by his voice it seemed to be Master Lu. But for an instant I found it hard to believe that the hero I so much admired and the man who made such a fuss over tiny bolts were one and the same person. After thinking it over, I realized that the two had much in common.

"I poked my head inside the cab, but there was too much steam to make out who was there. Suddenly the door of the fire-box opened, the flames illuminating a ruddy face and grizzled temples. It was Master Lu, a book in his hand. In the blazing light its crimson title stood out: *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. I remembered then that he was the head of a group of veteran workers who often gathered together to study Marxism-Leninism and Chairman Mao's works in their spare time. Then I saw them, one sitting in the driver's seat, another squatting by the fire-box and another standing before the fuel tender, each with the same book in their hands. They were obviously studying, but why here and so late at night?"

"That happened before Liberation, Old Yang. In terms of philosophy, it was a spontaneous act. I wasn't politically conscious then. Only with the Party's guidance and by studying Marxism-Leninism and Chairman Mao's works did I come to understand the significance of our railway workers' task. Let's go back to the ex-

ample of the bolt. Before Liberation I loosened that bolt in order to overturn a train running along the capitalist track. But today, we must do our very best to tighten each bolt so that our train can race full speed along our socialist course. So you see a bolt, small as it is, is tied to the struggle between the two classes, the two roads and the two political lines. Knowing that, you've got to put your whole heart into seeing that the bolts are in tiptop order. When I hear a train rumbling along or see an express race forward with its cargo of thousands of tons, I wish I could turn into a bolt, a permanent part of the engine, firmly clamped there.'

"The more I listened, the more stirred I became. It was only then that I realized why Master Lu sets so much store by each little bolt, takes such good care of it and really puts his heart into his work. In that sturdy body, reddened by the light of the fire, beat a red heart devoted to our Party and people. As I looked on, he seemed to grow in stature. Those words coming straight from his heart rang in my ears.

"Then, Master Lu stood up and declared, 'Tomorrow . . . no, it's already past midnight. Today, I mean, Little Fang's going to carry out an important task. His train will pull more cars and run at record time. We must tighten every bolt in the *Vanguard's* engine to help him deliver the building material to the work site ahead of schedule. Let's all pitch in and do a good job.'

"There was a flashing of light and a clinking of nuts as the old workers jumped down from the cab. Each one was equipped like Master Lu, an acetylene lamp in his left hand, a hammer in his right, a string of nuts slung across his shoulder and wrenches stuck in his belt. In the glimmering light of a swaying lamp, I spotted Old Yang among them. My heart warmed at the sight. I thought to myself, 'We'll overcome all difficulties and work miracles, so long as we have the Party to direct us and the veteran workers to help.'

"I hurriedly lit my lamp too and taking my hammer followed in Master Lu's footsteps, tightening every bolt. The quiet shed reverberated with the clanging of hammers.

"At daybreak I drove the locomotive to the station. After all the cars were coupled, they seemed to stretch out endlessly to the

horizon. I fully felt the weight of the great responsibility resting on my shoulders.

"It was less than ten minutes before departure time when I poked my head out of the window to watch for the signal. A man was running towards the cab. From the familiar clinking I knew it was Master Lu. Realizing there must be something wrong, I leaped down onto the platform to meet him.

"He could hardly speak for panting. He pointed with his hammer under my engine, and after a pause gasped out, 'Old Yang asked me to tell you . . . just now . . . he heard the weather forecast. There'll be heavy rains about noon, when you're nearing Red Rock Mountain. You'll be pulling more cars than before, at greater speed, so I must tighten the bolt in the brake a bit more. With strong brakes, never mind the load, you can make top speed!'

"He crouched under the engine and gave the bolt another two turns with my wrench. After that, he tapped it.

"Clang, clang!

"That clear ringing sound seemed to be declaring proudly: 'Don't worry about me. I'm a bolt that'll stand fast!'

"The green light flashed on. I bounded back into the cab. The sight of Master Lu standing there warmed my heart. Like a well-stoked engine, I felt tremendous energy coursing through my veins. Squaring my shoulders, I pulled the starting lever. Our long train sped down the gleaming rails and raced forward.

"Before me the sunlit track stretched straight out into the distance, a long line of cross-ties and rails. I thought to myself: It's thanks to the joint strength of steadfast bolts like Master Lu, of hard gravel, red plate screws and all the innumerable components of a railway that the train of time is racing ahead so fast.

"Though people like Master Lu work at ordinary jobs and don't attract attention, they are the true heroes whose thinking runs far ahead of our locomotives."

Fang paused, then added gravely, "So you see, the real record-breakers are the countless unsung heroes like Master Lu."

Silence reigned in the reading-room.

The listeners were as moved as Fang himself.

Clang, clang! The knocking rang out again. The engine-drivers and firemen were so accustomed to this familiar sound that they normally paid little attention to it. Now it seemed a deeply-moving melody.

Just then another train rolled out of the station, roaring and thundering past the reading-room. But the clanging of the hammer was not drowned out this time. The thundering of the train became an accompaniment to it — an orchestral accompaniment of a myriad instruments. As the train raced on, its roar faded in the distance but the clanging grew louder and louder.

*Illustrated by Chen Yi-fei*

## POEMS

*Chang Tung-hui*

### Our Motherland

Our squad leader keeps two pots of seedlings,  
On the window-sill of our sentry post.  
In one there's early rice from south of the Yangtse,  
In the other spring wheat from the far north.

When we return from patrolling the hills and dales,  
The seedlings stand there, so full of life,  
They welcome us back from our long trip,  
Swaying in the breeze as though to show their affection.

Ah! Here is our motherland in miniature,  
The beauty of our wide land fills our sentry post.  
Like our people of many nationalities,  
Each speaks to us in its mother tongue.

We often gather around the pots of growing grain,  
Caressing it with endearing glances,

Each eye a deep pool, a stream from which  
We water each plant with our love.

Silently we each appraise their growth,  
How was it yesterday, this morning, now?  
“How much taller have they grown,” we ask each other,  
“How many fine new leaves have sprouted?”

At night to the comrade on duty,  
The squad leader gives this warning,  
“Remember these seedlings, guard our crops well,  
Be vigilant against all wild beasts that destroy.”

In the morning when comrades return from night patrol,  
Our squad leader greets them full of pleasure, saying,  
“Our seedlings suffered no harm at all  
From last night’s storm of wind and rain.”

On our window-sill we do not see  
Just two pots of early rice and wheat,  
But in our mind’s eye is a vision  
Of our whole vast dear motherland.



*Sun Kuei*

## The Miner’s Love

He never thinks of green leaves or pink-tinted blossom  
Or white clouds gathering over rippling water,  
His great love is the roar of blasting,  
The sight of glittering coal cascading down.

With drill in hand he transforms our land,  
Tramping hardships underfoot, he sings in triumph.  
Always loyal in heart to the Party,  
He’s willing to spend his whole life mining coal.

---

Sun Kuei is a coal-miner.

*Huo Man-sheng*

## As If a White Cloud Had Dropped Down from the Skies

Today I went to Cotton Gully,  
What a fine sight met my old eyes.  
Each cotton plant had spread like a peach-tree,  
Its purple bolls as large as fists.

As each boll burst in a wide grin, it revealed  
Pure white cotton like a fluffy snowball.  
Nimbly flew our girls' fingers,  
Filling their aprons to the brim.

As they picked the cotton, they sang new songs,  
So sweet that small clouds drifted near to listen.  
Piles of new cotton rose high as mountains,  
As if a white cloud had dropped down from the skies.

---

Huo Man-sheng, a peasant poet from Liaoning Province, is a 79-year-old Communist.

*Tsai Hua*

## The Derrick

Above you sails the silk-like cirrus,  
Bright stars twinkle at your feet.  
Gazing at the mine, I see you first,  
And warmth flows quickly to my heart.  
How powerfully you stand there aloft,  
Just as militant as are we miners.

Over a sea of coal you stand on guard,  
Your vision is as wide as the universe.  
Storm and stress never confound you,  
Thunder and rain only invigorate you.  
Good! That's the spirit of us miners,  
That's the stiff backbone of the working-class.

---

Tsai Hua is a coal-miner.

Who wants to know the output of coal?  
There's no need to consult the figures.  
Just listen to the rumble of machinery,  
And watch the stream of black gold flow.  
You stand like the arrow of our production charts,  
Ever rearing your head to reach the sky.

The derrick is our miner's mechanical arm,  
The shovel, a mighty powerful hand.  
Together you unleash the black dragon,  
That's slumbered for millennia in its rocky bed.  
To hasten the steps of our socialist construction  
Day and night you work endlessly, taking no rest.

---

**The Light of Kutien** (oil painting) by *Wang Lu*

Kutien in Shanghang County, Fukien Province, was the site of the Ninth Party Congress of the Fourth Army of the Chinese Red Army held in December 1929, at which a resolution drawn up by Chairman Mao Tsetung was adopted. This resolution known as the Kutien resolution served as the programme of the Chinese Communist Party for building up the people's armed forces.



## Morning Song

Snow, white as pear blossom, still covers hill and valley,  
So how in early morning could there be bird-song?  
Just listen to that sweet "tweet, tweet . . . tweet",  
It's the chirrup of some lark or other summer bird.

Beside the stove, the cook lays down his poker,  
"Why is a bird singing so early," he says to himself.  
"Doesn't it know our soldiers marched all through the night,  
And are now sound asleep inside their tents?"

So, up gets the cook to drive away the bird,  
Opens the door and is amazed to find  
Two bundles of firewood and a crate of charcoal there,  
With footprints and a wheel-track in the snow.

The tweeting of the bird has receded now,  
But following the sound he sets off along the road,  
Till he overtakes an old man trundling a wheelbarrow,  
The "tweet, tweet," was but the axle lacking grease!

The old man's brows are frosted white,  
But warm is his greeting when he says,  
"Please accept them, comrade, from the heart  
Of the people in the old liberated area.  
Mengshan charcoal can thaw ice a thousand feet deep."

Panting, the cook replies, "But we can't accept these gifts. . . ."  
The old man smiles. "It's a tradition with us  
To support the army. Don't you believe me, eh?  
Go and ask your old commissar, who has known  
How good our millet tastes, when boiled  
In the sweet water of the Yiho River."\*

"But still we can't!" "Yes, you must."  
So went the argument beside the road.  
Till the axle began to sing its song again.  
In their dreams our soldiers hear that chirrup,  
It's like a warm spring, flowing deep,  
Melting the snow, thawing the winter's ice.  
Spring comes early to the mountains.



\*Mengshan Mountain and Yiho River are both in the southern part of Shantung Province.

## ANECDOTES ABOUT LU HSUN

The great writer Lu Hsun ruthlessly exposed and thoroughly debunked all manner of devotees of Confucius and the whole retrogressive system of Confucianism. Many moving examples of this can be found in his life. In this issue of *Chinese Literature* we are publishing two descriptions of his struggle against Confucianism by Shih Yi-ko.

— The Editors

*Shih Yi-ko*

## The First Thunder in Spring

Sixty years ago, outside Hsuanwu Gate in Peking stood a hostel for natives of Shaohsing. In this hostel was an apartment facing east which was called the Studio with Additional Trees, and this was where Lu Hsun first stayed when he came from Nanking to Peking.

In May 1912, the provisional government of the new republic moved to Peking, and Lu Hsun went north with the Ministry of Education. Though the provisional government had not been set up long, it was already growing moribund. The bourgeoisie had relinquished the power it had seized to the old feudal forces, so that the fruits of the 1911 Revolution fell into the hands of Yuan Shih-kai, a reactionary

opportunist who had served as the minister in charge of the northern provinces at the end of the Ching Dynasty. Abetted by the imperialists, as soon as he became the president of the Chinese republic he plotted to restore the feudal monarchy. On the one hand he butchered the revolutionary people; on the other, he invoked the spectre of Confucius and made a great show of worshipping Confucius and Heaven, in the hope of setting himself up as emperor. The two-fold oppression of imperialism and Chinese feudalism made the whole of China like a stifling iron dungeon.

The Ministry of Education was of course controlled by die-hards too. After signing on every morning, its functionaries had virtually nothing to do. Spied on by Yuan Shih-kai's agents, most civil servants lost heart and grew apathetic, not a few of them becoming corrupted. Lu Hsun despised their supine decadence. He himself was not intimidated by Yuan's agents, but the black outlook depressed him. So he started analysing the situation while doing compilation and research work in old Chinese literature. In this way he passed year after year in loneliness and indignation.

There was a big locust tree in front of his rooms. On summer nights he would sit alone under this tree, fanning himself as he watched the sky through the thick leaves and meditating.

"Where is the moving force for the revolution? Where does China's future lie?" For a long time these problems weighed heavily on his mind.

But time marches on, the people want revolution. Finally a new page of history opened up. In 1917, under the leadership of Lenin, the great October Revolution broke out in Russia. The salvos of the October Revolution proclaimed the start of a new period in man's history. Like a lighthouse shining over the illimitable expanse of the ocean, the October Revolution pointed out the way for the liberation of the proletariat and oppressed peoples of the whole world.

The news of this revolution elated Lu Hsun, who saw the dawn of a new age in the flames of the revolutionary war in Russia where the workers had overthrown the tsarist rule. Under the influence of the October Revolution, the new cultural movement in China gained tremendous momentum and stormed the reactionary feudal

strongholds. The clarion call "Down with the Confucian shop!" resounded far and wide. In January 1918, Lu Hsun joined the editorial department of the magazine *New Youth* which ushered in the new cultural movement, plunging fearlessly into this great struggle.

One March evening after supper, Lu Hsun was sitting alone in his northern room reading the newspapers. Recently his spirits had lifted, for the October Revolution had brought him fresh hope and the masses' struggle against imperialism and feudalism had swept away his gloom. In a letter to his friend Hsu Shou-shang in Honan, he wrote: "My ideas have undergone a great change. I'm no longer pessimistic." He saw hope now of destroying the iron dungeon and decided to use literature as his weapon in this fight. He determined to make a pitiless exposure of social abuses to call attention to them; and to prop up the dungeon gate with his own shoulders, to let the young people out to a bright future. He would sound a call to arms, to encourage the fighters storming the ramparts of feudalism and imperialism to advance more bravely.

Ever since his return from Japan, Lu Hsun had been observing and analysing the situation in China. He was convinced that Confucianism was the instrument used by all China's feudal rulers to consolidate their reactionary rule and poison the minds of the people. In the course of more than two thousand years, their vicious moral code had swallowed up countless innocent lives!

Recently, especially at night when all was still, Lu Hsun would ponder these problems. He had a mental picture of countless people dying in agony, crushed by Confucian ethics; he recalled the ludicrous sacrifices to Confucius staged by Yuan Shih-kai in his attempt to restore the monarchy. . . . But most of all he was preoccupied by the obscurantism of his own day. Though Yuan Shih-kai had died, the cult of Confucius continued. Only the other day the Ministry of Education had performed ancient rites in the Confucian Temple, and many die-hards both old and young were upholding Confucianism as the "national essence" which they alleged must be preserved at all costs. As he thought of these things Lu Hsun heaved a long sigh, gazing out into the dark night outside his window. "Yes," he told himself. "The present situation in China

is like this pitch-dark night." He felt that to change all this, an ideological revolution was needed. Confucianism must be completely debunked; an end must be made of "feasting on human flesh". The people must be freed from all these thousands of years of feudal bondage.

On 15 May, a short story written in the vernacular appeared in the magazine *New Youth*. It was *A Madman's Diary*\* by Lu Hsun. The first story in the vernacular in modern Chinese literature, it cuttingly exposed the man-eating nature of China's feudal society and the crimes of the feudal moral code and patriarchal system. It was a fierce attack on the age-old feudal traditions which had Confucianism as their reactionary spiritual basis. Like the first clap of thunder in spring, its publication shook the whole of China. The reaction of the young was especially marked. They read it avidly and discussed it eagerly.

"Listen to this!" one would say. "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 intently half the night until I began to see words between the lines. The whole book was filled with the two words — 'Eat people'."

"That's right! The words 'eat people' thoroughly expose the true essence of feudalism for the last two thousand years. They strip off the false mask of Confucianism."

"This story also tells us that the Confucians who rant all the time of virtue and morality are actually hypocrites whose hearts are set on eating other people and whose lips are smeared with human blood. Yet these cannibals try to keep up appearances, not daring to act outright. They want to batten on others without being blamed for it!"

"As the story says, they have 'the fierceness of a lion, the timidity of a rabbit, the craftiness of a fox'."

"Hear the writer's call to arms? 'Curse all man-eaters!'"

\*See *Chinese Literature* No. 4, 1974.

"And at the end he appeals: 'Save the children!' This shows his concern for and high hopes of the younger generation. But who is this Lu Hsun?"

Young readers did not know who Lu Hsun was, but his own friends knew that this was Chou Shu-jen's pen-name. One evening some of his friends came to see him. They told him their own opinions of the story and the comments they had heard. Their conversation turned naturally to recent trends in thinking, and they voiced their indignation against the die-hards who were trying to put the clock back.

After the publication of this story, Lu Hsun thought even more about such problems, often losing sleep over them. He told his friends: "All this talk about 'preserving the national essence' reminds me of a man with an ulcer on his face. Of course in a way it is unique. One could call this ulcer his particular 'essence'. But it seems to me he'd do better to rid himself of it, so as to look the same as other people."

This apt and vivid simile made his friends laugh. They rejoined: "Those in favour of keeping China's ulcer are damaging the country."

Lu Hsun showed them some cuttings from recent newspapers of articles praising the chastity of women and reports of women who had killed themselves at their husbands' death. Pointing at these he commented with feeling: "We are living in the twentieth century and have already had a glimpse of the dawn; yet Chinese society is still so black, one can't tell whether it is night or day." He turned up the paraffin lamp then and continued: "These are only a few examples chosen at random. Innumerable other instances could be found. But from these few we can see how critical the situation is."

"Yes, if this goes on, the outlook for China is black," one of his friends agreed.

"What way out is there then?" another asked eagerly.

"We must fight back, regardless of taunts and arrows shot in the dark," Lu Hsun answered firmly. He had made up his mind to use not only the short-story form but also short essays, sharp as

daggers, to strike back swiftly and forcefully at Confucianism and the feudal forces.

Subsequently, many of his writings appeared in *New Youth*. In August 1918, the magazine published his essay *My Views on Chastity*, that autumn it carried seven "Random Thoughts" attacking various social abuses; and these were followed early in 1919 by eleven more "Random Thoughts". From April onwards he also published *Kung I-chi* and other short stories exposing the viciousness of feudal society.

All these writings, like thunder reverberating in spring or lightning cleaving the dark night of old China, showed up and shattered the feudal moral code. They marked the upsurge of a high tide of revolution. Under the new historical conditions, Lu Hsun began his fearless fight as a revolutionary democrat, soon becoming the standard-bearer of the May 4th new cultural movement.



Lu Hsun in Shanghai 1934

## In the Forefront of the Battle Against Confucianism

It was the summer of 1934. In Shanghai there was a heat-wave, with the temperature rising over 36 degrees centigrade and a long spell of drought.

Even more stifling than the weather, however, was the putrid cult of Confucius. That February, to cover up the failure of the Kuomintang's four campaigns to encircle and annihilate the Communists and to enforce his fascist rule, Chiang Kai-shek had launched the nation-wide "New Life Movement" which stressed Confucian teachings. Soon after this, local warlords and politicians went into action like flies round a garbage heap. They fleeced the people of money to rebuild Confucian temples, republished Confucian classics, wrote articles to defend orthodoxy and denounce communism, and claimed that Confucianism had the power to refute wrong ideas and rectify men's minds. By order of Chiang Kai-shek, Confucius' birthday became a day of national commemoration when it was obligatory to worship the "Sage". Special programmes were broadcast preaching Confucianism.

Where Lu Hsun stayed in Shanghai there was not a breath of fresh air. When he opened the window all he could hear was the strident shrilling of cicadas and the blaring of a neighbour's wireless. Frowning with disgust, he turned to his desk and took up the newspaper.

"Still the same old talk of morality and virtue." Lu Hsun contemptuously tossed aside an article on venerating Confucius. Leaning back in his chair, he lit a cigarette.

... The cicadas outside went on shrilling incessantly.

The sound reminded Lu Hsun of a fable he had read when young. It described how, on a hot summer's day like this, some ants labori-

ously dragged food over the ground while an indolent cicada just sang on the bough of a tree, laughing at their exertions. But when the summer ended and the leaves began to fall, the cicada was cold and hungry, not having laid in any supplies for the winter, whereas the ants had plenty to eat. And they reproached him: Why were you so lazy all summer?

"In this fable the cicada suffers for his laziness. But how is it in our society?" Lu Hsun thought of the workers and peasants sweating away beneath the blazing sun. In fancy he saw the coolies bent double under heavy loads in the dockyards, the peasants toiling in the heat of the fields. He knew that when winter came they would not enjoy the fruit of their toil like the ants but would have to work on in wind and snow, a prey to hunger and cold. On the other hand the idle rich, the "cicadas", in summer went dancing or listened to light music, keeping themselves cool with electric fans and ice-cream; while when winter came, in their luxurious apartments with central heating, they lived on the fat of the land.

"This is simply a world of cicadas!" Lu Hsun announced with indignation. Again he picked up the article extolling Confucius. It was full of such fine phrases as "benevolence and justice" and "the kingly way" and the writer, taking a slave-owner's attitude, concluded by exhorting the Chinese people to remain submissive to the ruling class. "Those who work with their minds rule over others; those who work with their hands are ruled by others. The ruled supply the rulers with sustenance." It was clear to Lu Hsun from this article that the teachings of Confucius were fundamentally the same as the fascist philosophy of Chiang Kai-shek. And the cult of Confucius in the "world of cicadas" was simply designed to strengthen Kuomintang rule and perpetuate class oppression. To expose the reactionary character of Confucianism and Chiang Kai-shek's cult of Confucius, Lu Hsun took up his pen and wrote an essay entitled *The World of Cicadas*.

On 27 August that year, ludicrous ceremonies were held in different parts of China to honour Confucius. In Nanking, the Kuomintang government commemorated his birthday with great fanfare, high officials paying homage to a portrait of the "Sage". In the Con-

fucian Temple in Chufu, Shantung, various politicians, Kuomintang agents and local die-hards assembled to pay homage too. Ancient musical instruments were displayed, while men in old-style square black hats and gaudy robes as well as Kuomintang officials in long gowns and wide-sleeved jackets sacrificed whole pigs, oxen and sheep in the temple court, putting on a ridiculous show. As for the Shanghai authorities, they organized an orchestra comprising over forty ancient and modern instruments to play what they claimed was the ancient "Shao" music which had made Confucius "forget the taste of meat for three months".

From this pandemonium Lu Hsun concluded that the Kuomintang were leaving no stone unturned. At the start of the republic, Yuan Shih-kai had put on a similar show when he dreamed of becoming emperor; and now they had surpassed Yuan Shih-kai. Lu Hsun looked up the newspaper reports of this event. He saw that the Shanghai newspaper *Shen Pao* praised this Shao music as "dignified and serene", "quite out of the common", and described it fulsomely as "songs of the peaceful reign of the three early dynasties". Confucius had been dead for more than two thousand years. Who could really tell what the old Shao music was like? Could these "songs of the peaceful reign" wash away the blood on the hands of the Kuomintang die-hards? Could this "tempo, dignified and serene" change that hell on earth into a paradise?

In his mind's eye Lu Hsun saw pictures of the real suffering in China.

That year a serious drought in fourteen provinces south of the Yangtse had caused the rice crop to fail. Millions of acres of land lay waste in the provinces of Kiangsu, Chekiang and Anhwei. In the last province alone nine million peasants were starving.

In thirteen provinces north of the Yangtse incessant rain had caused floods. Many dykes were breached, many villages inundated. The Chienkan River alone, overflowing its banks, destroyed more than seven hundred *li* of land. . . . From all sides came news of disaster. Food reserves were exhausted, even the roots of trees had been dug up. Many people died of starvation. These famines and floods completely belied the peaceful reign of which the Kuomintang boast-

ed. The cruel sufferings of tens of millions of people forcefully showed up the hypocrisy of the cult of Confucius fostered by the die-hards.

On 27 August, the day that the Kuomintang officials enjoyed this ancient music of a "peaceful reign", the poor peasants in the county of Yuyao in Chekiang not only had no food to eat but no water either. A fight for drinking water cost a man's life. This antithesis revealed the cruel oppression and exploitation of the corrupt Kuomintang regime. This fact alone sufficed to tear off its mask.

Lu Hsun contrasted these two incidents which had happened on the same day in his short essay *Forgetting Meat and Forgetting Water*.<sup>\*</sup> Once more he attacked the Kuomintang reactionaries for the crimes they had committed behind the smoke-screen of the cult of Confucius.

Towards the end of this essay Lu Hsun wrote indignantly: "Shao music belongs to one world, thirst to another. Meat-eaters who forget the taste of meat belong to one world, thirst and fights for water to another." Confucius in his day had wanted the labouring people to nourish the slave-owners with their blood and sweat; now, more than two thousand years later, the Kuomintang reactionaries had once more trotted out Confucius' effigy and teachings to savagely oppress the people. They were using this ancient music of "a peaceful reign" to deceive the people.

Lu Hsun sent this short essay to a new magazine *Morning Star*.

When Lu Hsun received this magazine, his essay was published on the first page, in the most prominent place. But he found that it had been drastically curtailed by the Kuomintang censors, certain passages having been cut to obscure its meaning.

A few days later a young man called on Lu Hsun. After chatting for a while, he produced a magazine he had brought with him. It was the *Morning Star*. Turning to the first page, the young man said diffidently: "I've read your essay, sir, but I'm not too clear as to its meaning. . . ."

"Yes, they've cut out two whole sections, so that readers can't understand what I'm driving at. This is the good work of the

<sup>\*</sup>See *Chinese Literature* No. 9, 1974.

Kuomintang censors, the 'benevolent rule' or 'kingly way' of those disciples of Confucius." Then Lu Hsun explained to the young man what had been cut.

His visitor responded eagerly: "At first I thought all this return to the past and the Kuomintang's cult of Confucius was just nonsense. After reading some of your essays debunking Confucianism, I'm beginning to see the sinister aim behind it. Worshipping Confucius is a cover for flood, famine and other man-made calamities and for selling out the country. As you've pointed out, when Chiang Kai-shek calls on us to be polite and to show compliance, he wants to sell out all China. These traitors put the cult of Confucius above everything else. To them there is nothing more important than this. Provided the new rulers will worship Confucius and respect the Confucians, they are willing to submit as slaves to any foreign power. In your essay *Settling Accounts* you warn us that we must settle scores with them. This is absolutely essential."

In reply to this enthusiastic outburst, Lu Hsun said earnestly: "Yes, these things are bound to be all the vogue: the cult of Confucius, veneration of what is ancient, study of the classics and writing in the classical language. We who work with our pens must be ready to attack this trend. I've made up my mind to read more old books and write more essays, to dig up the ancestral grave of all those scoundrels."

So some months later Lu Hsun made a stronger attack, a general settling of scores with Confucianism and the cult of Confucius.

In April 1935, a big temple to Confucius was completed at Yushima in Japan and the Japanese warlords made painstaking preparations for a grand sacrifice there. When this news reached China, the Kuomintang warlord Ho Chien promptly got hold of a portrait of Confucius which he dispatched to Japan. Chiang Kai-shek also hastily sent delegates to attend the grand inauguration of this temple. And descendants of Confucius went to Japan to join in the sacrifice. Thus the Chinese and Japanese reactionaries joined forces to stage a showy ceremony.

The fiercer the struggle and the more rampant the cult of Confucius, the more courageously Lu Hsun struck back, standing in the



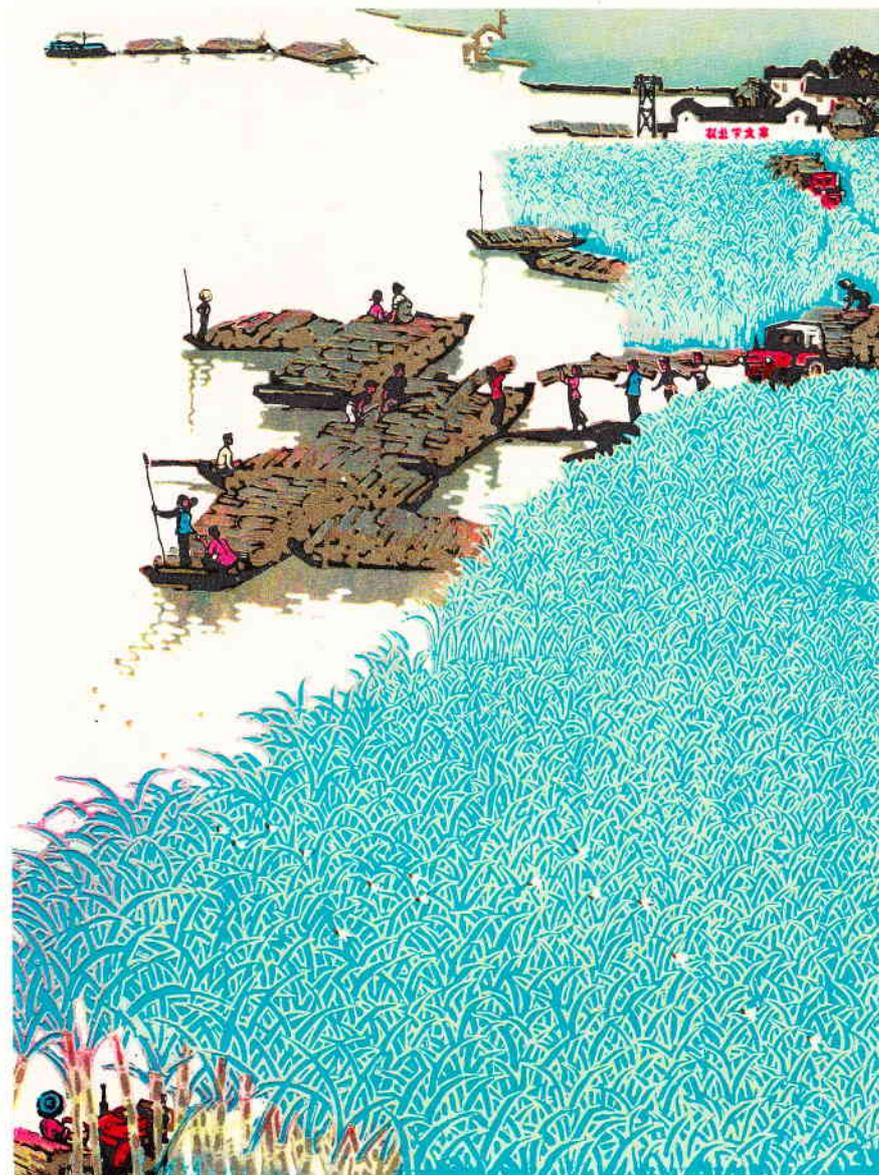
Now Chiang Kai-shek and the Japanese imperialists were invoking the spectre of Confucius again. These reflections enabled him to see the spectre of Confucius in its true light. And thus he reached the conclusion that Confucius was a brick used by all reactionaries to open doors, a tool to serve their counter-revolutionary purpose.

However, the course of history is independent of the wishes of die-hards. Some temporary setbacks there may be, but in the long run the reactionaries' plot to put the clock back will not work. Using Confucius as their brick, they never succeed in opening the door to restoration or aggression, never escape their inevitable doom. This is the irresistible law of history. The mighty tide of the people's revolution always has swept and always will sweep away all foul manifestations of the cult of Confucius.

The dark night was passing. History would always march forward. Lu Hsun was elated by the thought of the mighty strength of the people's revolution led by the Chinese Communist Party and Chairman Mao which was sweeping away every modern "Confucius", whether Chinese or foreign. He spread out paper and took up his pen for a final reckoning with the whole sinister cult of Confucius. First he wrote down the bold title: *Confucius in Modern China*.

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Sugar-cane Grows Sweet in the South  
(woodcut) by Hsu Chuan-ju



*Chang Yung-mei*

## The New Silk Road Across the Skies

The runway gleams in the dawn light,  
While a gentle breeze sweeps the airfield.  
A thousand lamps sparkle like friendly eyes  
To watch the plane take off,  
For this is the inaugural flight to Tehran,\*  
Carrying friendship across the boundless skies.

As the plane speeds through trackless space,  
From the ventilators, cool frontier air refreshes us,  
A sea of billowing cloud spreads beneath our wings  
Its vast expanse turbulent and measureless;  
Then like helmeted warriors standing on guard,

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\*The inaugural flight of the Chinese airline to Tehran, Iran, was made on December 27, 1974.

Or massed white stallions tossing their wild heads,  
One by one the towering snowy peaks emerge.

On, on speeds our plane, across the roof of the world,  
Over glittering golden desert sands;  
A silver streak of light we cross the frontiers,  
First of Afghanistan and then Iran,  
Following the ancient silk road of wide renown,  
Along which the loaded camels used to wend their weary way.  
The sound of tinkling camel bells still hovers in the air,  
As in the mind's eye the heavy loaded caravans pass on.

Going westward, they carried  
Chinese painted scrolls and precious books,  
The finest porcelain from Chingtehchen,\*  
Soochow embroideries and famed Chengtu brocade.  
On their return, coming east,  
They carried loads of melons and sweet grapes,  
Pearls, frankincense and fine six-stringed guitars.

Our forefathers, you who toiled in the past,  
What hardships you suffered, what obstacles you overcame,  
As you travelled by night through lonely mountain passes,  
Crossing icy chasms or fiery desert sands.  
Through the long dynasties of Chin and Han,\*\*  
Your footprints were engraved on the old silk road,  
While your streaming sweat moistened the parched weeds.

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\*Chingtehchen in Kiangsi Province has been famous for its porcelain since the Tang Dynasty (A.D. 618-907).

\*\*The Chin (221-207 B.C.) and Han (206 B.C.-A.D.220) were two powerful ancient feudal Chinese dynasties.

You it was who transplanted the red-rooted spinach,  
Brought as gifts to China tawny roaring lions;\*  
While Chinese dragon and phoenix designs,  
Or pavilions of intricate architecture,  
Decorated many a Parthian palace of old,  
And were seen in the city of the nightingale...\*\*

Then foreign brigands swarmed across our lands,\*\*  
Brutish as wild bears, savage as ravening wolves,  
They clutched with claws that dripped with blood;  
Seizing fair young Iranian maidens,  
Murdering hoary-headed Chinese patriarchs,  
Tearing up sweet perfumed roses, uprooting sturdy pines.  
Finally this ancient silk road, this path of friendship  
Was deserted, lost and long forgotten,  
Only the cold moonlight shed its lustre on the bloodstains.

Banners unfurl in the wind.  
"One cannot change the die-hard's heart with good advice,  
Neither can one knock a nail into a stone."\*\*\*\*  
Brutality must be resisted by fighting back,  
The people were forced to take up arms.  
On winged Parthian steeds with Persian scimitars,  
Staunch heroes charged at their enemies;

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\*Spinach and lions were originally imported into China from Iran.

\*\*The city of the nightingale was another name for the ancient city of Shiraz; also known as the city of two famous poets Sa'di and Hafiz.

\*\*\*The following passage describes how both China and Iran were victims of imperialist aggression, and how the Chinese and Iranian peoples resisted.

\*\*\*\*These lines come from *The Rose Garden* written by the Persian poet Sa'di in the thirteenth century.

While with red-tasselled spears and broad swords,  
Chinese peasants rose to combat wild beasts.  
Both our peoples suffered from aggression,  
Though far apart our struggles were an echo of each other:  
No one can shake the mighty Elburz Mountains,  
For ever flow the torrents of the Yellow River.

Now that the east is red and the sun has risen,  
The Chinese people have stood up  
And carried through a cultural revolution,  
To eradicate the roots of revisionism.  
Chairman Mao's line gains ever greater victories,  
Our friends on the five continents are constantly increasing.

As I reflect upon our two thousand years of friendship,  
Time passes as swiftly as our flight.  
Though outside the cold air is searing,  
Inside the plane it is as warm as spring.  
Looking down on the earth beneath, I see  
A mountain range as motley-coloured as a tiger's skin,  
And wax-like rivers lie congealed.  
Now as we approach the capital,  
Flaming sparks rise from factory chimneys,  
Like red roses blossoming in the sky.  
We have arrived in Tehran!  
Friends have come to the airport to welcome us.

The hearts of our two peoples beat as one,  
Both in the sky and down below on earth.  
Ah, dear friends!  
Now a new highway crosses the sky,

A new highway linking Europe and Asia.  
Chinese and Iranian planes soaring on the east wind  
Fly over a rainbow-bridge that spans infinite space,  
A new silk road to link our hearts.  
A silk road indestructible and everlasting;  
How bright is our future!  
Friends, let us hail this new victory,  
As stronger and more united the third world grows,  
Just look at this new silk road of friendship,  
And see how the present is surpassing the past;  
The tide of history is irresistible,  
And we the people are the moving force!



*Chiang Tien*

### The Struggle Between the Confucians and Legalists in the History of Chinese Literature and Art

During the movement to debunk Lin Piao and Confucius, the Chinese people are making a serious study of the struggle between the Confucians and Legalists in past history on the basis of Chairman Mao's directive to make the past serve our present-day needs.

The early Confucians opposed social reforms and wanted to go back to the old traditions. They were for absolute adherence to the old order of Western Chou slave society (c. 11th to 8th century B.C.). They claimed that all things were ordained by Heaven, "life and death are predestined and wealth and nobility are decided by Heaven." They used this idea to deceive the people, in the hope of stopping the slaves from rebelling and thus preserving the moribund slave system. The Legalists on the other hand advocated rule by law. They wanted to have publicized laws in place of hereditary privileges and the hierarchy of the slave-owning nobles. They proposed reforms and were against retrogression, claiming that "Man's will can conquer Heaven." They were for a dictatorship of the new landlord class instead of the dictatorship of the old slave-owning class; thus their ideas reflected the interests and demands of the newly emerging feudal landlords.

The struggle between the Confucians and the Legalists continued for more than two thousand years. Different historical periods had their different class

backgrounds and political basis, yet the struggle between these two schools of thought always centred round the issue of whether to introduce reforms or abide by the old ways, whether to go forward or backward. This struggle was also reflected in Chinese literature and art.

The article we publish below attempts to give a brief summary of some of the main issues in the struggle between the Confucians and the Legalists in the history of Chinese literature and art.

— The Editors

The Confucian and Legalist schools emerged during the Spring-and-Autumn and Warring States Periods (770-221 B.C.), the centuries of China's transition from slave society to feudal society. Thereafter, the Confucian and Legalist lines remained in sharp conflict in the various ideological realms, as can be seen from the history of our art and literature. One important task in our present study of the past is to sum up, from a Marxist standpoint, the historical experience of this struggle in Chinese literature and art, and to make a dialectical analysis of the laws of this struggle.

Chairman Mao has pointed out to us that in class society, **"All culture, all literature and art belong to definite classes and are geared to definite political lines."** The Confucians and the Legalists alike used literature and art as weapons to propagate their different political lines; hence the question of which political line to serve was at the heart of the contest between these two schools in literature and art.

During the early period before the Chin Dynasty, the issue fought over by the Confucians and the Legalists was whether to preserve the ancient slave system or to overthrow it and set up a feudal system. This fierce, protracted conflict was reflected in literature and art as well. The Confucians tried to make literature and art a tool to restore the moribund slave system. Thus the founder of the school, Confucius (551-479 B.C.), a die-hard set on restoring the old order, proclaimed: "If men do not know the ancient songs, the rites will become confused; if men do not know the ancient music, the rites

will lack splendour." He made every effort to use literature and music to propagate his retrogressive political programme.

Confucius' disciple Mencius (372-289 B.C.) also used literature to serve the needs of the "benevolent rule" of slave society. In a parable aimed at opposing social reform, he insinuated that the Legalists who advocated progressive measures were like the man who pulled up corn by the roots in the hope of making it grow faster.

The early Legalists hit back at such reactionary ideas. In the realm of politics, they opposed "rule by rites" and proposed "rule by law". In art and literature, they opposed the teachings of the Confucians too. For example, Shang Yang (c.390-338 B.C.) declared that the Confucians who used ancient rites and music, ancient texts and songs to control the minds of the people were harming the state in the same way as lice or maggots, and injuring the interests of the new landlord class. He proposed burning the *Book of Songs* and the *Book of Documents*, and making the laws known to all.

Another Legalist Hsun Kuang (c.313-238 B.C.), writing in the popular drum-ballad form, argued that "present-day rulers are better models than the kings of old" and "there should be a single unified empire". These ideas served the interests of the new landlord class bent on setting up a centralized feudal state.

Another well-known Legalist Han Fei (c. 280-233 B.C.) used the fable form to satirize Confucian die-hards and advocate reform. One of his fables tells of a man who saw a hare kill itself by crashing into a tree trunk, and after that waited every day under the tree, in the hope that another hare would do the same thing. The moral of this was that the Confucians' adherence to old ways and opposition to reform and progress were as ridiculous as this fool waiting for a hare.

By the Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D.24) Chinese feudal society was established. From then on, the struggle between the Confucians and Legalists continued within the landlord class itself, with literature and art still used as weapons.

In the eleventh century, Wang An-shih (1021-1086), a famous statesman and poet who took a Legalist line, carried out a series of reforms in politics, the economy and the military system, in order

to restrict the annexation of land by big landlords, resist the incursions of princes in national minority areas, and consolidate the central authority and unity of the empire. These measures reflected the sharp clash between the reformists representing the interests of the smaller landlords and the die-hards representing the interests of the big landlords. The latter whose spokesman was Ssuma Kuang (1019-1086) fiercely opposed Wang An-shih and compared him with Shang Yang, who had also introduced drastic new measures. Wang An-shih, quite unabashed, wrote a poem on Shang Yang to counter-attack and show his support of the early Legalists.

The men of today should not condemn Shang Yang;  
Shang Yang was able, his government efficient.

He wrote many other poems exposing the Confucians who supported the special privileges of the big landlord class, and pointing out the success of his reforms by describing the prosperity in the countryside resulting from his new measures.

The die-hards of the big landlord class used various forms of literature and art to attack Wang An-shih's reforms. Thus a certain Cheng Hsia memorialized the emperor saying that these reforms were calamitous and even blaming Wang An-shih for the drought at that time. He said, "Get rid of Wang An-shih and Heaven will send rain." He also painted a picture of peasants reduced to beggary and forced to leave their homes, and presented this to the court to discredit Wang An-shih.

Su Shih or Su Tung-po (1037-1101) also wrote poems painting a black picture of the countryside after the implementation of the new measures. After Wang An-shih's fall from power, the Confucians continued to slander Legalists in essays and in stories. Shao Po-wen (1057-1134), using an assumed name, wrote *A Dissertation on Detecting Traitors* which was filled with trumped-up charges, making Wang An-shih out a most sinister character and claiming that before he became prime minister someone already foresaw that he would cause great havoc.

Chairman Mao has pointed out: "To overthrow a political power, it is always necessary first of all to create public opinion,

to do work in the ideological sphere. This is true for the revolutionary class, as well as for the counter-revolutionary class." The history of the struggle between the Confucians and the Legalists in literature and art fully confirms the absolute correctness of this judgement.

## 2

The struggle between the Confucian and Legalist lines in feudal China's literature and art is also manifested in the choice of representatives of different political lines as heroes or villains, who are depicted as typical characters.

The First Emperor of China, Chin Shih Huang (259-210 B.C.), by carrying out a Legalist line succeeded in uniting China and setting up a centralized feudal empire. Among the writings of Legalists or progressive opponents of Confucianism are works which eulogize the success of the Legalist line by depicting the First Emperor as a hero. An example is the inscriptions on stone by his Legalist prime minister Li Ssu (?-208 B.C.) to commemorate the First Emperor's tours of inspection and praise his unification of the whole country.

The well-known Tang poet Li Po (701-762), who also opposed Confucianism, wrote:

The King of Chin, mighty as tiger crouched to spring,  
Swept away six opposing states;  
Swinging his sword he cut through floating clouds,  
All the barons came west to pay homage.  
Endowed with clear judgement by Heaven,  
He surpassed all others in grand strategy

This is a warm tribute to the First Emperor's brilliance and his historic achievement.

The Confucians, for their part, left no stone unturned to glorify Confucius. The reactionary Neo-Confucian Chu Hsi (1130-1200) even compared him to the sun, declaring: "If Heaven had not sent down Confucius, for all eternity the world would have been in darkness." At the same time the Confucians did their utmost through

writing and art to vilify Chin Shih Huang and belittle his historical role. The traitor and renegade Lin Piao and his gang repeated the charges of earlier Confucians, slandering the First Emperor as a "tyrant".

In the field of Chinese music, two traditional works for the *pipa* *Besieged on Ten Sides* and *The Conqueror Unbuckles His Armour* are good examples of the struggle between the Confucian and Legalist lines in music. The fall of the Chin Dynasty in 207 B.C. was followed by years of fighting between two political factions, one headed by Liu Pang (256-195 B.C.) who carried out a progressive Legalist line, the other by Hsiang Yu (232-202 B.C.) who followed a retrogressive Confucian line. Liu Pang gradually gained the upper hand and in 202 B.C., in the decisive Battle of Kaihsia (present-day Lingpi County in Anhwei), his forces surrounded Hsiang Yu's army and routed it. Both these musical compositions take this battle as their theme, but deal with it completely differently. Whereas *Besieged on Ten Sides* depicts the discipline and fighting spirit of Liu Pang's forces and celebrates the victory of Liu Pang who followed the Legalist line, *The Conqueror Unbuckles His Armour* depicts Hsiang Yu, the self-styled "Conqueror of Western Chu" who wanted to restore the former warring states, as a tragic hero and laments his defeat.

So we see that both the Confucians and the Legalists used literature and art to serve their political lines through the depiction of different heroes. During the long feudal period, just as the Confucians created various characters to propagate their moral code of "benevolence" and "rites", the Legalists created heroic images in art and literature to represent the Legalist line and debunk Confucianism.

Of course, because the Legalists were limited by their historical circumstances and class prejudices, although their literature and art criticized Confucianism they failed to refute its reactionary ideas thoroughly. And although they sometimes reflected the life of the labouring people they could not create true heroes of the labouring masses, the main force to impel history forward, much less praise their revolutionary actions from a mass standpoint and help them

to unite and struggle. Basically, the art and literature of the Legalists still reflected the mentality of the exploiter class.

In our present socialist period, the struggle between the two lines, proletarian and bourgeois, and two classes in literature and art also centres around the problem of which class to serve and to which class the heroes created should belong. By summing up the historical experience of the struggle between the Confucians and the Legalists in our traditional literature and art we can see more clearly that it is essential today to create heroic images of the proletariat to serve proletarian politics.

### 3

Another important issue in the struggle between the Confucian and Legalist lines is whether to glorify the old and belittle the new, or *vice versa*. The Confucians were conservative die-hards who idealized the past and decried the present, while the Legalists were bold reformers eager to break with the past and concentrate on their own times.

Confucius was fanatically devoted to old traditions. He never tired of praising the music of Shang and Chou slave society, claiming that it was unsurpassed; and he detested the new music of Cheng and other states, which reflected the desire for progress of the new emerging landlord class. He called this new music licentious and improper and wanted to suppress it. Later Confucians followed in his footsteps. Thus the Neo-Confucian Chu Hsi considered that poetry had degenerated since the Hsia, Shang and Chou Dynasties. "Today," he lamented, "... all the ancient ways have died out." One of his followers boasted that his criterion in compiling the book *Proper Models in Literature* was "selecting only those works written in ancient forms, whose contents correspond to the Confucian canons. Other works, however well written, have been rejected." All later Confucians took the Confucian classics as their highest model, and were for ever talking about restoring ancient traditions. Thus in art they advocated "taking the ancients as models" and emphasized "It is the ancient spirit which gives a painting value."

The Legalists were against the old songs and music which the Confucians praised. Thus Wang Chung (c. A.D. 27-97), an enlightened thinker of the Han Dynasty, criticized the Confucians of his day for "liking to paint the men of old" and "refusing to depict scholars of the present times", and for "exalting the past and disparaging the present". He pointed out cuttingly that the Confucians "prize the past and despise the present, and claim that present-day writing falls short of ancient works".

The Tang poet Liu Yu-hsi (772-842) wrote in one of his poems:

Play no more tunes, sir, of bygone dynasties  
But hear the new *Willow Ballads*.

This stated explicitly the Legalist view on art and literature.

Li Chih (1527-1602), an enlightened thinker of the Ming Dynasty, pointed out that history was for ever progressing. "Today is new; tomorrow will be new, too; and the day after tomorrow." He asked: "Why should poetry be restricted to old anthologies? Why should prose be restricted to works written before the Chin Dynasty?" Again: "Why talk only of the Six Classics? Of the *Analects* and *Mencius*?" These were direct attacks on the Confucian canons and the Confucians' attempts to return to the past.

The Confucians' reverence for the past manifested itself not only in their praise of old literature and art to glorify the culture of slave society, using retrogression in the cultural field to serve their reactionary political programme; but also in the way they upheld the Confucian classics as models in the hope of perpetuating the pernicious tenets of Confucianism. The Legalists on the other hand looked down on the songs and music of the slave-owners, and in this way opposed the Confucians' retrogressive political line. They were against taking the Confucian canons as models; in other words, against the Confucians' use of literature and art to propagate their reactionary ideas.

We of the proletariat pay more attention to the new than to the old. In the field of literature and art we believe in Chairman Mao's policy of "letting the new emerge from the old". We are trying to rid ourselves of blind reverence for past literature and art, be it

Chinese or foreign, and are for what is new in socialism, for our new proletarian literature and art which we are doing our best to develop further. As Chairman Mao points out in his *Talks at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art*: "Nor do we refuse to utilize the literary and artistic forms of the past, but in our hands these old forms, remoulded and infused with new content, also become something revolutionary in the service of the people."

Current class struggles cannot but be linked in some respects with the class struggles of the past. Lin Piao's counter-revolutionary revisionist line was an ultra-Rightist line opposed to socialism and aimed at the restoration of capitalism. And when Lin Piao's clique used literature and art to attack the proletariat, they took over Confucian maxims for the restoration of the old regime. So when we study the struggle between the Confucians and Legalists in the history of Chinese literature, our purpose is to make correct use of this historical experience the better to implement Chairman Mao's revolutionary line in literature and art and to hasten the proletarian revolution in this field.

## The Children's Orchestra of Tachai

In China's countryside today, one finds many good examples of how to dominate the ideological and cultural field with revolutionary literature and art. Among them are the paintings by the peasants of Huhsien County in Shensi Province, the poems by members of the Hsiao-chin-chuang Brigade, Paoti County near Tientsin and the music of the Children's Orchestra of Tachai Brigade in Hsiyang County, Shansi Province which is the main subject of this article. "Paint for the revolution", "write for the revolution" and "learn to make music for the revolution" all popular slogans in these places, show the purpose of such cultural activities.

The Tachai children's orchestra was set up in early 1974. It has 43 members whose average age is 13, and the youngest player is only 8. The instruments used by the orchestra divide into several groups: the various fiddles, the plucked stringed instruments, the wind-instruments, and the percussion instruments. It also has an accordion player and a conductor. After learning for over a year the young players now have a repertoire of dozens of pieces of instru-

mental music including the *pipa* ensemble *Men with Red, Loyal Hearts* (a passage from the modern revolutionary Peking opera *The Red Lantern*), the violin ensemble *Busy Transplanting Rice on Tiger-Head Hill*, the plucked instrument music *Tachai's Militiawomen* and the concerto *New Song in Tachai*. In addition, they often play accompaniments for song and dance performances. Their music has strong national characteristics and is full of vitality, alive with the spirit of our times.

In order to make sure that the orchestra would always serve the workers, peasants and soldiers, and would serve socialism, the first step for its members after its establishment was to study Chairman Mao's article *Talks at the Yenan Forum on Literature and Art*. "You are Tachai's new generation," the leading comrade of their Party branch told them. "You must shoulder the glorious task of propagating Mao Tsetung Thought and our Tachai spirit of hard work. With music as your weapon, take an active part in the battle to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius. Work hard for the revolution and use the new socialist culture to dominate the ideological field in the countryside." Hence, in the year and more since it was set up, the little orchestra has never swerved from Chairman Mao's revolutionary line on literature and art.

"Self-reliance and arduous struggle" is the guiding principle of the orchestra. When it was first organized, some people said, "Since our Tachai is a big enterprise, we should buy as many new musical instruments as possible. New instruments will spur us on to learn better." Hearing of this erroneous idea the Party branch began to instruct them in the revolutionary tradition of frugality and hard struggle. Tachai is situated on the slopes of Tiger-Head Hill and surrounded by the looming Taihang ranges. Before Liberation three major characteristics of the area really summed it up: the mountains were high and covered in rocks and stones; the ground dropped away steeply from the very thresholds of the houses and natural disasters occurred regularly every year. In 1945 Tachai was liberated. Since then, the Tachai people have been fighting to transform their poor hills and valleys. In the course of a hard struggle of more than ten winters, Tachai changed completely: the hills turned green, the slopes were transformed into terraced fields, and



Setting off for a performance

a stock of animals has been built up. In 1964 Chairman Mao issued the call to the whole country: In agriculture, learn from Tachai.

After study, the members of the orchestra came to understand that hard struggle was an heirloom of the Tachai people which should be handed down from generation to generation. So, they set to work themselves repairing some of the *erb bu* (two-stringed fiddle) and the *san hsien* (three-stringed guitar), and making new instruments such as the tenor *pan bu* (another kind of fiddle), cellos and violins. They



Rehearsing

also made stands for the music scores and instruments. In this way they not only saved money for their collective but also improved themselves ideologically.

At the beginning the children found it difficult to learn to play. Some people said: "These mountain village children don't know anything about music and they don't have any special teachers. It'll just be a waste of time and money, they'll never get anywhere." Li Chi-lien was a daughter of poor peasant family. When she began to learn to play the Chinese guitar she kept forgetting the fingering or missing the strings she tried to pluck. She felt she was too stupid to do it and got rather down-hearted. When the leadership found this out, they helped her to study Chairman 'Mao's teachings and repudiate the "theory of genius". When she recovered her morale she kept on practising, undaunted by hardship or fatigue until, finally, she mastered the technique.

"We should work hard at our music and learn to play instruments for the revolution." This is the principle followed by every member of the orchestra. They say proudly:

Although we're young, our aspirations are high,  
Hardships and problems cannot make us sigh,  
When we meet them we beat them in this or that way,  
For it's to serve the revolution that we're learning to play.

The orchestra trained whenever its members had some spare time and also began to combine training with performance. How should an orchestra be developed? This was a question concerning the political line. At first some people advocated starting with theory. They said that only after they had studied theory well could they begin their basic training on the instruments, and as training took time, it would not be possible to do propaganda and give performances for quite a while. The Party branch felt that this, the "normal" way of running the orchestra was not correct and would lead the young musicians on to the wrong path. So it directed very clearly that

A violin ensemble



the orchestra must keep strictly to its amateur character and take on the task of propaganda as early as possible. Under the guidance of the Party branch, the players trained in their spare time and by performing; they learned to read music and picked up musical theory in the course of practice. They acquired the basic techniques of fingering and bowing as the need arose. Soon they had all mastered the basic techniques of their various instruments. Thirteen-year-old *baiti* (a kind of flute) player Li Cheng-yuan and *suona* (a wooden trumpet) player Chia Wen-yi, for instance, could perform *The Three Main Rules of Discipline and the Eight Points for Attention*, while the guitar player Kuo Hai-yen learned to play the popular song *I Am a Soldier*.

Performing for the commune members



Holidays were the busiest time for the orchestra. During the Spring Festival this year they gave performances of their best items. All the Tachai brigade members and the visitors to the area came, and it was warmly applauded. The orchestra has also performed for foreign visitors, thus making a contribution to the promotion of friendship between the Chinese people and the people of other countries.

More than a year has passed since the orchestra was set up. In this time the musicians have not only improved their technique and their playing, they have raised their political level as well. They resolved to be "a new generation of the Tachai people and good successors of the revolution". Now many of them have been elected Model Little Red Soldiers or Model Red Guards. The Tachai Propaganda Team which includes the children's orchestra has been chosen as an advanced cultural unit in Hsiyang County.

In the course of its work, the Tachai children's orchestra has become a red propaganda team. Its success has spurred on revolutionary musical work in the whole county of Hsiyang and helped to enable socialist ideas to dominate the cultural field in the countryside.

## CHRONICLE

### Spare-Time Literature and Art Creations by Forest Workers

Since the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, spare-time creative activity in literature and art has developed vigorously among workers of the Forestry Bureau of Sungchiangho, Kirin Province. Since 1972, they have written and published a collection of short stories *The Axe That Cleaves the Mountains*, a book of poems *Hammers Clang in the Forest* and two albums of paintings, *Young Chu-tou Delivers a Message* and *A Ferry*. Additionally, more than a hundred of their works of literature and art have been published in newspapers and magazines all over China.

*The Axe That Cleaves the Mountains* is a selection of stories written to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the publication of Chairman Mao's *Talks at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art*. It contains 14 of them, differing in theme and varied in style. They reflect the ardent struggles and life of the forest workers from different angles. The book has won a warm welcome from readers.

Every section under this Forestry Bureau now has its own amateur writers and artists.

### Art Exhibition by Middle-School Students in Shanghai

An exhibition of art works by middle-school students in Shanghai opened recently. It was the city's second since the Great Proletarian

Cultural Revolution. The more than two hundred works shown include traditional Chinese paintings, oils, woodcuts, scissor-cuts, posters, New-Year pictures, serial pictures and sculptures. The exhibition demonstrates the new achievements of the revolution in art education in Shanghai's middle schools. Among the better works are the traditional Chinese paintings *Be a Good Son of the Party* and *A Red Examination Paper*, the gouache *New Look of a Brigade*, the woodcut *Teacher and Student*, the oil painting *Filling the Water Keg Before Leaving* and the serial-picture set *Vanguard*.

### Shang Dynasty Relics Discovered in South China

Relics dating from the Shang Dynasty (c. 17th-11th century B.C.) have been discovered at Shanchien Commune in Chingkiang County, Kiangsi Province. It is the first large site of Shang Dynasty culture to be found south of the Yangtse River. Analysis of the soil and cultural objects from this site dates them as ranging from the middle period of the Shang Dynasty to the early Western Chou Dynasty (c. 11th-8th century B.C.).

A large number of production tools and utensils for daily use have been unearthed. Stone moulds for casting bronze, copper cinder and bronze vessels show that bronze casting south of the Yangtse had reached a high standard at that time. Some ceramics, including a large mouth *tsum*, and fragments of jars, basins and so on, had a kaolin clay basis, attaining the level of proto-porcelain. The written characters and marks incised on the pottery vessels and stone moulds constitute an important find. Preliminary study has revealed about sixty such characters and signs. In form and style, they are basically similar to those on Shang oracle-bone inscriptions previously unearthed in Hsiaotun in Anyang, Honan Province. But some of these are more pictographic.

The discovery and excavations provide data of great scientific value for the study of slave society in ancient south China.



Published by Foreign Languages Press  
Peking (37), China  
*Printed in the People's Republic of China*

Studying Revolutionary Theory (woodcut)

by Chu Yeh-ching



# 中国文学

英文月刊1975年第7期

本刊代号2—916